



The HARVESTER

INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'



YORKSHIRE ASSEMBLIES SUNDAY SCHOOL CAMPS

**INSIDE:
ENCOUNTER WITH MOTHER TERESA**

**January 1981 Volume LX No1 Price 40p
Editor: Roy Coad**



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The HARVESTER

INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'

EDITORIAL

The purist would claim that January 1981 (not 1980) is the first month of a new decade. Certainly, it is a month which starts a new era for the two journals that now appear under the one cover of **The Harvester**: and an auspicious one both to welcome to our readership former readers of **The Witness** and to restate the basics of our editorial policy.

Both journals have been deeply imbedded in the history of the churches of so-called 'Christian Brethren' (a name, incidentally, which is far older than either — the editor will gladly supply documentation for that claim). Our loyalty continues unabated to those churches and to their members: but it is a loyalty which must be subject to the higher loyalty to the great Head of the Church Universal. For that reason, we hope that our fellow Christians who may not regard themselves as adherents of those particular churches (but for our part they are none the less Christian Brethren!), will find our pages of interest and profit.

Essentially we hope to inform and to challenge. We believe that a measure of controversy is essential to life and to progress; for that reason we shall not avoid controversial topics, but rather we trust the maturity of our readers to ensure that differences of opinion increase understanding and love. We are deeply committed to the Gospel message — but we believe also that true faith is evidenced in works, and above all in a concern for others: so that a Gospel which has no practical result in good works is broken-winded. Our columns are open to the participation of readers: we look forward to a profitable and vigorous interchange with them.

Above all, we are loyal to the Bible, for without it we are deprived of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ. In **Exploring the Bible** month by month, we hope to take our readers regularly with us to the roots of our Faith.

This is the most important section of this journal, and readers will see that it has been separately page-numbered, and punched for permanent filing and reference. It will be indexed annually.

A HISTORY OF THE YORKSHIRE ASSEMBLIES SUNDAY SCHOOL CAMPS

David Fryer

An interesting account of a very special work, that will bring happy memories to all who love camping.

Early in 1946 the small Assembly at Ossett, Yorkshire saw the need for the young people to be encouraged, and, following a two weeks gospel campaign led by Evangelist Stewart of Scotland, Mr. L. Waterhouse and Mr. J. Watts decided to try a weekend camp for a few boys. The young people often went cycling, but on this occasion a short trip by bus to picturesque Coxley Valley, between Huddersfield and Wakefield, saw the small party of approximately six boys, and the brethren, under canvas for the two nights.

The camp was repeated in August the same year, but now for a full week. This time about a dozen boys assembled and caught the local double decker bus and booked a one way ticket to Netherton. From there, equipped with small ridge tents, ground sheets and primus stoves, the gear was off-loaded on to an old wooden wheelbarrow to be trundled the last two miles to the site. Thus encouraged, and sensing that the Lord was with them in the venture, a further 'mixed' camp was held at Stanbury near Howarth in Bronteland, famous for the Bronte sisters and *Wuthering Heights*. Mr. G. Lamb joined the campers and remembers happy times of chorus singing on the rambles. The camp nurse, Miss Green, suffered a broken arm after falling over a tent peg. Quite a num-



ber of young people professed to be saved. The weather in those days was traditionally hot and there were fires on the moors. Football formed the main part of the sports programme.

By now the camp had expanded and in 1949 moved to the hillside above Beezley Farm, Ingleton with about 50 young people above the age of 11. The leaders were thrilled to be 'out there amongst the hills' living, working, playing, and learning more of God's word. Transport had improved and equipment was now carried on an open backed lorry. This also served as transport for the 'advance party' who assembled on the Friday night, having loaded the tents, poles and equipment from an old mill

store on to the lorry at Ossett to make the journey through the dales to Ingleton.

In those days campers brought their own packets of cornflakes and tins of beans, whilst milk and bread were provided by the camp. The advance party arrived late on the Friday evening prior to camp and the first task was to pitch a tent in the darkness, then to unload the lorry, before groping around for a corner to sleep in, ready for an early Saturday morning start.

Although Ingleton was the perfect setting for camp, with its magnificent scenery, views of Ingleborough, waterfalls, caves and potholes, when the weather was adverse and the rain and winds swept across the hillside it was often questionable whether we

would last out a weekend, let alone a full week. The same marquee was used for eating, cooking and meetings; and to have this tent blown down, lifted and torn, often brought despair to the workers. However, we pressed on, and after stitching, sewing and glueing, the tents would be re-erected and by Monday or Tuesday the camp had been rescued. We were blessed by the Lord.

By 1950 it was felt necessary to move the camp nearer 'home' and at Whitsuntide the same year, the move to the village of Cawthorne, Barnsley was made. How different to Ingleton; but we still had the rain to contend with! The field was very heavy and muddy. Some of the ladies and girls were allowed the use of the farmers barn 'room'. It was not until some months later that a young boy told us that he had cried 'Lord save me' on that day in the field at Cawthorne.

It was a welcome move to Thistle Hill Farm, near Knaresborough, and in August 1950 we shared the field by the River Nidd with a Scouts Camp. We were roused by their early morning bugle calls. Morning and evening meetings were always a feature of camp. The young people sang their hearts out. It was at Thistle Hill where we affectionately remember 'the Cup', donated by the farmer. After seeing the tug-of-war rope snap, he presented the camp with a large cup, still held to this day, on which was inscribed 'The Knaresborough Cup'. We returned to Thistle Hill Farm at Whitsuntide 1951. Each camp had its own 'camp chorus', and we could later link many of the songs with Ingleton. Great fun was had by all but we don't know how the wooden forms remained on their legs as 'Our Albert' was played, and the chorus 'Row me over the tide' had to be banned due to the constant threat of a collapsed bench.

The camp numbers remained steady, with up to 100 under canvas. However, the workers were committing their only two weeks holiday in a year for the Lord's work, and it was decided to drop the August week and concentrate on Whitsuntide from 1952 onwards.

It was in 1952 that we moved to Scotton Bank at the other side of the town of Knaresborough. Mr. T. Brayshaw (well known as 'Uncle Tom') joined the camp as evangelist for the week. He was accompanied by Mr. Tom McGuin of Scotland. We enjoyed his choruses with the aid of the guitar. We believe that many who were saved in those early days of Camp continue to this day by the grace and power of God.

We returned to the same field at Ingleton, loaned by Farmer Chapman, at Whitsuntide 1953. The barns were used for storage and sometimes as alternative sleeping quarters in the event of bad weather. Many times the farm house kitchen was full of drying clothes. The river was our bathroom and on one occasion it was a thrill to witness the baptism of 5-6 young people in the river above the fast flowing Beezley Falls. Many passers-by watched as Mr.

Lamb baptised them in the chilling waters. On Whitsunday afternoons a crowd of young people would gather for an open air meeting in the village, when many visitors to the falls heard the message of life as the Gospel was told and testimonies given.

One more break from Ingleton came in 1956 when we moved our tents to Matlock Bath to a farm above the town. Water was still being transported on wheels in a galvanized tank. Most of the large tents were ex-army marquees of the non-pulley type, so to put up camp was a fair haul and very hard work. However we were quite well organized by then. We employed a 'Camp Policeman' and the four team colours brought strong competition to win the cup or receive the wooden spoon. Even a camp 'Comic' award was presented. Long walks were led by Mr. Lamb, who was also the sportsmaster.

Then from 1957 until 1968 without a break we were to continue at Ingleton. A small wooden hut was used as a cookhouse. This was a great help both for storage and cooking, particularly after a fire had on one occasion flared in the cooking area of the large tent.

Campers were charged a small fee, and all the catering was provided. Funds were small, but replacement tents were purchased, although the large marquees mainly in use were difficult to manage on such a site. One or two smaller bell tents were a little easier to cope with. Assembly Sunday Schools were sending people from as far away as Hull and Chesterfield.

It was whilst the Camp was at Ingleton after moving from Matlock that a Gospel Witness team was established and, using an old van, they were encouraged by many local assemblies to serve the Lord mainly in the West and South Yorkshire and Derbyshire areas. Weekends were spent holding special meetings, open air work, and on a number of occasions week long crusades, notably at Frecheville, Sheffield, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury and others.

Such was the growth of the Camp that, in the mid-1960's it was felt necessary to form a committee of a few brethren. The committee is now thirteen in number. Dennis Gibson chairs the committee meetings and also leads the camp meetings and rallies. The Camp Secretary, Gordon Moxon, has a busy time trying to cope with pressures of an involvement which is almost all the year round.

Two of the camp helpers, Mr. B. Deakin and Mr. W. Wilson Stainforth of Doncaster, composed a number of choruses to be learned and sung at some of the Ingleton Camps. Some of the songs are featured in the 'official' camp chorus book.

Many will treasure those happy times at Beezley Farm but by now we were outgrowing the field and our stay at Beezley Farm.

A new site was urgently sought and after much prayer and assistance by Mr. G. Tryon our Camp Evangelist for many years, we were kindly offered a large field at Park Farm, Howden by a Christian farmer Mr. Metcalfe of Ripon. Much help was given

by Mr. D. Bailey, also a believer and farmer at Howden. It was in 1969 that the 'big move' from Ingleton to Howden took place. A much larger cookhouse had already been sited having been transferred from Thorpe, nr. Wakefield, and having once been a mission hut. It seemed an enormous task to dismantle a hut and transport it from the hillside on to a flat field near Howden. Many were disappointed and felt that such a move would be a backward step. However, we were sure the Lord was with us, and, at a difficult time, and in answer to much prayer, we felt that the way had been opened in order that the work of camp could continue. We were grateful to the Lord for the assistance given by Mr. Metcalfe and Mr. Bailey. We quickly became well established at Howden, (near Goole), and the camp grew until in excess of 200 boys, girls and families were together for one week each August. The influence of Camp became greater, and catered not only for Sunday School Groups of 11 year old and upwards, but for whole families. It was, therefore, necessary for the spiritual and physical needs of a wide age range of young people to be met.

Even to date the cost of a week at camp has not exceeded £9 per head and has thus enabled almost anyone who wished to spend a week at camp, to do so. A well equipped cookhouse provides a balanced menu by a dedicated team of staff with many volunteers helping. A little of the manual labour has lately been reduced by the hiring of a large marquee, although the few regular workers have had to start a week in advance in order to have the camp ready for

the Friday evening start. Saturday is the first full day with an evening rally led by Mr. Dennis Gibson. Sunday, also of value to believers, is a great experience; and now the whole of camp witnesses the Breaking of Bread on the Lord's day morning, followed by an active afternoon Sunday School and evening rally. Monday starts with early morning Bible study and prayer time for the workers. Following breakfast, 'quiet time' is held for all, whether in private tents, caravans or camp ridge tents.

Campers are accommodated 12 in a tent with a leader and assistant in charge to look after the general well being of the young people and also to give spiritual guidance. Mid morning sees a shortened service with bright singing and a message by one of the young brethren. The awarding of team points for the competitions, sports, activities and many other items brings great fun and a healthy atmosphere and team spirit. Afternoons bring field sports, games, activities in a large tent erected for the purpose of doing creative activity with the children, which also includes making mascots for 'It's a knockout' on Wednesday, when many parents visit camp and stay for the evening rally. No one could leave camp unmoved by the singing and joy expressed in the Christian environment in camp, and the message of the cross preached by members of the camp team of helpers. At midday a group of young people come together for Bible study. Late in the evening following the rally meeting and supper, films are shown and coffee bar discussions held.

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IRONY: THE BITER BIT

Tony Newell

Dr. A. G. Newell is
Acquisitions Librarian of the
University of Liverpool. This is
the first of an occasional
series of Christian glances at
literary topics, from his pen.

One of the perks of being a librarian is the opportunity to enjoy reading *Punch* a little before our customers do — and that, in these days of increasing austerity, without paying for it. A regular recent contributor to the magazine is the cartoonist Handelsman, whose 'Freaky Fables' are featured prominently near the front, often taking up a full page. His strips are drawn simply, with lots of balloons for the characters' very modern remarks, and conclude with a final 'moral'. Because they are published in *Punch*, we don't expect them to be mere updatings of Aesop or La Fontaine for Britain in the 80's, nor are they: Handelsman is capable of using any well-known story, mythical, fictional, legendary, historical or biblical, to illustrate his vision of life.

This vision is rationalistic and gloomy, highlighting illogicalities and human frailties. By choosing to deal in fables, Handelsman has placed his cartoon world at two removes from reality, so that his primary target becomes the fabric of the story he selects for treatment. From his choice of narratives, it seems clear that he categorizes the biblical with myths, legends and folk-tales rather than with history. I can't claim to have seen all his work published in *Punch*, but a handful of biblical stories have certainly been included. While I disliked the tone of some of these, as a Christian I found one or two positively objectionable, in that by both his drawings and his text, the cartoon-

ist was making fun of what I believe to be divinely revelatory history.

Handelsman sees the Bible stories through his modern spectacles, judges them by his own criterion of gloomy rationalism, and so reduces them to the significance of a sick joke. The touching and sternly theocratic account of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael and Isaac was rendered as a series of cruelly capricious pranks on God's part, with the sins of extramarital passion, jealousy, despair, and so on, seen as normal human weaknesses, thrown in. On its own terms, it was wryly funny. Having just moved house, I am unable to check my references but I think the concluding moral ran something like this: 'Trust in God. He has a great sense of humour'.

To poke fun at somebody or something is one way of deflating pretensions, of reducing importance, of undermining authority. It is a perfectly legitimate, time-honoured method of criticism, can prove more effective than serious argument and appears more acceptable than mere mud-slinging or name-calling. Handelsman's estimate of the Old Testament may very well be the generally received one nowadays. His *Punch* cartoons will surely serve to reinforce it as popular knowledge among the magazine's readership.

Punch, of course, used to be much more directly satirical than it has been of recent years. But satire is more than poking fun. The satirist seeks to persuade his readers to identify and condemn certain persons and behaviour which he regards as vicious. 'The true end of satire', said Dryden, 'is the amendment of vices', and ultimately the satirist aims at

healing and correction, as well as punishment by means of his ridicule. For Dr. Johnson, satire involved the censuring of wickedness or folly: it was a moral activity. It had to be written from a firm positive basis, because to condemn certain behaviour as foolish or wicked means that the satirist implicitly holds up a different code of behaviour as wise and good. To tear down without then erecting a demonstrably better alternative is anarchy, and is to be deplored in any sphere of life. Satire, therefore, must be sure of its values and appeal to a broadly agreed morality and worldview. So we find, as we might have expected, that the great age of English satire was the Augustan period of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, the age of Dryden and Pope.

It is a truism to say that we can no longer appeal to a generally accepted system of beliefs and values. We live today in a pluralist society, where a broad, popular acceptance of one religion and morality does not exist. Satire, strictly speaking, is therefore no longer possible. Handelsman's 'Freaky Fables' are not satirical in the full sense. Even so, 'poking fun' is an inadequate description for these strip cartoons. In fact, they are ironic, because the cartoonist's own outlook, on the evidence of his work, is an ironical one. So I am not suggesting that he is trying satirically to censure what he might see as the folly of belief in the Old Testament narratives and their teaching, but simply that his own ironical vision of life determines his approach to and presentation of them.

The history of the concept of irony is a fascinating one,

developing from hypocritical conduct in ancient Greece to a major rhetorical device which has now come to be universally applied, as when we speak of 'life's little ironies'. The basic features of all irony have been summarized as a contrast between appearance and reality (an important theme throughout literature); a confident unawareness (pretended in the ironist, real in the victim of irony) that the appearance is only an appearance; the comic effect of this unawareness; and a sense of detachment (superiority, freedom, amusement) on the part of the ironist which gives rise to a dry, rational, casual manner. It is the way of your fast-talking city-dweller with the unfailing clever answer, be he cockney, scouser or Glaswegian.

Irony is not confined to *Punch*. It is found both in everyday conversation and in literature. It is not absent from the Bible. Although we read there about joyfulness and rejoicing, our English versions seem to indicate that laughing and laughter, in Old and New Testament alike, were associated primarily with derision, mockery and scorn. It is perhaps significant that the words occur most frequently in the poetical and wisdom books of *Job*, *Psalms*, *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*. A quick survey (in English) of the occasions when 'laugh' and 'laughter' are used in Scripture shows that out of some 35 references, 23 are to mockery. For every text which tells us 'our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy' (*Ps. 126:2*), there are two which declare 'they laughed them to scorn and mocked them' (*II Chron. 30:10*). In other words, the Bible writers seem more interested in laughing *at* than in just

laughing. Even God is described as laughing at the wicked, of 'holding them in derision' (Ps. 2:4; 37:13; 59:8). This is one reason why He has been called 'the pure or archetypal ironist' for whom man is the victim.

Since the Bible depicts God Himself like this it is not surprising to find it presenting a world in which irony figures frequently. It can be the simplest irony, where what is said is clearly intended to mean the opposite, where the speaker's tone is undoubtedly sarcastic, where the purpose must be to hurt or ridicule or challenge. This is how Micaiah the prophet responds to King Ahab's command (I Ki. 22:10-17), how Michal rebukes David (II Sa. 6:20), how Jesus mocks the Pharisees (Mk. 7:9), how Paul admonishes the Corinthians (I Cor. 4:8; II Cor. 12:13).

Christians should relish the ironies of life.

It can be more complex irony, where the true meaning of what is said and done is hidden from some or all of the participants but is apparent to the ob-

server. Thus Pilate's warrant for Jesus's execution was intended to demonstrate his contempt for the Jews but actually stated the truth (Jn. 19:19-22). There are other occasions in John's Gospel where this device is used, and the author sometimes alerts the reader to the real meaning in order to obtain ironical value from what might otherwise be regarded as metaphor: Jesus's reference to the temple of His body, His dialogues with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman, His assertion of Lazarus's resurrection, and Caiaphas's unwitting prophecy (Jn. 2:19-21; 3:3-8; 4:10-15; 11:23-26; 11:50-51).

Irony can also be built into the very fabric of a narrative as part of its essential construction. Joseph interviewing the brothers who believed him dead or a slave (Gen. 42:6-8), Haman self-importantly procuring the greatest honours he dared to ask, without realizing they were intended, not for himself, but for the hated and despised Mordecai (Est. 6:6-10), Pilate exhibiting the beaten, tormented, tortured figure of Jesus with the words 'Behold, the man!' (Jn. 19:5) — these are examples of dram-

atic irony employed to heighten the impact of the biblical account and to encourage the reader to savour the discrepancies between appearance and reality. The effects so obtained vary from the comic to the tragic. The reader possesses the advantage of superior knowledge, and can therefore appreciate the plight of the victim who is unable to see things as they really are.

When we look back at our lives we often recognize the Lord's leading where, at the time, we failed to realize He was directly at work in our circumstances. Yet we do possess a measure of the divine perspective on life, and enjoy the privilege of participating in God's insight into the way things are. Christians find themselves in a favourable position to distinguish and relish the ironies of life. When they themselves turn out to have been the victims in particular instances, they may be distressed or perplexed, but they need never become embittered or read events in terms of tragedy. They know that God may laugh in scorn at His enemies, but He smiles on His own. If sometimes He *does* laugh at our failures and stupidities — and I

feel sure He must do — it is in gentle irony, not savage sarcasm. I'm certain Handelsman (if I quoted him correctly) was — ironically — right: God *does* possess a great sense of humour. And if it is at least partially the product of His seeing the end from the beginning, then the divine sense of humour must be an ironical one. Perhaps we can accept that, while recognizing our difficulty in understanding what we call a sense of humour which is utterly consonant with the divine attributes of love and justice, mercy and holiness. Did our Lord's sense of humour, His total awareness of the ironical, help to relieve Him a little from His equally total grasp of the crushing burden of human sin? I think it must have.

I'm grateful that I didn't react to those *Punch* cartoons by writing to protest. I have no right to expect non-Christians to respect my conscience rather than any other citizen's. And Handelsman prompted me to re-examine Scripture and so to reaffirm my belief in the divine polity. There's irony for you!

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Professor Rendle-Short, Emeritus Professor of Surgery from Addis Ababa, writes of her personal experience of a remarkable work of Christian love.

To me, one of the most remarkable personalities of our time is Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Anyone who has seen the appalling conditions in which thousands of unfortunate people have to live, can only admire the amazing work she is doing, to try and alleviate some of the suffering and to show the love of God.

Her background certainly does not suggest a life of Christian service. She comes of rugged peasant stock and was born in the mountains of Albania. From there young Agnes, as she was called, went with her parents to live in Yugoslavia. It was here, as an adolescent, she first heard of the Christian, charitable and educational work being carried on by the Roman Catholic missionaries in Bengal. She decided she would like to dedicate her life to serving God in India. She was advised to apply to the congregation of Loretto Nuns who worked in Bengal. This meant going to their Headquarters in Ireland and learning English. This she was happy to do.

Mary Teresa eventually arrived in India in January 1929, and was sent to Darjeeling, from where she could gaze on the majesty and beauty of the Himalayas. After spending two years as a novice, she took her first religious vows. She was then attached to a large High School for wealthy girls run by the Loretto nuns at Entally near Calcutta. She taught geography and history. The educational standard was high. Later she became the Headmistress. She spent twenty happy years at the school, imagining this was to be her life work. From time to time the girls were sent out to visit poor patients at nearby hospitals, writing letters for them, and trying to help where they could. They brought back enthusiastic reports of what they had been doing. One or two expressed a desire to dedicate their lives to working in the slums. Mother Teresa herself never went with them.

On 10th September 1946, Mother Teresa was on a train journey going up to Darjeeling. She spent the time in prayer and meditation. Suddenly she felt she

had a distinct call from God. She was to leave the convent, and go and live among the very poor. She likened it to the call of St. Paul on the way to Damascus. She knew she must obey.

On her return to Calcutta she informed her colleagues and the Archbishop, of her vision. No-one was very enthusiastic. She obtained permission to leave the convent for a while to think things out more clearly. There was a lot of political unrest at the time. It was just before India's independence. The idea of a European woman, dressing in Indian style, and eating the food of the poor, was not likely to be acceptable either to the people themselves, or to the Civic Authorities.

It took nearly two years of prayer and discussion before the Archbishop agreed to ask Rome if Mother Teresa might leave to start a new Religious order.

At last permission came through! On 16th August 1948, she left the convent and found herself alone in the streets of Calcutta. It was an act of supreme faith and courage. She had nowhere to go, no money, no backing and no employment. As she walked she prayed, 'My God, you, only you! I trust your call, your inspiration, you will not let me down!' Tramping the streets she soon realised how hopelessly ill prepared she was to start any work among the poor. She knew she must get advice. She managed to leave Calcutta for a short while and to join the Medical Missionary Sisters at Patna. Here she talked to Mother Dengel, an Austrian woman of great energy, and plenty of common sense. Mother Teresa told her she intended to live in great poverty, just as the poor she hoped to help. She, and the Sisters she hoped would join her, would eat only rice and salt, the humblest of diets, Mother Dengel was adamant.

'You will commit a serious sin', she said, 'Within a short while, these young girls will fall prey to tuberculosis and die. How do you expect your Sisters to work if they receive no sustenance?'

Humbly, she changed her plans. Adequate food was essential, if they were to do God's work. Mother Teresa said later, she felt the time at Patna was like the Wilderness in which her Master prepared Himself for His public work.

She returned to Calcutta and lived temporarily with a community called 'Little Sisters of the Poor'. Dressed in a rough, white cotton sari with a blue border, she went to Motijhil, just behind the Loretto convent. Here she found a cheap room to rent, and gathered a few children around her, to form a school. She had no tables or chairs, no blackboard, no chalk. She drew figures on the earth floor and tried to teach the Bengali alphabet. She was just trying to make an effort to give them a sense of respectability, and to tell them that God loved them. Outwardly it was rather pathetic. But God was training her. She had to cling to Him in absolute trust.

'You pulled me out of the convent, where I was useful', she said, 'now guide me, as You wish'.

Eventually she found a much better place to live, on the second floor in the house of a Christian family. One day in March 1949, Mother Teresa heard a knock on her door. She opened it with a beating heart. A frail looking girl stood outside. 'Mother, I have come to join you', she said.

'It will be a hard life'.

'I know, I am prepared for it'.

The girl became Sister Agnes, Mother's life-long helper. That night Mother Teresa poured out her heart in thanksgiving to God. He had blessed her. Now they could start work.

By May, three girls had arrived. In November they were a community of five. Each day the Sisters went out to work in the dispensaries and in the slums around. In the afternoon they had classes and instruction. Gradually they were accepted by the people. The children would smile when they saw them coming. They would creep up and take their hands. The work grew. The poor started to come, emaciated, filthy, covered with sores and flies, suffering from every kind of disease. All were treated with love and care.

'It is Christ you tend in the poor', Mother Teresa taught them, 'It is His wounds you bathe, His sores you clean. Hear the words of Jesus, "What you do to the least of mine, you do it to Me".'

In February 1953, Mother Teresa with the novices and postulants moved to new premises at 54A Lower Circular Road. It is still the Mother House. They did not have enough money to buy the property so the Archbishop lent it. They lived by faith, relying on God alone to provide for their needs.

To-day there are over eighty houses of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Charity, as they are called. Part of Mother Teresa's work later, in Calcutta, was to go around the streets and pick up the dying, so that, as she puts it, 'They may die within sight of a loving face'.

I was fortunate to be able to see some of her work first-hand in Addis Ababa. It was just before the revolution, when the famine in Ethiopia was at its worst and had been made known to the world. Mother Teresa was invited to come and help. She soon realised that relief workers were starting to give assistance in the refugee camps, and felt that in



Addis itself was where she could do her best work. One of the Princesses, a daughter of Haile Selassie, offered her a piece of land in the centre of the huge market area where she could build.

I had just been reading Malcolm Muggeridge's book, *Something Beautiful for God*. Imagine my surprise one day, on walking into the office of the nursing supervisor, to see, sitting at her desk, two Sisters in white cotton saris with blue borders! One was Indian, the other was Mother Frederica, a Maltese, and a senior colleague of Mother Teresa. They told me they had only recently arrived. I asked how they hoped to be supported, had they any financial backing? Apart from this piece of land, yet to be cleared of rubble, none at all. 'But' said Mother Frederica with a broad smile, 'There is always God's bank, isn't there?'

I enquired about language; did they first intend to learn Amharic? 'No' they replied, 'We shall start right away. There is always the language of love, everybody understands that. Amharic will come later'.

Still curious, I asked how and where they were hoping to begin their work? That there was much to be done could not be doubted. Scores of destitute children and homeless adults roamed the streets, but how to get at them? They had looked around for a well-placed house in the central area, they explained, but found nothing. Later they discovered just what they wanted near the old Post Office. It would do excellently. They located the owner, an Arab. Their hopes were not very high that he would let them have it. They enquired about the rent. It was quite beyond any possible means they might have. 'What do you want the house for?' he asked. They told him. 'Oh, well, if that's what you are going to do, you can have it rent free, for six months', he said. Ah, yes, God's bank does not fail, I thought! Having established themselves in the simplest possible way, their first residents started to arrive. One was a homeless old woman who had not slept in a house for years. Along with others she spent her nights huddled on a doorstep with her thin cotton shamma (shawl) round her for warmth. Nights are bitterly cold in Addis. The Sisters started a class to teach simple knitting and sewing to girls from bars and brothels. Beggars in rags, soon came knocking on the door demanding food. The danger was they would get swamped. Having prayed about it, they appealed to the Bishop at the local Roman Catholic Cathedral. He suggested that the Sisters came each day at five o'clock to the cathedral compound and handed out a cup of milk and a piece of injera. This is the local bread, like a moist pancake, and very nutritious. It was not much, but it was something, for a starving beggar. Hundreds came daily.

By the time the six months were up, a few more Sisters had arrived. They found a suitable house with a large garden, in a pleasant suburb, away from noise and bustle. The idea was to make it into a Mother house, and also a home for unwanted

babies.

I visited it many times. It was quite near our hospital. The children were usually in a very poor condition on arrival. One or two were found in drains covered with lice. Others were just left on their door-step. Some were born in our Unit, the mother, usually unmarried, being so poor she could not possibly afford to keep the child.

The atmosphere of the home was one of happiness. You could sense it when you went in. Rows of tiny babies lay side-by-side on a long bed with wooden slats to prevent them falling off. Older ones were in wooden cots. They cooed and chuckled at you, stretching out tiny hands for you to hold. Toddlers clutched your skirt. They looked clean, well fed, and cared for. All wanted attention and love. The Sisters worked without stopping. They never seemed to have any time off for themselves.

One day they showed me their little chapel. It was just a small bare room in the house. A home-made altar, covered with a sheet at one end, a Cross and candles on top. There was a piece of local matting in front, and a prie-dieu to one side. That was all. 'Alas, it is not worthy', they said, 'We have no cloth for the altar'. I knew how much this room meant to them. It was like the hills to the Psalmist, to which they lifted up their eyes, and received their daily help.

I suddenly remembered I had tucked away in a trunk, the very thing they needed! It was an old-fashioned 'turn-back'. About five feet long, it comprised a piece of embroidered linen, edged with exquisite hand-made lace. I understand brides put them at the top of the bed in Victorian days, as an adornment to cover the sheet. It had been worked by a great-aunt of mine, at Müller's orphanage in Bristol. I wondered what she would think! I hope and expect she would be pleased. The Sisters received it with tears in their eyes.

On 6th August 1974, Mother Teresa herself came for the official opening of the house. The next day I had the pleasure of meeting and talking to her. She is small, with a wrinkled face. She wears the familiar rough cotton sari, with blue border, a Crucifix around her neck and bare feet in sandals. She talked unhurriedly, telling of her plans. She stressed the need for the Sisters to safeguard their health. She referred several times to the source of her great strength, the Holy Sacrament, which she takes daily.

She walked around the nursery, visiting each baby in turn. A very sad or frightened looking one, she would pick up and nurse. Her smile was infectious, lighting up her whole face. At the end she gave me a small wooden cross. 'This is just to remind you to pray for us', she said, 'Please pray, we need your prayers. Not everyone understands what we are trying to do.' I felt I was talking to a saint.

One of Mother Teresa's practical ideas was that the children should not stay in the home too long. Whenever possible she tried to get them adopted into Ethiopian homes, perhaps by a childless couple who would give them the love they needed. Later she felt



that the mothers of these babies were in as much need as their children. The practice of taking just the baby was stopped. The mother must come as well. This cut down the numbers somewhat, which was a good thing. The Sisters trained the girls in simple domestic work, baby care, cooking, dressmaking and so on: the idea being they should have some skill to offer, and be able to get a decent job, and not have to return to a bar or brothel. It also kept the mother and baby together. Above all, it brought them into contact with the Christian message of hope.

The care of the dying was another feature of the work. It is much more difficult and harrowing than looking after children. If you have seen, as I have, dying men and women, lying by the roadside, covered with sores, maggots and flies, moaning and asking for water, your heart would melt in pity, or else you would be revolted and unable to bear the sight. It is to these that the Sisters minister. A separate house was found for them, in the busy market area. Some could be helped by hospital care, but for others it was too late. Transport was a problem. They laid the problem before God, as they always did.

In 1975, there was in Addis Ababa an amazing little ceremony, attended by a few people, including the British Ambassador. It was the dedication of a minibus, in the presence of the Archbishop. This bus had come from Northern Ireland, where for a time, Mother Teresa had been working. Some of the Protestant community had collected money and bought the bus as a token of peace and goodwill, and presented it to her. She felt it could be put to

better use in Ethiopia, to go round at night, and pick up the dying from the streets. Their prayer was answered.

What impressed me so much about all this work as I saw it, was that it is essentially Christian. Mother Teresa herself, realises the danger that it might degenerate into mere social service. Let her speak for herself.

ON THE LOVE OF GOD

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind'. This is the commandment of the great God, and He cannot command the impossible. Love is in fruit at all seasons and within reach of every hand. Anyone may gather it and no limit is set.

ON HUMILITY

'Let there be no pride or vanity in the work. The work is God's work. The poor are God's poor. Put yourself completely under the influence of Jesus so that He may think His thoughts in your mind, do His work through your hands, for you will be all-powerful with Him who strengthens you'.

DAILY PRAYER

'Dearest Lord, may I see you to-day and every day in the person of your sick, and whilst nursing them, minister to you. Sweetest Lord, make me appreciative of my high calling, and its many responsibilities, never permit me to disgrace it by giving way to coldness, unkindness, or impatience.

'Lord, increase my faith, bless my efforts and work, now and for evermore.'

LOOKING AT BOOKS



A Mirror to Ourselves

Harold H. Rowdon

Dr. Rowdon of the London Bible College introduces an interesting publication

The publication of this slim volume is an historic event. For the first time since the so-called Brethren Movement came into existence an attempt has been made to gather together detailed information about its churches in England, Wales and parts of Scotland — their size, growth over the last few years, location, the nature and degree of success of their evangelism, their arrangements for worship, ministry of the Word and prayer, their activities among young people, their leadership and their attitudes to a wide range of controversial issues. The survey was undertaken by the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship at the invitation of an *ad hoc* group of Brethren who met together a few years ago to share their concern at the apparent ineffectiveness of the movement. Master-minded by Graham Brown who is employed in market research, and organised by Brian Mills in the spare time left to him after the discharge of his duties in connection with Counties Evangelistic Work, the results of the survey have been published by Paternoster Press (in association with CBRF) at the modest price of £1.60, under the title **'The Brethren' Today: A Factual Survey**.

What was the object of the exercise? In sharp contrast to King David's ill-conceived survey which was the product of pride and self-sufficiency, this one was born in a chastened atmosphere of weakness and apparent ineffectiveness. Owing to the sturdy independence characteristic of 'Open' Brethren, it was impossible to know whether the dying assemblies that one heard about from time to time and the closures that were being reported with increasing frequency were exceptional or typical; whether the situation was the same in different parts of the country; and whether it was likely to change in the future. The object of the survey was not to look for evidence of weakness — or strength — but to find out the nature of the situation. Not that this was regarded as an end in itself. It was hoped that the survey would provide indications of the reasons for the weakness or strength that it uncovered and that it would be possible for the lessons learned to be applied at various levels. Local churches might be

encouraged to look positively at their situation and, in dependence upon God, apply to it appropriate measures drawn from the experience of others. Ministers of the Word might be guided by it to areas of biblical teaching and its application which are particularly relevant today. Evangelists might be helped to know how best to employ their gifts.

To what extent was the object achieved? From one point of view, success was only partially achieved. The number of assemblies that responded (less than 25% of those contacted) was insufficient to be regarded as necessarily typical of the whole and therefore, statistically, it is not possible to say that what is true of those that did participate is bound to be true of those that did not. Nevertheless, to have obtained responses from 249 assemblies is a remarkable achievement in view of the traditional reluctance of Brethren to share the details of their church life with others. And it does mean that we know a good deal about the situation in the 249 assemblies that did participate.

No doubt questions will be asked about the validity of the information that was received. Were the respondents influenced by the form of the questions and the way in which they were presented by the interviewers? Was the information provided by the respondents accurate? In particular, does it represent the views of the assembly as a whole? (As if it were possible for a more or less heterogeneous group to have a single view!) Fortunately a series of appendices to the report set out in full the procedures adopted and the text of the questionnaire, so the reader can judge for himself to a large extent.

What does the survey reveal? To answer this question requires careful study of the report. One or two things may be singled out here. First, the enormous variety of practice and belief (on peripheral matters) characteristic of Brethren today. For example, of the 249 assemblies surveyed, 40% are led by elders, 24% by elders and deacons, 27% by an 'oversight', 15% by a Brothers' Meeting, while 2% manage their affairs without any recognised form of leadership. (The total of 108% betrays the fact that a few actually duplicate their leadership!) More than terminology is involved here, and this, incidentally, is one of the numerous pieces of evidence which shows that the assemblies surveyed were not all of one type. Further, the survey shows the extent of the

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G.J. Polkinghorne

Preparing to Explore

How do we set about the business of exploring the Bible? John Robinson's famous dictum will bear another repetition: 'The Lord has yet more light to break forth out of his holy Word' — there is something still to discover! Unless we believe that, we commit ourselves to a Christianity which is a dead, literalistic scholasticism — a mere memorizing of the letter that kills. But with that conviction, our Christian pathway becomes an adventure, an exploration of the mind and will of God. So Kallistos Ware (*A History of Christian Doctrine*, edited by H. Cunliffe Jones, Edinburgh, 1978) describes the late Byzantines as 'protagonists of a narrow "theology of repetition" which does no more than reiterate the accepted formulae of the past'. Doubtless we have all met people of that cast! By contrast, G. W. H. Lampe noted in the same volume 'the originality and freshness' of the canonical books. Is not this something of what R. C. Chapman had in mind when he wrote of 'the self-proving authority of Holy Scripture'? Granted, then, that there is something to find out, how then do we approach the task?

A glance at the Table of Contents will convince our readers that we shall have some proven guides to help us. Papers by men of similar ability are lined up for future editions. Indeed, reflection on these names serves to show that we live in thrilling times for the Bible student. Never before, since Reformation times, has there been such a proliferation of translations — RSV, NEB, TEV, NIV, to mention only the best known. Commentaries, Bible Handbooks and dictionaries and comparable volumes are also abundant. Not only so, but they are being written by men with a real love and respect for the fundamentals of the gospel. Of these tools we may safely make use. But more is required.

The stated purpose of the inspiration of Holy Writ is that 'the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work' (2 Tim. 3:17). It is surely not insignificant

that this passage focuses attention on righteousness and holiness. We explore the Book not to puff our heads with knowledge or to sharpen our wits, but rather to make ourselves more pleasing to and useful for God. This will be both exciting and rewarding, as we gain fresh insights, face new challenges and deepen our realization of the riches of divine grace. We now see where our pathway should take us.

It is germane here to quote an ancient prayer: 'Deliver us, O Lord, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, the laziness that is content with half-truth, the cowardice that fears new truth, but lead us to him who is the truth.' The Lord Jesus laid down at least two conditions for this knowledge of the truth. The first is that we be willing to do God's will (*John 7:17*) and the second that we continue with him (*John 8:31*). Truth, we thus gather, is more than an intellectual or logical matter. It is very much a question of morals. It is not unveiled save to those who will be obedient and persistent. These must accompany us on our search.

Nor must we be forgetful of the work of the Holy Spirit. A corollary to our conviction that Scripture is God-breathed is that the reader must be illumined by the Spirit of God. This fact tends to be overlooked at present as a reaction from the Charismatic Movement. Many who do not share the convictions of that Movement steer away from all its teachings, even those that are manifestly right. Therefore, they ignore the help of the Holy Spirit because others have misrepresented or exaggerated his ministry. In our efforts to understand Scripture, we must pray in the line of the Scripture Union prayer: 'Open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law' (*Ps. 119:18*).

These are the directions we must follow and the equipment we must use if, with hope of success, we are to explore the Bible.

The Gospel of St John (43)

F.F. Bruce

We are pleased to be able to continue the series of expositions of John's Gospel which has run for some time in The Witness. Prof. F. F. Bruce, M.A., D.D., F.B.A., is no stranger to readers of The Harvester. After a distinguished academic career, he retired in 1978 as Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at the University of Manchester.

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

I. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (John 7:1-8:59)

(c) Jesus at the festival (7:14-8:59)

(7) Abraham's children (8:31-59)

8:42-43 Jesus said to them, 'If God were your father, you would love me, for I came forth and have come from God. I have not come on my own account; it was he who sent me. Why do you not recognize what I say? It is because you do not hear my word.'

Jesus insists on using the terms 'father' and 'children' in an ethical sense: the children are those who reproduce the father's qualities. Those with whom he engages in debate have claimed to be children of Abraham (by natural descent) and children of God (by adoption). He has already told them that Abraham's children might be expected to do Abraham's works; now he denies their claim to be children of God because nothing of the heavenly Father's character is to be seen in them. In particular, he is the unique Son of God; those who call themselves children of God might be expected to recognize him, and indeed to love him, for a family feeling would bind them to him in affection. 'Every one who loves the parent loves the child', John puts it elsewhere (*John 5:1*), whether the 'child' be the Son *par excellence* or any other member of the family of God. In saying 'I came forth and have come from God', Jesus may mean, 'I came forth (*exelthon*, aorist) from God (by my incarnation into the world) and I have come (*heko*, present form with perfect meaning) from God to be his messenger to you right here and now. But Westcott, followed by Dodd, sees more in the words 'I came forth from God' than a reference to the incarnation. Pointing out that the preposition rendered 'from' is *ek* ('out of'), Westcott concludes that 'the words can only be interpreted of the true divinity of the Son, of which the Father is the source and fountain'. He finds the same sense in *John 16:28*, where Jesus says, 'I came forth from the Father and have come into the world' (where 'from' renders Gk. *para* with the genitive), and contrasts *John 13:3* and *16:30*, where his coming forth from God is expressed by means of the preposition

apo and refers to the incarnation. We can no longer treat the theology of Greek prepositions as an exact science in the way that Westcott did; yet the meaning of the clause at present under consideration could well be, as Dodd puts it, that 'He had His origin in the being of the Father' (*Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, p.259). This does not imply that, in the words of Arius, 'there was once when he was not'; the aorist here refers to eternity, not to time. But whether the words point to his eternal generation or to his becoming flesh, it is as the one sent by the Father that he has come to those whom he now addresses.

As the one sent by the Father, he delivers the Father's message. Those who were truly children of God would recognize their Father's message on the lips of Jesus. But these people were manifestly incapable of such recognition; this showed that they did not know him whom they claimed as their Father (cf. *John 7:28*). 'They could not perceive the meaning or the source of His speech', says Westcott, '... because they could not grasp the purport of His Word, the one revelation of the Incarnate Son in which all else was included.' They did not understand his outward speech (*lalia*), which the ear could pick up, because they did not hear the word (*logos*) the message it expressed, which could be apprehended only by the enlightened mind.

8:44-45 You are (the offspring) of your father the devil, and you are resolved to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning; he never stood in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he utters what is false, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of lying. But because I speak the truth, you do not believe me.

Grammatically, the opening words of verse 44 could be translated 'You are from the father of the devil.' This mistranslation could lead to unprofitable speculation of a gnostic type, and probably did so at one time; hence a few ancient witnesses rule it out by omitting the words 'your father', so that the statement simply runs: 'You are (the offspring) of the devil.' But there is no need to abridge the text: 'father' and 'devil' are in apposition to each other.

As before, it is an ethical relationship that is implied. Jesus' enemies had tried to bring about his death; they showed themselves incapable of accepting the truth which he brought. In both respects they made it plain that they were children not of God but of the devil. God is the life-giver and the fountain of truth; the devil is the life-destroyer and the father of lies. What is meant by the statement that 'he was a murderer, a man-slayer (*anthropoktonos*), from the beginning'? Probably that by his deceiving our first parents he 'brought death into the world, and all our woe'. 'Through the devil's envy death entered the world, and those who belong to his party experience it' (*Wisdom 2:24*). And as for his being the archetypal liar, his first recorded utterance not only calls in question, but flatly contradicts, what God has said. 'You shall surely die', said God (*Gen. 2:17*); 'You shall not "surely die"', said the serpent (*Gen. 3:4*), which is viewed in the New Testament, and indeed earlier, as the mouthpiece of the devil. What God says is 'the truth'; what the devil says is 'the lie', because it contradicts 'the truth'. So Paul speaks of idolaters as 'exchanging the truth of God for the lie' (*Rom. 1:25*); elsewhere he says of those who refused to receive 'the love of the truth' that 'God sends on them the working of delusion, to make them believe "the lie"' (*2 Thess. 2:11*). The devil utters falsehood as naturally and spontaneously as God utters truth: if 'it is impossible for God to lie' (*Heb. 6:18*), equally it is impossible for the devil to speak the truth — even when he chooses to 'quote scripture for his purpose'. The children of God, then, will be characterized by their love of the truth; the children of the devil by their refusal to accept the truth. Jesus does not say, 'although I speak the truth, you do not believe me', but 'because I speak the truth, you do not believe me'; in view of the spiritual lineage of his opponents, the fact that what he said was the truth was sufficient reason for them to reject it.

8:46-47 *Who among you convicts me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe me? Whoever is (a child) of God hears the words of God. This is why you do not hear (them): you are not (children) of God.*

They had supposed that Jesus was guilty of a double sin: sabbath-breaking and blasphemy (*John 5:18*). But would this accusation procure a conviction against him in the one court that finally mattered — the heavenly court? When he defended himself against the double accusation, his defence served only to add fuel to the fire of their hostility, but he was confident that it would be admitted in the heavenly court.

Again he tells them that the reason for their refusal to accept the truth which he declares is that they are not children of the God of truth. If 'he whom God has sent speaks the words of God' (*John 3:34*), so whoever is a child of God will give evidence of that fact

by hearing — and recognizing — the words of God. Jesus' present words anticipate what he was to say later to Pilate: 'Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice' (*John 18:37*).

8:48 *The Jews said to him in reply, 'Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan, and demon-possessed at that?'*

As was suggested in our note on verse 41, Jesus' denial that they were children of God reminded them of the aspersions cast by the Samaritans on the Jews and their origin. But in using such language, Jesus did not even have the excuse of being a Samaritan by race; for a Jew, as he was, to speak like this about his fellow-Jews was sheer madness, a token of demon-possession (cf. *7:20*).

8:49-51 *Jesus answered, 'I am not demon-possessed; I honour my Father, and you dishonour me. I seek no glory for myself; there is one who seeks it, and judges (rightly). Indeed and in truth I tell you: whoever keeps my word will never see death.'*

Jesus' words are far from being the product of demon-possession; they are the words which his Father has given him to utter (cf. *3:34; 17:8, 14*), and in uttering them Jesus glorifies his Father, just as in refusing them his hearers dishonour him — and, through him, his Father (cf. *5:23*). It is his Father's glory that Jesus seeks to promote by obediently delivering his message; he is not concerned for his own reputation. He can trust his Father to take care of that, and in fact he, above all others, receives 'the glory that comes from the only God' (*John 5:44*). He need not be disturbed by the adverse judgment of those who cannot 'judge righteous judgment' because they judge 'according to appearance' (*John 7:24*); so long as he enjoys his Father's approval, he is well content.

In the synagogue at Capernaum, on the morrow of the feeding of the multitude, Jesus said of the words that he spoke, 'they are spirit; they are life' (*John 6:63*). Now he emphasizes again, with his double 'Amen', the life-giving potency of what he says: 'Any one who keeps my word will never see death'. To 'see' death, like 'seeing the kingdom of God' (*John 3:3*), means to enter into it, to experience it. As Peter had already confessed, Jesus has 'words of eternal life' (*John 6:68*). The message which he brings delivers those who hear and keep it from eternal death.

The utterance of verse 51 entered in various forms into the oral tradition of later generations. The Gospel of Thomas, for example (a compilation of 114 sayings ascribed to Jesus), opens with the words: 'These are the secret words which Jesus the living one spoke and Didymus Judas Thomas wrote down; and he said: "Whoever finds the interpretation of these words will never taste death".'

TOP PRIORITY

Haggai's Challenge to us

Leroy Birney

Leroy Birney and his wife serve as missionaries at Cartagena in Colombia. The following article appeared in a slightly different form in Missions magazine in the U.S.A.

There it was again — that small but insistent voice. For several weeks the words, 'Make disciples, baptizing them . . . and teaching them,' were repeatedly thrust into my mind, and I was resisting them even though I was a new missionary. Why? Because I had come to Colombia with the idea of carrying out only the second half of the Great Commission, of teaching those who were already Christians rather than making new disciples. God did not permit me that luxury, but insisted I make disciples and begin assemblies.

God has a programme for this age, a top priority task for the church. It is to be his witness 'to the ends of the earth' in the power of the Holy Spirit (*Acts 1:8*), to 'preach the good news to all creation' (*Mark 16:15*), to preach 'repentance and forgiveness of sins . . . in his name to all nations' (*Luke 24:47*), and to effectively 'make disciples' and form them into congregations by baptizing and teaching them (*Matt. 28:19*).

No Detour

Unfortunately, we have a tendency to make a beginning and be content with it. This is like the exiles who returned from Babylon, built the altar and left the temple unfinished for seventeen years while they attended their own property. God had commanded them to build the temple, but they built only the altar and were detoured into other activities. God called them back to his top priority task through the prophet Haggai: 'But now be strong . . . and work. For I am with you, declares the Lord Almighty' (*Hag. 2:4*).

And so he calls us back to our top priority task. He has not commanded us to build temples or chapels, nor to found organizations, publications, schools and other institutions. Nor has he prohibited it, but his Spirit is always there with the question: Does it contribute to making disciples, or is it a detour? How easily we switch from building God's house (the church) to panelling our own houses (religious projects) (*Hag. 1:4*).

It is Time

The people in Haggai's time excused themselves from building the temple, saying 'The time has not yet come for the Lord's house to be rebuilt' (*Hag. 1:2*). Some think that unsettled world conditions today make it a time for withdrawal from missions.

Just the opposite is true. Unsettled conditions make missions more difficult, but also more productive, speaking generally. Old traditions and ties are shattered so that people are willing to listen to the message of the gospel if it is presented in terms they can understand by people who know their language and their way of thinking. Today is a day of unparalleled turning to Jesus Christ in many places. At the same time missionary research has identified over 16,000 ethnic groups in the world which can be reached only by cross-cultural missionaries because there is no church in their group. Now is the time to dedicate all our resources to evangelizing the world.

But the millstone of materialism keeps us from rising to the opportunities of the day. 'Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your panelled houses, while this house remains a ruin?' (*Hag. 1:4*). It is not so much that present missionaries need more money as that the world needs many more missionaries, not just doing what they please but dedicated to evangelizing the world.

That means being prepared to give up the comforts of our technological society to live with and minister to the poor masses of the world who are responsive to the gospel. It means being willing to leave the security of our own culture to identify with and communicate God's Word to those in another culture. It means sending out church-planting evangelists who are capable of teaching the Bible to the new churches, and sending out gifted Bible teachers who are capable of raising up new churches. It means sacrificially supporting especially those who are making disciples among unreached peoples.

Each Christian should prepare himself now to be a missionary so that he could respond immediately if God should call him, rather than expecting to do all the preparation after the call. This means gaining an understanding of New Testament indigenous church principles, cross-cultural communication of the gospel, and how to evaluate his effectiveness (that is, faithfulness) in carrying out the Great Commission. Above all, it means learning to live in obedience to God's Word through regular Bible study and prayer and learning to walk in the Spirit.

Looking Forward not Back

Finally, some of Haggai's listeners lacked heart to work on the new temple because it was so humble compared to Solomon's temple. 'Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like

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SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

H.L. Ellison Slavery (1)

Mr. H. L. Ellison, B.A., B.D., is a well-known Old Testament scholar, lecturer and author, who has often contributed both to *The Harvester* and *The Witness*. We look forward to regular papers from his pen.

Slavery must be almost as old as mankind, for it was the logical outcome of war, which has left its traces on the earliest evidences of man's social life. One of the oldest settlements to have been excavated is Jericho, which as early as 8000 B.C., by carbon-14 dating, was surrounded by a stone wall. It is not likely that this was built purely to keep out wild animals. War almost of necessity involved the taking of prisoners, and the conquest of a settlement and the taking over of its fields and other means of livelihood created the existence of a dependent population. So slavery became something natural.

The landless, tribeless, prisoner was obviously put to the hardest labour to justify his daily bread. So from *'avodah* (labour) he received his name *'eved* (slave). Its basic meaning was, however, soon widened. *Gen. 24:2* we are introduced to Abraham's oldest slave, 'who had charge of all that he had'. We shall not think of hard labour here, but rather of one who had worked hard and had shown himself sufficiently dependable to choose a wife for the heir. In the AV we repeatedly read of the king's servants. In more modern translations this is replaced by 'retainers', when it is a question of mercenary soldiers, or by 'courtiers'. The king, an absolute monarch, considered that when someone had the privilege of entering his service, it cut him off from his past and made him entirely dependent on his lord.

There was another development, however. According to Near-Eastern mythology, the gods created men in order to

serve them and to relieve them of their domestic chores — their temples were regarded literally as their homes, in which

they slept, ate and were dressed. So *'avodah* (labour) came to mean worship as well, and the worshipper was called

the *'eved* of his god. Religion is always conservative in its language, and Israel retained this terminology, though it had left the underlying concepts behind as early as the time of the Patriarchs.

Abraham gave Yahweh his trust and obedience, not out of compulsion, as he would have, had he followed the traditions and worship of his family, but willingly and gratefully he gave his allegiance to Yahweh, and his example was followed by Israel at Sinai (*Exod. 19:8*).

We find the same usage in *Ps. 116*, a psalm of thanksgiving beginning, 'I love the Lord, because He has heard my voice and my supplications'. In *v. 16* the unnamed writer says, 'O Lord, I am Thy slave; I am Thy slave, the son of Thy handmaid' (i.e. female slave); in other words, he has been devoted to the Lord's service from his childhood.

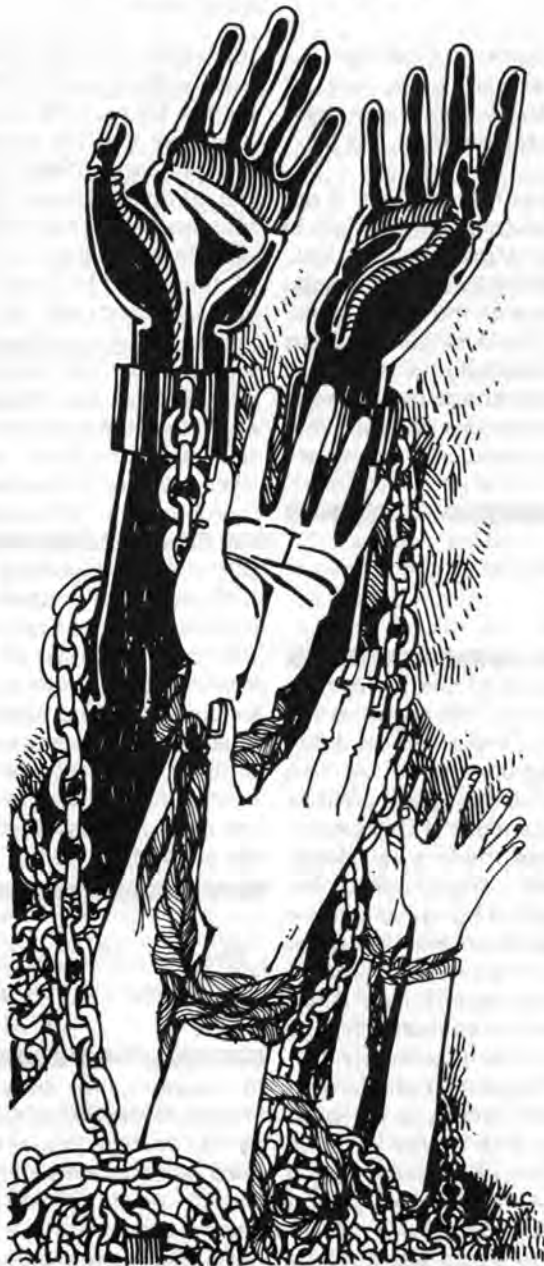
Unfortunately we have no equivalent in English for *'eved* in this sense. When we read *Isa. 53* and speak of the Servant of the Lord, it should be obvious that the English is moving in a different realm of thought than the Hebrew *'eved* *'adonai*.

Even if we rendered Slave of Yahweh, it would be an utterly inadequate title for Him who said, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work' (*Jn. 4:34*) and of whom the Father said 'Thou art My beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased'.

Even when we pass on to His follower Paul and render his title *doulos Christou* literally as slave of Christ, we should realize how far short we fall of the passion of the one who could say, 'The Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me'.

The same attitude breathes through Mary's humble, trusting answer to Gabriel, 'Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word'.

(To be continued)



MEDITATIONS ON MARK(5)

Hear him, ye deaf: his praise, ye dumb

David Brady

Dr. Brady continues his Meditations on Mark from The Witness. He is Assistant Librarian in the John Rylands University Library at Manchester and holds a Ph.D. of that University. He writes on Mark 7:31ff.

Peculiar to the Gospel of Mark is the account of our Lord's healing of the deaf man with an impediment in his speech. While the Gospel of Matthew gives only a summary of Jesus's activity on this occasion and refers to a multitude of healings of the lame, blind, dumb, etc. (Matt. 15:29-30), Mark singles out this case, perhaps because of the special methods used by Jesus to effect the cure and perhaps because the event was illustrative of much else in a general way. Let us consider what special truths we may learn from the incident.

Of special interest is the location of the event.

Of special interest is the location of the event: the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. This was not the first time that Jesus had visited the area. His fame had probably reached the region before he had actually visited it and those of the place whose interest he had aroused sought him out in Galilee, i.e. in the region on the other side of the lake (cf. Matt. 4:23-25). But later Jesus made a most memorable visit to the area, on which occasion he drove out the legion of demons from the Gadarene maniac. Mark tells us that on that occasion the people of these regions began to beg Jesus to depart from their neighbourhood. Apparently they cared more for pigs than for people. Nevertheless, he whose sanity had been restored 'went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and all men marvelled' (Mark 5:20). It was to these regions that Jesus and his disciples came again seeking recreation 'for many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat' (Mark 6:31), but they were unable to avoid the zealous crowds, who, says Mark, 'ran there on foot from all the towns, and got there ahead of them'. The compassion of Jesus overcame his weariness and he

ministered to their needs, not only by his teaching, but by the miracle of the feeding of five thousand. By the time of the next visit, the people were well-prepared for him and 'great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the dumb, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them' (Matt. 15:30). From these incidents we learn a little about our Lord's methods of teaching. He was constantly moving from one place to another, but that did not mean that he would not return to where he had been before. This would mean that his teaching would be known over a wide area, but it would also mean that during his absence those whom he had taught would learn to take the initiative for themselves, without their depending on his actual presence. This, we may remember, was precisely the same method used by the first preachers of the gospel in the Book of Acts, but in a more general sense it is true of the whole Christian church throughout the ages. We may all look back to the first visit of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth and we all together look forward to his coming again in glory. In the meantime we have his teaching and the experience of his grace within our hearts and his command to us to engage in his trade until he returns (Luke 19:13). How much more fervently shall we welcome him when he comes again! We are now busy on his account and ever ready for his second appearing.

The disabled man was brought to Jesus, a picture so true of ourselves.

In addition, we may remember that the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee were the back of beyond as far as religious orthodoxy was concerned. The herd of pigs is eloquent testimony to that account. But still our Lord did not stint to grant to these half-castes and outcasts his frequent visits. So we may remember how we as Gentiles were 'alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus we who

once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ' (Eph. 2:12-13).

Mark tells us that the disabled man *was brought* to Jesus (cf. Mark 2:3), a picture so true of ourselves. How few, if any, of us sought out Christ for ourselves; how many came to know him through the guidance and persuasion of friends.

But what exactly was the man's disability? It was a double confinement: he was both deaf and he suffered an impediment in his speech. The word used to describe this impediment occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but we do find it once in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which Mark is no doubt deliberately echoing: 'the tongue of the *dumb* shall sing for joy' (Isa. 35:6). This passage is surrounded by such expressions as 'the wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom . . . waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert' and on reflection may well have reminded Mark how Jesus brought to the wilderness regions beyond the Sea of Galilee the refreshing water of life. No wonder then that he also recognized in the text of Isaiah a description perfectly fitting the Lord's restoration of hearing and speech to a resident of such regions. But the word

Right speaking is conditioned by right hearing.

which Mark borrowed from his text in Isaiah does not in fact describe complete dumbness. It describes one whose speech could hardly be understood (a slightly variant word found in some manuscripts denotes roughness of speech). We should probably understand that the man's prior disability was his deafness, which would in due course produce the impediment in his speech. We may note how his deafness is mentioned first in Mark 7:32 and how in v.33 his ears are treated before his tongue (cf. also the emphasis on the opening of the ears in v.34). It is probable therefore that the man was not totally dumb, and so when he is healed it is not then said that 'he spoke', but rather that 'he spoke plainly'. His speech would no doubt resemble the indistinct noises that we associate with the deaf in their uneducated attempts to speak.

But what would have been the consequences of the man's disabilities? His deafness would have deprived him of all opportunities of hearing the word of God (private copies of biblical books were extremely hard to come by), and his dumbness would have disqualified him from participating in the praises of God. The worship of the synagogue would have been to him as so much dumbshow. This may be to us an illustration of our condition by nature. We are spiritually deaf to the word of God (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14) and if we are able to speak of spiritual things at all, it is only

with stammering or rough speech; it is not as those who possess the clear perception of divine truth which comes by the Word of God and the operation of God's Holy Spirit in our hearts. Right speaking is conditioned by right hearing. How can we rightly declare the truth of God if we ourselves have not heard and imbibed that truth in our own hearts? There are unfortunately those who presume to speak and act for God, but their aberrations are manifest testimony to the fact that they have neither part nor lot in the matter. Hearing must ever be given priority to speaking. 'Be quick to hear, slow to speak' (Jas. 1:19). 'If one gives answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame' (Prov. 18:13). In a more general sense, we must receive in our hearts the sacrifice of Christ before we may offer up to God a sacrifice of praise. Let us ask ourselves honestly whether the confused noise of the Christian service which we presume upon ourselves is drowning out the cry of our Lord, 'Be opened' (that he might fill our hearts with his own heavenly peace and blessing). 'Speak; your servant is listening.' 'Lord, speak to me, that I may speak in living echoes of thy tone.'

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nothing?' (Hag. 2:3). This same attitude hinders the mission of world evangelism in two ways. One is the comfort of having a secure place in the home assemblies and Christian organizations as opposed to the more taxing, uncertain and complicated effort of beginning new assemblies in a new place among different people. This hinders people from going.

The other way this attitude hinders world evangelism manifests itself on the mission field. It is the desire of the missionary to overload new churches among poor people with the 'glories' of the churches in the home lands, such as organizations, structures, publishing houses, resident seminaries, schools, hospitals, and many other institutions which prolong dependence upon foreign funds and personnel. These things are fine where Christians are numerous and fairly well off, but the effort to reproduce this 'glory' of the homeland often puts burdens on new churches which delay their becoming indigenous and absorb effort that could better be used directly carrying out the Great Commission among people willing to listen to the gospel.

These young churches on the mission field, rich in faith and poor in all else, are young Davids who should not be encumbered with Saul's armour. Rather we should teach them to use with faith what they have at hand and within their means. With this approach, 'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house, declares the Lord Almighty' (Hag. 2:9).

'So the Lord stirred up the spirit of . . . the people. They came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God' (Hag. 1:14). May he also stir up our spirits so that we all give our best efforts to making disciples of Jesus Christ the Lord, whose name is above every name.

PHILEMON - FAITH AND LOVE

John Mayberry

Dr. John Mayberry is Research Registrar in Gastroenterology at University Hospital, Cardiff, investigating Crohn's Disease. A batchelor, he is in fellowship in Adams-town Gospel Hall, Cardiff.

Paul's letter to Philemon is unique in the New Testament canon in that it is a personal letter to a friend concerning a personal problem — the desertion of a slave. Its importance lies in its concern with love and faith in action. Paul was imprisoned in Rome and was unable to discuss the problem with Philemon face to face. Instead he writes a letter, not only to Philemon, but also to his wife, son and the church that met in his house. It is addressed to a family group which almost certainly included slaves. Superficially it concerns the treatment of a runaway slave. Desertion was a serious offence which merited severe punishment. On a deeper level Paul is going to challenge the love and faith of Philemon and his friends. Throughout the letter 'I hear of your love and the faith, which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints' is under challenge so that 'it may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake'.

Philemon

This letter tells us several things about Philemon:

1. He was a Christian who was loved by Paul.
2. He was a worker — a Christian who put his life into action. Paul even referred to him as his 'fellow worker'.

3. His home was the centre of a church. He was prepared to show hospitality to other Christians.

4. The Christians he was associated with were praying for the release of Paul.

Philemon and the church in his house were approaching the ideal church that we seldom find in the world today. *It was Christian, it was active, it was effective, it encouraged growth, prayer and hospitality.* What more could one ask from such a group? Paul was going to ask for Onesimus.

Onesimus

Less is known about Onesimus.

1. He was a runaway slave who had escaped as far as Rome. Why he should have run away will always be the subject of speculation, but perhaps he had stolen money from Philemon.
2. In Rome he became a Christian. Repentant in thought and deed he returned to his master, who could have severely punished him. A death sentence was permissible.
3. He became Philemon's brother. The Christian Philemon could see nothing wrong in owning slaves. He treated them well; he was not over-demanding; but they were still his slaves. The whole social order that surrounded Philemon was gradually to be destroyed by the Christian message.
4. He was a useful Christian of great personal worth to Paul.
5. Fifty years later Ignatius wrote that the bishop at Ephesus was a man 'of inexpressible love'. His

name was Onesimus. We can only hope to fulfil Luther's comment that 'we are all God's Onesimus's'.

It is against this background, Paul writes about *love* and *faith*, two subjects fundamentally linked in the Christian way of life. They are so basic that we often spend little time on them. But if such people as Philemon needed to learn about them, so do we.

Love

We live in the day of love. The media proclaim it from every corner. Yet our society does not know true love. Lonely people die alone and each man and woman lives on their own island of isolation. We have debased the meaning and practice of love.

'Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails...' (1 Cor. 13:4-8).

This is true love. Christian love. It was the type of love that Philemon was known for. Paul called on him to show such love towards Onesimus. He put this love on a very high level, but if we lack it he characterizes our lives as being no better than a clanging cymbal or noisy gong. Does love permeate our behaviour? Do we really love our brothers and sisters? How much offence are we prepared

to tolerate from them? God loved us when we were unlovely and Christian love does not seek its own, it bears all things; it endures all things.

Christian love, whether it is towards Christians or non-Christians, is not an impulse of the feelings. It should not be restricted to people with whom we have something in common. Because it is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22) it seeks the good of all (Rom. 15:2) and the harm of none (Rom. 13:8-10). We can only learn of such love from the Lord Jesus: 'Walk in love just as Christ who loved you and gave himself up for an offering and sacrifice to God' (Eph. 5:1).

Faith

The second part of this pairing is *faith* — a subject so important that the Bible gives its own definition: 'Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen' (Heb. 11:1).

We are certain of an *invisible God* and his *revelation to man*. We are sure of our place in Heaven through faith in his Son. Philemon and his friends were known for this type of faith. By accepting and forgiving Onesimus, Philemon demonstrated his faith by his reaction to human need. If he had not forgiven his slave then such a faith would have been profitless and dead. But true faith shows a living power by the evidence of a new life. It is this sort of faith that gives peace and assurance.

Love and faith both need to be practised and used. Is your faith strong? Is your love great? That great apostle Peter was once weak in faith and poor in love until Jesus...

Looking at Books *continued*

changes that have taken place in recent years. The prevalence of arranged and even systematic ministry after the breaking of bread, female participation in prayer meetings and house groups, the use of part- or full-time workers in church work: this is part of the evidence which seems to show that resistance to change is not as widespread as might have been thought. Even more surprising are the evident changes in attitude towards issues like female participation in worship, the use of 'charismatic' gifts, participation in the activities of the local community and of local fellowships of evangelical churches. The flexibility for which Scripture gives full warrant seems to be more evident in Brethren circles — in practice if not in theory — than might have been thought. Perhaps the rigidity remaining in Brethren tradition rests not so much on Scriptural grounds as on temperament and personal preference. The survey tells its tale of strength and weakness, of growth and decline, as well as of static conditions. 19% of the assemblies surveyed report more than 10 conversions during the past two years (though only 2% of these were adult conversions). On the other hand, 23% are unable to report a single conversion. 43% claim that their total numbers have increased over the past five years, 37% have to record decrease, while a further 20% remain static.

The most fascinating section of the report consists of an analysis of the 46 assemblies which reported 10 or more baptisms over the past two years (the 10plus group), and the 65 assemblies where there had been none (the nil group). The *average* assembly in the nil group is small, generally composed of mostly elderly or middle-aged folk, maintaining a large number of activities but often unable to sustain youth work, and taking a largely traditional line in such areas as leadership, role of women, attitude towards other Christians etc. The *average* assembly in the 10plus group stands in fairly sharp contrast at almost every point. The report wisely declines to draw firm conclusions from all this: the reader will draw his own.

What does the survey suggest? First that all is not well with the Brethren. This comes as no surprise to those who are already aware of the constant drain of gifted people through death, removal to other areas where there is no assembly (or no congenial one), and withdrawal from assembly fellowship for a variety of reasons, or who have visited churches of other kinds only to discover that the minister, the deacons, or the most active members have come from Brethren churches. Nor is it news to those who have contacts with inner-city areas (particularly London) or rural parts of the country where assemblies are closing down with frightening frequency. But it may well shock those who frequent flourishing assemblies or hear only of new assemblies coming into existence.

Secondly, the survey should stir us to prayer — and action. The promise that the gates of hell should not prevail against it was made to the Church as a whole, not to local manifestations of it. Sometimes a church is saved from closure at the eleventh hour, but that does not exempt us from the duty of putting our houses in order at 10.30 or even 9 p.m.! First, however, we need to be sure that God has a continuing purpose for our church (the fact that it was needed in the past is no guarantee that it will be needed in the future). Assuming that it is, we must make sure that we are using such resources as we have in the most appropriate and effective way, bearing in mind the needs not only of the congregation but of the community it exists to serve. Does the worship of the church succeed in drawing out the spiritual response of the worshippers to the amazing grace of God? Does the Gospel Meeting (or the Family Service) actually bring people to faith in Christ? Are these the best ways of making an evangelistic impact on the district? Does the youth work introduce young people not only to Christ but also to the fellowship of his people? Is that fellowship comparable with that of the first Christians? Does the church minister in a meaningful way to the temporal as well as the spiritual needs of the people who live nearby? If not, we must find ways of serving our master more effectively. Thirdly, then, the survey should move us to find new sources of help. Perhaps this will come via stronger churches, or through the growing number of young men and women to whom God is giving the desire to use their evangelistic gifts in fellowship with one or more local churches in an area. It might come through the numerous para-church organisations such as Fishers Fellowship, Operation Mobilisation or Gospel Literature Outreach, City Missions, In Contact, Christian Colportage Association or one of the fellowships for rural evangelism. In the meantime, make sure of your copy of *'The Brethren' Today*, and read it on your knees.

A Hidden Revolution Ellis Rivkin. SPCK. 336pp. £12.50.

Review by Dr. R. P. Gordon, Cambridge University

The Gospels abound with references to the Pharisees, Josephus highlights their activities from time to time in his histories, and the early Jewish (Tannaitic) writings are a third source of knowledge about them. Even so, information on the origins of Pharisaism, as also on its development in the two centuries before the fall of Jerusalem, is pitifully meagre. It is therefore understandable that Rivkin should assign over half of his space to an evaluation of the relevant data in the ancient sources. To anticipate his conclusion: the Pharisees are uniformly projected as a law-making scholar class which directed the

spiritual life of Israel in the late Second Commonwealth.

With Josephus Rivkin is perhaps least at home. Here the objection is not so much to the surprising infelicities in his handling of Josephus' Greek as to his indiscriminating use of the histories as sources of historical information. In *Antiquities* the Pharisees are accorded a more exalted status than in *Jewish War* written twenty years earlier, and it is a 'given' of modern scholarship that in the later work Josephus is guilty of propagandizing — portraying the Pharisees as the only possible vice-regents for Rome in the post-destruction era. Rivkin fails to take this into account.

From propaganda to polemic! Rivkin detects varying degrees of hostility towards the Pharisees in the New Testament. Of the Gospels, *Matthew* is the most hostile and *Mark* the least. *John* is useful in that he attests the Pharisees' domination of the synagogue. Still Rivkin's characterization holds good: according to the New Testament 'the Pharisees were a scholar class committed to the authority of the Written Law and the *paradosis* (tradition)' (p. 124).

The Jewish Tannaitic literature poses a special problem since the term *Perushim* seems to be used not only for 'Pharisees' but also for groups which had little or no connection with them. 'Separatists' would sometimes be a more appropriate rendering. Rivkin picks his steps carefully; only where *Perushim* stands antithetically with 'Sadducees' can the equation with 'Pharisees' be made without further qualification. Two other designations, 'Sages' and 'Scribes', are used for the Pharisees in the Tannaitic literature, the proof being that the groups so labelled exhibit the same features as the Pharisees of the core texts. Cognoscenti will catch echoes of an important article of Rivkin's which appeared in 1970.

As for the Revolution, this, says Rivkin, took place in the middle of the second century BC when the authority of the old 'Aaronide' priesthood was usurped by an upstart scholar class which set about promulgating its own kind of law, with not a little emphasis on an 'oral law' which did not even pretend to derive its authority from Scripture. It was this new politico-religious entity which, through its organ 'The Great Synagogue', legitimized a non-Zadokite priesthood. That there was great upheaval in the life and institutions of Israel in this period is beyond dispute, but to what extent this was the contrivance of a religious party like the Pharisees is very debatable. As Rivkin himself acknowledges, the wresting of the priesthood from the Zadokite family occurred several decades before the Pharisees, *ex hypothesi*, institutionalized the breach. It is strange that no mention is made of the Hasidim, the precursors of the Pharisees, in the discussion of this period.

While Rivkin deals with the evidence of Josephus

and the New Testament at some length his view of the Pharisees is based almost exclusively on the Tannaitic references. But, as we have already noted, only a restricted class of references has been admitted to the discussion. Not surprisingly, therefore, Rivkin's Pharisees are a lot less occupied with ritual cleanness and uncleanness than the Pharisaic stereotype with which most of us are familiar. The traditional view currently finds expression, however, in the voluminous writings of another Jewish-American scholar, Jacob Neusner (cf. *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70* (3 vols., 1971); *From Politics to Piety* (1973)). For Neusner the Pharisees are primarily a table-fellowship, and greatly exercised by questions of purity and impurity. But — somewhat perversely — Neusner excludes from his consideration the very passages on which Rivkin builds his argument. Neither scholar, in fact, has given us a comprehensive picture of the Pharisees, valuable as their works are. It is noticeable that although both castigate the New Testament for its polemic they vie with each other in their eagerness to claim its support!

THE ITALIAN EARTHQUAKE

The area of the recent Italian earthquake is one which has seen considerable evangelistic activity since the war, and there are some hundred evangelical churches in the area, including twenty assemblies of Brethren. There has been substantial loss of possessions, and although (so far as is known) no believers from the Brethren assemblies have lost their lives (several have lost their homes) believers from other evangelical churches are among the dead.

In the face of real distress, Italian assemblies have been to the fore in organising and carrying out relief work: three groups are understood to be operating, and proper administration of funds received is in the hands of a committee connected with their journal *Il Cristiano*.

There will be major long term needs for rehabilitating and rehousing those who have lost many or all of their possessions. Up to date news can be obtained through Telephone Echoes (0225-26217) and from Mr. Brian or Mrs. Elizabeth Hodges (0432-59523). Gifts in cash can be sent to Echoes of Service at 1 Widcombe Crescent, Bath, Avon BA2 6AQ, or to B.I. & E. Hodges (Account 2), 22 Clive Street, Hereford HR1 2SB. The Hodge's address in Italy is La Piaggia 10, 60013 Corinaldo (An.), Italy.

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PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

When attention is drawn, as it frequently is, to the disproportionately high number of women, as compared with men, engaged in missionary service overseas, it occurs to me that one explanation is often overlooked. There are many areas at home where women's opportunities for an evangelistic, pastoral or teaching ministry are limited. On the foreign mission field, however, they are able to exercise their gifts with much less restriction. If men have ample opportunity to fulfil their ministry at home, the call to fulfil it overseas may be less insistent; for women the greater opportunity to exercise their gifts to the full on the foreign mission field may in itself constitute a clear call. Is this as important a factor in the situation as I think it is?

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

Replies to Professor Bruce

Owing to the late despatch of the November issue, it was not unfortunately possible for readers to submit replies to the November question in time for publication. It is hoped that our future timetable will not be so tight! — Ed.



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.

Question and Answer with Peter Cousins

Because of demands on space in this issue, this feature is held over this month. We welcome our Witness subscribers to this feature and hope that they will join with our former readership in making full use of it for their observations and enquiries. This feature is intended to attract discussion of controversial issues! — Ed.

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The Luis Palau Campaign in Argentina

From Mr. J. R. Taylor

Dear Editor,
Just a brief report of the Luis Palau campaign held in Mendoza, Oct. 24-25. We were granted the use of one of the main football fields for two nights. We just had to pay the running expenses, light, loudspeaking system etc. Over 30 evangelical churches collaborated. Baptists (10), Brethren (2), Nazarenes (1) and the rest from some 15 different groups of Pentecostals. The attendance reached an average of 5000 per night, somewhat less on the Friday and somewhat more on the Saturday. The first night was fresh, the second warm. The united choir of some 250 voices was led by a North American Baptist missionary, Mell Plunk. The president of the committee was another Baptist pastor Bresci, whose church was the meeting place and office for 3 months previous in the heart of the city. There was lunch for pastors, workers with wives and some 240 met on that occasion. For being the eldest pastor present, I was allowed to sit next to Luis Palau and renew our friendship which began personally at All Souls, London, Oct. 1979. I was secretary of the Counsellors' committee. Some 380 people came forward on the two nights and the cards were ready for distribution the following Monday to the 33 churches that had taken part in the distribution of the 100,000 invitations printed. Perhaps the approximation to the Marian Congress held in Mendoza Oct. 8-12 to which

70 bishops, 550 priests, 1000 nuns and 50,000 pilgrims came affected somewhat our possibilities of reaching the civil and religious authorities. It was I assure you boring and grievous to have to see and listen to their propaganda. The Papal Legate said (and it came out in the daily paper) that 'Mary is the daughter of God, the mother of Christ and the wife of the Holy Spirit'. I hope that last clause was just a lapse on his part. There were 38 images of the Virgin on display in the football field where they met and Mary was acclaimed as in Poland, by the RCs, as 'the mother of the nation'. Our young people especially were pleased with Palau, simple, Biblical, straightforward but never harsh, and gentlemanly, never an attack on either Catholics or Dispensationalists. He always speaks to youth, and on the sex problem, but always with a call to purity and with mention of his own family, his North American wife Patricia, twins of 17 born in the States, Andrew (14) born in Mexico and Stephen (10) born in Colombia. He was pleased with his first visit to Mendoza and tentatively offered to return for a week's crusade, God willing, in 1982. He also had good times in Mar del Plata and Bahia Blanca, two days in each place.
Yours sincerely,
J. R. Taylor
Luzuriaga 666
5500 Mendoza
Argentina

London Missionary Meetings

From Mr. Jack Heap

Allow space, please, to record appreciation of the work of the conveners of the October meetings, and others who participated in setting up seminars, for the excellent 3-day programme which, under the Lord's guidance surely, they had planned and

then directed so effectively. Missionary reports were thought provoking and a stimulus to action in furtherance of the permanent command of *Mark 16:15*. Ministry from three brothers of widely differing ages was sensible provision for equivalent age range in the congregations. How novel, timely and refreshing to hear a sister — under the leadership and authority of the chairman — tell in lucid terms of the dedicated work of the Women's Missionary Fellowship in London; of God's provision of material supplies for our missionary sisters and brothers worldwide.

I look forward to the day, subject to His return, when missionary sisters — particularly those from stations where there are no men — will be permitted (?) to report on the Lord's work through them at meetings not restricted to sisters only. This surely would be today's counterpart to *John 20:18*, for our sisters see the risen Lord at work: I see no problem with the *real* significance of *1 Cor. 14:34* and *1 Tim. 2:11-12*.

Alas, Westminster Chapel had spare seats on the Saturday evening, notwithstanding coachloads from South Wales and elsewhere. I think it a great pity that some local churches ('assemblies') within reasonable distance of London held ministry meetings on that evening. Is this a sign of the times on spiritual priorities?
Yours sincerely,
Jack Heap
198 Abbots Road
Abbotts Langley
Watford, Herts.

Simple Life Style

From Mrs. Gladys Goodall

Dear Mr. Coad,
I refer to Professor Bruce's question on simple life style. With *Phil. 2:4*, in mind it may be well to 'look on the things of others'. Indeed, this

thought is implicit in the wording of the question. No doubt, Lord Congleton in many ways contributed to the livelihood of his contemporaries, but, in the example given, it may be noticed that to refrain from buying carpets would, in an interdependent society, set up a chain of deprivations beginning with the retailer, passing on to suppliers of yarns and machinery. In time, transport and shipping concerns would lose revenue. Looking further afield, some rural Asian communities would lose their market for highly prized hand made Persian and Indian rugs.

It is conceivable that among those thus deprived of income might be some, whether wage earners or capitalists, who, from their means, contribute to Christian causes.

These considerations may not specifically answer the question posed by Professor Bruce but may not be irrelevant to the discussion. It does appear, however, that theorists of last century or the present day equally pursue one line of thought and action and ignore wider issues.

It is undeniable that added possessions bring extra cares but one may ask how far are the advocates of the simple life prepared to go? Is ownership of a car excluded? Are they ready to pursue the theory to its conclusion and live in a tub, like Diogenes?

Yours sincerely,
Gladys Goodall
Victoria Cottage
Markham Moor
Retford
Notts. DN22 0QU

Mr. Ron Smith's 'Propositions'

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,
The propositions featured in the Nov. '80 'Readers Forum' suggest a deep dedication and concern for the Lord's interests on the part of the propounder. I imagine that they embrace too wide a

range of topics for any one reader to deal with them all. Comments on some of them are offered.

Proposition 1

Love is certainly 'the principal thing'; not doctrine, in the sense that, I think, the term is being used. While the Lord told His own that the Spirit would guide them into all the truth, He did not say that it was by soundness or uniformity of doctrine that all men would know that they were His disciples, but if they had love for one another. Paul wrote that if one knew all mysteries and all knowledge — akin perhaps to doctrine — but did not have love, he was nothing.

It may be the question is asking whether there can be true love, in the sense of fellowship, unless all espouse the same sound doctrine. That's another story.

Proposition 2

The Bible is not a textbook of theology; and there is need to guard against using the scripture as law. Those who do so are on Jewish ground. The words of scripture are dead words unless and until by the power of the Spirit they become to the reader words of life. From any one portion or verse of scripture, the Spirit can bring to Person A the message that suits his need, and to B a different message, suited to B's different need.

Proposition 6

Given my background, I am not altogether surprised that this proposition could come to be framed and to be supported by *II Cor 6:14-18*. Even so, I deeply regret that thereby 'co-operation in united missions', advisable or not, is characterized as being diversely yoked with *unbelievers*, having partnership with *lawlessness*, having fellowship with *darkness*, and having part with *unbelievers*. I regret, too, that inconsistency should be seen between on the one hand a Christian's interest in 'humanitarian concern' and 'welfare work', and on the other 'our responsibility to the great commission'. The Master 'went about doing good'.

There is a meeting where one or two sisters started a work, one afternoon a week, aimed at reaching young mothers

around the hall. From the start the 'outsiders' would not stand for anything 'religious'. Nevertheless, the 'club' was continued, affording any who came an opportunity to talk over their problems if they wished. Responsibility to the great commission was being discharged by sympathetic actions that spoke louder than words; after a few years, some had come to know the Lord. May I remind the propounder that 'Wisdom is justified of all her children'? So much for the individual propositions.

I have no wish to cast any stones, but it does occur to me to wonder about the 'some' whom the propounder has in mind in these nine propositions. If they could be asked to comment, what would they say? Might it not be, in a word, that they would like the 'tone' of the propositions to have evidenced something more of compassion?

May I encourage the propounder to take heart? The 'some' may not all be prophets of Baal; a number may be found to be among the seven thousand.

Yours sincerely,
L. L. Fox
9 Warden Close
Maidstone
Kent. ME16 0JL

Two Elections?

From Mr. C. E. Oulton Lee
Dear Mr. Coad,
Arising out of the correspondence in the current issue of *The Harvester* in reply to Professor F. F. Bruce's Question in the September number, I feel the urge to make a further contribution on this subject of Election, for although the matter has been helpfully discussed from different viewpoints yet may I be permitted to offer an interpretation which is entirely based upon Scripture but has so far never been advanced in recent treatment of this very important doctrine? This I would do in all humility in what must be the closing years of a long life of experience of the Lord's gracious dealings both in providence and grace, which enable me to assume a depth of understanding both of the Scriptures and (with all reverence) of their divine Author. *Ps. 119* breathes the innermost thoughts of

(perhaps) Daniel, to whom were revealed the most secret things of the Lord. His submission of heart was uniquely fruitful in his understanding of the ways and wisdom of the Most High. Why is it so generally assumed that God has only one elected people? There is surely abundant evidence in Scripture itself to make it clear that He has (inter alia) elected two great streams of people, which should claim particular study in these days in which we live. First in time, God chose Abraham and his seed, confirming this to Isaac and finally to Jacob — the people of Israel — and that choice is irrevocable, however much it may be in abeyance during the present era; the natural branches of the olive tree will most surely be regrafted into their own olive tree, as Paul attests. Secondly, God has been 'calling out a people to His Name' — an election of Grace — which, while it stems from Abraham, is quite distinct in its character and destiny; the one an Earthly destiny, the other a heavenly and excelling in glory.

It behoves us therefore not to confuse the two, but to observe from Holy Scripture how they are distinguished. Let us be prepared to perceive that in our Lord's eschatological utterances in those prophetic chapters contained in each of the three synoptic Gospels He refers exclusively to the Elect of the nation of Israel and those who maintain testimony to their cause **after the Church has been translated to Heaven**; while the Election propounded by both Peter and Paul concerns the Church, and only the Church, and is completed at the Rapture; her destiny being with Christ in the heavenlies, which does not preclude her attendance upon her Lord & Master when He deigns to come to Earth in pursuance of His Royal engagements.

If only there were clear thinking upon this whole subject of Election, there would be far less controversy among sincere believers in this age. The Reformation brought inestimable blessings; but Calvin and his multitude of apologists between them have utterly confused these two 'callings' and 'elections'.

I plead for an honest, proper understanding of Scripture, and the realisation that God is infinitely greater than our greatest estimation of Him, and that He has 'many more irons in the fire' than we give Him credit for! — 'For of Him, and to Him, and for Him are all things; to Whom be glory for ever! Amen'.

Yours sincerely,
C. E. Oulton Lee
Stroma
Manorial Road
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Cheshire L64 6QN

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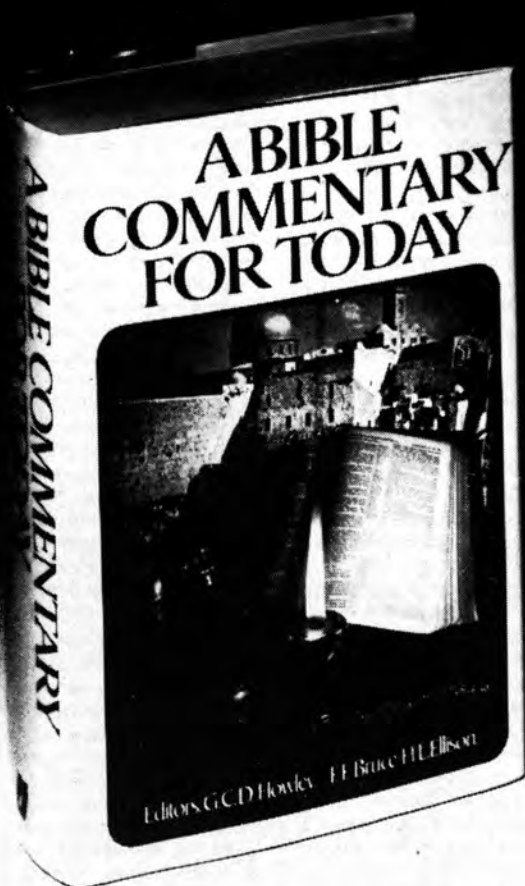
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NEWS PAGE



Africa

At a special service in the World Council of Churches Headquarters in Geneva on November 3, Bishop Festo Kivengere received the Edward W. Browning Achievement Award for Spreading of the Christian Gospel. The award for the 'Spreading of the Christian Gospel' is given to the individual who by 'distinguished example, effective teaching and exceptional personal service' has made an outstanding contribution in extending Christian principles. After the Award Ceremony in the Chapel of the World Council of Churches, Bishop Kivengere preached on the text *Romans 1:14-16* '... I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ ...'. The Karamoja region of Uganda, ravaged by famine for over a year following the liberation war, is experiencing what Bishop Kivengere calls a 'definite change'. But even though relief supplies are getting through and fewer people are dying, there will be a need to continue supplying food to Karamoja at least until August 1981.

Audio Visual Aids

The Bible Society have produced six sets of 24 slides based on the life of Jesus and using pictures from the television series directed by Franco Zeffirelli. At £6.84, they come in a transparent wallet together with teaching notes suggesting many different ways to use the material in churches as well as schools. Particularly popular, one suspects, will be the series on Christ's birth and childhood and on the Trial to Resurrection — both of which will be a most useful resource for seasonal services.

China

The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students has news of two former staff workers in China. They had

suffered greatly because of their faith in Christ. One had to spend many years pushing a heavy cart and working in a farm feeding pigs; it was only about eighteen months ago that he was 'rehabilitated' because of new government policies. News has come recently of one lay evangelist who had the privilege of baptising 114 adults on a Sunday morning in a rural house church! The Fellowship has been asked to produce two half-hour radio programmes in Chinese which can be beamed into China. The programmes will major on topics and themes which will enable local pastors and Christian workers in China to minister the word of God to their scattered flocks.

Conferences

A correspondent writes about the Women's Bible Study Conference held in November at Weston-super-Mare. 'Our theme was "Unchanging Truth for a New Decade"'. Right at the outset we were challenged on outreach, and stimulated by brief reports from conference members on their involvement in varied forms of outreach. The speakers were Margaret Jones, a lecturer at All Nations' Christian College, and June Kennedy who shared her experiences as a mother, missionary and teacher. Margaret Jones led us in two most instructive studies in Matthew, the Gospel of the Kingdom, with a special emphasis on the Beatitudes. June Kennedy gave valuable help in her talk on building happy family relationships. The problems of working amongst Islamic immigrants in Birmingham were outlined by Audrey Smith of the Red Sea Mission. We were also given information on the dangerous tactics and teachings of the Moonie Cult. We had a very profitable question and answer session when we particularly thought of our

response as Christians to the hungry people of the world, as well as topics arising from the talks. Our final session was on prayer; June Kennedy encouraged us to keep open our lines of communication with the King of Kings.' (In 1981 the 'Weston' Conference will be held at Trinity Theological College, Bristol, from 25 to 27 September. For further information please contact Mrs. Phyl Nute, Doron, Hazel Avenue, Redland, Bristol BS6 6UD. Telephone 0272 34631.)

Evangelism

31 January marks the beginning of 12 weeks of outreach in the London area, when the Hildenborough Hall team launch New Heart for the Nation. Mid-week meetings will take place in nine different districts of London, and each Saturday night, at 7.30, from 31 January to 4 April, there will be meetings at Central Hall, Westminster. Justyn Rees, who is leading the mission, hopes to attract large numbers from the mid-week meetings, as well as many others, to hear the message of New Heart for the Nation. That message revolves around a highly relevant interpretation of the Ten Commandments and their meaning for us today, pointing out where we have gone wrong and directing us to the right route, i.e. to wholeheartedly follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The meetings, aimed at people of all age groups, all backgrounds, centre around the themes Priorities, Dignity, Sincerity, Time, Freedom, Life, Wealth, Love, Trust and Contentment, each one a presentation of the relevant Commandment. All seats for Central Hall Westminster are free, but seats may be reserved for 50p each. For further details, write to New Heart for the Nation, Hildenborough Hall, Otford Hills, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 6XL.

Giving

The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students is facing a difficulty that must be sadly familiar to many Christian organisations. 'We are \$36,000 below our budget income for the first nine months of 1980 Altogether we need \$250,000 between now and the end of 1980 to cover our commitments. We have reached the situation where our cash balances are becoming dangerously low. And at this very time we are being asked to make decisions involving financial commitments two or three years ahead.' If the gospel is to be proclaimed worldwide in a time of recession, the costly and genuine involvement of all of us is needed.

The Campbell Reid Memorial Fund reports that the Fund's work of assisting persons considering full-time service has gone steadily ahead and the total received to date is over £3,000. Some has been allotted in order to assist with Bible college fees, some to help an individual moving into an independent ministry, some to a fellowship in Sussex upon hearing that they were in the process of calling a full time worker to help their ministry. The address of the Fund is 10 Spencer Road, South Croydon, Surrey, CR2 7EH.

The United Kingdom Evangelization Trust (Inc.) has produced an informative booklet providing valuable advice about money matters for making covenants to the provision of property for Christian witness. Obtainable free from the charity, the booklet outlines six simple-to-follow headings handling income in the form of a covenant, popular questions on deeds of covenant, giving and lending capital, building loans, trusteeship of buildings and executorship and estate management. Giving by deed of covenant needs to be

looked at carefully in the light of the last budget and the additional advantage in covenant giving that will be available from April 1981. The booklet can be obtained from UKET, Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL (Telephone 01-739 6927).

Japan

A six city evangelistic tour conducted in October 1980 by Billy Graham, attracted record numbers. The attendances and response surprised missionaries and national church leaders since Christians form only one per cent of Japan's population of 120 million and progress in evangelism and church-planting has been slow. Japanese men have been resistant to the gospel in the past, but crusade sponsors reported an exceptional response by males. Although surveys have revealed that there was no religious interest among sixty per cent of the population, Christian leaders were encouraged to note that the largest number of those responding to the evangelistic invitation were from 19 to 30 years old. One leader suggested that the crusade signalled a new day for Christians in Japan. 'The era of the evangelical is dawning in Japan,' he said. 'God providentially timed the Billy Graham Crusade to coincide with, encourage and contribute significantly to what may well be a new day for the church.' Canadian missionary Kenneth McVety who has worked in Japan for 31 years, predicted that the crusade would have an ongoing influence in the churches. 'I feel that the crusade is going to have a tremendous impact on the

churches of Japan,' he maintained. 'People are realizing that their fellow countrymen are winnable.'

Missionary

Everybody who is interested in knowing the facts about British overseas missionary work will value the new edition of Volume 1 of the UK Christian Handbook. It answers such questions as: How many British people are serving overseas as missionaries? Has the number increased or declined in recent years, and by how much? To which countries have they gone? Where are their headquarter organisations located? How large is each society? How much money was given last year to support their work? Where are the various theological schools located? Who is their principal? The Handbook can be obtained from The Bible Society, 146 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BX, for £2.50 + 50p postage and packing.

Relief Work

Tear Fund reports that over three hundred professionally trained and committed Christians have attended three-day conferences in Belfast, Bristol and Oxford, towards the end of 1980 with a view to filling current overseas vacancies. Each day conference started with a Bible reading before moving into a wide-ranging overview of the different areas of need around the world shared by workers who had returned from overseas. *Tear Fund's* Deputy Director, Ian Prior, says 'I never cease to be amazed that Christians in this country continue to respond to service abroad in such large numbers'. A further series of

day conferences for Christians interested in discovering their place in the world today is being planned for Spring 1981 — further details available from Jennie Loughlin at Tear Fund, 11 Station Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 9AA.

The latest Tear Fund film strip, 'A Future and a Hope', deals in general terms with the various ministries of the Fund. In 19 minutes it shows the broad spectrum of Christian involvement overseas pursued in partnership with the Church. It is available on free loan, or it can be purchased for £6.00.

World Vision mercy ship 'Seasweep' is continuing to help refugees. Its ministry has captured international attention and has been highly praised by organisations such as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, who have said 'The assistance which the refugee programme has received from Seasweep has been quite outstanding . . . We have relied enormously on your support in practically every field . . . There is no ship I would rather have assist us in our task. You have never failed us.'

World Vision's hospital in Kampuchea, which opened in October 1980 is the first new medical facility in the country in nearly twenty years. The *World Vision* medical team were the first personnel from western non-communist countries to practice medicine on a full time basis in Kampuchea. Five doctors and nurses from Australia, Switzerland and the United States treated more than 50 children when the hospital opened its doors in the late afternoon of Wednesday,

October 15. The staff, assisted by 70 Kampucheans, anticipate treating up to 300 children a day within a week. The new centre will be operated jointly by *World Vision* and the Kampuchean Ministry of Health. If the working relationship proves satisfactory, *World Vision* will consider doubling the capacity of the hospital.

Sunday Schools

John Tigwell of Scripture Union's Education in Churches Department saw 1980 — the 200th birthday of Sunday Schools — as a time when Sunday Schools are still alive and kicking although for years people had been saying that they were finished. 'But,' he continued 'we should be challenged by the statistics presented to the National Initiative in Evangelism, which show that denominations with traditionally strong Sunday Schools are being worse hit by falling child attendances than those who integrate their children earlier into the family life of the church.' (A warning, some readers may feel, that is particularly needed by fellowships that make a habit of officially ignoring the presence at the Lord's Table of the children of believers.)

Home Calls

Jean Rees, wife of the late Tom Rees the evangelist, went to be with the Lord whom she loved and served so faithfully during her life on Tuesday, November 18. For the past few years, she had been suffering from increasing ill health and in recent months had undergone a series of strokes. She leaves behind her her children, Jennifer Larcombe with her husband

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Tony and Justyn Rees with his wife Joy. Also nine grandchildren Sarah, Justyn, Jane, Naomi, Duncan and Richard Larcombe and Esther, Daniel and Rebecca Rees. Jean Rees was married to her husband Tom in 1936. Together, they conducted evangelistic campaigns until they took a small pastorate in the village of Banwell in Somerset. In 1945 Jean and Tom Rees co-founded Hildenborough Hall near Tonbridge in Kent. Using the Conference Centre as a base, they campaigned up and down the country filling the Central Hall Westminster on innumerable occasions and London's Royal Albert Hall on 55 different nights. They travelled the length and breadth of the British Isles, conducting a mission to Britain, and then went on to tour Canada leading a similar venture. Jean Rees was never the timid wife who stayed in the background. It was she who gave the sparkle to the Hildenborough Conferences, and she was the one who led the choirs, prepared the counsellors and stirred up prayer support. She was also a speaker very much in demand in her own right. Speaking extensively in Britain, the United States and Canada and in more recent years in Australia. She was a founder member of the Christian Lunch and Dinner Clubs. In addition to raising two children she also managed to find time to write nearly 40 books not to mention innumerable booklets and magazine articles. She served her Lord faithfully to the end, and there are many who will remember her in gratitude, for she was the person who introduced them

to the Lord Jesus Christ.

George Hammond Wilson, on September 18, aged 96. His fellowship with the Fitzwilliam Chapel Sheffield extended from the early 1900s to 1964. During that period he was involved in practically every assembly activity and in addition he was greatly used as an able and dedicated Gospel preacher and minister of the word over a wide area. He and his second wife, Mary, left Sheffield in 1964 for Norfolk where in Dereham, Cromer and Sheringham he continued his ministry in spite of his advanced age. He and his wife made a welcome return to Sheffield in 1976, but their stay was relatively brief and they finally moved to Whitchurch to live with Mrs. Wilson's daughter and her husband. 'I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith' said the great Apostle to the Gentiles. There can be no more fitting epitaph for George Wilson.

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Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during November 1980 amounted to £1,108.15.

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12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received for the month of November amounted to £8,768.86.

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.:

Crediton 4; Exeter 6; Tiverton 11; Exeter 13; Coleford 18; Exeter 20; Chard 25; Paignton 29.

Galyer, W.S.:

Manor Park 4; Wembley 6; Wimbledon 7, 14; Dorking 8, 15, 22, 29; Feltham 9; Horsham 11; Tolworth Tower C.U. 12; Tolworth 18; Downham 20; Sheen 25; Hampton 28.

Gillham, S.:

Trickett's Cross, Wimborne 4; E.A. Children's Evangelists Conf. 5-7; Poole 10; Dorchester 11; Evershot 17; Martock 18; Opportunity 80 Youth Evening 24; Charminster, Bournemouth 25; Dorset Regional Fellowship 26; Swanage 27.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Melton Constable, Norfolk 4.

Iliffe, D. J.:

Littlehampton 4; High Leigh Conference 5-7; Littlehampton 9; Ferring 11; Chichester 15; Littlehampton 17-21; London & Bexhill 22; Horsham 28; Bexhill 25 & 29.

Lowther, G. K.:

Grimsby, Lincolnshire and South Humberside.

Mills, B.:

Harrow, Elmfield 4; Children's Workers' Conference 5-7; Plaistow, London 11; Nailsea 17; Wokingham 22; Walthamstow 24/25.

Phillips, C.:

Edinburgh 1-5; Dundee 10/11; Chingford 18; Berrymead, Acton 20; Kenton 21, 28; Bury St., Edmonton; Bush Hill Park, Enfield 25; Maidenhead 27; Christ Church, Woodbury 31.

Short, S. S.:

Cheltenham 4, 7, 21; Gloucester 5, 12, 18, 19, 26; Ross-on-Wye 6; Caerleon 11; Newent 13, 20; Northway, Glos. 14; Weston-Super-Mare 22, 29; Corsham 23; Ashbury, Wilts. 25; Hutton, Avon 28; Carlisle 31.

Tatford, F. A.:

Hong Kong, Taiwan, France, Alresford.

Thurston, A.D.:

Strete 3-5, 12, 19, 26; Kingsbridge 6, 13, 20, 27; Chillington 1, 7/8, 14/15, 21/22, 28/29; Dartmoor (Prison) 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Plymouth (Wolesley) 11, 18, 23; Newton Abbot 14; Paignton (Greatparks) 25; Totnes 29.

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Balham 4, 11, 12, 18, 26; N. Kensington 6; Tooting 7, 14; Hampstead 15, 22, 29; Wellington 21, 28; Tolworth 22; Spenn, Bucks. 25.

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:

Drummond Hall, Drummond

Road, Upper Room Ministry.

Conversational Bible Readings to be held on Saturday, February 7, at 7 p.m. Subject: John 14. Speaker: Mr. G. Davidson, Camberley.

Chesham:

Gospel Hall, Station Road. January 24 at 6.30 p.m. the Monthly Bible Reading will be led by Mr. M. Jones, Luton. Portion: Joshua, Chapter 3.

Colyton:

The Gospel Hall, The Butts, Colyton. Monthly Bible Study. January 24, at 7 p.m. Portion: 1 Thessalonians, Ch. 4. Speaker: Mr. T. Ledger, Welton.

Croxley Green:

Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Monthly meeting to be held on January 24 at 7 p.m. Speaker: R. J. Bolton.

Cumbernauld:

Mossknowe Gospel Hall. January 17 from 7 to 9 p.m. the Saturday Ministry Meeting. (NB. 3rd Sat. this month) Speakers: Mr. J. Burnett, Dunfermline and Mr. A. Leckie, Airdrie. Mr. Leckie will continue in Ministry - Monday 19 until Thursday 22 at 8 p.m.

Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall. January 17 from 6.30 to 8 p.m. Conversational Bible Readings. 'Pillars of Triumph in the Manhood of Our Lord'. 'Transfiguration' (Luke 9:28-36). Speaker: Mr. W. Craig (Paisley).

Tyneside:

Sunday School Workers' Conference, Ebenezer Hall, North Road, Wallsend. January 17 at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Speaker: D. Clarkson.

'TEACH US TO PRAY'

February 7

What is prayer?

Basis and scope

Leith Samuel

February 14

How should we pray?

Alone and together

Clifford Phillips

February 21

Overcoming the problems

Thoughts and feelings

Paul Marsh

February 28

Effective praying

Are there any rules?

Alan Bamford

Closing address

Bill Hart

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INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'

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As I write, Christmas has just passed, and New Year is about to reach us. In the south we have enjoyed a bright, sharp Christmas; with sun, and blue in the sky, a nip and a scent in the morning air and an unusually mild mid-day. Already the tips of a few daffodils are to be seen through the ground: by the time our readers receive their copies of the magazine, 1981 will be past its first infancy, and those promised spring flowers will be well above ground, and a few snowdrops and early bulbs may already have appeared. Frost, perhaps snow, will still be with us, but the stirring of new life and new promise assures us that the ancient covenant still stands: 'seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease'.

These thoughts are needful, if we are to rise above the daily preoccupations and anxieties and remind ourselves that we are creatures of eternity. The year that had passed had taken with it part of our lives: but they are not lost. For good or for ill, we have passed before the eye of God, and the results of words and actions echo down the days. Dear friends have gone from us — but it is not only memory that remains; for part of them remains in us, as part of us will remain in those that follow, until that reunion in our God that we cannot picture or conceive of. With us goes the God of the covenant — and, in Christ, we name Him Father.

How can we write or imagine such things? Because God has spoken in Christ, and His Gospel has reached us: the good news of hope and joy that surpasses knowledge. The truth of Being is not truth, unless it is valid for all men and all time: but the knowledge of that truth is to be found only in Christ. It is not for us to speculate on the uncovenanted mercies of God, or on His way with the Sodoms and Gomorrah which did not know, but would have repented had they known . . . it is for us to try to understand and to express (in our own ways, for our gifts differ and our defaults are many) something of the glory that has been shown us.

God be patient with us, that our expression is so shabby and down-at-heel.

WITNESSING IN SHETLAND

L. Wilson

We are glad to carry this account of a part of the United Kingdom which few of us know but which today contributes to the well-being of us all. Mr. Wilson, a B.Sc., is a retired Senior

Telecommunications Engineer from the Post Office. Everyone has heard of Shetland these days. But not all, it seems, are clear just where it is. It is, in fact, a group of about a hundred islands lying in the North Atlantic some 200 miles north of Aberdeen, and Britain's most northerly outpost. The passage by sea from Aberdeen takes about 14 hours, through what can be some of the stormiest seas in the world, making the trip one to remember rather than to repeat.

Only 16 of the islands are inhabited. Out of 21,000 inhabitants around 17,000 live on the largest island, 'Mainland', while several of the smaller ones have populations of 100 or less. These include Fair Isle, familiar to those who follow the weather forecasts, and Foula, way out in the Atlantic, whose population of 30 or so makes up Britain's most remote community. There is one town, Lerwick, the capital, with about 7,000 people. It is a bustling port, and a principal supply base for the North Sea oil fields. Much of Shetland is sparsely populated; the second largest island, Yell, though half the size of the Isle of Wight, has only 1/100th of its population. Distances are considerable — again, contrary to popular belief; a trip from Lerwick to the far north and back would take a full day and involve four roll on-roll off ferry crossings.

There are close links with Norway, to which the islands belonged up to 500 years ago. Everyday speech, while predominantly English, has a proportion of Scots and Norse words, resulting in a distinctive dialect which can be quite puzzling to a 'Sooth-moother' (i.e. an 'Incomer'). Shetlanders are very proud of their ancestry, and the whole community shares in the spectacular winter festival of 'Up-Helly-A', when hundreds of 'guizers', carrying flaming torches, march through the darkened streets of Lerwick as they escort their Viking galley to its blazing funeral pyre. Shetland is rightly called 'Britain's Viking Isles'.

Shetlanders

It used to be said that the Shetlander was 'a fisherman with a croft'. Fishing was the traditional way of life — harsh, dangerous and unpredictable — while a croft provided a home and the other necessities of a very basic existence. They were grievously oppressed for centuries by rapacious Scottish lairds and in virtual bondage until freed by the Crofters' Holdings Act of 1886.

They are most hospitable people, though they may be a little reserved at first. Because of their isolation the islanders are closely related one to another, and family connexions tend to be much more extensive than is usual on the mainland. It is very close to being a 'classless' society and is characterised by a refreshing degree of mutual understanding and tolerance. Any Christian witness must take this into account if it is to be effective. (For example, should you — or need you — distribute tracts to folk who know you as well as you know them, who possibly went to school with you, and may even be relatives? Or does it need the comparative anonymity of the typical mainland situation?)

The oil industry recognised the uniqueness of Shetland, and produced a booklet 'Living and Working in Shetland' to introduce its staff and contractors to the island and its people. One sometimes thinks it could be read with profit by 'visiting speakers'!

Decay and Revival

The islands suffered from progressive depopulation until a few years ago as young people — and not so young — left to find employment or an easier life elsewhere. The population dropped from 32,000 in 1861 to 18,000 in 1961. The evidence of this is to be seen in the derelict crofts dotting the landscape. There are two former Gospel Halls in country districts, where there is no longer a testimony. One is now a farm building; the other is stripped of furnishings but still weatherproof and in the custody of the Lerwick trustees. A testimony on Yell came to an end when most of those in fellowship — six families — moved to Lerwick (and joined the Assembly there). It is also all too evident, too, in country



Jarlshoff

churches: built for a bigger community of regular churchgoers, they now all too often cater for only a few — mainly elderly — faithful.

About 1961 the tide turned, with an unprecedented development of the Islands' three basic industries, crofting, fishing and knitting. The community as a whole enjoyed prosperity, but without detriment to its traditional life-style, often referred to as 'The Shetland Way of Life'. It was a society in which people knew each other and cared for one another. There was a virtual absence of class distinction and no serious crime. Houses and cars could safely be left unsecured, and shops would let you take goods home 'on trust'. This was the community to which 'oil' came in 1971.

The Coming of 'Oil'

This is not the place to describe the development of North Sea oilfields, except as this relates to Shetland. The industry needs the islands for three things; as an oil terminal (Sullum Voe), as a helicopter base (Sumburgh), and as a supply port (Lerwick). All are massive multi-million pound operations. Sullum Voe is said to be the largest civil engineering project in Europe. Its construction is currently employing 6,500 people, mostly flown in from the mainland and housed in two massive specially-constructed, well-appointed Camps 30 miles North of Lerwick. Two former luxury liners, moored alongside, provide more accommodation. All this at what was formerly a derelict wartime flying-boat base on featureless moorland. Sumburgh has become one of the busiest airports in the country. A staff of 9 'pre-oil' has grown to 750 and the population of the neighbourhood has doubled in the past ten years. The challenge to Christians needs no elaboration.

While the prospect of this enormous development was welcomed by many, it was viewed with apprehension by others, who saw in it a threat to their culture and way of life. Fortunately the County Council acted quickly and with foresight to lay down a framework within which the planning of subsequent developments could take place. This was embodied in the Zetland County Council Act of 1974. It ensured that the local authority had control of



Lerwick — Shetland

developments at Sullum Voe, gave them a partnership with the oil industry in matters affecting Shetland life and provided for an income from oil revenues to be available for the benefit of the community. The official principally responsible for this unique and far-sighted legislation was Mr. Ian R. Clark, then Clerk to the Zetland County Council and in fellowship in the Lerwick Assembly. Despite the extreme pressure under which he worked he was an active Minister of the Word and a discerning and faithful pastor. His Christian testimony was widely known throughout Shetland, and indeed throughout the United Kingdom. He is generally regarded as the 'father' of modern Shetland.

Changing Shetland

The coming of 'oil' has transformed the islands. Not so much the environment, which for the most part remains as unspoilt as ever, as the life of the people. The oil industry — and those that are 'oil-related' — pays high wages, and those who benefit from this have never had it so good. Some do better than others. The old, infirm, and those in areas remote from the new developments find life expensive and sometimes difficult. And there are problems for the traditional industries, and for shopkeepers, who just can't compete for scarce staff. But, generally speaking, the Shetlander — in town or country — is likely to have a car, a telephone, probably a colour TV (three channels), a freezer and an increasingly well-furnished home. All in all, Shetland is a society in rapid change. It is affluent to a degree never known before, but unsure of its future as the labour-intensive 'construction stage' begins to run down. There has been a massive influx of new 'Shetlanders' — 5,000 in the last ten years — to be housed, fed and 'integrated'. This is over and above the 6,000 or so 'migrant' workers at Sullum Voe. It says much for wise planning and an understanding, tolerant society that this has been accomplished so smoothly. Not surprisingly, in a changing society with a chronic housing shortage and a new-found affluence, crime has markedly increased. But, so far, not serious crime, mainly driving offences and the

consequences of excessive drinking.

The Christian Scene

Most denominations and cults are to be found in Shetland. The Church of Scotland predominates, with about 3,100 members. Its churches are to be found in every 'township', however small, and even on the most remote islands. But its regular worshippers are, alas, much fewer than its nominal membership. It is at present suffering from a shortage of ministers so serious that it is looking for expedients to enable it to discharge even its basic minimum commitments to its worshippers and to the non-churchgoing majority to who look to it to perform its rites. There is an increasing realisation that the way ahead must be through greater lay participation.

Next in numerical strength are the Methodists. They have about 600 members and there are probably at least as many who would identify themselves as 'Methodists'. They have over twenty chapels. Within Methodism the work is classified as a 'Home Mission', and has its own tradition rooted firmly in Shetland's history. Its establishment, associated with the name of Adam Clarke, has some resemblance to the work of William Sloan in the Faroes. They have a strong evangelical element, are adequately provided with lay workers and are responsive to new situations and fresh opportunities. Their open approach to other Christian denominations stands them in good stead and gives them a good public image.

The one Roman Catholic church in Shetland is also something of a 'mission'. Established mainly to serve the girls who used to come to Lerwick each year for the herring season, it had merely a handful of worshippers before 'oil'. This created a completely new situation, as hundreds of construction workers looked for the Church's ministrations. This led to the posting of a young Jesuit priest to serve the Camps at Sullum Voe.

Of the other denominations it will perhaps suffice to comment on the Baptists, who have a substantial witness, with three ministers and 400 or so members. Doctrinally, and in outlook, they are the ones with whom the Assemblies have closest affinities, and this shows itself in informal co-operation at a personal level.

Assembly Witness

There are five Assemblies in Shetland, all on Mainland. The largest is in Lerwick. A witness was first established there in the 1880s and there are at present about a hundred in fellowship. Quite a number of these are believers who have moved in from country districts as mentioned earlier. There is also a long-established Assembly in the South of the island, at Hoswick. But it is poorly located in relation to the new 'airport' community and has less than 20 in fellowship.

The three other Assemblies are at Scalloway, Seli-

voe (a small crofting community in the West) and Brae (of which more later). These each have about 30 believers in fellowship. They owe much to the ministry and witness of the late Mr. James Moar, who laboured in Shetland (and Orkney) for over fifty years. His faithful preaching and pastoral care established and sustained these 'country' fellowships in the hard days before good roads and easy transport. Preaching engagements then meant long weary miles of walking, in all weathers, perhaps needing a boat to avoid making a detour round the head of a Voe (i.e. a sea loch).

In addition to having an ample number of acceptable ministering brethren the Assemblies are well-served by visiting speakers. Many missionaries, ministering brethren from the mainland, as well as 'deputation' speakers from bodies such as the Scripture Gift Mission and SASRA make their way to Shetland. They are usually on a circuit taking in Orkney and the North of Scotland, so that travelling costs are not prohibitive. Visits may be for a long week-end or for several weeks, according to circumstances or purpose.

The long days of summer, when Shetland enjoys its best weather and there is almost no night, is a time for evangelism in the country districts. Invited brethren come for extended periods, working in association with the local Assemblies. Sometimes they have the use of a 40-seater 'Gospel Bus' to hold meetings in. This year a party of twenty spent a fortnight in the islands under the auspices of the Scottish Counties' Evangelistic Movement (SCEM). Led by the evangelist Rod Sharp they held young people's meetings, supported by house-to-house visitation and tract distribution, in Lerwick, Hoswick and Brae. As a direct consequence of their visit two mid-week Children's Meetings have been started — one in the 'new' part of Lerwick, attracting around 50 children each week.

Challenge and Response

In most communities — however small — there is a 'kirk', often a Methodist chapel and occasionally a church of some other denomination. Some of these may however only have a service fortnightly — or even just once a month. The working arrangements which result from this foster a 'grassroots ecumenism'. This, of course, is in keeping with the close ties of kinship and common interest which exist between members of a small rural community. Perhaps because of the isolation of the Islands and the close-knit nature of the community there is probably more co-operation between the churches in Shetland than is the case elsewhere.

There is a Shetland Churches' Council, set up about six years ago but not particularly active. Nevertheless it is recognised as the channel through which the local authority and other bodies can most conveniently work — especially when dealing with new developments. Understandably, the Assemblies are

not represented. This means that they are not 'in' on some important new opportunities. For example, the islands' newspaper, **The Shetland Times** provides space each week for a 'Good News Column', a Christian message of 300-400 words. Sponsored by the Shetland Council of Churches, its contributors cover the full range of churches which it represents. The paper reaches practically every home in the islands. The potential readership is about 28,000, as the newspaper has a large overseas sale. Another opportunity occurred this year with 'Radio Shetland'. This is one of the BBC's experimental local radio stations serving small, isolated communities. It broadcasts a half-hour 'news and views' programme to the islands, on VHF, each weekday. Since April 'the kirks' have been given a monthly 'slot' in which to present a 'do-it-yourself' Christian News Magazine. Planned and recorded by a small inter-denominational committee it is appropriately called 'The Good News Programme'.

Undoubtedly the other churches would welcome the Assemblies' association with their work. We would have a most valuable contribution to make — particularly in showing the vitality of our faith and in demonstrating the rôle of the 'laity' to churches which are woefully short of lay ministers. Meanwhile a few brethren — and sisters — have contributed to the 'Good News Column' in a personal capacity, while the writer's membership of the 'radio committee' — again, purely as an individual, by invitation of the other members — ensures that newsworthy activities of 'Assembly' interest get consideration. Of course there is another side to this. Because we are not dependent on decisions made elsewhere we can respond comparatively quickly to local oppor-

tunities. A local branch of the Gideons was started in Shetland about three years ago — and this is largely a 'Brethren' supported activity. It was responsible for the largest single Bible 'placement' ever in the UK, at the Sullum Voe work camps. This was just under two years ago, when 3,200 New Testaments were formally handed over to the management there. And Lerwick's principal young people's Sunday witness, a 'Coffee Bar' outreach in the town centre, has the Assembly's young people as its driving force.

But it is in Brae, the largest of four new communities being built in the North to house the 'permanent' oil workers, that the most evident progress is to be found. A small group of believers in the Mangaster area — about three miles to the north of Brae — had been meeting in the home of one of them for some years. They were given a second-hand wooden hall by a Christian businessman from Northern Ireland, and after some planning delays began a regular witness in it at Brae about two years ago. A larger, permanent Hall has now been built alongside it which will seat 120 people. It will serve a growing community of about a thousand people. It will be Britain's most northerly Gospel Hall, and noteworthy as the first new church to be built in Shetland for very many years. It is very much a venture of faith; hopefully, it is the grasping of an opportunity, and it needs our prayerful interest.

This, then, is an outline of some aspects of Shetland today, its Christian witness and its needs. The Assemblies are playing their part; they can feel encouraged but not complacent. It can truly be said, as always, that 'the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few'.



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FAMILY LIFE IN THE THIRD WORLD

Avril Game

Contributed by Barbara Baigent

This article arose from the series about children featured in 'Mainly for Women' in The Witness from January to June last year. It was sent to me by a 'missionary mum' from Bangladesh and although she is now living back in England, I have retained the article as she originally wrote it. B.B.

Family life has become a very important subject for Christians to consider and maintain in this day and age where too frequently it is becoming meaningless to society. Our family life is very different from most British families, for we are a missionary family. Many people think of missionary children as being deprived of many normal things that most children take for granted. I would like to share with you some of the joys and encouragements which our children have experienced and how we feel that their lives are richer through having this privilege of spending so much of their lives abroad in a developing country. Firstly, let me tell you about their school. Our three sons go to a Christian Primary School run by mission groups and relief agencies. The school of 32 children is divided into two classes and both teachers, being convinced Christians, take a real interest in each child, who is allowed to work at his own pace. The atmosphere of such a Christian school, raises many positive comments, especially from the minority of non-Mission parents. Our children not only learn the 3 R's there, but also do music (including the recorder), woodwork, cooking, sewing, swimming, French and many of the things that most children enjoy at school. The guinea pigs have become a much loved part of the school too, especially when they produced babies. To us the biggest 'plus' is the influence of Christian teachers who encourage the children to bring their joys and problems to Jesus, and in a natural way to learn to love Him. Recently one of our sons gave his heart to Jesus through hearing how his school-friend had trusted

Jesus, and also after seeing a very moving drama depicting the death and resurrection of Jesus. This led to his younger brother wanting to give his heart to Jesus too.

Our one concern is that our children will one day have to face the world, and though we feel sorry that naturally they will not be in this Christian environment, we do praise God for this foundation that this wonderful school has given them to prepare them to encounter the outside world. In a matter of weeks we are leaving for furlough, where we know a different life will be ahead of them.

True there are many things our children don't have: lack of recreational facilities, TV, sweets, to name a few; but some of these are more important than others and easier to live without! It is not easy for them to be the centre of attraction and draw large, staring crowds whenever they go out, especially if we try to have a picnic. These are things that they, like their parents, have to learn to accept. But it is good to see how resourceful they have become. At Christmas-time we made decorations, candles, sweets and biscuits. I could not help wondering if we would not find next Christmas very dull when we can take all these things off the supermarket shelves, and indeed I'm interested to see if it will be a temptation for us to do so or not. Our three oldest children have all become such book-worms and can hardly find enough to quench their appetites. May I here just add my sincere thanks to the WMF for their encouragement in this by faithfully remembering the children's birthdays. Their enjoyment of books has mani-

fested itself in their progress in their English work. Will TV make any difference to their love for books? We shall see. Our oldest son and his dad have become great stamp collectors, and so father and son spend time together poring over their stamps. This has helped their relationship enormously.

Living in a third world country one cannot ignore poverty and sickness, for daily we encounter these. Our children's hearts have been touched many times by sights that many western eyes have never seen in reality. They have been moved to tears to see a dying child in its mother's arms and on many occasions have said 'Mummy, we must do something to help'. They have travelled to many countries, seen many cultures (and hopefully learnt that our culture isn't the 'right' one — other cultures are different) visited many interesting places like the Taj Mahal, and travelled in a Jumbo Jet, while their grandparents have never been outside the UK. All this has widened their horizons in more ways than one.

When I first became a missionary I struggled through two years language study and during that time our first child was born. How was I to combine the two important rôles to become a missionary mother? At first I felt frustrated. Was my first two years in this land wasted? Over a period of time I became conscious of a growing number of people 'popping in' to our home. With a new baby they knew that I was unlikely to be out; and where is there to go anyway? I began to realise that here in my own home I could have a real ministry for the Lord, and

prayed to this end, accepting this as my missionary rôle. What joy and peace I found in this acceptance.

Our children too have readily accepted all the 'aunties and uncles' and are a little disappointed if no-one is coming for dinner or to stay. Though lacking their own grandparents and relatives there is no doubt that the 'aunties and uncles' on the mission field help to bridge a wide gap in our children's lives; and it's obvious that single people enjoy being with children in a family atmosphere. How many people are needing a home where they can relax and unwind and maybe even share their problems. Over the years I have given little advice but done a lot of listening — that's often all that's needed. We all live under pressure, have to cope with tiredness plus many frustrations, whether we are missionaries or not. We have lived through some difficult times personally, as we have seen this country emerge through cyclones, floods, famine, disease and the horror of war. As I look back over the years it is with the clear consciousness that all these difficulties have drawn us all closer together as a family and (more important) closer to God.

However I hope that you will no longer think of missionary families and particularly missionaries' children as deprived — after all, deprived of what? Things that may not be so good for them after all! As you see the positive ways in which missionaries' children's lives have been enriched, you will be able to give thanks to God for the unique opportunity that has been theirs to live in a developing country and expand their horizons.

REFLECTIONS ON PREACHING

Jack P. Lewis

We are privileged to carry this article by Dr. J. P. Lewis of the Harding Graduate School of Religion, Memphis, Tennessee. It first appeared in the Bulletin of HGSR, and we are indebted to its Editor for permission to reprint it.

We are all interested in one common goal of influencing as many people for good for our Lord as we can. We all share a common problem that there are more demands on our time than we can meet. Hence, a system of priorities has to be set up that must be continuously re-evaluated across the course of our lives. We must ask, 'How can I make my efforts count for the most?' When we have made that choice for ourselves, others about us may dispute its validity. We do not see ourselves as others see us.

The local preacher, in particular, is confronted with this problem. Where is the priority to be given? Is it to study? Is it to sermon preparation? Is it to counseling? Is it to community involvement? Is it to the mass media? Is it to socializing? Is it to bulletin preparation? All of these activities, and many others, are knocking on the preacher's door for their share of his time; something can be said in favour of each of them; and some matter of personal judgment is involved in any ranking of them in importance in achieving the goal of influencing people for good.

Teaching the techniques of preaching is not one of the areas in which I claim to be an expert; nevertheless, among the voices that are attempting to tell you what you ought to do, I would like to speak a word about some of my concerns.

VISITATION

First, I would like to speak in behalf of what seems to be a dying art — the ministerial visit. It has died because most of the people in our congregations are too busy at their work or at their television sets to want to take out time to talk to the preacher. It has died because the preacher, himself, is too busy to give it a high ranking place in his priorities. It went out with the 'house call' of the physician. Many preachers have adopted this policy: If you want to see me, you can make an appointment in my office at my office hours. Not very many preachers, particularly in our larger congregations, do a lot of calling. We also have to admit that we are not changing the lives of any startling number of people in our congregations.

An older preacher under whom I studied preaching years ago insisted that a local preacher should be in the home of every family in his congregation at least twice a year every year he was with the congregation. I do not know any preacher who does that; I confess that I never did it, for after I heard him, I was always a student or teacher and was doing 'fill in' Sunday preaching. That teacher related in the class an admonition his mother had given him when he was a beginning preacher: 'If you stay in a congregation for any time there is not a family in it in which there will not be a tragedy of some sort, and at that time you will want to go to help that family as a trusted friend — not as a stranger.'

I would not at all say that if you, in your work, have neglected to go to your people until tragedy strikes that you should stay away — but how awkward it is to find yourself at the door of a house where you have never been before and there has been a death! How awkward to go and introduce yourself to sorrowing people who do not know you and whom you do not know! How little you can accomplish in contrast with what you could have done if you were really that one to whom they turned for spiritual support in their need!

Some churches have an active visitation programme conducted by the elders; others have an associate minister who is responsible for visitation needs; and in some cases the arrangements work quite well. Sick people do get visited; the weak and the grieving do get encouraged. The elders may be quite willing for you not to visit. But there is one aspect of preaching that someone else's visiting cannot fill. It cannot put you into the lives of the people so that you can motivate them to be a different people from what they are! You may not be able to accomplish that in many cases even when you are in their lives, but at least you are in a much better position to try.

In preaching there is a great need for the well-prepared and capably delivered sermon; but we who preach need also to keep asking, 'What are the purposes of these activities?' In the ultimate (whether one is doing evangelistic preaching or edifying preaching), the changing of lives of the hearers is the

goal. One does that as much by what he is and by his relationship with the individual, as by what he says. An enthusiastic response from the audience at the door at the end of the sermon may fall far short of that goal. The Lord told the prophet Ezekiel that he appeared to his people as 'one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument, for they hear what you say, but they will not do it' (Ezek. 32:32). That can also be true of any preacher. He can be extremely popular and his people not be one whit changed when he is through. A great deal of preaching one listens to is well presented and deals with at least semi-Biblical themes, but the man in the pew goes away no different from the condition in which he came; his emotions have not been stirred, his heart has not been melted. The preaching did not deal with a problem he was actively wrestling with nor did it convince him that he should start wrestling with one he had previously neglected.

It is very easy for us who preach to turn our eyes to the ends of the earth. We can see evangelistic opportunities where we are not, and we can imagine success in programmes that do not fit our situation. We can dream of reaching the billions, when we are not reaching the tens; and we can become so enthralled with that idea that our time becomes too valuable in our estimation to bother with individuals. But we must never forget that though on some occasions Jesus spoke to five thousand or to four thousand, he

also called a few men out of their fishing boats and worked in depth with them. He met with Nicodemus at night, he talked with the woman at the well, he was in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. He called Zacchaeus out of the tree and went home with him.

HUMOUR

Another concern which I have is with humour. No one has a better appreciation for well-turned humour than I do. I have been known to tell a stale joke or so now and then. We all know its value in getting the attention of a sleepy audience. However, a question of balance enters. Some time ago I went to a revival conducted by a speaker of national reputation. His sermon was to a large extent made up of a series of jokes with a short admonition at the end of the whole. I came away wondering about his reputation. Is preaching an after-dinner occasion? I thought of Milton's *Lycidas*, 'The hungry sheep look up and are not fed.'

Areas of humour merit some thought. It is easy to feel very clever in your jokes and to provoke a great laugh out of a large part of an audience while driving a sword into the heart of some you should be trying to influence for good. One person in about five in America will suffer some emotional derangement during his life. Jokes at the expense of the mentally and emotionally deranged cease to be funny when you have so suffered or when someone near you has

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so suffered. Is your joke worth forfeiting permanently the possibility of helping these people? People do not forgive sword jabs to their hearts. Drunkenness and the antics of the intoxicated present humorous situations to those removed from the problem. But the sickness (or sin, as you will) of drunkenness is not humorous to the family suffering from the effects of alcoholism. There is nothing funny about the behaviour of a drunken father, a drunken mother, or a drunken child. The preacher's joke is not going to lighten the burden of the wife trying in desperation to hold a marriage together with a drunken husband, or of a husband trying to live with an alcoholic wife.

Death is a light matter to those far from it and is the subject of a great deal of humour. But death ceases to be a funny matter when the doctor announces to someone near you, 'You have a malignancy', or 'You have a crucial heart problem and may drop dead at any time'. It is not funny when one near you is recently gone. No one can tell you about that. You have to walk that path yourself to know. There is not an audience in which you will speak in which there is not one or more whose world is shattered and whose heart is breaking over an irreparable loss it has suffered. Is a laugh worth a sword thrust to open again the wound of that bleeding heart? Surely we who want to change lives can find something more appropriate to be funny about. I would suggest that the preacher who is concerned about his influence should make for himself an infallible rule: 'I will be sensitive to the feelings of all my people! I will not needlessly wound the hearts of those I am seeking to win.'

MOTIVATION OR LEARNING?

Yet another concern is over what is supposed to happen in a sermon. It is a question over which we might have a lot of discussion. A brother, speaking rather unkindly of the efforts of his preacher, said, 'You have to park your brain with your car on the parking lot each Sunday before you go in'. Is there supposed to be intellectual stimulation in preaching? At an earlier time the preacher was the best informed man in the community. That has long ceased to be. A preacher here in Memphis some time ago said, 'All you need to preach are a few scriptures and the gift of the gab'.

It is likely a false dichotomy to oppose motivation and information. I think that in preaching motivation must grow out of the information that is supplied. At the carnival one buys cotton candy which is a pinch of sugar fluffed up; but he does not get very much in the fluff. Motivation without information is only stirring zeal without knowledge. It is all fluff. One can attend and respond to only so many spiritual pep rallies. If there is no substance, after a while he ceases to respond. Aesop told of the boy who cried, 'Wolf, Wolf!' until no one listened when the wolf really came. In my opinion if the audience is not get-

ting something besides a shot of enthusiasm, in fairly short order, the shot will no longer stimulate. I listened to a preacher some years ago with whose basic theological orientation I am not sympathetic. He chose the statements about Elijah in *James chapter 5* as his text. He began by telling of having seen a movie depicting figures of early American history in which the short-comings of Washington, Franklin, Adams, and the other leaders were laid bare but which at last magnified what uncommon things these ordinary men had achieved in building the American Republic. He moved to 'Elijah, a man of like passions with us', and he said, 'Elijah was afraid, as I am afraid'; 'Elijah became discouraged as I get discouraged'; 'Elijah was short on faith as I am short on faith'. But then he also told of Elijah's great opposition to Jezebel turning the tide of Baal worship in Israel. As I listened to that familiar story which I have known since childhood, something happened that has seldom happened in listening to preaching. I suddenly found myself thinking, if God could do that with a man like Elijah, who knows, maybe, in spite of everything, he might be able to do some small thing with Jack Lewis.

That is what preaching is all about!

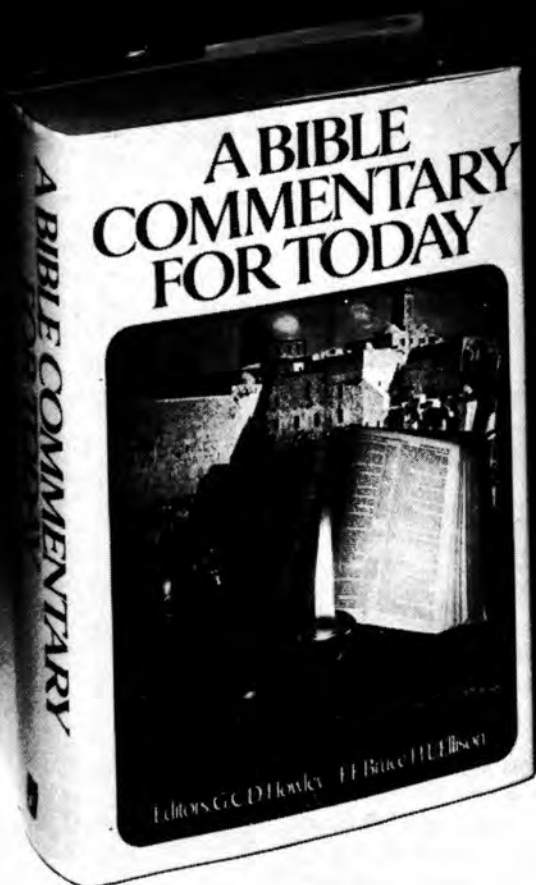
PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

The reading of CBRF Journal No. 30 prompts me to ask those who use the expression 'assembly principles' if there is any difference between these and the New Testament teaching about the church. If I were to make an intensive study of the New Testament about the church, would I be well grounded in 'assembly principles'?

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

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SPECIAL REPORTS

Inside the Churches

'Mission in the 80's' was the title of the CBRF Seminar that took place at London Bible College on 1st November. The papers given and discussions on case studies proved to be practical and challenging.

Brian Mills chaired, and opened the Seminar by giving a comprehensive coverage of 'Where we are in Mission', stressing that we are not talking about a single Church's task but that of the whole Church of Christ on earth; not about our methods but about God's. Our attention was turned to parts of the world where the Church is growing, and then back to Britain where there is little evidence of growth. However, there has been a renewed interest in Mission as is evident from the Conferences on Evangelism that have taken place this year. Doctor Boyes gave a significant report on the National Congress of Evangelism.

The importance of localised evangelism was emphasised: 'Mission has to take place where the people are and not where we would like them to be'. It was suggested that we may have changed the 'Go' commission of our Lord to a

more comfortable 'come' compromise of our own.

What, therefore, needs to be done? The task is colossal but we must enter unreached areas, learn to co-operate with other groups of Christians wherever possible, use our homes and the media for evangelism. Many people are searching, and if we do not help them to find Christ they will turn to cults etc. to try to find satisfaction. However, 'strategy, methodology, specialization will accomplish little unless first our hearts are warmed by God' (Michael Green).

The second paper entitled 'Mission in Action — at local Church level' was given by Robert Scott-Cook. He stressed that evangelism must flow naturally from a local Church that identifies with the community but is not identical to it. Before the Church rushes into a method of evangelism, it must prayerfully acknowledge that the source of spiritual life is not in human ideas but in God. There is a need to make contacts, to build meaningful relationships, to make the challenge of the Gospel clear and to follow up new Christians. Illus-

trations from the Bristol area where Robert works reinforced what he shared.

Peter Maiden's experience as UK Director of Operation Mobilization proved valuable as he spoke about 'Mission in Action — at para-Church level'. Organizations such as OM have been raised up by God to serve the Church in mission, not to do it for them. God has ordained that world evangelism should be the responsibility of His Church as a whole. However, para-Church organizations often have the expertise and the vision needed at local Church level, but the Church must not rely on their effectiveness in every situation, and must not rely on an organization rather than God.

In the final paper 'Preparing for Mission' Patrick Sookhdeo looked at the questions, 'Is a strategy for the future a practical possibility?' and 'Can we begin to grow again?' First a recognition is needed of the changes in society, of the nature of the Assemblies, and why people are leaving. Then there needs to be a return to the Scriptures, to a true understanding of the Church, to mission and to the centrality of

Christ and reliance upon Him. Before a local Church can be relevant to the community there often has to be reconciliation within it. Patrick stressed the need to set realistic goals and described how this has been done at the 'In Contact Centre', and through much prayer, planning and commitment these have been or are being fulfilled. This sort of vision is often missing from the Assemblies.

It was very evident through questions asked in a lively forum and through comments heard throughout the day that everyone found the Seminar challenging. However, it must not stop there; as Bill Galyer said in his epilogue, 'How to do it meetings' must not be a substitute for evangelism; or, as Brian Mills had earlier said, 'Unless action of some kind ensues, our seminar today will have achieved little. Now is the time for action, for prayer, for confession, for personal revival, for going out with the Good News. Our God desires it, the unreached world needs it. Who is going to do it?'

Report by Melanie Tucker and Ruth Edwards

CBRF Seminars 1981

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Seminars will be held in 1981 on 13 June and 7 November

Saturday 13 June Agree to differ?

Can we distinguish between essential and non-essential doctrines and practices? What guidance does Scripture give? Need differences of opinion result in division?

Saturday 7 November New Life in the Church?

In what ways is the life of the Church being quickened today? What problems arise as a result? What does Scripture say about spiritual dynamics?

Mark your diary! Further details to follow

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

The Protevangelium

Question 182

Great prophetic significance attaches to Genesis 3:15, the so-called Protevangelium. In view of this, can you suggest why it is cited in the New Testament only at Romans 16:20?

The direct application of *Genesis 3:15* to Christ has been encouraged by certain hymns and by an interpretation of *Galatians 4:4* which interprets 'born of a woman' as a direct reference to the virginal conception of Jesus, an interpretation which rests on no very secure foundation as may be seen from *Job 14:1* and *Matthew 11:11*, where the term is clearly a way of referring to humanity in general.

We shall make no sense of *Genesis 3:15* if we do not understand that in the same way 'the seed of the woman' refers primarily to mankind as a whole viewed as Eve's posterity. The direct reference here is to the age-long warfare between human beings and snakes. Far from being an error of unbelieving biblical criticism, this interpretation was the one favoured by Calvin (to mention one name only) whose straightforward exegetical practice contrasts so strongly with that of his mediaeval predecessors.

Certainly the passage holds a deeper meaning. Because the snake in this narrative is so closely identified with evil, the words have to be interpreted as referring to the unending struggle between good and evil. Once again, however, it is a group of people to whom the prophecy is directed. Righteous and godfearing people are thus promised that their 'good fight' will end in victory. It is to this hope that Paul refers in *Romans 16:20*, although some have suggested that Paul may equally have had in mind such passages as *Psalms 91:13* and *Luke 10:18-20*.

Certainly it is legitimate to see this promise of victory to the descendants of Eve as being fulfilled in one man. Indeed, this understanding fits in well with the way in which the New Testament develops the concept of Jesus as the Last Adam. But, as your question implies, it is probably not unfair to say that the messianic interpretation has been read into *Genesis 3:15* just as much as it has been read out of it.

The Unborn Child in Hebrew Law

Question 183

It seems that the question of the ethics of abortion hinges to some extent on the exegesis of Exodus 21:22-25 since, if we follow RSV, it is clear that the 'life for life' principle does not cover the safety of the unborn child, so that we might conclude that the law does not consider it a person in the full sense. On the other hand, NIV seems to favour the opposite view. Which is the better interpretation?

You are wise to qualify by the phrase 'to some extent' your suggestion about the significance for Christians today of *Exodus 21:22-25*. The relevance of Old Testament law to Christians today or to society in general is a more complex question than some people apparently recognise. However, it would clearly be regarded as highly significant by many Christians if the Old Testament were seen to regard causing a miscarriage as no different from manslaughter or murder.

The point at issue is whether the brawl in which the pregnant woman has been involved has resulted in premature birth or in a miscarriage. Most scholars and translators assume it is a miscarriage that is implied here. In such a case, if there is no harm to the woman, then damages for the loss of the child shall be assessed and paid. Injury to the woman, by contrast, would involve the sanctions mentioned in vv. 23-25.

The other interpretation assumes that the fine is on account of the premature birth. It follows on this view that 'no harm' must be understood as 'no further harm'; if the incident results in death or injury for the child (or the mother), then the *lex talionis* should apply as before.

However, one may interpret this passage — and, as I have said, the RSV interpretation seems the more natural one — a passage such as *II Kings 15:16* shows the horror with which injury to an unborn child was regarded in Old Testament times. On the other hand, it seems to be going well beyond Scripture to equate termination of pregnancy with murder as some have wished to do.

LOOKING AT BOOKS



Church Order in the New Testament

Eduard Schweizer. SCM Press. 230 + indices. £3.95 (paperback)

Schweizer wrote this work in 1959: it was translated in 1961 and is now re-issued without alteration. It was written in the context of a lively debate about the nature of the church, and was reviewed somewhat critically by both Catholic and Protestant scholars; the former on the basis of his protestantism, the latter on that of his historical scepticism.

There are two sections: the first investigates the diversity of thought in the New Testament on the nature of the church, and the second attempts to find an underlying unity of approach. The scope is actually wider than the New Testament material: Schweizer also discusses the evidence of **The Didache, I Clement, Ignatius** and other early texts. Schweizer's attitude to the historicity of our documents is seen even in the layout of the material. *Matthew, Luke and John* are discussed only **after** a discussion of Jesus' conception of the church and the primitive community's conception. This does not mean that Schweizer sees nothing of historical value in these three Gospels (or indeed that he views *Mark* as an unbiased source); but his picture of Jesus is inevitably coloured by his approach to the material.

Jesus' view of his community is seen as being essentially 'open': the community was bounded only by an individual's determination to love and serve within it. Nor could any hierarchy exist within the community (*Mt. 23:11*, etc, though it is doubtful if this sentiment will bear the weight placed on it by Schweizer). In the early church we find evidence of many different forms of church order. In Paul we see two factors in tension: charismatic freedom under the direct guidance of the Spirit, and the authority structure of at least some well-defined 'ministries' such as that of the apostles. 'This dialectic determines the whole of Paul's Church order' (99). Only in the later church does the former fade into the background.

Part Two presents a summary of these findings in the search for an underlying unity. Both free forms and fixed forms are authentic to the New Testament and so valid for today. The preaching of the Word must be central, and all church members have a part to play in the church. The important

thing is dependence on God, not on church order. Readers will find much food for thought here, and many challenges; but also a great deal with which to disagree. Much water has flowed under the bridge over the past twenty years, and the book is curiously dated. Few would now follow the basic approach which Schweizer adopts, in the light of the strictures of James Barr (**The Semantics of Biblical Language**). One curious result of Schweizer's method is that *1 Cor. 5* is hardly mentioned, although the act of church discipline outlined there is surely highly relevant to the question of church order. There have also been several books written on Schweizer's subject since 1959, and any student of this theme would need to read, as well as this book, at least one contemporary discussion, such as J. D. G. Dunn's **Unity and Diversity in the New Testament**.

Review by Dr. D. R. de Lacey, London Bible College

Evangelism Strategy for the '80s

Ed. Sherwood Eliot Wirt. Pickering & Inglis. 165pp. £2.25 (paperback).

This **Festschrift**, presented to Billy Graham on his sixtieth birthday, allows some of his friends and fellow-workers to assess the evangelistic strategy for the next decade. This is undoubtedly an important task, and they provide much food for thought, but unfortunately too many of the chapters appear to have been hurriedly written and do not contribute very much. The first chapter, an appreciation of Billy Graham, falls into this category and fails to do justice to both the man and his message.

The two British contributors are amongst those who stimulate. Maurice Wood, Bishop of Norwich, writes on Lay Training for Evangelism. Amongst other things he outlines a leadership course, based on Personal Discipleship, Christian Family Life, and Christian Life and Service, which many elders would do well to consider. Tom Houston, executive director of the Bible Society, writing on Evangelism and Church Growth, demonstrates that growth and not simply evangelism should be the objective. 'Church growth', he says, 'is about living like Jesus, whereas much evangelism has tended to stop at getting people to accept him.'

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In the final chapter Luis Palau argues convincingly for the future of mass evangelism. In one of the 27 reasons why he believes in a future for such evangelism he says that 'mass evangelism is required because neglected duty calls for extraordinary measures . . . There is no indication that every true believer is actively propagating the faith. Mass evangelism becomes a necessary instrument used of God for stepping into the gap'. Those who doubt the future of this form of evangelism must face up to the challenge implied in these words.

Review by Graham K. Rand

Body Building Exercises

Eddie Gibbs. Falcon. 94pp. £1.10 (paperback). If you, like me, are the kind of person who has a mild inquisitive streak when it comes to filling in the answers to questions on 'know your character' or 'find out your partner's weaknesses' in a women's magazine or weekend weekly, you will probably appreciate this book! If you appreciate lucid expression, pithy sayings, human and humorous statements, and yet something thoroughly spiritual, you will like this book. If you want to know where your church has gone wrong, or how it can learn to become a growing church, you ought to get this book. If you want some new material for group discussion, or to help your elders identify what should be their concerns — then get it and use it!

Although it is about church growth, it is not stuffy. Although it is scientific in approach, it is not complex. Eddie Gibbs is well qualified to write on the subject, having had experience as a missionary in a growing church situation in Latin America. He is now responsible for leading seminars on church growth throughout the country. If you can't get him — then 'Body Building Exercises' is a do-it-yourself method of conducting one's own church-based seminar. He identifies thirteen symptoms of a sick church, like 'fellowshipitis', 'remnantitis' and 'ethnikitis', and twelve signs of a healthy one, then prescribes ways in which health can be improved and the body can grow again. Warmly recommended.

Review by Brian Mills, Counties Evangelistic Work

Where are the Women?

Pauline Webb. Epworth Press. 45pp. 50p (paperback).

Pauline Webb has served as a Vice-President of the Methodist Conference and a Vice-Chairman of the World Council of Churches, and is now Organiser for Religious Broadcast in BBC's World Service. This book, in the 'For the people in the pew'

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EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G.J. Polkinghorne

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Slavery

H.L. Ellison

In our previous instalment we saw that the concept of slavery in ancient Israel was deeply modified by the social circumstances of the time and by the fact that worshippers of Yahweh considered themselves His slaves, something hidden in our older translations by the use of 'servant'. It was based also on the deliverance from Egypt. This is brought out very clearly in *Lev. 25 (v.42)* 'Because the Israelites are my servants (i.e. slaves), whom I brought out of Egypt, they must not be sold as slaves . . . (v.55) for the Israelites belong to me as servants (slaves). They are my servants (slaves), whom I brought out of Egypt' (NIV).

The summary of the law both in *Exod.* and *Deut.* gives early prominence to the Hebrew slave (*Exod. 21:2-11; Deut. 15:12-17; cf. Lev. 25:25-28*). Though in course of time, Hebrew became synonymous with Israelite, this was not the case in the law-giving at Sinai. It seems fairly certain that 'Hebrew' is to be linked with *Habiru*, a name the archaeologist has familiarized us with. It seems to cover a variety of persons, but above all persons who had fallen through the bottom of society. In *Deut. 15:12* he is sold to his owner. In spite of the prohibition of selling Israelites as slaves the possibility clearly existed for debt (*2 Kgs. 4:1; Neh. 5:1-5*). In *Exod. 21:2*, it is possible that the man sells himself, *cf. Lev. 25:25*. In both cases behind the slavery there probably lay the loss of land. During most of Old Testament history there were few artisans in Israel apart from potters and smiths. This meant that the landless man had no certainty of being able to earn a living. The only choice before many was between slavery and becoming 'a hired servant'. The bitter words of *Job 7:1-3* give some idea why many preferred slavery. The presence of slaves reduced the pay that the hired servant might expect. In addition the landowner who had invested capital in a slave would be far more likely to look after him reasonably well than he would a day labourer, who had nothing to expect beyond

his wages.

The institution of the Hebrew slave combined with the return of land in the jubilee meant that the unfortunate were not deprived completely of hope.

At the same time the possibility of permanent slavery was given (*Exod. 21:5, 6*). Though it is not incompatible with the Hebrew 'for ever' (RSV 'for life'), the Rabbinic interpretation, until the jubilee is improbable. The man who had dropped through the bottom of society by sheer incompetence was likely to welcome the security of slavery, especially if he could honestly say of his master, 'I love my master', which shows the position a slave could have in an Israelite household. The boring of the ear has been beautifully allegorized in evangelical tradition, but the Rabbinic interpretation that it was a mark of shame for those who had it (*Lev. 25:42*) is more probable. To be noted is that however much the slave might belong to his owner (*Exod. 21:21*), he was in no sense his chattel. Inordinate punishment (*Exod. 21:20*), or brutal treatment (*21:26, 27*) were prohibited. Similarly a girl sold into slavery had the right to motherhood and had to be treated as a legitimate wife.

Something of the exceptional position of the slave in Israel is shown in the story of Mephibosheth (*2 Sam. 9*). There Ziba, a slave of Saul's family (v.2), has slaves of his own (v.10).

By New Testament times, while slavery still existed, it had become exceptional for a Jew to have Jewish slaves. This was because the Pharisees had so hedged in the tasks that could be asked of a Jewish slave, that the average religious man did not consider it worth while buying a Jewish slave. This had the far-reaching result that the average Gentile slave embraced Judaism and thus freed himself of many of the tasks which his master might have demanded of him. This did not apply in Sadducean and Herodian circles, where Pharisaic norms were not accepted.

THE GOSPEL OF ST JOHN (44)

F.F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

i. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (John 7:1-8:59)

(c) Jesus at the festival (7:14-8:59)

(7) Abraham's children (8:31-59), continued

8:52-53 The Jews then said to him, 'Now we know that you are demon-possessed. Abraham has died, and so have the prophets, yet you say, "Whoever keeps my word will never taste death." Are you greater than our father Abraham, who has died? The prophets also have died. Whom do you make yourself out to be?'

Jesus' opponents in the debate continue to display what the readers are intended to recognize as crass literal-mindedness. While the readers know that death of the body (a matter of small importance in Johannine thinking) is not what is meant, the opponents suppose that it is. Abraham heard the word of God and obeyed it; God's own testimony to him ran: 'Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws' (*Gen. 26:5*). Yet Abraham died. The word of God came to the prophets of Israel, and they delivered it faithfully to their contemporaries; yet the prophets also died. If the word of God did not preserve from dying those who heard it and kept it, how can the word of this man serve as medicine against death? If he believes that, they reasoned, he is the victim of an illusion, and a demonic illusion at that.

To 'taste death' (*cf. Heb. 2:9*), like to 'see death' in verse 51, means 'to experience death'.

8:54-56 Jesus answered, 'If I glorify myself, my glory is of no account. It is my Father who glorifies me — the one of whom you say, "He is our God". You do not know him, but I know him. If I say that I do not know him, I shall be a liar, like you. But I know him, and I keep his word. Abraham your father looked forward with exultation to see my day, and he saw it and rejoiced.'

As a testimonial to oneself is no testimonial (*John 5:31*), so praise of oneself is no praise, and even

in a community of mutual admirers one may wonder if the admiration is entirely unprejudiced (*John 5:44*). The only glory that matters in Jesus' eyes is 'the glory that comes from the only God'. Jesus' opponents in the present debate acknowledge this God, for they claim him as theirs — is he not the God of Israel? But perhaps he is more particularly the God of those in Israel who, like Nathanael, are Israelites indeed (*cf. John 1:47*). To Jesus, indeed, he is more than the God of Israel; Jesus knows him as 'my Father' — a designation to which, because of what it seemed to imply on his lips, his opponents took special exception (*cf. John 5:17, 18*). They took the greater exception to his use of it during the present debate, because he denied it to them. When they said 'We have one Father, even God', he told them that their actions belied that claim (*John 8:41, 42*).

When Jesus says to them, 'You say, "He is our God", and yet you do not know him', he echoes the insistence of the great prophets of earlier days, that their contemporaries' claim to be the people of God, and indeed the children of God, was an empty claim, because they had rejected the knowledge of God (*cf. Hosea 4:1; 6:6*). There is probably no distinction in sense between the two verbs for 'know' in verse 55: 'you do not know him (*egnōkate*, perfect of *ginōskō*), but I know him (*oida*).'¹ John likes to ring the changes on synonyms or near-synonyms, as (for example) in 7:27: 'we know (*oidamen*) where this man is from; when the Messiah comes, no one knows (*ginoskei*) where he is from.'

Jesus's claim to know God is founded not only on his being from eternity the Son of the Father, but also on his perfect obedience to the Father's will. Disobedience is a bar to the knowledge of God, 'in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life'. 'I know him, and I keep his word' are two correlative clauses, but there is the underlying implication: 'I know him, because I keep his word.' If eternal life is to know God (*John 17:3*), it is made equally plain here that to keep his word (as communicated through his Son) is the way to eternal life. Whom does Jesus make himself out to be?

That which he essentially is: the living and life-giving Word.

'Abraham your father exulted in order to see my day' (paraphrased here 'Abraham your father looked forward with exultation to see my day') seems to point to a particular experience in the life of Abraham. But which experience was it?

Various rabbis, toying with the statement in *Gen. 24:1* that Abraham 'was advanced in years' — literally, 'entered into the days' — suggested that Abraham foresaw outstanding days in the history of Israel, such as the crossing of the Red Sea, the giving of the law, and so on into the age to come. So the idea that he foresaw the messianic age would not be unacceptable to Jews. But when did he 'exult' (aorist of *agalliaomai*) to see the day of Christ? Perhaps when he said to Isaac, on their way to the place of sacrifice, 'God will provide himself with a lamb for the burnt-offering' (*Gen. 22:8*). The incident of the 'binding of Isaac' played a prominent part in Jewish religious thinking, especially where the doctrine of atonement was in view. But Jesus did not say that Abraham saw 'the day of Christ' or 'the messianic age'; he spoke of him as seeing 'my day', and it was this personal way of putting it that raised offence and excited ridicule.

8:57, 58 So the Jews said to him, 'You are not yet fifty years old. Have you seen Abraham?' Jesus said to them, 'Indeed and in truth I tell you, Before Abraham was born, I am He.'

They chose to understand Jesus' words as though they meant that he and Abraham were contemporaries. Such a claim was too absurd to be treated seriously. He had not said that he had seen Abraham, but that Abraham looked forward and saw his day, and that the sight filled Abraham with joy. But, said Jesus' opponents, he was born only the day before yesterday (so to speak), he was younger than many of themselves were: how could Abraham have seen him, or he Abraham? The 'fifty years' estimate of his age is a round number. True, he was much less than fifty years old, but in comparison with the antiquity of Abraham the difference between thirty and fifty

was negligible. In our note on the 'forty-six years' of *John 2:20* mention has already been made of the far-fetched idea that the life of Christ on earth covered forty-nine years (corresponding to the first seven 'weeks' of *Dan. 9:24-27*), in which case 'not yet fifty years old' would mean 'not quite fifty years old'.

Jesus' reply to their protest repeats the affirmation 'I am He' (*egō eimi*), used twice already in this chapter (*verses 24, 28*), and does so in a way which underlines the magnitude of the claim which it expresses. He echoes the language of the God of Israel, who remains the same from everlasting to everlasting: 'I the Lord, the first, and with the last, I am He' (*Isa. 41:4*). How can a man who is 'not yet fifty years old' speak like that? Only if he speaks as the Word who had been with God in the beginning and was now incarnate on earth. Abraham looked forward to the time of his incarnation, but he himself existed before his incarnation, before Abraham was born (*genesthai*), before the worlds were made. The Word of the eternal God cannot be other than eternal. So much, in this context, is conveyed by *egō eimi*. And if we suppose that the conversation was carried on in Aramaic or even in Hebrew, then Jesus could have uttered the very words *ani hū*, as though he were applying them to himself.

8:59 Therefore they took up stones to throw them at him, but Jesus was hidden and went out of the temple.

If Jesus' claim was not well founded, then his words were openly blasphemous: he was using language which only God could use. His hearers were horrified: their natural reaction was to inflict on him summarily the penalty prescribed for the blasphemer: 'all the congregation shall stone him' (*Lev. 24:16*). The statement that Jesus 'was hidden' (passive) may mean that he hid himself, or John may imply that he was supernaturally concealed from them. A variant reading says that he 'went through the midst of them and (so) passed by' (*parēgen*) — which prepares the reader for the opening words of chapter 9: 'and as he passed by' (*kai paragōn*).

MEDITATIONS ON MARK (6)

David Brady

In Mark's account of the healing of the deaf man who had an impediment in his speech, we are informed that the people 'besought Jesus to lay his hand upon him' (Mk. 7:32). They had no doubt seen Jesus use this method before (cf. 6:5) and they would see him use it again (cf. 8:23), but Christ was not bound to act in any predictable way and so on this occasion he uses a quite different means of healing, a means more appropriate to the need of the particular man with whom he was dealing. It is perhaps salutary for us to ask ourselves whether or not our own rigid minds also from time to time fall into the trap of presuming that there is only one proper way of doing something, in particular of performing some Christian service. Do we always conduct our evangelistic work in the same way? Have we ever stopped to ask ourselves whether, for instance, it is really appropriate to ask outsiders with no previous church experience to come and sing hymns with us on such occasions? Was this ever the way of the first preachers of the gospel? Or do we, on the other hand, think that there is only one particular day, or week, or month in the year on which we may celebrate the Lord's Supper? Let us remember again the glorious liberty with which Christ has made us free and let us take care that we do not make void the word of God by our vain traditions.

Let us also try to imagine ourselves in the place of this man who was brought to Jesus. The Lord did not do what the man's friends had asked him to do for him, but acted otherwise, just as Elisha had treated Naaman in a very different way than he had expected (cf. 2 Kgs. 5:10ff.). 'Behold,' said Naaman, 'I thought that he would surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place,' but not so. Elisha's command was, 'Go and wash in Jordan seven times' and until Naaman did exactly as he was commanded his leprosy did not leave him. So it is with us. So often we come to the Lord for salvation or for help and we ask him to resolve our problems according to our own best devices. How much better it is to entrust ourselves to him

completely and to allow him to tell us what he knows to be best for us. This man in Mark's history sets us the example. He was content to leave himself in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First of all then, Jesus took the man 'aside from the multitude privately'. This act of taking aside was to be repeated again in the case of the blind man of Bethsaida (Mk. 8:23) and the privacy obtained thereby is comparable with the privacy enjoyed by the disciples when Jesus explained to them the meaning of his parables (cf. Mk. 4:34). A man may lose himself in the crowd, but when Jesus takes us aside he will unfold to us wonders that we had never imagined and reveal truth to us which will plumb the depths of all our need. Jesus did instruct the crowds and his heart went out to them (cf. Mk. 6:34), but let us consider here the particular importance in our Lord's taking this incapacitated man aside. Several reasons for this action may occur to us.

First, the crowd could be a hindrance (cf. Mk. 2:4), and so Jesus may have wished on this occasion to avoid any such distraction.

Secondly, our Lord may have wished to escape the wrong kind of publicity which might well have followed from a spectacular cure (cf. Jn. 6:15). This danger is still with us today. Where churches and evangelistic movements make much of the spectacular element in Christianity, it is often not long before the crowds gather for the 'loaves and fishes' who could not be satisfied with the bread of life.

Thirdly, it might also have been our Lord's intention that the first voice the man should hear on regaining his hearing should be that of Jesus himself, and not the noisy hubbub of the crowd. How important this principle still is for ourselves and for the new convert. Let us not be distracted by the clamorous and contradictory cries of the multitude, but let us firmly fix our newly-awakened spiritual perceptions on the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Fourthly, we may observe that now that the man had been carefully removed from the crowd, there could henceforth be no uncertainty in his mind

that his cure was due to Jesus alone. It could not in any sense be mistaken as the outcome of some kind of mob-hysteria.

Fifthly and lastly, we should remember that even in the crowds Jesus dealt with individuals. We may remember that Jesus sought to prevent anyone in the crowd feeling that his words were only addressed to a faceless multitude, by his cry at the end of his sermon, 'He who has ears, let him hear' (*Mk. 4:9*). We may remember also the concluding words of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus challenges the individual in the crowd to take heed how he or she hears and to build on the rock by not only hearing but also doing what he commands. How impossible it was for the woman whose haemorrhage was staunching to remain hidden in the crowd (*Mk. 5:25-34*). Nor did he miss the diminutive Zacchaeus (*Lk. 19:1ff.*). So on the day of Pentecost the crowd testified to the particularity of the word of God with their amazed question, 'How is it that we hear each of us in his own native language?' (*Acts 2:8*). Yes, Jesus loved the world of lost mankind, but how much more important it is for us to realise that he 'loved me and gave himself for me' (*Gal. 2:20*).

What are we to make of the means employed by Jesus to cure the man with an impediment in his speech? We note first of all that different interpretations have been placed on Jesus's act of spitting: (1) Jesus spat on his finger or hand and then applied the saliva to the man's tongue — a symbolic moistening and loosening of the man's organs of speech; (2) Jesus spat as an encouragement to the man to 'spit away' his impediment. Comparison of Jesus's action here with the two other occasions on which he used spittle in the course of healing (*Mk. 8:23; Jn. 9:6*) would lend support to the first of these alternatives: Jesus spat and then applied the saliva to the man's tongue. There is nothing magical about this; indeed, the methods used by Jesus resemble those used in modern psycho-therapy. The miracle lies not so much in the actual method used as in the outgoing love of God in Christ and his effective power over all weakness and disease.

The use of saliva in healing techniques seems to have been fairly common among the ancient Jews and Greeks. The Roman historians Tacitus and Suetonius tell us for example that the Emperor Vespasian cured a blind man by spittle. This close physical contact used by Jesus reminds us of God's original gift of life to man by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life (*Gn. 2:7*). This action stands in marked contrast to God's word of command 'Let there be . . .' which brought into being the rest of creation. In the creation of man God gave of himself and drew intimately close to the work of his hands. So also in re-creation, salvation is through Christ's personal contact with the soul. We see something similar in the healing acts of God's prophets in the Old Testament. We are reminded of Elisha's stretching himself on the dead child and doing something which looks to us remarkably like mouth-to-mouth resuscitation (*2 Kgs. 4:34*), something he had no doubt learned from his master Elijah (*1 Kgs. 17:21*). It reminds us again of what happened when a man was hastily buried in the tomb of Elisha: 'as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood on his feet' (*2 Kgs. 13:21*). This is most unusual in more ways than one. For the Jew dead bodies and bones were unclean and touching them transferred the contagion of uncleanness to the one who touched them; but now we see this principle reversed. So is the curse of death reversed in our Lord Jesus Christ. He touched the bier of the widow of Nain's son and did not receive uncleanness, but rather bestowed life on the dead (*Lk. 7:14-15*). Jesus was not afraid to touch unclean lepers, but by touching them cleansed them and restored them to fullness of health (*e.g. Mk. 1:40-42*). So in the incident before us, our Lord was happy to turn the contemptuous act of spitting (*cf. Nu. 12:14*) into the means of blessing. So he who 'hid not his face from shame and spitting' (*Isa. 50:6; Mk. 14:65*) became a curse for us, that we might have life and health and 'freely all things with him'.

WHY THIS FEAST?



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One of the compulsory, but nevertheless pleasant aspects of life as a young midshipman at the Naval College at Plymouth was 'dining-in night'. We were required once a week to dress up in our formal attire, complete with bow tie, and eat a meal together! Of those occasions two things stand out over the years. One was the brevity of the Naval Prayer which was simply 'Thank God' and the other was the deep meaning of the loyal toast to the Crown. Enshrined in this act was a rich and fascinating history of naval tradition. If an act of loyalty to a human monarch can linger so long in the memory, what about the Lord's supper? How much does it really mean to us and how much do we value it? Perhaps one of the greatest contributions the Brethren movement has made over the past century is the emphasis it has placed on the Lord's supper. Our spiritual fathers were gripped with the vital contribution this feast made to the spiritual health of the Church. At great personal cost to themselves — and no doubt heavily criticized by many of their contemporaries — they resolved to set up the Lord's Table in the way we have come to accept so readily today. It has been said that

no movement of spiritual renewal has ever lasted longer than the third generation! If this is true — and we are passed the third generation — it behoves us to look again at this precious heritage, lest with the passage of time, its very familiarity as part of our Sunday scene should dull our appreciation of its true meaning. But why this Feast? First and foremost it is a feast of remembrance. On the night of the Lord's betrayal, with the darkness of Gethsemane looming ahead, His simple request to His followers was made with such stark simplicity. 'This do in remembrance of me' (Luke 22:19). Just a few hours away was the Cross with its awesome darkness and separation — and then the triumphant cry 'It is finished'. The great act of redemption had been secured. He arose to become the first fruit of countless millions down through the history of the Church who were to find in that act the answer to their deepest need. Our remembrance of the Lord is not a morbid rehearsal of His physical sufferings, great as they were, but an outpouring of our gratitude for such a great salvation. In the words of the well-known hymn we are 'ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven'. Gratitude is not something that can be manufactured and put on — along with our Sunday attire — half an hour before the meeting starts. It springs

from a deep ongoing appreciation of the Lord. Martin Luther was greatly concerned that the spirit of the Reformation would not last and laid stress on the old Latin proverb — 'Nothing ages more quickly than gratitude'. Keeping alive a grateful memory depends on a living faith which day by day is constantly aware of the goodness of the Lord. Such a faith registers in numberless ways, both great and small, the wonder of being part of God's family and of knowing His presence. John Newton was quite unable to forget what he once had been and out of a continuing sense of gratitude he wrote the inspiring hymn 'Amazing Grace'. Its words express so vividly the stirring of the soul in outflowing appreciation of the goodness of the Lord, secured so costly at the cross. If at the Lord's Table our appreciation is stilted and our praise dull it can only be that we have drifted into ingratitude. The secret of praise is an overwhelming sense of God's grace towards us. Real praise and worship brings joy to the very throne of God and fills the believer with a deep sense of 'belonging'. Gratitude is the continuing knowledge of the past linked to the daily experience of the present and latched to the utter certainty of the future. 'Be thankful unto Him and bless His name for the Lord is good' said the Psalmist (Ps. 100:4 and 5).

But there is another aspect of the Lord's supper which we sometimes overlook. Paul, writing to the Church at Corinth, reminded them that this was an act of 'communion' (I Cor. 10:16) — and in this word there is a depth of meaning we dare not neglect. J. B. Phillips in his translation brings out the thought of sharing and fellowship. As we partake of the bread and wine we identify ourselves as part of His Body, the Church. We openly — and publicly — restate our total allegiance and loyalty to the kingdom of Heaven and all that it stands for, its blessings and demands. We, as it were, drink a loyal toast to our Heavenly Monarch. There is a Scottish Regiment that so prizes the privilege of the loyal toast that the wine glasses, immediately after drinking, are smashed — lest they might ever be used again in an unworthy fashion! We can so easily fail to appreciate the significance of what we do — and so readily forget. As the children of Israel prepared to enter the promised land Moses exhorted them to 'beware lest they forgot the Lord that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage' (Deut. 6:12). Forgetfulness fuels doubt and doubt in turn leads to unbelief and departure from God. The sad history of the children of Israel, with the marked anguish which this brought to the heart of God, is stamped with forgetful-

Stanley Linton



The Last Supper

Leonardo Da Vinci

ness. Particularly in times of material prosperity we so readily forget that we are citizens of the kingdom of Heaven — and we need to be reminded so often. Not only do we need to be reminded of the blessings into which we have been brought, but also the demands of the Christian life. Love and compassion to those we touch each day in our ordinary secular calling, personal integrity and honesty, purity of thought. Paul puts the challenge so succinctly in his letter to the Church at Corinth. 'Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils' (1 Cor. 10:21). We may never have thought

about this aspect of the Lord's supper or allowed the Holy Spirit to sharpen our sense of commitment as week by week we have sat at His table. The secret of keeping aflame our love for Him is to start each week with a rededication of ourselves to the Lord at His table. The church of the Laodiceans was wretched and miserable and poor and blind, because it had lost the lustre of an on-going dynamic relationship with the Lord.

Before we leave the subject we must however look at the very solemn possibility of eating and drinking unworthily at the Lord's supper and thereby bringing judgment upon ourselves (1 Cor. 11:29). For this cause, Paul

says, many of you are weak and sickly among you and many sleep. What does this mean? — we dare not say that such a warning has not got a message for believers in every age. In 1 Cor. 12:27 Paul reminds the church at Corinth that they are the Body of Christ and elsewhere in the same chapter he underlines the need for all the members of the Body to have a discerning care for each other. If we approach the Lord's table with bitterness or resentment, unresolved and unforgiven, against any brother or sister in the Lord whether in our own company or elsewhere in the Body of Christ we eat and drink unworthily and bring judgment upon ourselves. The challenge is penetrating and demanding and calls for sober self-examination. We can so easily harbour ill feelings to others and carry 'chips' on our shoulders. The damage this does to the Church — the Body of Christ — and to ourselves is incalculable.

Why this Feast? Correctly understood and entered into with gratitude, awareness and commitment it is the corporate act which binds us together and brings immeasurable blessing. To approach the Lord's table in any other way is to seep away the very life blood of the Church.

THE YEAR OF THE JUBILEE

M.E.J. Packer

Dr. M. E. J. Packer is a partly retired Medical Practitioner and lectures at the Chelston Bible College.

In 1516, Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England, was deeply concerned with the problem of social reform. Accordingly, he wrote a book describing his conception of the ideal state wherein there was neither property nor money, but where everything was possessed by the community. The book he named *Utopia*, meaning Nowhere.

God also postulated a form of government which would be far from perfect because of man's fallen condition. His chosen people, the Jews, had been in bondage in Egypt, and had just emerged with no experience of self-government. So now he revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai his plan of basic guidance to operate when they had entered the land of Canaan. Part of it related to the year of jubilee and the sabbatical years. One of his essential premises was the declaration 'the land is Mine' (Lev. 25:23). Thus he ordained that both for the land and the people every seventh year should be a sabbatical year of rest, and also seven sabbatical years, i.e. forty-nine years, would lead into the fiftieth year, which would be a rest year of jubilee.

The Israelites were to be tenants of that land by divine grace and favour, and this property they were not to

sell-for-ever. At no time did God forewarn his title to it, for it was to be his in perpetuity. The Israelites lost possession of it by never occupying it fully, and by persistent disobedience despite solemn and repeated warnings.

The year of jubilee started at the beginning of each fiftieth year with the sounding of the ram's horn trumpet of jubilee, and care was taken to ensure that it was heard throughout the land. In this manner was ushered in the greatest day of liberation in the half-century, reminding them primarily to get right with God, and then to enter into the richness of the blessings which a loving Father had provided for them.

The first day of the year of jubilee took the form of the day of atonement, and how appropriate it was that it should be so. Briefly, it included the sacrificial blood of animals being shed as a sin offering for the priests and the people, and it involved the sprinkling of it on and before the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant. This entailed a time of confessing of all the sins of the nation by the high priest, and an occasion for the afflicting of their souls by the people. This constituted a realistic introduction to the year of jubilee, for the death of the animals signified the covering of sin relative to a righteous God. The people entered into the benefit of it by acknowledging the guilt of their sins, and more so by their souls experiencing

the gall of bitterness by the realization of the evil lurking within themselves. Only when they had plumbed the depths of the conviction of the wretchedness of their natures could they know what is meant by afflicting their souls. Then could they truly repent and find reconciliation with God by committing their lives to him. The day of atonement was a prerequisite to the spiritual blessings that were attached to the year of jubilee.

The period of the year of jubilee was a time of rest, enjoyment, thanksgiving, worship and trust. Did Sir Thomas More, who was a religious man, ever compare his Utopia with God's plans for the social government of his people in this special sabbatical year? It is interesting to examine the principles involved, particularly in the light of modern legislation.

Health regulations and agricultural policy. The sabbatical rest gave physical relief from striving with an earth under the curse. No ploughing, no sowing, no pruning and no reaping. They must leave the results to God, and remember his great example when after creation he rested on the seventh day and hallowed it. But when it would come to the sixth year of the seventh heptad of years, God promised that there would be a triple harvest, providing enough food to last for three years and then seed for sowing in the year after that. In addition there was a spiritual jubilee rest, when the people should cast every care upon God, trusting that he would be faithful in supplying a superabundant crop in that last year of farming such as never happened except on equivalent occasions, and that no catastrophe would assail the land. In this way, they would have a period of freedom from spiritual tension and anxiety, experiencing perfect rest in their souls as they enjoyed God's unearned bounty. Also they had ample opportunity to thank, praise and worship him, and to get to know him better by profitable times of communion with him. They would learn that by being obedient and not working the soil as commanded, they were not losing but becoming richer by leaving the land fallow. They rejoiced that as tenants they had so great a Landlord, for

they gave up only to find that they got. The poor and the animals were not forgotten, because they were permitted to help themselves to the produce in the untended fields. Likewise, the workers and the beasts of burden enjoyed their rest (*Exod. 23:11, 12*).

Economic Policy

Land conservation. There would be no dust-bowls through persistent over-intensive farming by avaricious men.

Fair prices. The value of property would be regulated by the proximity of the sale to the sabbatical year. There was little scope for profiteers.

Security of land tenure. Firstly, the original owner had the option of redeeming the land at any time. Secondly, at the sound of the trump of jubilee, he had the right to take it back free of charge.

Redistribution of wealth. All rights of tenure-by-purchase would be cancelled in the year of jubilee, and any large estates broken up.

Tied cottages in the countryside. They were to be only tied to the former owners, who could redeem them whenever they had the money, or they could have them freely returned in the year of jubilee.

Food according to need. The last working year before the year of jubilee would produce a bonus of two years more for nothing. So doubtless faith in God would be increased. There would be no butter mountains.

Social service reliefs. The poor should receive hand-outs of gifts or interest-free loans from others whom God has favoured with both credit balances and opportunities for this service. The better-off should recollect that the needy are their brothers, and that God brought these favoured ones out of Egypt and gave them their possessions.

Good labour relationships. There would be no oppression of employees. They must all live beside each other.

Emancipation of workers. Broadly speaking, if a man became desperately poor and was hopelessly in debt, he could sell himself, not as a slave because he was a brother and God's servant, but as one who would be treated as a hired servant.

Thus he could honourably settle whatever he owed. A relief clause enabled him to terminate the agreement when he had acquired sufficient money, if he had sold himself. Alternatively, when the year of jubilee dawned, he would be set free to return to his family and to his inheritance. Better still, acting on the principle of the sabbatical year release (*Deut. 15:12-15*) which cannot be less than that of the jubilee itself, he is to be provided with some of the flocks, corn and wine, according to the measure of God's dealings with the employer; thus the worker has capital to start life anew. This employer must remember that he himself was a bondman in Egypt until God redeemed him, and then he came out with a goodly supply of Egyptian ornaments and vessels of silver and gold, and also raiments, flocks and herds together with other things needful, thus leaving the Egyptians impoverished (*Exod. 12:35-38*). In relationship to this standard, he should deal with his servant. Such were God's plans for the year of jubilee concerning his people in the land. It is vital to recall that all these highly beneficial regulations were to follow the day of atonement. What an unfathomable depth of teaching can be adduced from this display of God's loving care for His own!

Why did God choose the land of Israel from all the other territories in the world? Here may some suggestions be advanced? Because of Mount Moriah with its tragic revelation of a father not sparing his only son, and in this way picturing God not sparing his only Son — perhaps the most touching story in the annals of history; because of Jerusalem with its throne of David linked to prophecy; because of the ark in the temple with its mercy seat; because of Jordan with its Trinity-hallowed baptism; because of Gethsemane with its unforgettably agonizing prayers; because of Mount Calvary with its stupendous sacrifice; because of the garden with its empty tomb; because of the Mount of Olives with its scenes of the ascent of the Lord and his long-awaited descent to claim the land for himself. How justly God could declare 'the Land is Mine!' Nowhere else could

possibly be as dear to him. A trumpet publicly announced the year of jubilee. Another trump will sound — the trump of the rapture, marshalling millions untold to meet the Lord in the air. We never heard those trumps of jubilee in Israel, but all the great company of the redeemed will recognize with exultation the trump of the rapture. Its reverberations will crash through the barriers of death, the 'dead in Christ' will be resurrected, and we on earth shall join them in clouds as we sweep up to that wonderful meeting with him, a meeting that will never end.

Yet one more trump there is to mention in connection with our subject, and it is the antitype of the trump of jubilee. After the rapture, the saints will return to earth in their glorified bodies with their glorious Lord. Then a great rallying trumpet will summon the Jews from Assyria, Egypt and the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other to take part in the greatest exodus of all back to the land of promise, to worship the Lord in the holy mount in Jerusalem (*Matt. 24:31, Isa. 27:13*). The land itself will not be overlooked, nor the world in general, for the creation itself will be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

series, is linked to a study on 'Community of Women and Men in the Church' initiated by the World Council of Churches, with questions at the end of each chapter.

We start in Genesis with a study of the masculine/feminine rôles in the creation story and a critical look at the male image of God. The female elements of the Creator, and the human need for mother as well as father, lead to the view, summed up in 'Woman's Creed' written by Rachel Wahlberg 'I believe in God who created woman and man in God's own image, who created the world and gave both sexes the care of the earth'. The rôle of woman, historically, and in the Old Testament, mostly behind the scenes but occasionally coming to the fore, is used to highlight the tragic lack of acceptance of women as equal with men in God's order; the equality in Joel's prophecy, coming to life in the New Testament community, where 'all discrimination is ended'.

The basic New Testament concept of no discrimination (*Gal. 3:28*) is seen as a 'time bomb' at last beginning to have its impact on modern society. (*I Cor. 14:33b-36* and *I Tim. 2:11-14* are seen as later additions relating to particular situations, and not of authoritative Pauline origin.) Like other books of this kind there is the hint of overplay ('woman and man' is as difficult as 'chips and fish') and yet the danger of underplaying the uniqueness of woman has not been fully avoided. The book is nevertheless a useful counter-balance for those of us who may, for so long, have misrepresented God's creation of both sexes.

Review by Alan Reed

The Family and The Fellowship

Ralph P. Martin. The Paternoster Press. 142pp. £2.60 (paperback).

The subtitle of this book, 'New Testament Images of the Church', gives a truer idea of its contents than does the picture on the front cover, which is of some young people with a guitar sitting around an informal communion table. In fact, there is very little in the book about modern possibilities of the family-fellowship-church except in the last chapter. The rest is a scholarly monograph on the church — its birth, its fellowship, its ministry, its sacraments, its unity, its attitude to the world, and a very short chapter on its charismatic gifts.

It is a useful reference book with several indices and comprehensive footnotes referring to many important works, but it will be read more by elders with some knowledge of theology than by lay church members.

Review by Barbara Baigent

Talking to Children

John Eddison. Henry Walter Ltd. 53pp. 85p (paperback).

Four short chapters with a wealth of useful information which every teacher and preacher ought to read. Should we preach the gospel to children or give them a little pep-talk? Should we teach the whole truth or selective passages? Do children take concepts literally? All these queries and others are answered in the first chapter. Should we allow emotional responses, and what about mind, conscience and will? See chapter 2. Do we prepare walking along, in the bath or on our knees? Should we write out a talk word for word? Is there any difference between the written and the spoken word? Consult chapter 3. Finally what about the presentation. Can we use humour? Shout? Use visual aids, illustrations or colloquial slang? And what about discipline or the unexpected event? Chapter 4 will help you. At 85p the book is cheap and readable. Buy one for each of your youth workers.

Review by Barbara Baigent

Dialogue with God

Guy Appere. Evangelical Press. 62pp. £1.20 (paperback).

Here is a little handbook on prayer, translated from the French into very readable English. Man comes to God as a creature before his Creator; a sinner before a holy God; a son before a Father. We are asked to consider motives for prayer; the nature of prayer; the scope of prayer. How to pray; perseverance and prayer; faith and prayer; the word and prayer. 'To want to only pray with the Spirit' would be to open the door to mysticism, to subjectivism, to individuality and to spiritual pride. 'To be content to pray with the mind would be to fall into a narrow rationalism which is rigid, dry and presumptuous . . . The variety, the spontaneity and the freshness of the Spirit should be reflected in our prayers, which will blossom forth in our dialogue with God if we make the effort to leave behind our stereotyped habits.'

Review by Barbara Baigent



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.

What Might Be — and What Is

This month's contribution to Readers' Forum is from Mr. John Knipe of Maghull, Merseyside.

There are hundreds of assemblies of the Lord's people scattered throughout Great Britain and it can generally be said of them all that:-

1. Their fundamental doctrine is sound.
2. In practice they keep the two ordinances of the Lord i.e., Baptism and The Lord's Supper.
3. They are dedicated to evangelism.
4. They acknowledge the right of the Holy Spirit to lead them.
5. They agree there is plurality of eldership.
6. They agree that there are Spirit given gifts in the church and they should be used and they are not all in the hands of one man or even a small group of men.

7. They agree to follow the New Testament pattern in worship and service.

With such background and freedom from outside control we should be 'top of the league' in outreach, and spontaneous Spirit led worship which is vital, flexible, joyful and meaningful to the whole congregation.

Is it true to say that generally speaking, looking over the country as a whole, we are not . . . and that slowly but surely our beloved assemblies are growing old, groaning and dying and we are burying our heads in the sand whilst it is happening?

Elsewhere there are churches belonging to what are sometimes called amongst us 'denominations' and they are just waking up to discover the truths set out in the early part of this letter, truths which we have held for more than a hundred years. They are rejoicing in their discovery, battling against tremendous odds with committees and parochial church councils and the like, to try to put into practice those things which our beloved brethren of yesteryear have served to us on a plate.

They are discovering that if they let the Holy Spirit free to do what he wishes unfettered, worship becomes meaningful, joyful, spontaneous and not the least bit funereal and they are loving what they are discovering.

We had it all. What have we done with it?

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The December Question

The appreciation of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones in the September issue prompts me to wonder if, in order to realize his full potential as a great preacher, a man requires a pulpit of his own to serve as his base. (I take a 'great preacher' to mean something more than a 'great evangelist' or 'great Bible teacher'.) If anyone in reply adduces the example of Paul, I have an answer to that!

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

I have frequently asked staunch upholders of 'assembly principles' whether C. H. Spurgeon or Dr. Campbell Morgan, if they had been assembly

members, subject to all the limitations placed on such members, could have achieved the results that they did. The answer was always No. Whereupon I suggested that not our principles, but our understanding of them, was at fault. We have fallen down and worshipped the Moloch of no one-man-ministry and failed to recognize the principle of recognition of gift. God challenges our feeble understanding by raising up the exceptional man, and woman for that matter, and showing us how little room there is for them in our traditions. As the late G. H. Lang used to say, If the Apostle Paul were to come to the average assembly, the elders would have to say to him, 'Sorry, Brother Paul, but we are booked solid for the next six months'.



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.

A Lancaster Jubilee

From Mrs. Penelope Andrews
Dear Editor,
In October Dr. and Mrs. David Carling of the Sudan United Missions were the speakers at the annual conference sponsored by the Lancaster assembly. They gave an illustrated talk about

evangelistic, pastoral and medical work and presented us with a disturbing challenge. Since they both have close connections with the city and the assembly, it was good that they were able to be with us much of the weekend and especially at a jubilee tea held to celebrate fifty years of Brethren witness in our present building. A large suitably decorated cake was ceremonially cut by one of our senior members.

To mark the occasion a short history entitled **The Moorlands Testimony, 1897-1980**, has been produced. This begins with an account of members of the Church of Christ who in 1897 erected the building then known as Moorlands Tabernacle. The land cost £120, the building £600 plus free labour. For years the witness flourished, but by 1930 membership had dwindled.

The property was then bought for £460 by local Brethren and renamed Moorlands Gospel Hall. The progress of the fellowship up to the present day is related in some detail. In the goodness of God the blue corrugated iron building, which by the 1970s needed repair, has been transformed into a pleasant warm brick one with a blue-black roof. A public address

system has been installed, and outside an eye-catching board bears the new name, Moorlands Evangelical Church. Readers familiar with Lancaster will recognise many names which cannot be included in this letter. I should be happy to send a copy of the pamphlet to anyone interested. There is no charge, but a stamped addressed envelope measuring 8½" x 6" would be appreciated.
Yours sincerely
Penelope Andrews
270 Bowerham Road
Lancaster LA1 4LP

Mr. Ron Smith's 'Propositions'

From Mr. J. E. Todd
Dear Mr. Coad,
Our comments were invited on the discussion paper drawn up by Mr. Ron Smith in 'Readers' Forum' in the November issue.

1. Both the conflict between and the separation of love and doctrine are unscriptural. Love is doctrine (teaching). 'Love one another' (John 13:34). Doctrine tells us what to do, love is doing it (1 John 5:2).
2. The fundamentals of the Christian faith are not up for debate, because they are founded upon historical events. Scripture records what has happened and what has happened cannot be made to unhappen (Rom. 10:6). Also what has already happened is all sufficient (Eph. 1:3).

3. Scientific theories are constantly being modified. If we try to make scripture fit every passing phase of every theory, our interpretation of scripture will be in a constant state of flux (2 Tim. 3:7).

4. One essential in evangelism is to condemn false doctrine, but it is not necessary to condemn those who hold it, often in ignorance.

5. History proves that large

fish swallow small fish.

Minorities must be different to exist. The great danger is that children brought up in this ecumenical atmosphere lack the solid evangelical background of their ecumenical-minded parents and are therefore easy prey for a take over.

6. Humanitarian concern is the business of Christians, not the Church. The Church's commission for evangelism and teaching is so vast and its resources so meagre that it cannot afford to disperse them. Universities do not take in the sick, but they train the doctors who do.

7. This is answered in paragraph one. We need a balanced Gospel, to tell people to flee from the wrath to come and enter into the new life in Christ.

8. Our Lord taught in a very popular parable that doctrine (teaching) is the foundation; whatever is not built on this foundation will not stand (Matt. 5:43-48).

9. In spite of the pagan behaviour of the people of the Reformation period (on both sides), yet nevertheless they had enough sense (on both sides) to see that Christianity is of vital importance (our soul's eternal destiny) and therefore must be correctly defined at all costs.

Yours sincerely,
J. E. Todd
47 Rother Avenue
Brimington
Chesterfield. S43 1LG

Womens' part in vocal worship

From Mr. H. L. Ellison
Dear Mr. Coad,
My congratulations to Dr. Andrews on his discovery of a good reason why sisters should not take vocal part in meetings, viz. the meetings would have to be much longer. Why not? In many parts of the world they are.

What would happen, if our silent brothers were suddenly to wake up. Would we have to ask them to be silent, for the meetings were getting so long?

We pride ourselves on following the New Testament pattern. If we really did, we would realize that this involves 'the church in the house of . . .'. Even though our living quarters are more generous than those usual in the first century, all those able to squeeze in would be able to take vocal part within the usual time set aside for worship and prayer.

Yours sincerely
H. L. Ellison
Dawlish
Devon

The Law of Copyright

From the Librarian, Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Editor,
That fundamental tensions and conflicting interests emerge rather noticeably from copyright schemes is self-evident. That these same opposing forces are continually testing the other has significance for the resolution of each separate struggle that surfaces. The tug-and-pull centers on the extent of the monopolistic essence of copyrights, that is, how much control should authors/creators/producers/publishers have in the matter of funneling their works to the marketplace and, on the other hand, how much or little control should they have over the subsequent uses of their works of authorship once they are released in the public arena?

Reader/consumers/listeners/viewers/users under US statutory copyright law have the privilege to exercise 'fair use' in the copying, adapting, performing, public displaying and other uses of the

creator's works without first seeking the permission from, or payment to, the copyright owner when the use is reasonable, fair and not a deprivation of the copyright owner's exclusive rights. But 'fair use' is far from susceptible to precise definition (though US copyright law has taken steps in this direction) and often becomes interpreted on a case-by-case basis in the judicial court system. The conflict of interests inherent in copyright legislation is further heightened by the third party marketing agencies (such as publishers) since they often straddle both sides of the fence. The protection is clearly between 'too little and a possible too much'. Consumers contest that the monopoly causes 'censorship by copyright'. Creators cry 'amputation by fair use'. The US Copyright Act revision of 1976 is at best a broad compromise of interests that divide the component parties. **Droit moral** (moral rights) for copyright legislation are not defended in US courts, except in the most tangential manner. US courts will vindicate only the economic issue, that is, whether or not the creator has been deprived or harmed monetarily and perhaps discouraged from continuing his or her creative endeavors. Copyright laws of some countries, namely, France, Germany and Italy, do uphold moral or personal rights for creators. These author's rights include: recognition as the author of the work; prevention of anyone else from being named as the author of the work; prevention of falsely-attributed authorship of a work by another; prevention of distortions, truncations and other deformations made by others; withdrawal of published works from the distribution market if the author decides they no longer represent the author's convictions; and prevention of others from misusing the work or the author's name in a manner that would reflect poorly on the author's professional reputation. Christians are generally more sensitive to the underlying moral issues than to the

economic ones. The Christian recognizes that acts of piracy or plagiarism not only violate economic principles but more, they violate the eighth and tenth commandments — 'you shall not steal' and 'you shall not covet . . . anything that is your neighbor's'. That 'anything', of course, includes literary property. I am certain that in most instances where Christians have infringed these ethical principles relating to copyright law, they have done so in blissful ignorance of the law and/or have failed to grasp the fact that original works of authorship, even after they are released to public exposure and used in the form of copies, once published do not divest the creator's property rights in the work by sale, purchase, rental, or lease to those legally acquiring ownership of a copy of the work through trade and commerce channels. It is my observation that non-Christians seem to be more aware of the nuances and meanings of copyright laws but also more readily and wilfully infringe them, or stretch 'fair use' provisions far beyond their intended or contextual settings, often in the sanctimonious name of 'academic freedom'. It should be noted that under the rubric of 'fair use', many exemptions or limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright owners are carefully built into the structure of copyright laws. These exemptions include fair uses of copyrighted materials in religious broadcasts and religious services. The US copyright act allows churches to make copies or phonorecords of transmission programs that contain a 'nondramatic musical work of a religious nature' as well as a sound recording of such a musical work, without infringing the reproduction right. However, this sweeping exemption is subject to five parameters and sub-conditions, all of which must be satisfied in order to assure immunity from wrongdoing. Another specific US exemption for churches includes the privilege to perform or display a 'nondramatic literary or musical work of a religious

nature' provided it occurs during the course of worship or other religious services held on the church's premises. This provision precludes the performance use of dramatic-musical works of a non-religious nature.

The bottom-line of this matter for the Christian does not entirely revolve around whether to copy or not to use at all, for first one must effectively determine if the intended use of someone else's work is permissible or illegitimate use. This presupposes a knowledge and consciousness of both the intent and content of copyright schemes.

Interpretation as is the case with Scripture, is inescapable. There can only be good or bad interpretation. Neglect or head-in-the-sand attitudes are linked with less-than-adequate interpretations. Good interpretation will arise from synthesis of internal and external data surrounding the intent and content of copyright systems. All laws are designed for public consumption or benefit or observation, copyright notwithstanding. Without this background information all uses that involve copying, adaption, performance, public exhibition, broadcast transmission, etc., will of necessity require that permission be sought from the copyright holders before one would have an easy conscience about the legality or morality of such uses. Literary rights are allied to property rights and as such they are sometimes riddled with easements. Christians would do well to make a bona fide effort to unravel and understand those 'easements' on copyright property and then live within them. Where there is no clear-cut easement provided for a given use, then it is incumbent upon the Christian user to apply the established channels of seeking permission from the owner of the literary rights prior to actual use.

Of critical import is the fact that copyright schemes by their very nature do not protect ideas, concepts, principles, systems, discoveries, processes or procedures. Such are fair game in the informational and

educational realms. Nonetheless, copyright does protect the fixed expression of or form in which ideas, concepts, principles, etc., are cast in tangible media. It is the reproduction of copyrighted works, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device, that is at stake here. Probably, in many cases, adapting to uses that are alternatives to exact reproductions would take the matter out of the boundaries of copyright considerations altogether. Let the user be aware. Because of additional moral sensitivity, let the Christian user be all the more aware.

Yours sincerely,
Stuart Milligan
Congress Bible Chapel
Rochester, New York

Books on St. Boniface

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David Keep

A well researched but straightforward account of the life and times of St. Boniface.

£1.20 net

'The Greatest Englishman'

Editor Timothy Reuter

Essays on St. Boniface and the Church at Crediton.

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John Cyril Sladden

A full-scale and highly readable biography.

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For further information and catalogue, write to:

The Paternoster Press
Paternoster House
3 Mount Radford Crescent
Exeter UK EX2 4JW

NEWS PAGE



The Bible

The Pocket Testament League annual report mentions the work of Bible Packers groups. Young people send used and renovated Bibles to Christians in West Africa who value them highly. The group at Ruislip sent out no fewer than 485 Bibles, 387 New Testaments and 240 other Scriptures. They even paid their own postage costs! (For details write to Pocket Testament League, 16 Holwood Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 3EB.)

Evangelism

Scripture Union Staff Teams, reinforced by the Footprint Theatre Company, will be in action in 'Spring Into Life' — a series of five weeks of concentrated evangelism in different parts of the country — from March 1 to April 5, 1981. They will be visiting secondary and primary schools and will also be in churches, speaking at services and children's meetings and at various evangelistic and training activities for adults and teenagers. Teams will be in Nuneaton from March 1-8, in Brighton from March 8-15, in Hull from March 15-22, in March (Cambridgeshire) from March 22-29 and in Torbay from March 29-April 5. Each week will end with a Saturday night evangelistic presentation by the Footprint Theatre Company, whose gifts for communicating Biblical truth to all age groups through drama made a major contribution to SU's Centenary Road Show in the autumn of 1979. The team in Hull will concentrate almost entirely on schools; in Brighton the team are hoping in some secondary schools to arrange a Christian Option Programme of the kind successfully pioneered by SU in Australia by offering to present a Christian view of

aspects of the school syllabus. Qualified team members would take lessons in subjects including English, Science and Sociology to show the relevance of the Christian faith to all aspects of life. Further details about these 'Spring Into Life' weeks can be obtained from SU regional offices or from the Information Department, Scripture Union House, 130 City Road, London EC1V 2NJ.

Ireland Outreach has worked during the past seven summers in Dun Laoghaire, a suburb of Dublin with a population of 150,000. The teams have been involved in house visitation, personal witness and literature distribution, Bible studies and practical work of all kinds. They have also co-operated with a local New Testament assembly in open-air witness and tract ministry, and a week-long Gospel film and coffee-bar outreach. All the same, most of the population remain unevangelized. More and more are searching for answers, particularly the young people. There is a need for workers to come and help present the Gospel this summer.

July 3 to August 24 are the dates the summer team will be working in Ireland. Applicants must be at least 16 years old and in good health. The cost is £20 per week including room and board and transportation within Ireland (not for travel to and from Dublin). Workers may choose to devote a week or more to this ministry. Those who come for the entire summer may come earlier during the month June or July or stay until the end of August at no extra charge. Since the Irish speak English — there is no language to learn! Application forms are available from: Ireland Outreach, 'Charleville',

Harbour Road, Dalkey, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

New Heart for the Nation

begins this month. This evangelistic programme, headed up by Justyn Rees of Hildenborough Hall, runs right through until Easter. It consists of a series of week-long missions in different parts of London with a focal point each Saturday evening in the Central Hall, Westminster and the climax in the Royal Albert Hall on Easter Saturday. The organizers of New Heart for the Nation are concerned not to present a pat, cliché-ridden 'Smile, Jesus loves you' type of solution. The preaching of the Gospel on the first day of Pentecost emphasized 'Repent and believe the Gospel'. But by drawing the theme for this mission from the Ten Commandments, the New Heart for the Nation team are concerned to place the emphasis first on repentance. Many Christian leaders have been pointing out the difficulty of presenting the Christian Gospel to the people of Britain who seem to be largely unconscious of the reality of God. Some would advocate the need for twentieth century prophets to convey God's feelings about the nation through personal revelation. But this mission is based on the conviction that men's consciences will be quickened as God's Holy Spirit applies the Life-giving common sense of God's Word as set out in the Bible, to the confusion and disillusionment of twentieth century Britain. New Heart for the Nation presents as a challenging alternative to the present indifference to God's laws, the opportunity to follow the Lord Jesus Christ in whole-hearted repentance, faith and obedience. It is as individuals themselves turn back to God in this way that they

themselves will find a new heart and so bring new heart to the nation. For further information contact Gary Rowlandson, at Hildenborough Hall, tel: Otford (830) 4525.

Facts (?) and Figures

It is unwise to take statistics on trust, even if they come from Christian sources. Some recent Luis Palau publicity asserts that 'in England less than 2% of the population are "genuine" Christians'. At the same time African Enterprise refers to 'England and its 2% church-going population'. Which is not quite the same thing. But the facts disclosed in the recent census of the churches in 1979 undertaken by the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism present a rather different picture. Adult church attendance in November 1979 was 11% of the total population. Church membership was claimed by 18% of the total adult population. Guessing how many of these are 'genuine' Christians (to use the Palau phrase) is not at all straightforward. But the estimate of 2% (500,000) seems a little bit low in view of the NIE figures. These showed, for example, that attendance at 'independent' churches alone (including FIEC, house churches, etc.) was 206,000 and that of Pentecostal and Holiness churches another 88,000. 1 1/4 million attending the Church of England presumably included a fair number of 'genuine' Christians. The moral is not that the organizations concerned are particularly slovenly, let alone dishonest but all Christians should beware of the temptation to paint a sensationally black picture especially if it involves using unverified and inaccurate statistics.

Giving

Eric Hutchings reminds us that 1980 saw some severe increases in the costs of Christian work. He mentions rent rising by 25%, an increase in radio station charges of 16 1/2%, a 17% surcharge on telephone calls, an extra 15% being put on the cost of posting a letter 2nd class and a sensational 27% increase in the cost of tapes for radio stations. He reports that the number of people reached and saved has also grown. But the implications are clear for all Christians who want to keep their giving at a realistic level.

Ireland

A letter from Jim Gillett reports the distribution of 30,000 Bible correspondence courses from August 1980 to December 1980 exceeded the 25,000 which were sent out in the previous entire twelve months. The target for the 1980/81 school year is 50,000 courses. 'I know that much of the blessing we have seen in the past is because thousands of Christians are daily praying for the ministry of Ireland Outreach International. Additionally, this work has grown as many have made it possible with their gifts. Too, we are encouraged as some write to let us know of their concern and care. We appreciate your part in this work of God through all of these channels. Thank you so much. However, please don't stop praying. We need you standing with us constantly in prayer as we enter 1981. We face many new opportunities and challenges this coming year in reaching Roman Catholics with the Gospel right around the world. With these open doors before us, we face a greater challenge in prayer and a larger financial outlay for literature, equipment, and other needs than ever before. Also, the work is expanding so rapidly that "Charleville" is over crammed to beyond capacity. There are so many people living and working and so much literature stored in such small space, that we cannot any longer work efficiently!! The new extension which will relieve the pressure here is *urgently needed and must be*

finished soon; but building personnel and finance for materials are both still required! All of these needs seem so impossible, humanly speaking, but we know our God is the "God of the impossible" and He will answer prayer.' Ireland Outreach is planning to convene World Focus '82 on Missionary Outreach from December 27, 1981, to January 1, 1982. This will be a residential missionary congress specifically planned for assembly young people, youth leaders, elders, full-time workers, and missionaries. Speakers, music, workshops, seminars and missionary exhibits are all included in the imaginative programme designed to involve you. Details can be obtained from 'Charleville', Harbour Road, Dalkey, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

Italy

Elizabeth and Brian Hodges report that the area affected by the earthquake contained over a hundred evangelical groups representing approximately 10% of Italian evangelical groups. Of these about twenty were Brethren assemblies and the rest mainly Pentecostal assemblies. They were amazed and delighted when the Lord began directing gifts through them — over £35,000 by the middle of December. The believers from Manfredonia were among the first to go into the area and within 48 hours had already established a programme of relief work. They received homeless people into their meeting room and have erected a large tent of about 200 square metres near the worst hit places. Relief work is also going on at Castellamare di Stabia near Naples and at Potenza. The work is being supported by friends from Germany and contributions have come not only from the British Isles but also from the Faroe Islands and Malta. Prayer is requested: for the work which will be done and for the participation of really consecrated believers; that even in these dreadful circumstances the Lord will through this work see souls saved. The need is immense. Contributions can be sent via

B. I. and E. Hodges (account no. 2), 22 Clive Street, Hereford, HR1 2SB.

People

John Eddison is one of the best known Scripture Union staff workers having served the movement for 38 years. Throughout this whole period he has led holiday house parties for boys from preparatory schools and in term time has visited schools and preached in school chapels. It is no mean compliment to his work that a man who has never been a schoolmaster himself should be elected honorary member of the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools and invited to act as Chaplain year after year at their annual conference. Now John Eddison is retiring. His successor is the Rev. Tim Sterry who has been Headmaster of Temple Grove, a preparatory school near Uckfield, since 1975.

Children's Evangelism

Readers who are interested in a Children's Evangelism Course to be held in Holland from July 10 to 30, should write to Rehoboth Springs Christian Youth Ministries, Klein Engendaalweg 52, PO Box 16, 3760 AA Soest, The Netherlands. Two hundred participants are expected from every European country; the Course will be taken by an international team of highly qualified teachers and instructors.

Nationwide Festival of Light

1981 sees the tenth birthday of the Nationwide Festival of Light, ten years since the mass rally in Trafalgar Square attended by 35,000 people. February 28 has been designated by the Festival as a Day of Prayer for the nation. In London this will be held at All Souls Langham Place from 10.00 to 19.00; it will be led by Denis and Beth Clark. A similar event is to be held in Liverpool on March 28 at the Centre Hotel behind Lime Street at the same time as the London meeting. This will be led by Michael and Jeanne Harper. Details and literature are available via 01-499 5949. These two prayer days will be followed in the spring by two one-day workshops to

be held by invitation in London and the Midlands, beginning a nationwide programme of teaching on issues dealt with by the Festival of Light.

Home Calls

Miss Helen Moffat, on October 12, 1980, aged 49. She had a lifelong association with Selkirk Street Evangelical Church, Hamilton (formerly Baillies Causeway Gospel Hall). To this church fellowship she came as a child. It was here as a young teenager she first trusted in Christ, was baptized and received into church fellowship. Here, too, she gave long years of diligent service in the church's life and work, setting an example to all by her regular attendance at services, interest in all the Lord's people and encouragement to those younger in the faith. Many missions and missionaries had her constant practical and prayer support. She was specially interested in Hamilton Missionary Fellowship (of which she was a founder member); the Maranatha Youth Centre and the Gospel Literature Outreach. Even when ill health and weakness came her way her interests continued. At the end she passed suddenly into the Lord's presence leaving a gap in the activities of her church which will be difficult to fill.

Edgar Small, on December 29, 1980. Saved in boyhood and connected with assemblies in the Port Glasgow and Greenock areas for over 55 years. For the past 12 years at Ardgowan Square, Greenock. In early life was an active member and used by God in Gospel preaching. A cheerful, pleasant and unassuming brother. Please remember his wife and family.

Robert Stephen, on July 9, 1980. Born into a Christian home on July 5, 1894, he placed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at 15 years of age following a Gospel service. He served in the Royal Engineers during the First World War, and while serving in Rouen in France he began his long association

with Army Scripture Readers. During the second World War he served as an A.S.R. at Bridge of Don Barracks, Aberdeen and at the end of the war he joined the work full time taking on the task of Scottish Secretary. He was Sunday School Superintendent at Hebron Hall Aberdeen for many years. It was in this assembly that he commenced the work that was to result in thousands of service personnel enjoying hospitality and hearing the Gospel. His wife Barbara

Abernethy was a true helpmeet, and together they gave themselves wholly to the cause of Christ amongst service men and women. She predeceased him by five years. Since 1945 Robert Stephen resided at Otago Street, Glasgow, and was a much valued and esteemed member of Elim Hall Assembly. He was always present at the gatherings of the assembly until deteriorating health prevented this in recent years. Many people knew Robert Stephen

simply as 'Uncle Robert'. He is remembered as a winner of souls, a wise counsellor and a brother beloved.

Mrs. Jean Stothers, on November 3, 1980, aged 75. Converted in her early teens, baptized and in Assembly Fellowship in Victoria Hall, Clydebank for 60 years, before her marriage she worked in Sunday School for several years. Most hospitable and a true 'Dorcas', she was a regular attender at assembly

meetings. Her interests were always in the Lord's work and in his people.

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

For your summer plans...

The Keswick Convention

NOW IN ITS 106th YEAR - A BLESSING TO ALL - ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS

England's glorious Lakeland plays host again in July to the 106th Annual Keswick Convention. **NO ADVANCE REGISTRATION is necessary: simply plan to come to Keswick for part of your summer holiday - and you will be a welcome participant in the Convention. You make your own accommodation arrangements: the Convention Registrar can help and assist in finding something suitable, be it a site for a tent or caravan; a guest house or hotel (see address below).**

The Keswick Convention is held from the 11th to the 18th July 1981.

Speakers expected this year include: The Rev. R. C. (Dick) Lucas - who will give the Bible Readings. The Rev. Chuck Smith (of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, USA) who will lead the Young Peoples' Meetings. The Rev. George B. Duncan, Dr. Raymond Brown, The Rev. Philip H. Hacking, The Rev. David Jackman, Canon Alan S. Neech (Chairman of Keswick) and others. All other enquiries to: The Secretary, Keswick Convention, 25 Camden Road, London NW1 9LN. (01 267 2264).



The Rev. Chuck Smith

The Keswick Holiday Convention is held from the 18th to the 25th July 1981. Speakers expected this year include:

The Rev. Alan Flavell - who will give the Bible Readings. Canon James Ayre, The Rev. Sinclair Ferguson, The Rev. Keith Weston, Mr. Derek Cleave (Young Peoples'), The Rev. Chuck Smith (USA), and others.

Enquiries for accommodation to: The Registrar, 12 Skiddaw Street, Keswick, Cumbria CA12 4BY. (Tel: Keswick 0596 725889).

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund:
Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during December amounted to £982.00.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 ONP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during December amounted to £8,785.56.

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.:
Exeter 1; Torquay 7; Teignmouth 15; 18; Chagford 22; Exmouth 25.

Campbell, B.:
Falmouth 1-6; St. Ives 7, 8; Falmouth 15; Christchurch 21-28.

Carr, G.:
Seven Kings 1; Thundersley 3; Hainault & Redbridge 5; Plympton 6/7; Seven Kings 8; Thundersley 10; Dagenham 11; Seven Kings & Redbridge 12; Redbridge 15; Woodford Green & Redbridge 19; Bramhall 21/22.

Clifford, D. L.:
Nassau (Bahamas), Marsh Harbour, Man-O-War Bay; Spanish Wells.

Galyer, W. S.:
Harrow 1; Worcester Park 3; POCA (London) 4; Catford 5 & 12; Reigate 8; Sheen 11, 18 & 25; Croxley Green 15, 19 & 26; Ruislip 17; Kingston 22; Civil Service Dept. CU 23.

Gillham, S.:
Strouden Chapel, Bournemouth 1; Poole Mission 1-8; Heatherlands Parkstone 10; Ebenezer, Weymouth 11, 18, 25; Blandford 12, 15, 16, 18; Adventure Time Club Prize Giving 14; Charminster, Bournemouth 17; Hamworthy 22; Three Cross 26; Junior House-Party 27 Feb.-1 March.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Waldensian Committee, London 8; Norwich 8; Ringland, Norfolk 15.

Iliffe, D. J.:
Chichester 1; Littlehampton 4; Westbury 5; Chichester 8; Moorlands Bible College 9-13; Worcester 15; Selsey 19; Coventry 21-24; Littlehampton 24.

Loader, G.:
Barnards Cross, Salisbury 7/8; Trowbridge 14; Cheddar 15; Exeter Youth House Party 20-22.

Lowther, G. K.:
Grimsby, Lincs. & Humberside 1-6, 12-28; Clumber Hall, Nottingham 7, 8; Stapleford, Notts. 9.

Mills, B.:
James St. Church, Oxford 4; Goodwood Ch. Leicester 7/8; Endlesham Church, Balham, London 15; Victoria Hall, Camberley 22; Wokingham Praise Evening 28.

Phillips, C.:
Christchurch, Woodbury 1; Crouch End 3, 10, 17; Brentwood 4, 11, 18, 25; South Ealing 5, 12; St. Albans Thirlmere 8; Bloomsbury 14; Kingston 15, 24; Oakleigh Whetstone 19, 22, 26; South Ruislip 22.

Pierce, D. H.:
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Short, S. S.:
Carlisle 1; Chingford 2, 8, 9, 16, 23; Romford 3, 10, 17, 24; Seven Kings 4; Hornchurch 5; Walthamstow 11, 18, 25; Reigate 12, 19, 26; Weston-super-Mare 15; Tunbridge Wells 22.

Stringer, D.:
Belfast 1; Birmingham 2-15; Bournemouth 16-28.

Tatford, F. A.:
Alresford 1; Ryde 4; Fareham 7; Winchester 8, 9; Colchester 14-16; Westminster 17; Bognor 21; 22; Bournemouth 26; Rugby 28.

Thurston, A.:
Newton Abbot 1; Strete 2, 9, 16, 23; Gara Bridge 3; Brixham/Chillington 4; Dartmoor Prison 6, 20, 27; Kingsbridge 8, 10, 24; Truro 11-14; Chillington 15, 18, 25; Gerston, Paignton 17; Dartmouth 26; Umberleigh 22.

Tryon, G. C.:
Blackheath a.m. & Fetcham p.m. 1; Kingston 3, 10, 17; Welling 4, 11, 15; Loampit 7; Kensington 8; New Cross 13, 20, 27; Beckenham 18, 25; High Wycombe 22; Kingston 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.

Boscombe:
Drummond Hall, Drummond Road. Upper Room Ministry. Conversational Bible Readings to be held on Saturday, February 7, at 7 p.m. Subject: John 14. Speaker: G. Davidson, Camberley. A warm welcome is given to all.

Chesham:
Gospel Hall, Station Road. February 28 at 6.30 p.m. Monthly Bible Readings. Speaker: D. C. Hinton (Hayes). Subject: Joshua 4.

Clydebank:
Victoria Hall, Shelley Drive. Annual Conference, 14 February at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: John Gillespie, Falkirk; Stanley Hunter, Kilmarnock; Allan Jessiman, Edinburgh.

Colyton:
The Gospel Hall, The Butts, Colyton, Devon. Monthly Bible Study. February 28 at 7 p.m. Speaker: J. Glenville. Portion: 1 Thess. chapter 5.

Croxley Green:
Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Meeting on February 28 at 7 p.m. Speaker: B. Osborne.

Cumbernauld:
Mosknowe Gospel Hall. Ministry Meeting, February 14, 7-9 p.m. Speakers: Mr. J. Grant, Bridge of Weir and Mr. S. Hunter, Kilmarnock.

Exeter:
Gospel Hall, Buller Road. Annual Conference, Saturday,

February 28. Meetings 3 & 6 p.m. Speakers: Ivor Harris (Plymouth) and Howard R. Norton (Norwich).

Greenock:

Ardgowan Square, Evangelical Church. Christian Conference, February 21 at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: W. Purdie, Edinburgh and W. K. Morrison, Falkirk.

Grimsby:

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. Monthly Ministry. February 21 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: R. Johnson, Leeds.

London:

London City Mission, 175 Tower Bridge Road, SE1 2AH. One day Conference on February 19. Subject: 'Ethnic Minorities'. Main Speaker: Rev. John Root (Chairman of Evangelical Race Relations Group). Also 'Youth Alive Weekend' on February 27-March 1. Subject: 'Full-Time Service'. Representatives from a number of home and overseas missionary societies will be taking part.

Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Vincent Road, Leagrave. Monthly Bible Reading. February 21, 4-5 p.m. and 6.30-8 p.m. Studies in the Gospel of Luke. Speaker: R. Hill (Bristol). Subject: Pillars of Triumph in the Manhood of our Lord: 'Presentation' (Luke 19:28-44).

Maidenhead:

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Rd. Monthly Conference, 7 March, 6.30 p.m. Address by J. Nickless (Littlehampton), subject: The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit — 'The fruits of the Spirit'. This will be followed by refreshments and discussion from 8.15 to 9 p.m.

Nottingham:

Cumber Hall, High Cross Street. Monthly Ministry. February 7 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther (Grimsby).

Woodford Green:

South West Essex Women's Missionary Conference, Salway Hall, Woodford Green, Essex. March 14, 1981, at 3.30 and 6.00 pm.



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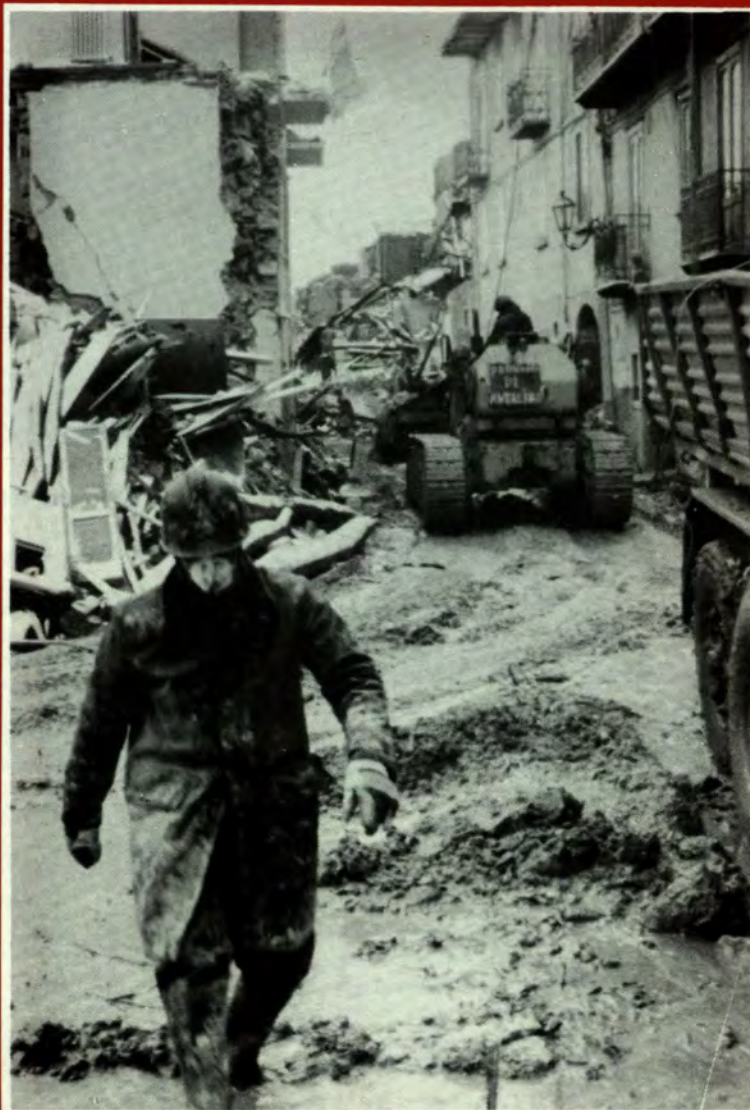
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The description of a major black 'fundamentalist' Baptist church in Atlanta, Georgia, on a recent BBC radio programme highlights again the vexed question of the extent to which the local church should be involved in the social needs of its community. About this church, there can be little doubt: deep commitment to helping its people and their neighbours in terms of housing, education and financial matters, had done nothing but increase its testimony and the power of the Gospel it preached. It is a commoner case in America than in this country, where we look to the welfare state to provide for such needs: yet it is in American circles that we sometimes detect the most extreme polarization between the Gospel and 'social work'. Is this another example of a latent British hypocrisy?

Hardly, as another American work illustrates vividly. **Discovering an Evangelical Heritage** by Donald W. Dayton, professor at the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary of Lombard, Illinois (Harper and Row, NY, 1976) is an exciting and important book. Dayton lays open an American evangelical heritage of concern for the outcast and oppressed in society, that is as striking and important as that of Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, to which British evangelicals look back. Yet, as Dayton shows, later evangelical publications have not stopped short at censoring and tampering with the writings of men such as the great evangelist Charles G. Finney in order to hide their commitment to, and involvement in, great movements of their day such as the abolition of slavery and women's emancipation. It is a sorry story. Too often such concern is regarded by earnest evangelicals today as directly inimical to the spread and furtherance of the Gospel: Christians who allow themselves to be taken up by such concerns are warned that they are losing their spiritual edge, and tend to be regarded as 'unsafe'. Is it not high time that we asked ourselves whether **both** aspects of Christian activity are not complementary: and whether Christians in **both** fields of endeavour are not equally serving their God, in the differing ways He calls? 'I have seen too many who have become involved in social work and have lost their spiritual cutting edge' replies someone: but have we not also seen too many churches that have so forgotten that their neighbours are men and women with human needs, that they have ended up preaching the Gospel only to themselves?

REFLECTIONS AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

Timothy C.F. Stunt

Mr. Stunt, M.A. and historian, teaches at Aiglon College in Switzerland. He visited the relief operations in Italy after the earthquake, and recounts his impressions.

Ninety seconds is a very long time when your house is collapsing around you. Do you remain inside or is it safer outside, in the narrow street where you risk being crushed by stones falling from the house opposite? This was the agonising choice faced by many thousands of Italians on the evening of the 23rd November in the earthquake which devastated a huge area South East of Naples. The solitary clock-tower at Pescopagano like so many others, bears witness to the moment of the catastrophe — 7.33 p.m. If it had been a few hours later the consequences might have been even worse as folk would have been asleep, but even so, as it was, several thousands perished and many, many more were left homeless with their houses either destroyed or unsafe for habitation. Much has been written in the press of the incompetence of the initial rescue operation, of the misuse of charitable funds and other ways in which criminals have exploited the situation, and of the many who died because help came too late. Of such matters I cannot write with any special knowledge because my wife and I arrived in the area some three weeks after the event, and although we had come prepared to live in exceptionally primitive conditions, the situation was by now well under control and basic facilities like drinking water, sewage disposal, electricity and telephones were available nearby. In some villages like Laviano, coffins still lined the streets as the bulldozers and diggers continued the search for victims, in others like Conza di Campania all life seemed to have been effectively extinguished beneath a pile of rubble with only a few shattered relics still standing. At Calitri however, where we were working, very few inhabitants had been killed, though over half the population were homeless. The problem was less acute, but in some ways more insoluble. One knows what to do when a man is trapped or naked, but what do you say to a man who for the time being has enough food or

clothes, but who has no other home than a tent or a goods-wagon in the local railway station?

We had heard on Sunday morning in our church of the need for volunteers, and as my school term was just finishing we got in touch with some Brethren who were leaving a few days later with two caravans and supplies of food and clothes. By the following Saturday we were with some Brethren from Foggia who during the previous weeks had shown considerable initiative, and whose evangelistic tent had been converted into a distribution centre beside Calitri railway station (some 2km away from, and 200 metres below the town itself which, like so many other villages in the region, is located on a hill top, at an altitude of 580m above sea level). For the next ten days we were in the company of a delightfully varied team of Italian Christians — most of them between the ages of 20 and 40 — trying to respond to the needs of the homeless and the hopeless. Much of our work was very ordinary, cooking, carrying water, sorting out boxes of clothes sent by Christians in other countries, loading vans with supplies for families living in remote farms and hamlets. Others whose knowledge of Italian enabled them to communicate very much better than we could, were thus free to listen to the requests of those who came to the tent for help, though sometimes of course the local dialect was unintelligible even to many Italians. The work of distribution was far from easy. Contrary to what many may assume, people who have lost everything, do not necessarily accept **any** clothing. The wife of a Neapolitan peasant will sometimes prefer to wear her own rags rather than use someone else's cast-offs, and however badly she may need a warm jumper, she will often go without the one that you offer her, if it is not black like the clothes she usually wears or if she normally wears a shawl. We have all, at some time, decided in a shop that if we could not find the particular colour or design for which we were looking, we would buy nothing at all. Likewise, disaster victims have a right to be choosy. Far be it from me to discourage anyone who has given clothes for charity, but having recently sorted the contents of many boxes of such gifts I have to

repeat what has often been said before: 'Shabby, torn or dirty clothes are not required.' Sometimes we had the impression that Christian folk had decided to buy themselves new outfits and that the earthquake had provided them with the ideal opportunity to get rid of the old ones and an excuse to replace them. There is something very paternalistic and unpleasant about a box of ragged clothes which are not good enough for us but which will do for the victims of a natural disaster, especially when there is sometimes a tract in the sleeve which begins: 'Do you know about God's perfect gift?'

In a situation fraught with difficulties the Brethren have done a very impressive job. A lot of sacrificial giving has provided immense supplies of food, household goods and new clothes for distribution. They know what is needed and the best way we can help now is by giving money which, we can rest assured, will be carefully used. It was a great pleasure to meet a veteran missionary, Stan Davies, who was on a fact-finding tour of the disaster area and who had renewed contacts with responsible brethren. (Anyone wishing to help should get in touch with **Echoes of Service** at Bath. Regular news is also available from Mr. and Mrs. Hodges at 22 Clive Street, Hereford, HR1 2SB.)

I found particularly impressive the careful thinking and planning that was going into the work. An elder from the assembly at Foggia, Salvatore Corcelli, a man with considerable organizational gifts, reminded his colleagues at Calitri of the problems the Italian Brethren had known after the war when people had become **Protestanti** or **Evangelici** in the hopes of benefiting from English and American charity. With an admirably clear sense of direction, Salvatore outlined what he saw as three phases in the operation. The first had been one of indiscriminate distribution in the face of desperate need. We are now, he went on, in a second phase. We are not here to provide what the state should be supplying . . . indeed, we have already been asked to 'turn the taps off somewhat' so that earthquake victims will not become dependent and lose the will to help themselves. Our objective now must be primarily a spiritual one in which the physical problems of our neighbours are related to their deeper needs. After all he stressed, the long term aim must be the building up of the Christian witness in the locality. In addition to the service held in the tent on Sunday morning, two weeknight meetings were started while we were there, meetings to which about fifty local people came, and every evening workers visited homes either in the outlying farms or in the railway wagons nearby, where they had been invited and where some time was spent in singing, prayer and Bible study.

During one evening service, one of the workers was giving a simple explanation of the gospel and he asked the time-honoured question: 'Where are you this evening?' Great was the general amusement

when one of his hearers quietly answered: 'In the goods-wagons!' It was an appropriate reminder of how closely physical needs have to be related to spiritual needs and vice-versa. We got the impression that here were many folk wide open to the gospel and that the Italian Christians were effectively taking up the challenge with enthusiasm. Several brethren for example were ready to come out to Calitri from Foggia (1½ hours drive each way) on Sundays to help with the work often until quite late at night.

The Swiss Brethren with whom we had travelled had come with details of a project which had not been finalized but which corresponded well with Corcelli's long-term view. They were proposing to erect a set of prefabricated units for which they wanted the local Brethren to take responsibility. A central 'communal' unit would contain kitchen, showers and dining facilities, part of which would be able to be used for meetings, and smaller independent living accommodation could be built round the communal nucleus. When we put the proposal to the mayor he entered into the scheme with enthusiasm making a piece of land available near the tent, and warmly thanking the Brethren for the invaluable help that they had provided for his town in their hour of great need. We have since heard that further South at Potenza, the Brethren were likewise given honourable mention on Italian television for their part in the relief operation. All credit to them here at Calitri, therefore, that they have not lost sight of the ultimate objective, and that there will soon, God willing, be the nucleus of a Christian community established in the heart of the lower area which is likely to be the location for any rebuilding programme.

Perhaps the greatest need of the victims among whom we were working arises from the rootlessness of their new existence. We knew that when we went back to Switzerland, there would be a home waiting for us. For them it was otherwise, and they needed at least to be able to talk about their loss to someone ready to listen — a vital part of any Christian ministry here. There was the old man whose wife had gone to live with his daughter in Tuscany, but who himself had stayed behind to look after the animals. Every morning he was outside the tent, ostensibly because he needed a jacket or a pair of shoes, but more likely because he wanted to talk to someone. It is hard to imagine the despair of a man who has worked abroad, perhaps in Germany or Switzerland, sometimes separated from his family for a very long time, and who now finds that the house for which he paid with his hard-earned savings, is no longer standing. How important that he should find a sympathetic Christian who will love him and to whom he can unburden himself in this time of crisis? Again, I think of the young lady whom we met in the ruins of Conza. Her parents had lived there and she came to visit them at weekends. It had been a quiet little haven in which to escape from the noise and bustle of a big



ITALIAN EARTHQUAKE: THE AFTERMATH

The prospect of Christmas under canvas: many of the country folk made homeless in southern Italy by the 'quake spent the end of year festivities in tented villages like this one. With herds of livestock to look after, they have refused to abandon the rural community in which they habitually make their living.

Photograph by Claudio Marcelli, Camera Press, London.

city. All of a sudden there was nowhere to go and no-one waiting for her. Who more than she, now stands in need of Christian compassion and understanding?

Salvatore Corcelli's brother Paolo from Pescara, has very evident pastoral gifts. He is widely read with a quick, lively mind, but there is an inner tranquility about him coupled with a delightful sense of humour which makes him easily accessible and a man in whom one readily confides. To illustrate his calm unruffled manner, the story is affectionately told by his fellow workers, how Paolo was preaching on the night of the earthquake but in an area where the tremors were much less severe. Considerably agitated, some of the members of his congregation began to get up and hurry from the church, while the mystified preacher gently remonstrated with them: 'My friends . . . what have I said to have upset you like this?' On our first Sunday we were privileged to hear him preaching in the tent at Calitri, from *Acts 16*. Very simply he told the story of Lydia, of the soothsaying slave girl and of the Philippian jailor con-

verted in the midst of an earthquake. It is a long time since I saw a congregation listening with such rapt attention as they did in the tent that Sunday morning.

A thought that came to my mind later is perhaps worth mentioning, namely that the jailor's need of salvation was brought home to him by the earthquake and not by the apostle. Paul's first words were ones of reassurance, that the jailor should not despair and commit suicide, and he only preached the gospel in answer to the jailor's question. He did not **take advantage** of the earthquake to scare the man into believing, any more than he used the dangers of shipwreck in *Acts 27* to frighten his fellow-travellers into repentance. It will require considerable pastoral discernment in Southern Italy to resist that temptation; to listen and to weep with the bereaved for their own sakes rather than as potential believers. There is an old Italian joke about a deaf man who is being asked a question by a person who is about to light a cigarette. The questioner points at the deaf man with a box of cigarettes, asking: 'Do

you know a doctor who lives near here?' and the deaf man replies: 'No thanks, I don't smoke.' How frequently we are tempted to answer the question we feel people ought to be asking and we ignore the problem that they are worrying about. Too often Christians have tried to use a catastrophe as an opportunity for securing a 'quick conversion' while their hearer's defences are down. Many years ago, an Indian asked a Christian missionary the simple question: 'Do you want me to become a Christian because you love me, or do you love me because you want me to become a Christian?' We do well to examine our motives carefully.

Let me not be misunderstood! I raise the matter in passing as one which we all do well to consider and not as a criticism of the Italians with whom we found ourselves. I did not get the impression that they were 'taking advantage' of the distressed. When Paolo Corcelli spoke of the Philippian earthquake he was speaking to people who had chosen to come to a service and who could therefore be presumed to have asked the sort of question posed by the jailor. No, the real test of our sensitivity is when we are standing beside a man who has just buried his wife and two children, and who has evidently been drinking heavily, or when we are sitting in a windowless and airless goods-wagon with a homeless family; these are the situations which call for an abundance of tact and sympathy, and I hasten to add that my observation was that the Italian Christians' work among such people was an authentic Christian ministry of love and compassion.

Standing in the rubble of a village like Santomenna, beside a house that seems to be unscathed, one sees the traces of the family whose home has been destroyed. Pages from a book, toys, a broken chair, a diary, all speak of the life that has been cut off. How easy to jump to conclusions about the meaning of the disaster! From the ruins of Conza we looked across to the apparently untouched village of Cairano. Why one, and not the other? Was this God's judgment? Was God responsible or was it, as one homeless mother told us, the work of demons? These are some of the simple but profound questions that Christians are being asked as they work in this region.

Different Christians will give different answers. Some will stress the **permissive** rather than the **active** will of God; others will talk of the cosmic consequences of the fall as being one of the risks in God's quest for willing followers rather than robots; others, often of a more Pentecostal temperament, will speak of demonic intervention in our world, recalling that we are wrestling with the powers of darkness. However we see the matter, there is one thing about which we must be quite unequivocal: such disasters are **not** the judgment of God upon anyone. As one Italian pastor quite rightly said, if God wanted to enter into judgment with the Italians he'd have started with the big business men in Milan

or the Maffiosi, who, contrary to popular belief, are not to be found in Southern Italy, but behind expensive desks in Rome. Christ's replies (*Lk. 13:1-5; Jn. 9:1-5*) are so uncompromising that we can and must resist the temptation to detect the finger of God's judgment in such tragedies while affirming faithfully his readiness to participate in, and his desire to deliver humanity from their consequences.

The most depressing experience of my time at Calitri occurred in a **tendopolo** (a temporary settlement of huts and tents) which I visited with two Italian Christians and a car load of food, clothes, and other daily necessities. In seconds the car had been surrounded by a grasping and quarrelling crowd and soon the car was empty and nobody seemed much happier — indeed, some seemed angrier because they had not received the same as some other people, or because we had no cigarettes for them. We distributed a small amount of Christian literature, but we felt the operation had been worthless because it was impersonal. In marked contrast was the homeless family whom we discovered on another drive, set back from the side of the road, huddled together around a fire in a shed. The mother's gratitude for the little help we could give her was matched by her simple-hearted thankfulness to God for the miracle whereby she and her four sons had managed to escape from their collapsing house. We spoke and prayed together for a few moments, and as we said goodbye she thanked us warmly for everything, but especially for the prayer. Her shining, lively face, like so many others that I have seen, radiant in the midst of misfortune will remain with me for a long time.

We have resolved to try to live more simply and more thankfully.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

From time to time I hear reports (which I would have difficulty in crediting were they not well authenticated) of places where the authorities insist that women or girls attending a gospel service should have their heads covered. Considering that the most literal interpretation of the one relevant scripture prescribes a head-covering for Christian women when they are praying or prophesying, one would suppose that the state of affairs I mention must be very exceptional — but reports of it come from a wide variety of areas. Do readers ever come across it, and if so, what steps are taken to discourage such a disincentive to evangelism?

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MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Bible Praise

Alex F. Macintosh

This is the first of a series of articles, originally prepared for The Witness, to help us enlarge our appreciation of music in our worship. Dr. Alex McIntosh lectures in Microbiology at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. He, his wife and his two sons are in fellowship at Olivet Hall, Falkirk.

The warble of a blackbird a few yards from where I write is a reminder to me that God has not confined to man the ability to express happiness and pleasure in song. Giving vent to feelings in song is a natural exercise for man. Is it a biblical exercise? Indeed it is.

When we turn to the Old Testament we find every emotion of which men are capable expressed in song. Let us look at some of these references and, as we go, try to group them according to their character. Some Old Testament Songs have an **instructional purpose**, as does the magnificent song of Moses in *Deut. 32*. The didactic intention is plain, for after reciting its words Moses said (*vv. 46, 47, NEB*) 'Take to heart all these warnings which I solemnly give you this day: command your children to be careful to observe all the words of this law. For you they are no empty words; they are your very life, and by them you shall live long in the land which you are to occupy . . .'

In the second place, song in Old Testament times provided an **emotional outlet** for the singer. In this category there are songs of **love**. Room has been made in the canon of Scripture for a book which is a love song from start to finish. There are also songs of **joy**. 'Clap your hands, all you nations; acclaim our God with shouts of joy' (*Psalms 47:1*). Then there are songs of **sorrow**. David's lament for Saul and Jonathan (*2 Sam. 1*) and his later lament for Abner (*2 Sam. 3*) express the depth of feeling of which he was capable. Sometimes sorrow made the heart too heavy for song.

'How could we sing the LORD's song in a foreign land?' (*Psalms 137*) is the sad response of the Hebrews of the Babylonian captivity to their captors' lighthearted invitation to 'sing up'.

Thirdly, song was a fitting medium for **thanksgiving**. Thanks for **deliverance** for instance, as was the song of Moses and the Israelites to the Lord when they exultantly sang (*Exod. 15*) 'The Lord is my refuge and my defence, he has shown himself my deliverer.' Joyful abandonment to the theme followed: 'Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took up her tambourine, and all the women followed her, dancing to the sound of tambourines.' Miriam sang the refrain: 'Sing to the LORD, for he has risen up in triumph; the horse and his rider he has hurled into the sea.' The same kind of song was sung by Deborah and Barak at a later period of Israel's history after the stirring deliverance on Mount Tabor (*Judg. 5*).

Thanks was given in song for **provision**. In the journey to Moab (*Num. 21*), when God gave water, the singing of grace was invested with biblical authority. Israel sang this song: 'Well up, spring water! Greet it with song.' Again, the song of thanks might be for **blessing received**. David ordained the offering of thanks to the LORD by Asaph and his kinsmen' (*1 Chr. 16:7*). David, like Moses, sang a song of review at the end of his days (*2 Sam. 22*), in which he traced the hand of God in his personal life. Many of Scripture's great benedictions (as in *Genesis*)

must have come into the category of songs for blessing received. Since they were often blessings upon future offspring, it would be natural to have them set to music and sung by the blest of succeeding generations.

Thanks could be given in song for **enablement**, on those occasions when 'mission fulfilled' could be written across an enterprise. At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, Nehemiah appointed two great choirs to give thanks and recaptured the days of David when Asaph led the song and acted as director of praise. Times of **dedication** were often times for song. Solomon, whose songs were a thousand and five (*1 Kgs. 4:32*), made lavish provision for song. When the ark was brought to the temple it was a great moment, signalling the end to the years of uncertainty and heralding a future of settled worship. The consecrated players were mustered with the singers who then (*2 Chr. 5:13*) 'joined in unison to sound forth praise and thanksgiving to the LORD, and the song was raised . . . in praise of the LORD . . . for his love endures for ever'.

Fourthly, song has always been a natural way of expressing **worship**. Jehoshaphat (*2 Chr. 20*) appointed men to 'sing to the LORD and praise the splendour of his holiness'. They sang: 'Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.' Among the 'Hallels', the 'Songs of Ascents' and elsewhere in the book of Psalms is the whole range of expression of worship, with elements of confession and supplication

besides.

In our brief survey of the Old Testament we have found song to be a vehicle of instruction, of emotional expression, of thanksgiving and of worship. There is no doubt that Israel worshipped the Lord with a profusion of sound and song. Did New Testament worshippers do likewise? References to song in the New Testament are much more sparse. When however, song is mentioned, it is introduced in a completely natural way as if it should occasion no surprise and require no justification. The simple gathering in the upper room drew to a natural conclusion with the singing of a hymn ('the Passover Hymn' NEB).

Few as are the references, it is interesting to note that the main strands which form the cord of Old Testament song are again present in the New Testament. If it be allowable to include Mary's 'Magnificat' (*Luke 1*), Zechariah's 'Benedictus' and Simeon's 'Nunc dimittis' (*Luke 2*) as examples of New Testament song (they were certainly to become songs of the Christian Church) then the first two of these are full of **instruction**. Fragments of Christian hymns such as are considered to be present in *Eph. 3:14*, and succeeding verses enshrine or summarize aspects of Christian teaching. Then song is a natural form of expression in times of **emotion**. Users of the New English Bible who are in good heart are invited to sing praises while the merry users of the Authorized Version sing psalms (*Jas. 5:13*). New Testament Christians sang in sorrow and in



Photograph by Tony Neeves

trial. Incarcerated in a Philip-
pian prison Paul and Silas, their
feet fast in the stocks, trans-
formed an inner prison into an
inner sanctum as they sang
praise to God (*Acts 16:25*).
The walls of their prison, so
often wailing walls for those
confined by them, were every
bit as good, they proved, as
sounding boards for praise. The
very bareness of the walls and
the innerness of the prison
magnified the praise so much
the more. How the singers illu-
minated that Old Testament
phrase 'songs in the night'. The
scene is in bold contrast to that
of **Psalm 137** with its hung
harps and weeping willows.
Farther from Jerusalem than
had been the captives in Baby-
lon, far from that mountain for
worship which the woman in
John 4 thought to be so neces-
sary, they showed that it was

possible to worship in spirit and
in truth in a town jail in another
continent. Nor was their song a
lament. It was a song of tri-
umph in trial. The singing of our
Lord with his disciples on that
dark betrayal night is of the
same kind for, knowing what
lay ahead, he had already
entered upon his time of trial.
Then we find song used in
thanksgiving. 'Sing thankfully
in your hearts to God, with
psalms and hymns and spiritual
songs' writes Paul to the Col-
ossians (*3:16*). Song was also
used in **worship** — 'when you
meet for worship' wrote the
apostle (*1 Cor. 14:26*) 'each of
you contributes . . . First in the
list of items is the contribution
of a hymn. The apostle also in-
structs the Ephesians (*5:19*) to
'speak to one another in
psalms, hymns, and songs;
sing and make music in your

hearts to the Lord'. Indeed it is
in the New Testament that we
have one of Scripture's most
intriguing statements about the
Lord: 'I will proclaim thy name
to my brothers; in full assembly
I will sing thy praise' (*Heb.*
2:12).

So in New Testament as well
as Old, we find song associ-
ated with instruction, emo-
tional expression, thanksgiving
and worship. The writer of the
Apocalypse was given a
glimpse of the victorious in
heaven. What could emphasize
more the continuity of praise
from Old Testament through
New Testament and into the
future than the scene un-
folded? 'They were singing the
song of Moses, the servant of
God, and the song of the Lamb,
as they chanted:

*"Great and marvellous are thy
deeds, O Lord God, sovereign*

*over all; just and true are thy
ways, thou king of the ages.
Who shall not revere thee,
Lord, and do homage to thy
name? For thou alone art holy.
All nations shall come and
worship in thy presence, for
thy just dealings stand
revealed'"* (*Rev. 15:3,4*).

It is good for us to pause at the
end of our review and ask
whether the song fare in our
place of worship is sufficiently
balanced, catering for these
various needs for expression
which we have. Too narrow an
interpretation of the kind of
song we can sing at what we
call a 'worship meeting' or a
'gospel meeting' (if we use
these terms) can result in
whole areas of needful song
being eliminated.

Thought: Does praise in my
church/assembly have all the
elements of Bible praise?

LETTER FROM JERUSALEM

Neri Beck

'We have come up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles.'

Such words are common on the lips of Jews from all over the world who come to celebrate the autumnal High Holy Days of the New Year and the Blowing of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. But seldom have they been heard on the lips of Christians. In 1980 for the first time 600 lovers of the Lord Jesus came from many lands and traditions, including Latins, Greeks and Protestants, to celebrate simultaneously with the Jews the Feast of Tabernacles, the most popular of the Jewish feasts since the time of Jesus as Josephus tells us. And celebrate they did, with their own succah (tabernacle), a ceremonial blowing of the ram's horn and stirring new songs. An Israeli Cabinet Minister came and addressed them; they planted trees, and apart from their own meetings, they joined with Jews at the Western (Wailing) Wall of the Temple area.

The idea was born in the mind of Jan Willem van der Hoeven, a Dutchman, and friend of Corrie Ten Boom. For several years he was the Warden of the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem. Through him many thousands became aware of the wonder of the empty tomb, from which Jesus, the Lamb of God, arose from the dead that Passover weekend long ago; and they felt, maybe for the first time, the impact of the release of the Spirit upon those who acknowledged Jesus as Lord from the Day of Pentecost onwards. Jan emphasized the debt we owe the Jews through whom God gave the revelation of both the Old and New Testaments; then He personified it in the person of Jesus, the Jew of all Jews, and finally demonstrated His life-transforming power in the first Jewish church.

But Jan felt that Christians must demonstrate their appreciation and support of Israel, the modern Jewish state, in a more tangible form. Did not God through the prophet Zechariah in his last prophetic call, demand of the nations that they come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles? Might God use the nations to bless Israel at the Feast and bring Israel into the spiritual fulfilment of it? For their part the people of Israel feel alienated from

the world, though they have built a state where human rights and democracy prevail. Israel is surrounded by 14 hostile nations some of whom have sworn to destroy her. Only Egypt has dared to make peace with her. Abroad, antisemitism stalks Jews, and the very weekend I write four were killed by a bomb placed outside a synagogue in central Paris. In the memories of millions the horror of the Nazi threat of extermination and its dreadful execution remains alive. Israel is treated more like a pariah dog and kept at a distance whilst oil-rich neighbours are wined and dined, their shortcomings overlooked for the sake of a 'mess of black gold'. Even in Britain, where nearly 750,000 Jews live, there is still a tendency to lump together 'all Jews, Turks, and infidels' (as in the words of the Anglican prayer which was repeated in churches until recent years).

Did the organizers bring comfort to Israel? Rev. David Pawson of Guildford, the speaker on the first evening, sensed God saying to him that He had waited too long for the day when the believers would take a clear stand in public for Israel, acknowledging their debt and failures, and declaring their faith that God will fulfil His promises to His ancient people. There was a strong tide of appreciation in Israel, as seen in the large number of sympathetic messages the organizers received from Israelis, and also the favourable coverage on the news media. Maybe the crowning seal on the timeliness of the celebration was the formal opening of a 'Christian International Embassy' in the heart of the city. 1,000 people gathered to witness the opening and hear Jan Willem speak of the shame that nations should remove their embassies from Jerusalem in response to the unfavourable wind of world opinion over the law on her status. Our relationship with the people is not governed by small differences of opinion over political issues. The 'Embassy' is a sign of recognition by Christians of Israel's special calling before God: it is to be a lighthouse to the world recalling God's purpose to and through Israel; and a channel of practical support for the people of Israel. The opening took place on the same day as the Jerusalem March when thousands of Israelis march upon



Photograph: Christian Witness to Israel



Photograph: Christian Witness to Israel

the capital each year. Many of the Christians took part in the march and were delighted to be cheered by the onlookers in the city.

For one well-known believer who had been a mother in Jerusalem since before the foundation of the State of Israel, this day was the fulfilment of one of her great hopes. She was 74 years of age, and some days previously she had been assured in her heart that her time to die had come. She put all her affairs in order, bought herself a burial plot and informed her neighbour for the first time where her important papers lay. She danced at the opening of the 'embassy', she took part in the march and she was still celebrating on her way to the evening meeting when the Lord took her to be with Him. The day touched

the hearts of well-known Israelis also. The Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi could hardly speak for emotion. Mr. Teddy Gollek, the well-known Mayor of Jerusalem, seldom uses words stronger than 'impressive' to describe events, but he confessed to being deeply moved, and spent an hour telling a member of the Israeli Cabinet of the impact on him. They are planning a larger celebration in Jerusalem next year at the Feast of Tabernacles from October 14-21. Who knows how important this may be in breaking down the barriers between Jew and Christian?

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

'Swarming Things'

Question 184

The creatures described in Leviticus 11:29-31 as 'swarming' do not behave in the way that the word normally implies. What sort of behaviour is implied here and have you any idea of why these creatures were regarded as unclean?

The word is used to refer to animals that gather together in great numbers and move about among one another. It is applied in *Genesis 1:20* and in *Leviticus 11:10* to marine life. The other distinguishing feature of the creatures that are here categorized as unclean is that they move on their bellies, on all fours or on many feet (*Leviticus 11:42*).

It is not self-evident why these were regarded as unclean. If we knew more about the previous history of the Hebrews or about the religious customs of their neighbours or about the way in which these creatures were perceived, we might be in a better position to give an answer. (After all, why do the British dislike eating horse or dog, highly regarded as these are by the French and the Chinese?) Health may have had something to do with the prohibitions (in the providence of God), but it would be unrealistic to imagine that this consideration would play any significant part in consciously determining attitudes within Israel. So far as the divine purpose is concerned, the main reason for the prohibitions will have been to mark Israel off as a community that was 'different' from its neighbours. So far as the nation was concerned, these will have been communal taboos for which no reason need be assigned save that they had divine sanction.

It has recently been suggested that the creatures referred to in these verses may have been seen as transgressing the divinely ordained categories which mediate order within creation. Such an attitude may underlie *Leviticus 19:19*. By the same token, it is suggested that the creatures referred to, since they neither walk nor fly nor swim, offend against this canon. The suggestion is not without its attractions but the specific references to 'creeping things' in the good creation celebrated in *Genesis 1:21-26* constitutes a difficulty in accepting this explanation.

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

'The Law of Liberty'

Question 185

What do you think is meant by the 'the law of liberty' in James 1:25 and 2:12? I have seen it suggested that James is referring to the Law of the new covenant which Jeremiah prophesied would be written by God upon men's hearts (Jeremiah 31:33). I wonder whether James means simply the Old Testament law, without those parts which the Lord Jesus rendered obsolete by his death?

The first point to be clear about is that a phrase such as 'the law of liberty' is clearly intended by James as a paradox: because it seems self-contradictory, the hearer is encouraged to think carefully. A law is usually imposed upon the people who have to keep it without their having any choice in the matter; further it introduces an element of restriction into their lives. For the content of the law referred to by James, we may consult 2:8 which shows that he is thinking of the law of love. If we had asked the author for an explanation of why this was a 'law of liberty', then he might have made two or three different points in reply. The first would be that whereas in Judaism the law was a burden imposed by God, for the Christian the law of love is something which is freely accepted. A second way in which the Christian associates liberty with God's law is that he is not obligated to keep it in order to gain salvation; he is thus set free from the bondage of fear. In the third place, the believer is able to experience this law of love as a path to freedom. This is because he has received a new nature. To an unbeliever, it is unnatural to keep God's law. Although the law is 'holy, just and good' (to use Paul's words) and represents the purpose for which mankind was created, fallen human nature rebels against this and views it as a sort of slavery. But the new birth brings with it a new nature. The presence of the Holy Spirit in every believer means that doing God's will now corresponds to the most profound impulse within him. He realises that he is most free precisely when he is most fully committed to the will of God. There are parallels to this thought in *Ezekiel 36:26, 27* and *Jeremiah 31:33*, although we cannot say how far these Scriptures were consciously in the writer's mind.

SPECIAL REPORT

Mr. Speaker and a Special Anniversary

I had heard of the man in the House of Commons who was supposed to exhibit a Scripture text on his desk, but when you have worked in Westminster as long as I you will have heard of many things. Obviously he had not dropped many evangelical sparks into the parliamentary gunpowder or it would have said 'Bang!' loud enough for me to have heard that also. Even so, when my good friend, the Rev. Robert Beattie, invited me to hear this unusual man preach I was delighted; after all, that such a giant in the land should preach at all was a marvel of some magnitude. The 'giant' was, of course, The Speaker of the House of Commons, the Rt. Hon. George Thomas, and the occasion was Sunday 23 November 1980, at the 157th Anniversary of Brixton Hill Methodist Church. The Speaker was not the only dignitary present. The Past President of the Methodist Conference, Edward Rogers was there; in fact it appeared everyone who was anyone in the Borough of Lambeth was there. Mrs. Pam Verden, the Mayor was there, and read Ps.23; a leader of the Jewish Community was there, and he read a psalm from the Jewish Prayer Book; a member of the

London Business Men's Full Gospel Fellowship was there, and so on. Add to this Her Majesty's Lieutenant, representatives of the Armed Forces and Police, plus the largest congregation I have seen between four walls since I heard Lloyd-Jones back in the sixties, and you have no mean congregation. They sang **Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, and Thine be the Glory** with an enthusiasm which might have impressed J. Wesley himself, who had 'preached at Lambeth, in the chapel newly prepared by Mr. Edwards, . . . ' on Friday, December 2, 1778. But what we were all waiting for was the **Anniversary Sermon** to be preached by George Thomas. Would he let off a bundle of political fire-crackers, so often saved up by Christian MPs to throw among large congregations? Would he be so carefully vague as to be accepted by all the world? We should soon find out.

As he stood in the pulpit he did not appear to have much going for him, that is until he spoke. Then almost immediately you were caught up by his magnetic Welsh accent. After telling us how he had lived in Brixton forty-nine years ago, and something of the changes, in-

deed how things had changed since 1823, when the local worker would have been little better off than a serf — we can forgive just one political thrust — he launched into his sermon. He had three texts: **What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? Ps.8:4; Who is this of whom I hear such things? Luke 9:9; and Abide in me, and I in you. John 15:4.** From his first text he did not put man on the throne, as I half expected he might, but firmly at the foot of the Cross. Man had nothing except that which God had given him. Even our ordinary faculties were gifts of God. Of these he treasured memory; for through memory he could still see and hear his old mother.

Who is this . . . ? asked Herod. Why it is none other than the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, replied George. Jesus Christ, the only hope for the individual and the masses; he was God, who came here and 'could not pass by people who were suffering. He was the One who was interested in ordinary people.' The One to whom we could take our problems; the One through whom we could obtain salvation.

Abide in Me, and I in you. God's Holy Spirit is with all true believers. George knew saints

who had suffered beyond measure. He recalled one such — the late Dr. Sangster, who although crippled with an incurable creeping paralysis had still written to a prayer group while he had feeling left in two fingers! During his message the Speaker confessed his own complete dependence upon God. He admitted that if he missed his quiet time he never caught up during the day. He also regretted things had come to such a pass that those to whom we sent missionaries might now well send them to us. He ended by reminding us that those who had the faith to build that church at the bottom of Brixton Hill so long ago faced the problems which we face today. They were problems which only God could solve.

So ended a great sermon by any standards. I was not surprised at the evangelical tone in this church, for Robert Beattie had told me once, when I was undergoing attacks by our enemy, that the Lord Jesus Christ could put to flight all the devils in hell. What was surprising was that a Speaker of the House of Commons should be such a firm believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Surely there is hope for the old place yet.

Report by Leslie James



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LOOKING AT BOOKS



The Secular Saint

A case for evangelical social responsibility

Robert Webber

Paternoster Press. 219pp. £4.50

God's people in God's world

Biblical motives for social involvement

John Gladwin

IVP. 191pp. 2.95 paperback

Evangelicals and social ethics

A commentary on Article 5 of the Lausanne Covenant

Klaus Bockmuehl

Paternoster Press. 47pp. £1.20 paperback

In the first book, **The Secular Saint**, Robert Webber from Wheaton College USA sets out very clearly three models of Christian behaviour within culture, using examples from scripture and from church history. There is the *separational* model; examples Abraham, the pre-Constantine church, the anabaptists and the modern Christian community movement. The key here is *withdrawal* from the world. In the *identificational* model the key is *accommodation* to the world set-up: Joseph, the Constantine church, the Lutheran church and modern civil religion. The clue to the *transformational* model is *optimism*, moving in thought from creation, through redemption to eschatology and exemplified by Augustine, Calvin and the modern liberation movements. Finally Webber suggests that no one model adequately describes the relationship of the Christian to society and proposes a fourth which he calls the *incarnational* model. Christian social responsibility should follow that of Jesus Christ who was *separate* from the ideologies that ruled the world yet *identified* with the world, and by his death, resurrection and second coming *transforms* the world.

God's People in God's World has a similar structure in that it looks at the biblical basis for motives and behaviour in the world; it looks at protestant tradition and separatist views and at the example of Jesus. But it also considers in more detail such topics as politics and marxism; work and unemployment; sex, marriage and the family; honouring human life and property. Gladwin maintains that Jesus showed the Good

News to have political, social and ethical implications for every society and human institution.

The third book **Evangelicals and social ethics** summarises the major papers on ethics given at the Lausanne Congress and in particular works through Article 5 of the Lausanne Covenant. One of the major questions the monograph poses is, should we seek to *bring* liberty to the captives and *free* the oppressed, or *proclaim* liberty to the captives and freedom to the oppressed? He concludes that evangelism is a preaching gospel but that such needs as the protection of life, the provision of jobs and aid for refugees should also be the task of the Christian church.

Review by Barbara Baigent

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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.

For Readers' Forum this month, Amy Ginnings has contributed an account of the Women's World Day of Prayer, which is always held on the first Friday of March.

What is The Women's World Day of Prayer?

This is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year, and who in many countries have a continuing relationship of prayer and service. The annual day of celebration is the first Friday in March. More than 150 countries and islands join in. It brings together women of various races, cultures and traditions in closer fellowship, understanding and action throughout the year. Through it women around the world affirm their faith in Jesus Christ, and share their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows, opportunities and needs. They are encouraged to become aware of the whole world, and to take up the burdens of other people and pray with and for them. Through the day women affirm that prayer and action are inseparable, and that both have an imponderable influence in the world. It is a movement of 'informed

prayer' and 'prayerful action'. **How did it begin, and how has it grown?**

The movement began in America in 1887 when Mrs. Darwin James (the mother of seven children) who grew up in the aftermath of a nation divided over slavery, became concerned for the poor immigrants from Europe and the Orient who had come to the shores of America seeking a new life. She felt the work of the Women's Board of Home Missions (of which she was President) was only making a dent in the problems of these helpless newcomers. Believing that those who prayed persistently would become advocates of the helpless, she called for a day to be set aside for prayer. Others joined in and the offerings helped minority groups in the USA. In 1890 two Baptist women visited the Orient, saw the great need for education for women, and for Christian literature, and returned home to establish a day of prayer for overseas missions. In 1919 the two separate national days of prayer were combined into a day of prayer for missions worldwide. In 1920 the women of Canada joined in, and in 1922 joined with women of the USA to observe the first International Day of Prayer. In 1927 during the International Missionary Council meeting, the women had a greater vision; not only the two countries joined in prayer, but women throughout the world praying for all the concerns of the Kingdom of God. The Women's World Day of Prayer, as we now know it came into being. The world Headquarters are in New York, sponsored by Church Women United. While the recorded beginnings of the Day are in America, it is the desire of Christian women everywhere that has created

the worldwide fellowship of today. By 1936 women in 50 countries participated, by 1957 the countries involved totalled 145, and now Christian women of more than 150 countries are united each year in prayer.

The Movement in Great Britain

In 1928 in a conference in Jerusalem Mrs. Robert Forgan first heard about the movement, and on her return gathered other women of various churches together to plan a day of prayer. In Edinburgh in 1930 the first service was held in Scotland, so Great Britain came into the movement. Our Scottish friends still work through their own National Committee, England joined in 1932, Wales in 1933, and Ireland in 1934. About 250 women were present at the first service in London; now in England, Wales and Northern Ireland there are about 3,000 branches linked to the National Committee, and nearly half a million women attend the services held on the Day. Each year new branches are formed, uniting for this day the women of most of the churches in the neighbourhood. Each branch has a committee, with representatives of all the churches willing to take part, which is then responsible for all arrangements for the Day at local level.

Where are the services held?

Services are held in private houses, schools, in the open air, in small churches and great cathedrals, and under every conceivable condition of weather. The same Bible passages are read in Tonga and Tanzania, in Pakistan and Pennsylvania, and substantially the same prayers and praise are offered in more than sixty languages and a thousand dialects.

Golden Jubilees

In February 1980 our Scottish

friends celebrated their Golden Jubilee with a service in St. Cuthbert's Parish Church, Edinburgh, when over 1500 women gathered from many parts of Scotland. It was a pageant of world events during the past 50 years. It was a most memorable occasion. When the names of the countries taking part were read, banners all around the church were raised, reminding all of the many millions of women who meet to praise and pray and worship. The hymn 'At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow' was sung joyously, but with a lump in many throats! In 1982 the Committee for England, Wales and Northern Ireland have arranged to celebrate our Golden Jubilee in the Royal Albert Hall, London, and look forward to meeting women from all over the country, and some from overseas whom we expect to be with us to add their praises to ours for all that God has done over the years. In October 1980 a service attended by over 1500 women was held in Coventry Cathedral, based on the 1981 theme 'The Earth is the Lord's', and was greatly appreciated.

The Day of Prayer, like every day, begins at the International Date Line in the Pacific, and the first observances are in Tonga, Fiji and New Zealand. As the day progresses round the world new groups in city, countryside and hamlet join in the praise and prayer until it ends as the sun sets over St. Lawrence Island, off the coast of Alaska.

J. Ellerton's hymn (sung to St. Clement) 'The Day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended' has become very meaningful to many women, and in Great Britain is almost universally sung towards the end of the service. An alternative is suggested for those who find

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G.J. Polkinghorne

The Inerrancy Debate

In recent years, 'inerrant' with regard to the Bible has become a shibboleth in some circles and a new class of 'inerrantists' has arisen in the churches. However, many who hold a high view of biblical inspiration and authority have misgivings about the term. Thus, the famous Dutch evangelical theologian, Berkouwer, dismisses it 'as a needless and misleading addition to the confession of Scripture as reliable and infallible', mainly because he saw it as involving a mechanical idea of inspiration, as under-rating the human and time-related elements of Scripture and as diverting attention from Christ and salvation. Similarly, James Denney once said: 'The Word of God infallibly carries God's power to save men's souls. That is the only kind of infallibility I believe in.'

Jim Packer, a staunch champion of inerrancy in his books *Fundamentalism and the Word of God* and *God has spoken*, returns to the charge in *Under God's Word* (Lakeland, 1980, 159pp, £1.50, paperback). He has seen 'the ghost of an untheological inerrancy' which has scared many Christians away from the concept. Indeed, he appends a review of a book by Lindsell which he evidently regards as haunted by this spectre. But in a fine chapter he effectually lays the ghost and states his theological view of inerrancy in a balanced and careful manner which merits spelling out.

Inerrancy does not mean 'confidence that by our own independent inquiries we can prove all Scripture statements true . . . but certainty that all Scripture statements can and should be trusted.' Nor does it entail a 'commitment to treat all Scripture as consisting of didactic propositions' as if it were no more than a textbook of law or a rule book. Positively, it means that 'whatever Scripture, interpreted with linguistic correctness, in terms of each book's discernible literary character, against its own historical and cultural background, and in the light of its topical relation to other books, proves to be saying should be rever-

ently received, as from God.' He sees it especially as an interpretative principle, so that all that Scripture declares is to be harmonized and integrated without remainder and taken as God's message to me.

Thus defined, inerrancy allows full scope for reverent scholarship — textual, historical, grammatical, literary, theological. It diverts attention from alleged discrepancies and from matters of history and science to the realm of moral and spiritual and theological truth. This accords with the Bible's claim for itself, all too often overlooked in the heat of battle — 'all scripture is inspired of God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work' (2 Tim. 3.15ff.).

Packer puts the debate into proper focus by sandwiching his chapter on the subject between others which give guidance on the understanding and use of the Bible by individuals and churches. We may not share all his enthusiasm for the Anglican Prayer Book, but we can learn from its Lectionary with its provision for the regular reading of Scripture in services. Cranmer wanted the Old Testament read through once a year and the New Testament thrice (cycles reduced by modern revisions to five or even seven years). While popular abbreviated services may achieve a kind of outward success, Packer comments, they spell inward, religious failure. As for ourselves — do we not notice a tendency towards shorter services together with the displacement of the Bible from its former position of prominence alike in public and private? While the Bible can manage quite well without our defences, we desperately need its teaching, admonition and power. Whatever our attitude to the term 'inerrant', let us see to it that the Word of God has scope to speak to us in devout study and accurate, systematic exposition. We commend Dr. Packer's book to every lover of the Bible.

THE GOSPEL OF ST JOHN (45)

F.F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

ii. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN

(John 9:1-41)

(a) The Pool of Siloam (9:1-12)

9:1-5 Then, passing by, he saw a man who was blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, was it he or his parents who sinned, that he should be born blind?' Jesus replied, 'It was neither he nor his parents who sinned; it was that the works of God might be manifested in him. We must do the works of him who sent me while it is day. The night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.'

As the healing of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda in chapter 5 introduces the presentation of Jesus as the one who executes judgment and imparts life, so the healing of the blind man at the pool of Siloam illustrates Jesus' claim (made already in *John 8:12*) to be the light of the world. In the lively account of the present healing (by contrast with the earlier one) the man who has been healed plays an active part. The cut and thrust of animated debate in this chapter, preceded and followed by the monologues of chapters 8 and 10, bears witness to the evangelist's versatility of style.

How the disciples knew that the man's blindness was congenital is not said, but it was this knowledge that dictated the form of their question. In their thinking about divine retribution they had not advanced far beyond the position of Job's friends. Blindness, they imagined, was a punishment for sin — but for whose sin? Did God punish the parents for some sin previously committed by causing their son to be born blind? The very idea is an aspersion on the character of God, but before we condemn the disciples let us reflect that even today one meets Christians whose thinking about God runs along very similar lines to theirs. (There

is no suggestion here of the son's blindness being due to venereal disease contracted by one or other of the parents; to suppose otherwise is to credit the disciples with a degree of medical knowledge which they could not have possessed.) Or, if his blindness was not due to his parents' sin, might it be due to his own? It does sometimes happen that men and women are themselves responsible in part for physical ailments that beset them; it may be implied in *John 5:14* that the condition from which the cripple was healed at the pool of Bethesda was something for which he himself was to blame. But it is not usually so, and it seems particularly inept to suggest that congenital blindness could be due to the infant's own sin. The idea that an infant might sin while still in the womb, however, appears to have been entertained by some rabbis, and the disciples may have thought it possible. (It is less likely that they thought he might have sinned in a previous existence.)

The clause 'that he should be born blind' has in Greek the form of a purpose clause (*hina* with the subjunctive) but the sense requires us to take it as a clause of result. On the other hand, the clause in Jesus' reply, 'that the works of God might be manifested . . .' (again *hina* with the subjunctive) is a clause of purpose in meaning as well as in form. Jesus bids the disciples have done with their talk of the man's blindness being caused by somebody's sin. The purpose of his blindness was that a divine work should be wrought in him and the divine glory be revealed (as it is revealed in all the 'signs' of this Gospel). This does not mean that God deliberately caused the child to be born blind in order that, after many years, his glory should be displayed in the removal of the blindness; to think so would again be an aspersion on the character of God. It does mean that God deliberately overruled the disaster of the child's blindness so that, when the child grew to manhood, he might with his first sight see the glory of

God in the face of Christ, and others, seeing this work of God, might turn to the true Light of the World.

'We must do the works of him who sent me', said Jesus, referring primarily to himself. At the time of the earlier healing he had said, 'My Father keeps on working until now, and I also work' (*John 5:17*) — doing the things he saw his Father doing. 'I have come down from heaven', he said in Galilee, 'not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me' (*John 6:38*). If his disciples were minded to be disciples indeed, then these were the works which they also must do, in fellowship with their Master (cf. also *John 14:12*).

Moreover, the Father's works must be done 'while it is day' — which meant, so far as Jesus himself was concerned, 'while I am in the world' (verse 5). The coming night was the period of his withdrawal from the world: so in *John 13:30*, Judas went out into the 'night'; the others remained in the circle of the True Light while the True Light was with them (cf. *John 12:35f.*). To the same effect Jesus, when he was about to raise Lazarus from the tomb (another 'sign' in which the glory of God was shown), said, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If one walks by day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world' (*John 11:9*), with the implication of an analogous truth where the light of the heavenly world is concerned.

The true light was not totally removed when the time came for Jesus 'to depart from this world to the Father' (*John 13:1*), for it was then mediated through others; but Jesus is here concerned with the existing situation, which would not last more than a few months now. The clause 'I am the light of the world' echoes the affirmation of *John 8:12*, but it does not carry the same emphasis here. The independent pronoun *egō* is absent here, so that this statement does not rank (as that of *John 8:12* does) among the 'I am' affirmations

of the Fourth Gospel. The incident introduced in these opening verses of *chapter 9* is an acted parable setting forth Jesus' ministry as 'the light of the world'.

9:6, 7 Having said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva; then he smeared the mud on the man's eyes and said to him, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' (The word means 'Sent'.) So he went off and washed, and came back with his sight.

The application of saliva in healing is attested in Mark's record of the deaf and dumb man in the Decapolis (*Mark 7:33*) and of the blind man at Bethsaida (*Mark 8:23*), but there is no word there of its being mixed with earth to form a paste, as here. When his sightless eyes had been covered with this paste, the man was told to wash it off in the pool of Siloam. The pool of Siloam may have been the nearest convenient water-supply, but the evangelist points out a further significance. Siloam, he says, meant 'sent' — the Hebrew form *shiloach* (as in 'the waters of Shiloah that flow gently' of *Isa. 8:6*) is patently derived from the verb *shālach*, 'send' — and it speaks of Jesus, the Sent One (Gk. *apostolos*) of God, who alone is qualified to impart inward illumination. Without question, the man did as he was told: he went and washed the paste off his eyes in the pool of Siloam, and found himself able to see for the first time in his life.

The pool of Siloam, south-west of Ophel (the city of David), near the junction of the Tyropoeon Valley and the Valley of Hinnom, received the water which was carried, or 'sent', through a channel from the spring of Gihon (later called the Virgin's Fountain) in the Kidron Valley. It is called the 'Pool of Shelah' in *Neh. 3:15*, and is to be identified probably with the 'Lower Pool' or 'old pool' (*Isa. 22:9, 11*), lying a little way to the south-east of the present-day Pool of Siloam.

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sonal conduct. Then, biblical churches can be more persuasive in their teaching about personal (as well as social) morals and more energetic in their counselling and discipline of those in fellowship. The model provided by the lives of those in the public eye is very influential. Most effective of all is winning others to Christ and giving them good teaching and example. External controls are less and less effective and must be replaced with internal self-control.

Legal Justice also plagued northern Israel. It was the practice to 'take bribes' and 'deprive the poor in the court' (*Amos 5:12 NIV*). Court was held in the city gate. God rebukes the prevalence of lies in the court and commands, 'maintain justice in the court' (*Amos 5:15 NIV*).

Today we see justice in the courts hindered by legislation creating merely technical offences, by the unequal ability to hire a good lawyer, and by crowded schedules which prevent a speedy trial. Those within the legal system and common citizens need wisdom from God to discover correction for the technical problems and conversion to God in order to be honest and impartial.

God's message to us through Amos is, Seek me and live; (*Amos 5:4*)

Let justice roll on a river,
righteousness like a never-failing stream.
(*Amos 5:24 NIV*)

1. Outline:

- I Prophecies against 8 Nations, chapters 1-2
- II Three Sermons against Israel, chapters 3-6
- III Five Visions about Israel, chapters 7-9:10
- IV Promise of Israel's Restoration, 9:11-15

AMOS: THE FOUNDATION OF SOCIETY

Leroy Birney

Justice and ethical conduct between men is the foundation of society in the eyes of Amos. Israel had achieved peace, security and prosperity, but it was overrun within thirty years of Amos's prophecy because it ignored God's demands for personal and social righteousness.

God calls all nations to account for their acts of injustice. Amos proclaimed judgment upon six pagan nations as well as upon Judah and the northern kingdom of Israel (*Amos 1-2*). All were called to account for sins committed in wars, and the predicted judgments were to come upon them through war. The nations which knew God's Word were called to account even more strictly than the pagan nations because their responsibility was even greater.

The bulk of Amos's prophecy, however, was directed to the northern kingdom of Israel. He denounced their (1) false religion, (2) social oppression, (3) moral corruption and (4) legal injustice.¹ He urged them to repent and seek the Lord in order to escape judgment, but to no avail. Modern nations which have heard the preaching of the gospel for many years and have experienced many revivals will be called strictly to account for obedience in the four areas which Amos emphasized.

False Religion was rampant in northern Israel. The people worshipped at the shrine of the golden calf in Bethel. They worshipped things made by men rather than the one true God who made all. That is idolatry. Such false religion is seen in the theological liberalism of over half a century that has denied the authority of the Bible and has contradicted many biblical doctrines. Many false cults have also taken root. In addition, there is widespread idolatry — worship of material progress, brute power, personal wealth and comfort.

Another class of false religion is that which practises orthodox worship but neglects social justice and personal righteousness. The Lord says, 'I take no delight in your solemn assemblies . . . let justice roll down like waters' (*Amos 5:21, 24 RSV*). God will take no account of our regular breaking of bread, prayer meetings, and evangelistic crusades if we try to maintain darker skinned human beings in a lower status, overlook our own personal moral vices, and are indifferent to inequities in the administration of justice.

There are signs of a strengthening of true biblical

faith in these days. Great numbers have been rescued from the drug trip by Bible-preaching 'Jesus-freaks'. The theologically liberal ecumenical movement is floundering. Conservative churches are growing. Theological conservatives are making their voices heard in main-line denominations. The Charismatic movement has reached into sectors formerly resistant to the gospel. Bold witnessing is no longer looked down upon and evangelism is a major concern of the day. If we let this revival have full effect so that we become lovers of social and legal justice and moral purity along with true theology, it will be a source of fantastic blessing and renewal.

Social Justice was conspicuous for its absence in northern Israel. The poor were exploited and kept poor (*Amos 2:6, 8*). There was unfair distribution of wealth because those who had much insisted upon having more and more in order to increase their personal comfort (*Amos 4:1*). Unfair business practices which cheated the consumer were the order of the day (*Amos 8:5-6*).

To be obedient to the Word of God, we should support efforts to ensure fairness in the market place. We must also repent of our attitude of superiority to the poor and to other ethnic groups. A heart full of love will push out the walls of a narrow mind and heal us of our prejudices against other ethnic groups. May Christ pour out his love in our hearts and drive away the shadows of prejudice so as to make us biblical advocates of social justice for all.

Moral Corruption flourished in Israel's time of security and prosperity when Amos was prophesying, as it does today. Sexual immorality and perversion were commonplace (*Amos 2:7*). Those who held to the Word of God and proclaimed it were ridiculed (*Amos 2:12*). Violence and robbery were a major problem of society (*Amos 3:10*).

We recognize the same corruption today. Sexual looseness, street violence, pornography and false caricature of Christianity in literature, not to mention habitual lying, indifference to those in distress and the abuse of alcohol and drugs, all show the erosion of personal morality. We need to recreate an atmosphere which encourages high personal moral standards. We can begin by being openly and unashamedly upright in our own per-

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SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

H.L. Ellison *Kingship (1)*

Throughout the Ancient Near East, kingship was an apparently universally recognized principle, though at one time supreme power often lay in the hands of a woman. Irrespective of sex the king or queen was regarded as the personal representative of the supreme god or goddess of the city or people. As such he or she was not merely the head of state but also of religion.

A fundamental concept in Israel, both in the North and in the South was that God was their King, and that Israel was His people. What made Israel different from its neighbours was that during its first centuries in Canaan it did not have a human king to represent Yahweh.

No explanation is given for the difference, and it is left to us to guess at some of the reasons. In *Deut. 17:14-20* the possibility of having a king is neither commended nor criticized, but is considered as being a possibility. Scripture gives no indication whether, in the fulness of time, God would have appointed one. Theological presuppositions suggest an answer to some, but that is another matter.

One reason why God did not replace Moses by a king may well have been the inter-tribal rivalries to which *Joshua* and above all *Judges* bear such eloquent testimony. The rebellion of Dathan and Abiram shows that if Moses had claimed kingship, he would not have remained unchallenged.

It was not until the united power of the Philistines threatened the very existence of Israel, that the tribal elders found in their desperation — note the 'all' in *1 Sam. 8:4* — the willingness to ask for a king, whatever result the sequel might have on tribal pride. The approach was made to Samuel, the unchallenged representative of God. In other words they wanted God, through Samuel, to make the choice.

God's answer to Samuel's prayer (*1 Sam. 8:7-9*) contains an inherent ambiguity and apparent contradiction. God told him that they had not rejected him (Samuel), but that they were in fact

doing it (v.8) in a way comparable with the way they had been rejecting Him over the years. They had recognized Samuel's authority as God's spokesman by asking him to find them a king, but they were telling him by that very request that God was not able to use him in the crisis facing them, even though he had saved them years before from Philistine power. They were recognizing Yahweh by expecting Him to provide them with a suitable king, but they were tacitly suggesting that He would not be able to help, except by conforming to the accepted pattern.

This is an attitude we meet elsewhere in Israel's history. The other outstanding example was the building of Solomon's temple. Although its successor was still standing, when the *Letter to the Hebrews* was written, its writer ignored it, looking back to the Tabernacle, which was the expression of God's will for worship under the Sinai Covenant.

There is a very wide-spread weakness among God's people, which causes them to assume that He is confined to a certain pattern in His working. Paul had to face it, when his authority was questioned because he was not one of the original Twelve. Today one frequently meets the opinion that he and not Matthias was the rightful replacement for Judas Iscariot. This idea never seems to have occurred to Paul.

Other examples are that a man cannot carry out an effective work as church leader unless he has been 'properly' ordained, episcopally or otherwise. Similarly many seem to think that God's blessing is confined to a building specially set apart for the purpose, in which the services conform to an accepted pattern.

To question God's choice of instruments, as Israel questioned the usefulness of Samuel in his old age, is to reject God, even when it is done in God's name.

(to be continued)

ENOCH

H.P. Wotton

A veteran servant of God, Mr. Wotton has written more than fifty gospel tracts and has contributed over many years to The Witness and other Christian publications.

In the epistle of Jude, Enoch is referred to as 'the seventh from Adam'. Seven is the number that indicates spiritual perfection. Though God brought into being a physical creation, everything He does has a spiritual origin because He himself is a spiritual being, and He being absolutely perfect, what He does must be absolutely perfect also. In the record of creation we are told that 'on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made.' (*Gen. 2:2*). He rested on that day, and it was the rest of One who had completed a perfect work; and from the time when the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters to when the work of creation was accomplished, everything was perfect.

When we think of 'in the beginning' we are reminded of the solitariness of God, for He who is without beginning of days entered into time (if we may so speak) from a past eternity in which there was no created being, no person but the infinite Three, who constitute the incomprehensible unity of three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — one God.

His sovereignty reveals that He was under no compulsion to bring anything into being, and that His purpose to do so must have been subject only to His own will. His existence in a past eternity reveals that He is so sufficient in and of himself that He stands in need of nothing. Yet we are told in *Proverbs* that even before man had a being God's delights were with the sons of men, and the servant of God we are now considering was among this highly honoured number.

Divine teaching

The meaning of the name Enoch is **teaching** or **initiation**, and in *John 6:45* we read of the people of God that 'they shall all be taught of God'. Enoch must have had much of this teaching to have walked with God so consistently, and for such a long period of time. We teach our children to walk, and when they have learned the lesson we leave them to do it themselves. But a walk with God is such an exalted honour that it cannot be continued without the aid and prompting of the divine Teacher.

We may read the word of God and hear many sermons, but our profiting from these things depends on inner teaching. We must be taught by the Spirit of God if we are to learn anything effectually. The disciples knew some things about Jesus before the day of Pentecost, but they knew more after, for Jesus had said to them before His departure, 'These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things'. (*John 14: 25, 26*).

'Enoch walked with God.' (*Gen. 5:22*). What greater testimony can a man have than that he did this? We may do many things that have an outward appearance of righteousness without taking one step in the company of God. This is sad, but it is a fact, and many deceive themselves by thinking that their prayers, their church attendance, their alms, and other things, are a walk with God, when it depends on no outward work or circumstance whatever, but on a state of heart. If we do not walk with God in thoughts of faith and love for Him we do not walk with Him at all, for without acceptable thought we can do nothing to please God.

The spiritual mind is that from which all the graces of the Spirit flow, as they are enabled to do so by His power. We may well ask, Can we love a person who is not often in our thoughts, be submissive to one we ignore, obey one we forget days without number?

The same interests

In everyday life people walk together because they have the same interests. Artists have fellowship with artists, people who are fond of music with others of the same taste, and so on. They all believe that they are doing a good thing, and so they have fellowship with others they believe are doing a good thing also. It is impossible for two to walk together if they are not agreed. Enoch could not walk with God if he did not believe that God's way was the best way; if he did not believe that to be spiritually minded is the most satisfying and most exalted kind of life that anyone can have. The high quality of Enoch's faith enabled him to see this. It set him on a higher plane than that of his contemporaries, who were allowing their lives to fritter away in the trivial things of time.

There is a delightful reciprocity in walking with God. It is impossible to walk with Him without experiencing joy; and God is pleased when He sees that our hearts are not full of the affairs of this life, but of the joy of the Lord. The secret of Enoch's walk was that he delighted himself in God, and the secret of George Müller's wonderful life of faith was the same. He sought the glory of God in everything he did. He said, 'I know what a lovely, gracious, bountiful being God is . . . I was satisfied with God; I delighted myself in God; so it came, that he gave me the desire of my heart . . .'

Enoch's background and translation

Enoch's life was set against the background of a dark sky, for however much godliness there may have been on the earth, it was no doubt now on the wane. Enoch was only three generations before Noah, who was his grandson, and in the days of Noah we read that 'God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually'. (*Gen. 6:5*).

We read in *Jude 14* that 'Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied . . . saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints'. From this we may conclude that he, like Noah, was a preacher of righteousness. But however this may be, his life was a sermon and a bright light that shone from day to day, and year to year, whether the people responded to it or not. In *Genesis 5:24* we read that 'Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him'. It is a good thing that *Hebrews 11:5* informs us of Enoch's translation; for had it not done so, we might have assumed that God had taken His servant by way of death. But the faith of Enoch was so strong that it enabled him to triumph so completely over death that he did not experience it.

He had walked with God for so long and so well that God, as it were, allowed him to walk right into His arms. But it was a changed, glorified body, for flesh and blood as we know it cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. The translation of Enoch reminds us of the time when the Lord's people shall be caught up to meet Him in the air, when we shall be ever with the Lord.

MEDITATIONS ON MARK (7)

Profession and Practice David Brady

Towards the close of his earthly ministry, Jesus descended one morning the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives and made his way toward Jerusalem and the temple. He was hungry and 'seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for', adds Mark, 'it was not the season for figs' (*Mark 11:13*). If these latter words had not been included in the accounts of Matthew or Mark, we might have imagined that the explanation of Jesus's not finding fruit on the fig tree was that this particular tree, unlike others that might have been encountered, was in some way blighted or immature. But Mark inserts the words 'it was not the season for figs', implying thereby that not only this fig tree but probably all others as well were without fruit at this particular season, about the end of March and just before Passover, about six weeks, in fact, before the first-ripe figs appeared. Since the fig tree bears fruit for about ten months in the year, we might say that this was really the one time of year when anyone hoping to find fruit would be likely to be disappointed. It seems clear, however, that Jesus, who was returning to Jerusalem from Bethany and Bethphage ('Fig-town'), would have encountered fig trees in abundance along the route. The point then is not simply that Jesus came to a

fig tree selected at random hoping to find fruit to satisfy his hunger. Rather that, in the words of Mark, he saw one 'in the distance . . . in leaf' and made his way toward this particular tree because its abundance of leaves suggested that, unlike the majority of other fig trees at this season, this tree might be a fair way more advanced than the others in its maturation. Jesus was clearly acting a parable in which the precocious foliage of the way-side tree stood for the splendid (but empty) ritual of the Judaic religion. Although it was not the season for figs, here was a tree that made a fair show as if to suggest its own superiority over other fruitless trees around. Mark says that Jesus saw the tree 'in the distance', and so the people of God ought to be seen afar off, like a city set on a hill. But if the city set on a hill be a mere ghost-town, then the wayfarer will be bitterly disappointed. In a similar way the tree, when more closely examined, proved to be the source of discouragement and frustration. Jesus had wasted his labour in making his way toward it, for it proved fruitless. It was cursed not so much for being barren as for being false, for its abundant leaves gave hope of riches which it did not possess. It proved to be nothing more than a huge practical lie and embodied falsehood.

So it was with the Jewish nation, and so it may also be

with God's people of a later age. The Apostle Paul, perhaps recollecting the symbol of the cursed fig tree, reminded his Gentile readers in Rome, that 'if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you' (*Rom. 11:21*). Quoting the words of Isaiah, Jesus said of the Jewish people of his day that 'this people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me' (*Mark 7:6*). On another occasion he caricatured the men of his generation under the image of a son whose father told him to go and work in the vineyard. The son answered, 'I go, sir', but he did not go (*Matt. 21:28-31*), and we are again warned of this kind of hypocrisy by the example of Ananias and Sapphira's misguided attempt to flatter God with insubstantial pageant (*Acts 5:1-11*). God is looking for solid fruit, not for just the leaves of a fair profession. Let us make sure that our profession is matched by our deeds. We should remember the warnings given elsewhere (e.g. *Heb. 6:7-8*) and take care that our lives are pleasing to God, lest we too should be put out of the stewardship. But let us not be overcome by morbid self-examination; it is God who is at work in us 'both to will and to work for his good pleasure' (*Phil. 2:13*). A flower that is turned toward the sun will produce its blossom in due time, and if we turn our affections toward the Lord Jesus Christ we cannot help be-

coming fruitful in his service. Proceeding from the fig tree to the city, once again it is Mark alone among the evangelists who tells us in the account of the cleansing of the temple that Jesus 'would not allow any one to carry a vessel through the temple' (*Mark 11:16*). This is no doubt one of those details which stuck in Peter's mind as he witnessed those events and which in time he passed on to Mark as worthy of note in recording the happenings of those epochal days. But why is it important? We know from what is recorded by other Jewish writers that in order to demonstrate a proper spirit of reverence in worship it was forbidden to enter the temple mount with staff or sandals or wallet or dust on one's feet, to make of the place a short-cut, or to spit within the precincts; furthermore, in accord with the spirit of *Jer. 17:27*, no vessel was allowed to be carried into the temple (*Mishnah, Berakhoth IX.9*; *Josephus, C. Apion. II.8*).

Did Jesus then accept the estimate of the pious Jew of that day that the temple was indeed a place specially sacred above other places in the worship of God? First appearances might suggest that this was indeed the case. We must remember, however, that when questioned by a Samaritan woman about the relative worth of Jerusalem and Gerizim as God's chosen centres of worship he pointed her to a time fast approaching

when neither of those places could claim exclusive right as the holy place in view of the Father's claim to a worship which is in spirit and truth (John 4:20-24). Stephen was required to defend himself against the charge brought against him (as it had been brought against his Lord before him) that Jesus would destroy their holy place and the reply which he made was an assertion that there is in fact no place on earth which is to be regarded as holy ground, and yet that every place where God reveals himself to men is in a sense holy ground (Acts 7). We might surmise in this case that a tour of the so-called 'Holy Land' will profit us little if we do not make the place of our daily occupation a holy land

for God. In the words of William Cowper which we sometimes sing,

*O Lord, where'er Thy people meet,
There they behold Thy mercy-seat:
Where'er they seek Thee,
Thou art found,
And every place is hallowed ground.*

The temple precincts then were holy only inasmuch as those who came there sincerely sought to meet God and to humble themselves before his holy presence. Those whom Jesus found there were not so engaged and he alone had a true estimate of their hearts. But it

was not just the priests who had allowed the corrupt practices of barter and extortion to thrive there. These words found alone in Mark's account show us that our Lord's chastisement was directed also at those ordinary people who in the course of their business made a thoroughfare of the temple as they took a short-cut through its courts between the noisy city and the Mount of Olives on the east.

Applying the principle involved to ourselves, let us ask ourselves whether or not we regard the worship of God as a short-cut to our own ends. If we were really honest, would we alter the burden of our prayers from 'Thy will be done' to 'My will be done'? Do we engage

in Christian worship or service from any other motive than the glory of God and the honour of our Saviour, or do we allow ourselves to be persuaded that in some sense 'godliness is a means of gain' (1 Tim. 6:5)? Do I attend church services to gain an air of respectability, do I preach to gain the applause of the listeners, or do I (as indeed happens in some places) sing in the choir in order to earn a little extra money? Are we, in the figurative language of Scripture, bringing our baskets filled with firstfruits to set them down before the altar of the Lord our God (Deut. 26:1-4), or are we really trying to carry a vessel through the temple?

An Archaeological Handbook

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

Guides to the findings of archaeological research are less plentiful in the N.T. field than the O.T. From Pickering and Inglis comes *The Archaeol-*

ogy of New Testament Cities in Western Asia Minor by Edwin Yamauchi (180pp, £3.95, paperback), which gives the latest information on twelve cities, all but one mentioned in the N.T. It is especially useful in its

account of Pergamum, Miletus, Sardis and Ephesus, if rather brief on Thyateira and Philadelphia. In most cases there are plans and black and white pictures to support the text. The bibliography inevitably cites American editions.

The translation of this into English and the provision of a glossary of obscure technical terms would have helped the general reader, who will find the going heavy in places, but will be glad to have this book on his shelves for reference.

TWO USEFUL BOOKS

Review by Prof. D. Wiseman

Review by
Prof. D. J. Wiseman

Concise Bible Handbook
Edited by D. & P. Alexander
Lion, 384pp.

Concise Bible Encyclopedia
Organizing Editor P. Alexander, Lion, 256pp, £4.95 each; £2.95 (paperback).

The concise *Handbook* brings the text of most of the major articles in the *Lion Handbook to the Bible* (1973) to an even wider readership. This 'pocket' edition is ideal for

prizes or as a gift to anyone beginning in the Christian way and should introduce many to the purpose and value of Bible study. It provides a reliable evangelical introduction to all the books of the Bible with brief notes and background articles written by scholars, yet clear and relevant. With so much packed into its double-columned pages this is outstanding value, especially in the paperback edition, for a work at this level.

The companion volume in the *Concise Encyclopedia* aims to provide a look-it-up book

for beginners with 'sheer information'. To do this articles have been selected from the one-volume edition (highly commended in a review in *The Witness* in November 1978 as was also the issue in ten parts in December 1980). However, it should be noted that several articles have been curtailed or rewritten, many provide no chronological guidelines (except those by A. R. Millard) and the result is sometimes extreme brevity or information at a very elementary level. There are no cross-references save the contents

page and much will depend on the reader coming to it with the right purpose for there is more 'selected' than 'sheer' information in this handsomely produced volume. The hardback edition is somewhat expensive when compared with the original full-colour illustrated edition which should still be sought. Lion could well provide a great service to both beginner and advanced Bible student alike by adding to the series a *Concise* (selected) Bible Concordance with a system of cross-references to the major versions now in use.

the first two lines inappropriate if the service is held early in the day! But what a reminder of prayer worldwide from first daylight to the last of sunset's glow as women gather to praise and pray for each other, feeling united in their hopes and longings and thanksgiving. The *Offerings* taken at the services, after expenses have been met, are sent to the main Bible Societies for Christian literature work, and full accounts shown yearly on the Order of Service.

Who writes the Service each year?

The International Committee chooses the theme of each year's Service, and the country to be asked to prepare the basic draft. This is translated and sent from New York headquarters to each national committee. With 150 countries sharing in this Day it is easily understood that sometimes the phrasing is a little difficult to follow. The writer country expresses their needs and hopes and prayers. These may not immediately be seen to be ours, but if we can think into the situations then we can join in their prayer, and realise afresh our own blessings. Difficulties do arise from time to time, but if the Background material, the sheets about the service, the Bible Study on the passages are studied, this should be of

great help to the leaders of the service, and the speakers. It is a great temptation when the draft Service is received — it would be so easy to turn this into a wholly English service, over which there would be no queries, but then we should be praying with half a million women who receive the Service from us, and not the untold millions worldwide who will celebrate the day. We try to keep it as it is written, altering only where essential for clarity's sake. Translation into Welsh is done by one of the Committee, and Services for the Blind and in Urdu are also arranged.

The themes down the years have given splendid scope to speakers. Who would not be glad to speak on 'The Lord is Thy Keeper/Perfect Love casteth out Fear/Christ our Hope/That they may have Life/Abide in Me/One Flock, One Shepherd/Who shall separate us?' to quote but a few down the years.

Do 'our' Assemblies join in this?

Our assemblies have been represented on the National Committee for many years. First by Mrs. F. N. Martin for a number of years. Her help and counsel are still remembered. Then by Mrs. J. Fairbairn until her home call, since when I have had that honour. The others of the 23

representatives are appointed by the heads of their denominations. In our case, as we have no central body to appoint, we have to be co-opted by invitation. Where our assemblies appoint someone to join the local committee, they have a very real worth, having a part to play in recommending suitable speakers, and in a host of ways. I found over many years, in different localities, that this was a rewarding experience as one met and prayed with many women of differing church connections, and found how much one had in common in our real desire to serve the Lord. At our annual conference in London, several voices complain each year 'the only church in our area who won't join in is the Christian Brethren'. I can only pray for a wider vision in these areas, and I fear I only represent those of our churches who are open to some of the opportunities God gives through work such as this. Sometimes I find that one Catholic has joined the committee locally. To show that this is not a serious 'threat' as is sometimes suggested, I would mention that when the delegates from all over the world met in Zambia in 1978, about 100 being present, only one Catholic was among that number. One of our 23

representatives on the National Committee is a Catholic, deeply interested in God's work among women, and in prayer to that end. I have never heard mention of anything controversial. Where women meet to pray together for women all over the world, and for the extension of God's Kingdom; where His Word is our textbook, and is read in every service; can we not trust Him to guide and bless? I would gladly correspond with any sister who knows that her assembly would be willing for her to represent them on the local committee, and to announce the Day once a year, and would give her any necessary details, and introduce her to the committee in her area, where she would receive a warm welcome.

'Let us pray with the comfort of His abiding love; With the sense of His indwelling grace. With the knowledge of His plenteous wisdom; With the sureness of His endless power; With the joy of His radiant presence. With the hope of His certain promises.'

From the 1955 service from Argentina.

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The January Question

When attention is drawn, as it frequently is, to the disproportionately high number of women, as compared with men, engaged in missionary service overseas, it occurs to me that one explanation is often overlooked. There are many areas at home where women's opportunities for an evangelistic, pastoral or teaching ministry are limited. On the foreign mission field, however, they are able to exercise their gifts with much less restriction. If men have ample opportunity to fulfil their ministry at home, the call to fulfil it overseas may be less insistent; for women the greater opportunity to exercise their gifts to the full on the foreign

mission field may in itself constitute a clear call. Is this as important a factor in the situation as I think it is?

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

Let us get the figures before us first; and, as a good example, those shown in the 1980 Daily Prayer Guide published by Echoes of Service. These show that out of a named total of 486, brethren amounted to 195 while sisters were 291; which means that 60% were women, and 40% were men. Expressed another way: sisters

continued on Page 17



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.

Mr. Smith's and Mr. Warren's Propositions

From Mr. Ernest J. Rowson

Dear Mr. Coad,

I should like to comment on two contributions to the November *Harvester*.

1. It is with the utmost diffidence that I take issue with Mr. Ron Smith (*Readers' Forum*) as I have a high opinion of his Fellowship's lively newsletter, *Impact*. Yet it was with growing dismay that I read his nine propositions, or theses, on declension. Really, they were a series of rhetorical questions so constructed as to make reasoned debate difficult within their terms.

The style is both allusive and elliptical; the targets vaguely generalised. I had the feeling that a series of ill-defined *bêtes-noires*, or Aunt Sallies, were being held up for our disapproval.

For instance, in Proposition 1, who are the 'some' — and is there not a false antithesis between love and sound doctrine? Might one not equally ask if there can be sound doctrine without love? Then again, is Proposition 5 an oblique poke at those deemed unduly empathetic with neo-pentecostalism? I think that a thorough linguistic analysis of this contribution would reveal a phenomenon just as worrying as the errors, real or imagined, which Mr. Smith seeks to confute; generalised denunciation of ill-defined evils.

I hear this genre of exposition all too often in conferences and local ministry. It worries me, for it seldom builds up the hearer, and is rarely an

effective antidote.

2. I heartily endorse Mr. Warren's wistful plea ('An Elder Looks On') for a fresh study of basic principles, if only to blow away the cobwebs of some of our pseudo-scriptural certitudes. Recently, in the West Country, I lunched with two brethren who gently set about dismantling mine. In their church — 'assembly' is an archaism — they have communion, not the breaking of bread, in the evening once per month. Duly shaken, I enquired whether they were not aware of the crypto-Levitical principle of worship before service, in its strictest temporal sense.

But worse was to follow.

They sometimes have a presiding brother, and ministry by arrangement afterwards. Anglicans, not to mention others, speak from their platform; and sisters take audible part in prayer. I should not be surprised to learn that the elders wear pectoral crosses.

Returning by train, hemmed in by joy-riding senior citizens, to my citadel of ecclesiastical rectitude, I could not help rejoicing in the rich variety it pleases the Lord to foster amongst His people — though I did remember from time to time to be duly scandalised. Following the comment in your December editorial, I look forward keenly to the window-opening of future issues.

Yours sincerely,

E. J. Rowson

24 St. George's Crescent
Worsley
Manchester M28 5AN

The Christian and the Bible

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,

The final issue of *The Witness* contained a letter from Mr. S. Linton in which he noted that Dr. D. Brady had written (*Witness*, Aug. '80) 'for the

Christian the final revelation of God is something far greater than a written document'. Mr. Linton commented 'This leads us on to ask how the living Word is made available to the believer in an on-going sense — and the answer must be through the indwelling Holy Spirit, who teaches, guides and reveals the living Word.' The foregoing prompted some reflections on the attitude of the believer to the scriptures. In this connection, I acknowledge a debt to a perceptive analysis by Adolph Saphir (1831-91), a converted Jew.

It seems to me that this subject is particularly pertinent for 'Christian Brethren', seeing that they have been characterized as those who know their Bibles. The OT scriptures were committed to the Israelites. They regarded them as God's Word, revered their very letter, and studied them assiduously. Those scriptures described the features of the Messiah, but when He stood in front of the Jews they did not know Him, and failed to understand the living Word, Jesus Christ. Our Lord's explanation of this fact is to be noted. It is that the Jews thought that in the scriptures they had eternal life, but even so did not have His Father's word abiding in them (*John* 5:37-40).

Akin to this, there is a way of using the Bible in which one is occupied with the words of scripture — the letter — rather than the spirit of it; of asking 'what is the text?', and not 'what is the message of God?' I remember Mr. E. W. Rogers saying that it was easy for anyone who knew his Bible to speak for half an hour, but that whether he uttered the message of God for the time was quite another matter.

Every scribe who has become

a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old (*Matt.* 13:52). If, from the scriptures, the Spirit is pointing to some new thing in our own day, let us beware of replying 'By no means Lord' (*Acts* 10:14), if the ground of our rejection is only that 'we have a law' — our interpretation of the scriptures as dead words — and 'by our law' that new thing cannot be, that new life must die. In his day, Saphir felt that the church was in danger of ignoring the existence of the Holy Ghost and her constant dependence on Him, and of substituting the Bible for the Spirit. It seems to me that the danger remains.

Finally, does not the following, written around a century ago, have a voice for us?

'The opinion of the world concerning us is, that we are guided by the Bible; and to defend ourselves and influence the world, we begin to show that we are right logically, and historically, and ethically, in believing the Bible. But what we ought to have impressed upon the world is, that we are guided by the Holy Ghost, and that Christ is our life.'

Yours sincerely,

L. L. Fox

9 Warden Close
Maidstone
Kent ME16 0JL

Two Elections?

From Mr. Colin Porteous

Dear Mr. Coad,

The letter entitled 'Two Elections?' in the January *Harvester* asks why it should be so generally assumed that God has only one chosen people.

The answer to this is ultimately bound up in the revealed unity of the Godhead, and of the divine purpose. There is only one

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has revealed to us his plan to head up, i.e. to unite, all things in Christ (*Eph. 1:10*); one Lord, who in the nature of the case can have only one body and bride, and who has expressly stated that there shall be only one flock, with one Shepherd (*Jn. 10:16*); and one spirit, poured out in order to unite Jew and Gentile alike in the one and only Church of the living God. There is one Bible, one Gospel, one humanity, one new man (*Eph. 2:15*), one faith, one baptism (*Eph. 4:5*). In view of all this it is incredible that there should be ultimately more than one chosen people of God, which would imply more than one way of salvation (but see *Gal. 1:8-9*). One only need compare *Mt. 8:11* with *24:31* (= *Mk. 13:27*) to see that 'the elect' in the Synoptic Gospels are not exclusively Jews. In these two verses there is a double parallel between 'the many' and 'the elect'; and 'the east and the west' and the 'four winds . . .' etc. The former verse expressly teaches the fundamental and eternal unity of all true believers. It is a germinal statement, whose implications are fully brought out in the *Epistle to the Galatians*, that the true children of Abraham are those who share his evangelical faith from whatever nation. The same truth is beautifully pictured in the apocalyptic vision of the holy city, New Jerusalem, in *Rev. 21:9, 12*, where the twelve tribes of Israel are an integral part of the bride, the Lamb's wife. What God has joined, let not

man put asunder. Your correspondent rightly quotes the parable of the one cultivated olive tree in *Rom. 11* in order to affirm the ultimate conversion of Israel, to which we say a hearty Amen! That chapter is, to our knowledge, the only one in the Bible which may be said to teach 'two elections'; or rather two phases of the election of Israel, the present believing minority (*v.5*), and the 'dormant' national election (*v.28*), which Mr. Oulton Lee rightly describes as being 'in abeyance' up till now. But Paul goes on to say in *v.31* that Israel will eventually obtain the same mercy as us, and that is Gospel mercy! Many of the best MSS. have a second 'now' as the penultimate word of this verse: ' . . . that they also may now receive mercy' (see *Nestle, RSV margin, etc.*). It is difficult to imagine how the Jews could be saved after we have all gone home to be with the Lord, as He is coming 'inflicting vengeance upon those who do not know God, and upon those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus' (*2 Th. 1:8*). Now is the time to evangelise the Jews, and to pray for their conversion, which God shall surely bring about in His own time, by the one and only Gospel — there is no other way, nor ever will be. When will we wake up to the fact that the Bible is all about the Gospel, God's final word to man? I remain, Yours sincerely, Colin Porteous 90 Rue Florimond — Laurent 76620 Le Havre France

Replies to Professor Bruce continued from Page 15

exceeded brethren by 50%. Single brethren only amounted to 6; and the 102 single sisters were 35% of the total sisters. The 1981 DPG is expected to show about 40 fewer names; but the relevant percentages, and those of the evangelical societies, will probably amount to much the same. Therefore, we must not regard the men as a small minority. And now for my explanation. Almost all brethren can follow the occupation of their choice, marry, help bring up any family, and engage in the Lord's work according to their ability, unless the call of the Lord to other lands is irresistible. But, in the case of sisters, most hear the call in their early adult years, and go to other lands where they know the need is greater for their service. And if the right man comes into their life on the mission field, as so often has happened, they probably go on much the same. Therefore, I do not think that Professor Bruce's 'one explanation' is the reason for the 'disproportionately high number of women'.

Mr. Alan R. Davies replies:

In reply to Professor Bruce's proposition in the January issue concerning the call of women to the foreign mission field, it seems hard to find supporting evidence relating to those from Brethren Assemblies. Of the 100 single ladies from the U.K. recognized by Echoes, 60% have nursing or medical qualifications. It seems reasonable to conclude that their strongest motive is the healing and care of the sick. In the case of most married women, we would probably find that in the early days overseas, their first motive and concern would be the supporting role for their husbands. However, I have reason to believe that many women, single and married, participate and become involved in various aspects of evangelistic, pastoral and teaching ministry simply because of the exigencies arising as the work grows, and the opportunities that are thrust upon them.

Mr. John Kilpatrick replies:

If what Prof. Bruce says is true, and I believe that such factors do make a significant contribution to the formation of the missionary complement, then our loss is the gain of brethren elsewhere! However, it seems to me that there is a parallel to this form of discrimination which is also discriminatory, but this time, no positive benefits are to be found. It expresses itself as a tendency to encourage young men to better themselves financially or socially. Young women tend to escape exposure to this temptation produced by our middle-class consensus; and so, neither

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pushed in local affairs nor enticed away to comfortable respectability, more young women than young men have seen their way clear to cross cultural barriers with the Christian message.

The real tragedy is not that so many young women have to exile themselves in order to exercise their God-given gift, but that so many young men are enticed into safely respectable life-styles which come nowhere near to using their true potential. It is the responsibility of every elder to depreciate the systems of this world (which, after all, are perfectly capable of doing their own canvassing), while exhorting young men and women to look for opportunities to serve God.

In addition it may be wise to regard missionaries as normal human beings! At present it is not easy for missionaries to avoid the impractical glorifying of their position. This atmosphere can make it difficult for potential missionaries to take the initial step of even considering it possible that they could stand on the missionary 'pedestal'. Beyond this man-made barrier stands another. It is not expected that women candidates should have shown exceptional preaching ability and be experienced in church government, but it is different for male candidates. Few elders seem to be able to grasp the fact that the very gifts which are most useful in crossing cultural barriers are those most likely to remain hidden in the restricted local situation.

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

I am rather diffident about answering this question, because I may seem to be questioning the call of certain people to missionary work, which is certainly not my intention.

There is a strong probability that Prof. Bruce is partially correct. If he is, it implies a strange dichotomy in the thinking of some assembly elders. While they will not permit certain activities to gifted sisters at home, they are quite prepared to commend them for work of the same type overseas. Do they really believe that there are church principles which depend on geography, or do they refuse to think?

We do not have to look solely at home opportunities to explain the apparent deficiency in numbers of male workers overseas. In the circles in which I moved after my conversion (not assembly ones!), it was taken for granted that one would be going out as a missionary, unless God obviously ruled otherwise. I and most of my friends went. For various reasons this was an attitude which has largely disappeared today. To discuss and even to detail some of the reasons would call for an article and would not suit an answer like this. Three may, however, be suggested. The whole aspect of the mission field has greatly changed since the beginning of the century. More and more certain qualifications are demanded from the missionary before he is allowed to enter the overseas country. The returning missionary may find it increasingly difficult to find his place in society. Most important is early engagement and marriage. The call to the husband need not come to the wife, and very often does not. This is one of the main causes for men leaving the work to which they have been called prematurely. There is far too little balanced teaching on the mission field in the average assembly.

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NEWS PAGE



The Bible

A remarkable increase in the demand for Bibles in vernacular languages is reported by the Bible Society. In 1979 orders were received in London for 718,000 Bibles. By the end of 1980 the likely total for the year was 2½ million. But thanksgiving should be mingled with petition. Although the Bibles will be sold (at a subsidised price), the working capital needed by the Bible Society has also increased.

An air-lift to Iran of 50,000 copies of the Living New Testament in Farsi is a development that may surprise some readers. But the government has stated it will extend protection to all religious minorities including Christians and Iranian Christians are taking advantage of the situation to distribute as many copies of the Word of God as possible.

Hostility to modern translations is not confined to the Anglo-Saxon world. The Bible Society reports that the Orthodox priest Evangelos Skordas has been prosecuted for breaking the law by reading the New Testament in modern language. Athens dailies reported the case brought by the Athens public prosecutor, Mr. Fakos, following a complaint about the modern reading which was attracting a large congregation, many of them young people. A new understanding of the law resulted from the verdict of the Council of Judges who declared, 'The reading of the Gospel in the demotic (common) language does not harm the State or the Church; on the contrary, it helps the whole endeavour to have the Church come nearer to the people . . . When a Greek

professor connected with the translation was interviewed he explained that the message was not changed in translation . . . 'It is rather a matter of translating the message in a dynamic way, so that the readers can understand it.' In the past ancient Greek has been read in the Greek Orthodox Church to which 96% of the people owe allegiance. The old language is quite different from the everyday Greek now in use.

Bible Colleges

Further ground has been broken at Moorlands Bible College, to commence the building of another new accommodation complex. Sharing in the ceremony, with the staff and students, were two local business men, Mr. Ron Giles and Mr. Alan Levett, who also serve as Governors of the College. This new section will be ready for use at the commencement of the new College year in October 1981 and will cost £100,000. The ever increasing number of applications from Christians wishing to train at Moorlands makes the new complex a vital necessity. Moorlands' graduates serve in a large number of Christian organizations and societies at home and overseas.

Evangelism

The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization has again called for observance of the first Sunday of June as a day of prayer for world evangelization. It is also reported that the Committee intends to set up its headquarters in the United Kingdom.

The Way to Life Team report that twelve crusades were conducted throughout 1980 and more than 90,000 people

heard Dick Saunders. Almost 700 broadcasts were produced and 4,000 programmes aired over different stations around the world, at a cost of more than £50,000. During 1981 the radio outreach is likely to cost £91,000. Crusades are planned at London, Hastings and Edinburgh and there is to be a nine-week tour of South Africa.

*Stephen Gillham asks for prayer for the Counties work in Dorset. He particularly mentions the need for prayer that the Lord would give daily guidance and that there may be young men in Dorset to give themselves more fully to evangelism in the county. The spring will see a great deal of preparation for the three weeks of Dorset Adventure Time Camps with up to 200 campers expected. The recently launched *In Contact* young people's magazine is to be sent to about 100 13 to 15 year olds every couple of months through the year. The work of the Adventure Time Club (a postal Sunday School) will continue with between 70 and 100 boys and girls doing the monthly lessons.*

Personal evangelism is the concern of the Fishers Fellowship. During 1981 they intend to cover most of the London area with 'Winning Another' schools. The schools will be based on individual churches and will aim to teach ordinary church members how to witness to their friends, neighbours and colleagues about the Christian faith. The idea is to hold them one night a week for five consecutive weeks, involving as many church members of all ages as possible. They will be run by Ron Smith, general secretary of the Fishers Fellowship, or by men specially trained by the

Fellowship. Teaching in the schools will vary from the simple to the more complex, but it will not be just 'classroom knowledge' that is imparted. Students will be asked to put their lessons into action and then discuss the results the following week with each other. 'The Winning Another School is intended to get the ordinary church members more active in sharing their faith within their day to day Christian living' says Ron. 'We are hoping to see an increasing number of these schools being held during 1981. The size of the church does not matter. We are just as prepared to come and conduct a school where there may be only 15 in the class, as in a church with a class of 50.' Complete sets of the notes with instructions are available for local churches that wish to run their own school. (The Fishers Fellowship, 96 Plaistow Lane, Bromley, BR1 3AS.)

Christian Ministries, which co-ordinates the evangelistic and Bible teaching programmes of Peter Anderson, John Blanchard and Derek Cleave, is now being administered from PO Box 3, Witney, Oxon, OX8 6DZ. Correspondence for the individuals involved should continue to be sent to their home addresses.

New Heart for the Nation is to hold its last meeting on Easter Saturday, April 18, in the Royal Albert Hall. However, the NHFTN mission team do not plan to go into retirement following that event. Indeed their prayer is that this would just be the preliminary — a declaration of intent. Many missions in past years have started off with tremendous impetus, but because of the fact that the missionary has

been committed to other missions and cannot therefore carry on where a breakthrough is beginning to occur, the longer term effect of the mission has been minimized. The NHFTN team have therefore kept their diaries completely clear throughout the coming summer to enable them to build on the opportunities that are being generated through this mission. For example, there are other areas of London which are interested in holding mini-NHFTN missions. The plan is that these missions would be of ten days' duration, featuring a series of evening evangelistic missions, basing their themes on the Ten Commandments. During the day, the mission teams will be going into the schools, offices, homes and places of work of that area. Requests for a team should be sent to New Heart for the Nation, Hildenborough Hall, Otford Hills, Sevenoaks, Kent.

Gospel Recordings Fellowship have opened a United Kingdom division at Block 20, Moorlands Trading Estate, Bristol Road, Gloucester, GL1 5RZ. Audio Evangelism will produce thin, low-cost high-quality 7 inch LP records for use primarily as audio tracts. These can be suited to the users' own requirements or supplied from the existing range of over 70 titles in 30 languages including English.

International Year of the Disabled

Able-bodied 16 to 18 year olds are needed to help handicapped people during the summer at six residential ventures run by the Inter-School Christian Fellowship (130 City Road, London, EC1V 2NJ). A new venture this year is that one group will be helping at a new residential centre for mentally handicapped people at Tooting in South London. Another group will be helping to provide play activities for physically and mentally handicapped children from three to sixteen at Cheyne Hospital at West Wickham, Kent. Other ventures are a holiday near Tonbridge for handicapped boys and girls and another near the Peak

District for deaf children. At the Charnwood Trust Nursery, near Stockport, which caters for both handicapped and normal children, another group will be helping to run a play scheme, and others will be helping at Tatchbury Mount, a hospital for the mentally handicapped near Southampton. Most of the groups will be accommodated in church halls, and volunteers pay their own expenses.

Tear Fund offers an action and information pack, together with a challenging audio-visual aid. Workers experienced in this field offer ideas and suggestions for children's activities as well as talks, drama, prayers and hymns. The total pack, which includes an attractive full size poster and sample give-away broadsheets for adults and children, costs £1.50 from Tear Fund.

Scripture Readers

How many people read carefully through all the small print in the Honours Lists? Even those who do may have overlooked the fact that Army Scripture Reader Frank Crofts, the Senior Reader of the Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association, has been awarded the MBE for services to the military. Mr. Crofts has been a Scripture Reader for 28 years and is in fellowship at Victoria Hall, Camberley.

Bible College

Professor F. F. Bruce is one of the patrons of a fund that has recently been launched to raise support and prayer for Union Biblical Seminary (Yeotmal) in India. Professor Bruce has had close links with the college over the years, since three of his PhD students have been senior members of staff there. The present college registrar and senior lecturer in New Testament, Dr. Brian Wintle (an Indian himself) completed his research in Manchester only a few years ago. Support is being sought for this strategic, evangelical theological college at present, because of its forthcoming expensive move to a new location. Anyone interested in (continued over)

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'We have sixty copies of your magazine for our Women's Fellowship and they are greatly appreciated.' (Worthing)



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'A recently retired police sergeant came to my Bible stall recently. I handed him an EP and on receiving it he remarked: "You put one of those through my letterbox in the road where I live and an article in it has helped me to change my views a great deal". He has since truly believed the Gospel...' (Dorking)

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the Fund and the associated prayer Fellowship is invited to write for a free leaflet about the college and the Fund to UBS Fund, 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT.

Concert Pianist Commended into Full Time Service

The Gospel Hall at Gravesend has broken new ground by commending into full time service Richard Meyrick, a concert pianist of international standard. They believe that he can reach with the Gospel a section of society unlikely to enter a place of worship. It was Paul who said he became 'all things to all men, that I might by all means save some'.

Until his conversion about six years ago, Richard Meyrick had been a professional concert pianist. A prize-winning student at the Royal College of Music, he made a highly successful London debut in 1973 at the Wigmore Hall and subsequently worked with BBC television and radio in both recital and concerto work. His tours abroad have included Poland, Canada, Australia and the USA. Vladimir Ashkenazy has testified to 'his excellent musicianship and brilliant piano playing'.

But since becoming a Christian Richard Meyrick has

felt increasingly led to abandon his secular calling and during the past year he has been offering to present concerts without fee on the condition that he gives his testimony and present a Gospel challenge. Many New Testaments have been taken at the concerts. The growth in this ministry and the number of bookings, including tentative ones for North America, Australia and New Zealand, has confirmed his conviction that the Lord is calling him to launch out in faith.

Richard and Felicity Meyrick and their small daughter live at 35 St. James's Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 0HF (tel: 533384).

Home Calls

Mrs. E. Cairns, on January 5. After a short illness called very suddenly into the Lord's presence. Saved 55 years ago and in fellowship at Greenock, now Ardgowan Square, for 52 years. The loss of her husband four years ago was deeply felt, but stimulated her to busy herself more in the assembly work, particularly in the comfort of the saints. Her caring for others was much in evidence, inside and outside the assembly spheres. A large gathering was present to pay respect to one who by her

generous nature and love for the Lord and His Assembly will be missed.

Mrs. Elizabeth Hornal on December 30, 1980, aged 96. Saved at the age of 12, she was baptized in James Street Gospel Hall, Ayr, and (apart from four years in Prestwick and a period at Victoria Hall, Ayr) remained in fellowship at James Street, Ayr, throughout her life. Having read and memorized much of the Scriptures, she was able during her illness to minister to those who visited her. She chose all the hymns and verses to be sung at her burial service.

James S. Kirkland on December 27, 1980, aged 62. During a life-long association with Ebenezer Hall, Motherwell, he set a high standard of conscientiousness and

faithfulness, being Sunday School Superintendent for some 25 years and for the same length of time a valued elder. He was known for his hospitality and for his lively interest in every member of the fellowship. The presence of some 500 people to pay their last respects shows that he enjoyed similar respect in a wider field including his fellow townsmen and business associates. Prayer is requested for the family circle, particularly his wife and two married daughters.

Press Day, Tuesday, March 3 for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.)

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25-27 September 1981

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Write for accommodation and further details to:
The Chairman: Mr. K. P. Cutting, Ye Olde Forge,
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Every day we have men and women, young and old, arrive on our doorstep whose lives have been ruined and broken by Alcoholism. With many it all started in their youth. A 'friend' said "A little of what you fancy does you good". – It's noticeable that the 'friend' is not to be seen around anymore, and the 'good' thats been done stands before us – a trembling, faltering wreck of humanity, lost and lonely, and above all, on the road to Hell. Remember us as we seek to help them find The Lord Jesus Christ. He was once called "a glutton and a winebibber". He wasn't. In the same breath he was called the "friend of sinners". He was, and still is.

Ref: DF (H)

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund:
Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during January amounted to £2,663.30.

Missionaries Children's Fund:
29 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund during the months of November and December amounted to £258.00 and £637.95 respectively.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 ONP. Gifts and legacies received during January amounted to £124,996.17.

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.:
Cullompton 1; Woodbury 6; Creech St. Michael 8; Budleigh Salterton 10; Coleford 12; West Monkton 15; Puddington 22; Seatons 24; Counties Workers' Conference, Wokingham 26-27; Plymouth 29.

Campbell, A.:
Charminster 1, 2; Falmouth 3, 7; St. Austell 8; London 13; Israel 14-21; Falmouth 22-26; St. Ives 29.

Clifford, D. L.:
Spanish Wells, Bahamas; Florida, USA; St. Leonards, during March.

Galyer, W. S.:
Enfield 1; Tolworth 4; Chingford 5; Bournemouth area 7-22; Tolworth 25; Chingford 26; Stanmore 29; Dorking 30; Wembley 31.

Gillham, S.:
Junior House Party 1; Dorchester 3, 8; Thorncombe 4; Ilminster 5; Weymouth Training Coll. 6; Bethany, Weymouth 10; Dorchester 11; Heatherlands, Parkstone 12; Preston, Mission 14-22; Swanage 24; CW Conference 26, 27; Boscombe 29-April 5.

Greenaway, G. H.:
Hopton 1; Bacton 4; Haughley Green 10, 15; Diss 19; Burnham Market 22; Costessey 29.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Dane Hill, Sussex 1-2; Guildford, Surrey 8; Eaton, Norwich 15; Dereham re. Holy Land (slides) 17; Farnham, Surrey 22; Holy Land party (vacancies, 'phone Dereham 3954) 23-31.

Iliffe, D.:
Selsey 1; London 2; Littlehampton 3; Chichester 7; Sheffield 8-11; Chorley 12; Rossendale 13-15; Stafford 16; Chichester 20; Brighton 22; Littlehampton 23-25; Wokingham 26-27; Swansea 28-29; Pembroke 30.

Lowther, G. K.:
Grimsby 1-8; Wokingham 12 & 19; Bury St., Edmonton 14; Rochester & Southborough, Kent 15; Fleet, Hants. 16; Ash Vale, Hants. 17; Four Marks, Hants. 18; Dorset, Lincs. & S. Humberside.

Mills, B.:
Berkshire Prayer Group 2; EA Council 12; Nuneaton, Manor Court Church 14-16; CEW Evangelists Conference, Wokingham 26-27; CBRF Council 27.

Phillips, C.:
Boreham Wood 1, 8; Aylesbury 1; Kingston 3, 10; South Ruislip 2, 9, 16, 23,

30; Elmfield, North Harrow 5, 12, 19, 26; Folkstone Road, Walthamstow 11, 18, 25; Wokingham 15; Argyle Chapel, Reading 22, 29; Potters Bar 24, 31.

Pierce, D. H.:
Paignton 1, 8; West Down 15; Ashford 17, 24, 31; Chulmleigh 19; Cullompton 22; CEW Conference, Wokingham 26-27; Ilfracombe, Bible Teaching Conference 27-29; Eastacombe 30.

Short, S. S.:
Hutton (Avon) 1; Colchester 2, 9, 16, 23; Thundersley 3, 8, 10, 17, 24; Brentwood 4, 11, 18, 22, 25; Cardiff 14, 15; Weston-super-Mare 26; Hereford 28, 29.

Stringer, D.:
Bournemouth 1-31.

Tatford, F. A.:
Rugby 1-6; Northampton 7-11; Coventry 14-16; Calver 20; Leeds 21-23; Paisley 27-30.

Thurston, A.:
Kingsbridge 1, 17, 24, 28, 31; Ledbury 7-8; Strete 9, 15-16; Torre (Torquay) 10; Chillington 11, 18, 25; Plymouth, W. Hill 17; Dartmouth 22; Dartmoor Prison 13, 20, 27; Puddington 29. Schools: Dawlish 24; Plymouth 20.

Tryon, G. C.:
Southall 1; Redcar 8-15; Loampit 22; Cambridge 29.

Whitern, R.:
Kensington 1; Liverpool 2; Preston 3; Manchester 4 & 6; St. Annes 5; Wimbledon 7; Flitwick 8; Aylesbury 10; Bexhill 12; Herts Show 13, 20, 27; Barnet 15; Southend 16; Eastbourne 19; Golders Green 22; Youth Camp Preparation 23; Ware 25; Counties Evangelists' Conf. 26; Bath 29-30.

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.

Boscombe:
Drummond Hall, Drummond Road. Conversational Bible Readings. April 4 at 7 p.m. Subject: Upper Room Ministry. Portion: John 15. Speaker: T. W. Proffitt (Ashford).

Chesham:
Gospel Hall, Station Road. Monthly Bible Readings. March 28 at 6.30 p.m. Portion: Joshua 5. Speaker: Mr. G. B. Fyfe (Ealing).

Colyton, Devon:
The Gospel Hall, The Butts. Bible Studies. March 28 at 7.00 p.m. Portion: Jude. Speaker: H. Bell (Sydenham).

Croxley Green:
Fuller Hall. Monthly Meeting. March 28 at 7.00 p.m. Speaker: R. Catchpole.

Cumbernauld:
Mosknowe Gospel Hall. Ministry Meeting. March 14, 7-9 p.m. Speakers: Mr. C. J. Baker (Penarth) and Dr. W. Hannay (Gourock).

Dublin:
The Dublin & District Missionary Convention will be held from Friday 27 to Monday 30 March. A warm welcome is extended to all visitors. Further details from the Secretary, Mr. G. S. G. Lewis, c/o Merrion Hall, Lower Merrion Street, Dublin 2.

Grimsby:
Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. March 21 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Wilf Cryer (Stapleford).

Horsham, Sussex:

Gospel Hall, Denne Road.
Annual Conference, Saturday,
March 21 at 3.30 and 6 p.m.
Tea 5 p.m. Speaker: Eric R.
Grove (Kingston-upon-
Thames).

Kingston upon Thames:

Canbury Park Christian
Fellowship, Canbury Park
Road, United Missy. Cfce.
March 28. 4-5.30 p.m. (Tea)
and 6.30-8.00 p.m. Philip
Game (Bangladesh), Paul
Marsh (Scripture Union),
Patrick Sookhdeo (In
Contact).

Maidenhead:

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's
Road. Monthly Conference.
April 4 at 6.30 p.m. Address
by Mr. J. Riddle (Cheshunt).
Subject: The Person & Work
of the Holy Spirit — 'Filled
with the Spirit'. This will be
followed by refreshments and
discussion from 8.15 to 9 p.m.

Northwood:

Emmanuel Church. London
Bible College Choir and
Wealdstone Salvation Army
Band and Trimbrels will
present a programme of
favourite hymns and music.
Taking part will be students
from Africa, Asia, the Far
East, the Americas, Britain
and Europe. There will be a
retiring offering for the
Dialysis Fund to help purchase
more Kidney Machines.

Largs:

Netherhall Bible Readings. 4-8
May 1981. Conducted by Mr.
A. E. Phillips, West Moors and
Mr. Albert Leckie, Airdrie.
Subjects: John's 1st and 3rd
Epistles. Enquiries to: The
Manager, Netherhall, Largs,
Ayrshire, KA30 8RP.

London:

Bury Street Chapel,
Edmonton, N.9. Annual
Conference. March 14 at 3
and 6 p.m. Speaker: G. K.
Lowther (Grimsby).

Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall,
Vincent Road, Leagrave.
Monthly Bible Reading. March
21, 4-5 p.m. and 6.30-8 p.m.
Studies in the Gospel of Luke.
Speaker: Mr. R. Brind
(Cardiff). Subject: Pillars of
Triumph in the Manhood of
our Lord: 'Crucifixion' (Luke
23:24-49).

Springburn, Glasgow:

The assembly, meeting in
Gospel Hall, Hillkirk Place,
hope to celebrate their
centenary on Saturday, 21
March 1981. This will be held
in Springburn Secondary
School from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
and thereafter in their own
Hall from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Any former members not
already contacted please
write to H. MacAnlay, 16
Dalhousie Gardens,
Bishopbriggs, Glasgow.

Woodford Green:

South West Essex Women's
Missionary Conference,
Salway Hall, Woodford Green,
Essex. March 14 at 3.30 and
6.00 p.m.

NEW ADDRESS**Silver Street, Gospel Hall**

Assembly, Reading, are now
meeting in 'Providence
Chapel', 103 Oxford Road.
Correspondence to Mr. J. E.
Barnett, 4 Coley Hill.

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Evangelical theology, Commentaries, etc. Send list of titles, authors, condition to: G. Peek (Theological Books), PO Box 35, Hertford, SG14 2YE. (4)

Cambridge

Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan Way, off Queen Edith's Way. Visitors warmly welcomed. Sundays: Lord's Supper, 11 a.m. (Crèche); Evening Service 6.30 p.m. Near the New Addenbrooke's Hospital. Tel: 0223-45584. (12)

Christian (Male)

aged 53 years seeks employment, due to redundancy, anything considered. 20 years management experience as Cost Accountant. Box No. 8101, c/o The Harvester. (3)

Christian Singles

Holidays/Houseparties
Scottish Highlands, Devon, Sussex, Switzerland and Holy Land Tours. Group activities. Nationwide. Details: Christian Friendship Fellowship, Dept/A22, Edenthorpe, Doncaster (SAE). (4)

Clifton Hall

White Horse 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.) (12)

Croydon and District

Visitors warmly welcomed at Cranmer Hall, Sylverdale Road, Croydon. Sunday 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays 8.00 p.m. (12)

Holy Land

8 days of wonder in the Holy Land from £220 November 3rd from Gatwick. Early booking essential. SAE Brochure from C. W. Smyth, 10 Braemar Avenue, Filton Park, Bristol. (3)

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Two Christian Couples

exercised regarding the need for a Christian old people's home (private) seeks finance from a Christian source to enable them to buy and set up same. The finance would be considered entirely as a business transaction. Further details from Box No. 8102, c/o The Harvester. (3)

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Ideal seafront position. Fine food and fellowship at Lyndhurst Christian Hotel, 4 Park Terrace, Bognor Regis, West Sussex. PO21 2ND. Tel: (0243) 823254. (12)

Broadstairs, Kent

Comfortable furnished house to let for holidays. Sleeps 5/6. Also baby's cot. Near sea and shops. Garage. Apply: 49 Crescent Road, Sidcup, DA15 7HW. (4)

Cornwall

Newquay, Fairhaven Christian Hotel, Bothwicks Road, offers excellent accommodation overlooking Newquay's most popular beaches, close to shops, train/coach stations and all amenities. Parties also welcome. S.A.E. Miss Pauline Bate, Tel: Newquay 3259 or Canworthy Water 437. Miss Pauline Bate, Fairhaven Christian Hotel, Bothwicks Road, Newquay. (6)

Devon

Farmhouse accommodation within easy reach of beaches. B.B. & E.M. Home cooking. Reasonable terms. Children at reduced rates. Apply Pat Jones, Little Thorndon Farm, Holsworthy. Tel: 253 349. (4)

Devon/Cornwall Border:

Homely accommodation. B/B, E/M £40. Full board Sundays. Recommended for comfort, food and fellowship. Mrs. M. Davey, Homelea, Chilsworthy, Holsworthy, Devon.

Devon Delights

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Folkestone:

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Getting Away in '81

A helpful illustrated handbook of all types of Christian Holiday Accommodation throughout Britain. 80p, plus 20p postage. From: All-Age Christian Ministries (H), 3 Gibbs Road, Newport, Gwent. (3)

Ilfracombe, Devon

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Isle of Cumbrae

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Llandudno

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Nairn, Scotland

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Norfolk

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J.R.U.L.M.
CHRISTIAN
BRETHREN
ARCHIVE

A POEM FOR EASTER

WHEN OUR GOD TOOK FLESH

*When our God took flesh
gently He trod the borders of our fief.*

*He left
no trophies of ingenious art,
no storied stones, no threatening masonry
to tell a conqueror's passing:*

*but, in a corner of a quiet field
He left, unique, His mark —*

an empty tomb.

FRC

REFLECTIONS ON RECENT READING

O. S. Papps

Mr. Papps contributes his customary article to introduce our half-yearly Books Issue.

I am worried when I read a book such as Jackie Pullinger's **Chasing the Dragon** (Hodder and Stoughton paper back). I ask myself if there is a serious deficiency in my Christian faith; have I missed some profound Christian truth, for throughout fifty years of seeking the truth and trying to serve the Lord I have never witnessed the miraculous healings recorded in this book, I have never spoken in tongues, I have never had such striking and spontaneous answers to prayer nor such clear-cut guidance? Perhaps the answer is that my dedication has been less than total. While reading this book I began to read another, **The Marriage of a Rebel** by Jack Clemo, the Cornish poet and mystic. He is a remarkable man. For much of his writing career he has been deaf and blind. Of little formal education he has lived since childhood in near poverty in a primitive cottage surrounded by ugly Cornish clay dumps cared for by his widowed mother — a woman of great piety, simple faith and amazing love and courage. Before he became blind he read widely. He was profoundly influenced by Robert Browning's positive Christian faith and he believed that one day, in spite of his disabilities, he would find fulfilment in a marriage which would be truly sacramental. His quest for this brought him many bitter disappointments, loneliness, almost intolerable pain, but through it all he believed fiercely in God, passing through different attitudes towards various forms of churchmanship, and finally in his late fifties he found his ideal and married Ruth Peaty — a deeply spiritual and perceptive woman who, incidentally, came from a Christian Brethren background.

Jack Clemo's book helped me to see **Chasing the Dragon** in perspective. Both Jack Clemo and Jackie Pullinger are unquestionably people of great faith, people who know God: but the difference in the two books is that one plumbs the depths and dark valleys of Christian experience in rather prosaic surroundings, while the other highlights the achievements, the peaks of faith, in sensational surroundings, drug smuggling, illegal gambling, prostitution, heroin

addiction in Hong Kong's walled city. Jackie Pullinger's story is a dramatic one. She was assisted in the writing by a BBC T.V. man and, to quote from the preface, the book was written, 'against a tough time schedule'. The result is an exciting book that is very readable and reaches a wide public. It can quite easily lead to the personal deductions I made above, and perhaps even to the conclusion that these experiences are typical of the wholly committed Christian life. The reading of such a revealing autobiography as Jack Clemo's serves to correct this conclusion. I think that all such books as **Chasing the Dragon**, especially if they are paperbacks with rather lurid covers, should carry a Christian health warning: 'After reading this book read thoughtfully and prayerfully the 12th chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.' But to return to Jack Clemo. After a visit to Truro hospital following new symptoms of eye trouble the specialist gave a gloomy verdict of a definite threat of blindness. He was persuaded by a friend to make the six hours journey to London to visit a blind man who was conducting healing services. Realising Jack Clemo's aversion to crowds, a private session was arranged in a small chapel of an Anglican church in Soho. There on his knees in the gloom with his mother kneeling beside him, the healer grasped his head and began to vibrate it. Jack Clemo tried to pray, but the spiritual awareness which had brought him such ecstasies on the Cornish clay tips eluded him. Early the following morning he and his mother were taken by taxi to Paddington and put on the Cornwall bound train.

From out of his spiritual conflicts and searching Jack Clemo has much to teach us. In his search for truth he has been influenced by Calvinism, Anglicanism, Roman Catholicism and the campaigns of Billy Graham (a book **The Invading Gospel** dealt with this phase). He thinks that a society largely pagan and materialistic must find it hard to understand his and Ruth Peaty's kind of marriage, 'owing its stability to Evangelical faith. We saw our fulfilment chiefly as evidence for the God whom Browning had proclaimed in "The Ring and the Book" — the objective Interventionist,

*Who, for our own good, makes the need extreme,
Till at the last He puts forth might and saves.'*

Each phase of his life so far is reflected in four volumes of poetry. His poetry has firm evangelical roots and is tough, realistic, full of powerful and vivid imagery and description.

I loved Mary O'Hara's autobiography, **The Scent of Roses**. The art of this gifted Irish harpist and singer with the beautiful soprano voice has, like Jack Clemo's, been enriched and deepened through much suffering. Unlike Jack Clemo, Mary had not been seeking love, for her gifts and charm and capacity to love ensured that she was surrounded by affection, but a great love came into her life when she met Richard Selig, a handsome young American poet and Rhodes scholar, equally gifted and destined for a great future. Fifteen months after their marriage Richard died of cancer in a New York hospital. Mary's account of those three weeks watching by his bed as his life was slowly ebbing away to its close is unbearably moving. She was a 'cradle Catholic', but there came a time in her life when the things which she had always believed and accepted took on a new meaning and depth. She writes, 'Mine is in some ways a very simple faith. I do not argue with God. The certainty of the existence of a personal, infinitely loving Being who is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient has always been part of the fabric of my mind. I like to have the knowledge that the science of theology provides. My intellect needs to be fed with truth; needs to know. But not my heart — in the sense that it does not question God's providence. I have always, despite the pain it sometimes involves, been content to let God go ahead and "write straight with crooked lines". I feel profoundly convinced that he is at the helm of the ship that is our life and that in the words of Julian of Norwich, the great English mystic, "all shall be well, and thou shalt see that all manner of things shall be well" '.

After Richard's death the world seemed a barren place for Mary and at the height of her fame she entered the Benedictine monastery of Stanbrook to live a life of prayer and silence. After 12 years she emerged, her faith deepened, to resume her singing career. This is a lovely book, so sad in places, yet shot through with bright Christian faith and hope, and written in a style that in places partakes of the rare lyrical quality of Mary O'Hara's songs.

In my last contribution I happened to mention apropos my reading of Max Warren's autobiography **Crowded Canvas** that I was waiting for Dillistone's biography of him **Into all the World** from the local library. To my surprise and pleasure Hodder and Stoughton kindly sent me a complimentary copy of this handsomely produced book. I found it wholly absorbing. Its authorship ensures that it is well written. It is indeed up to the high standards of Dillistone's biographies of Charles Raven and C. H. Dodd. Max Warren has been described as one of the two ablest

clergymen of the Church of England in his generation, a possible future Archbishop of Canterbury. He was the son of CMS missionaries in India. His parents belonged to that remarkable group of 19th century men and women who regarded it as the highest privilege which earth could offer to spend their lives without reserve or repining in the foreign missionary enterprise. His own personal commitment to Christ was largely through the influence of his brother, Jack. He was a typical early 20th century evangelical upbringing in the circles in which he was born — Crusaders, CSSM, CICC (Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union), but it is significant that he was also a member of the SCM (Student Christian Movement), regarded with considerable suspicion by many evangelicals. 'He already showed that independence of judgement and attitude that would not be confined within any single channel but claimed the freedom to witness and pray alongside all who acknowledged allegiance to Christ in sincerity . . . "Loving Christ and living Christ is the real basis for unity. Let us rest on this and fight for that" he said.'

After Cambridge, where he distinguished himself both as a scholar and an athlete, he was accepted by the CMS for service in Nigeria. Some 40 years later he was to write, 'Ever since I was a schoolboy at the age of sixteen I have been totally committed to the missionary enterprise . . . from the evangelistic task of the Church in loyalty to the Church's Lord there can be no retreat.' Eleven months later he had to return home with a physical and mental breakdown. After nearly three years in a sanatorium and hospital he made a remarkable recovery. Throughout this time he was lovingly supported by Mary, the Girton girl he had become engaged to before going to Africa. In 1932 nearly five years after their engagement he wrote to her:

For very dark they were those days. How dark for you

*I think I'll never know, for you were bearing me
And your ownself, whilst keeping Mother free
From her dark doubts.*

The same year he was ordained. After a curacy in Bournemouth he was inducted as Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge. Amid all the pressures of his fruitful ministry in this key church he never allowed his vision of the missionary responsibility of the Church to diminish and in 1942 when Wilson Cash, the General Secretary of the CMS, was appointed Bishop of Worcester, Max became actively involved in the search for a successor, never dreaming that the mantle of Wilson Cash was to fall on him. In 1942 he was appointed General Secretary and for the next 21 years he dedicated all his talents to guiding the CMS during this period of revolutionary change.

Reading between the lines one is aware of a certain tension between his evangelical beliefs and all the different currents of thought which he encountered

in the many conferences he attended and the wide range of people he met. He clarified his thinking in two notable booklets, 'What is an Evangelical?' (1944) and 'The Sevenfold Secret' (1962). At the present time when evangelicals are divided, often quite sharply, over a number of issues, especially the nature of the inspiration of the Scriptures and involvement in social work (an outstanding BBC documentary 'The Politics of Compassion' illustrated vividly the dilemma which confronts Christians facing the appalling poverty and oppression in many third world countries), the views of Max Warren are apposite. He states four cardinal principles of evangelicalism. First, evangelicals view the Church as primarily a redeeming community, called to share in the divine purpose of salvation for the world. Secondly, the paramount need for conversion is the very heart of the evangelical approach, implying a personal

went by and his travels in every part of the world brought him into close contact with those who belonged to the millions and millions of souls born into non-Christian religions he pondered deeply over the best method of approaching them with the Gospel. He said in a lecture in 1966, 'Paul, the missionary, was never in the slightest doubt that however much God had called him to be a missionary God had always arrived in every situation before Paul got there — Paul's task, the essential missionary task of the Church in all ages, is to unveil the God who is already there; "Whom therefore you ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." ' Toward the end of his period of office as General Secretary the term 'dialogue' appears in missionary and ecumenical contexts. He wrote, 'Dialogue, properly conducted, is not a way of soft peddling truth, an easy pursuit of superficial agreement, a compromise on funda-



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encounter with Jesus Christ issuing in personal commitment to Him. The third principle he defines as trusting the Holy Spirit, which means a constant colloquy with Holy Scripture in the construction of which the Holy Spirit operated through men of old and in the interpretation of which the Spirit still operates today. The fourth principle is the priesthood of all believers. For an Anglican clergyman his views on this were surprisingly close to those held by many of the readers of this magazine. I feel that in our disagreements as evangelicals we would be wiser to adhere to principles rather than to attempt to define precisely in detailed statements of belief what is ultimately indefinable, for surely fundamental principles can be distorted, imperilled by exposure in too precise formulations.

Chapter 10 entitled, 'The "Why and Wherefore" ' I found particularly helpful especially in his comments on the East African revival movement. As the years

mentals. Essentially "dialogue" is an expression of that utter humility which acknowledges that Truth is always more than one has yet discovered and which is prepared to learn more about Truth from the discovery of what another has found. And this humility is based on the deep conviction that because Jesus Christ is the Truth, no real truth, wherever discovered or by whomsoever communicated, can ever be inconsistent with "the truth as it is in Jesus".' ('The Missionary Movement from Britain in Modern History'.)

On his retirement Max accepted a canonry at Westminster Abbey, but he was dissatisfied. He was often bored with the daily services and splendid ceremonies. He was frustrated by the thought of all those millions touring the Abbey and not being won for Christ — the 'fringe folk' as he called them. He never ceased to be an evangelist. He wrote, 'What an amazing privilege it is to be able to speak of "the

'King in His beauty'. I know my religion is a terribly over-intellectualised affair but if ever I get a 'thrill' it is from talking about Jesus, whether to an individual or to a congregation in Westminster Abbey.'

Max Warren was a good and a great man and I found this account of his life both illuminating and inspiring.

On first glancing through June Rose's **Elizabeth Fry** (Macmillan, £8.95) I thought, 'Here is another debunking of a famous figure', but I was wrong. In this fascinating book we have a detailed picture of this extraordinary woman, warts and all. A writer reviewing this book wrote, 'It seems as if God allows geniuses to have more warts than most, to compensate for their high qualities and achievements'. She was born into a wealthy Quaker banking family at a time when Quakers were as rigid in their views and discipline as Exclusive Brethren (e.g. for a Quaker to marry outside the Meeting was to incur excommunication). In between bearing eleven children she threw herself into campaigns to relieve thousands of women suffering appallingly in insanitary and violent prisons, she lectured statesmen and royalty, attacked complacent Government departments, wrote and distributed vast numbers of tracts, travelled all over the country and in Europe urging prison reform and, astonishingly, considering the times in which she lived, advocated the abolition of capital punishment. She was constantly torn between her duty to her husband and large family and her passion for social reform, and it is clear that her family suffered, for she was generally ready to sacrifice her family for her cause. It is not surprising that her husband, Joseph, a prominent tea merchant and a kindly and faithful man, found it hard to cope with his flagging business and his home. There is a description of a journey through France when she was fifty-eight, accompanied by the long-suffering Joseph, two of her children, Kate and Henry, and a Quaker Elder. Joseph and Kate often felt neglected and depressed. Wherever she went she formed charitable societies, visited prisons, distributed literature, and held meetings. She and her company progressed across France in a carriage with an attendant van carrying hampers stocked with sugar, coffee, and candles. At Toulouse discontent in the family threatened to erupt. She writes in her journal, 'My husband was rather discouraged.'

She loved the aristocracy and contacts with royalty, and she herself was autocratic. She was inclined to

She roused intense opposition. The Quaker community condemned as 'worldly' what she was doing to reform the penal system. The author concludes, 'Two hundred years after her birth, despite the sanctimonious clothing of her thought, she seems a brave and modern woman.'

Finally a novel, **Rites of Passage** by William Golding, winner of the Booker prize for 1980. My first acquaintance with Golding was his **Lord of the Flies**, one of the most powerful statements in fiction of the doctrine of original sin. For many years I taught it as an 'O' level and CSE set book, so strengthening an unorthodox view that I hold, that the best way to teach religious education to senior forms is through suitably chosen English Literature, so presenting the Christian faith in real life situations and overcoming the built-in resistance of many older boys and girls to R.E.

The story is set at the end of the Napoleonic wars. An old ship of the line recently converted to general purposes sails from England to Australia. She carries cargo and passengers, emigrants and a few ladies and gentlemen accommodated in make-shift cabins aft. The narrator, Edmund Talbot, a self-opinionated and arrogant young man sailing to Australia to be an aide to the Governor, has promised his benefactor and godfather that he will keep a journal for him, setting down faithfully everything that takes place throughout the long voyage. We see the passengers through the eyes of Edmund. They include a pathetic parson, the Rev. Robert James Colley, whose humiliation, and what Edmund learns from it, are at the heart of the novel. Colley writes a very revealing letter to his sister which is found after his death. There is Brocklebank, a lithographer and his glamorous daughter Zenobia who is no better than she ought to be, an irascible captain, and among the officers one who reminds one of the epileptic boy Simon in **Lord of the Flies**, who almost instinctively sees behind the facade of human behaviour and attitudes into the true cause of man's unhappiness and violence. Golding understands the danger and necessity of the sea. He was captain of a ship on D. Day and has gone down with a yacht in the Channel. There is a wonderfully detailed and vivid description of the ship, and his prose matches perfectly the period. He writes with clarity and understanding of the human condition. The ship and its crew and passengers on its long voyage to the Antipodes is a microcosm of the world, especially of Christendom. I saw a long

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OF VILLAGES AND CHANGE

Tony Newell

A further contribution in Dr. Newell's series of occasional articles.

Many of us enjoy looking at relics of the past — prehistoric mounds and forts, castles, stately homes, the contents of museums. It is particularly pleasant to stroll or float or even drive through some of the villages of England. We accept and delight in the familiar but satisfyingly picturesque groups of buildings, and derive pleasure from the nostalgic beauty of thatched or slated cottages in all their regional variations. We see them as monuments to a vanished way of life characterized by a slower pace and a deeper dependence on and concern with craftsmanship in contrast to our own hectic, stressful, mass-produced, pre-packaged era.

Village scenery on a quiet and sunny spring or summer's day in fact evokes a mental picture of a leisurely, gracious, contented past that never actually existed. Previous centuries knew villages that were dirtier, colder and darker at night that we can imagine without severe effort. We tend to forget, that is to say, that these little strings and huddles of buildings were the homes of communities, places where people were born, grew up (if they survived the manifold dangers of childhood); worked and died, often without ever having left their native village.

This was brought home to me by Richard Muir's book *The English Village* (Thames & Hudson, 1980), a handsomely illustrated and attractively written survey from prehistoric times to the immediate future. Text and photographs testify to the author's appreciation of the

visual beauty of so many villages. He is equally aware of the harsh facts of village life and work up to the very recent past, but is careful not to devalue what was truly healthy and worthy of celebration in that ethos. As he remarks, 'If standard of living is to be our measure, then the modern village is almost incomparably better off than the Victorian

World War both depopulated the villages and confirmed the churches' comparative failure to secure new members. If we allow the comparison, has the tension Muir emphasizes between living standards and quality of life something to say to us as Christians? Have we let slip anything we ought to have kept a firm hold on? Have we, perhaps, benefited congre-



This circular pond and communal pump are in the charming Oxfordshire village of Wroxton.
From The English Village

cotager. But if quality of life is our guide then we are thrown into confusion.'

In the story of the English village from its origin as a fenced handful of huts to its renaissance today as a superior settlement for middle class commuters there lurks, it seems to me, an allegory of the church. Rough parallels could be presented between the growth, change, decline and rebirth of the village and the vicissitudes of the church of Christ. For example, the First

gationally at the expense of personal spirituality? Difficult questions, these, to which each of us might supply equally valid but different answers.

So the village changed through the centuries, as the church and its local congregations have changed. Change, of course, is an evidence of life: every generation changes the face (not the nature) of the community in response to altering needs and pressures. Today Christians are well aware that the church can't

afford to present to society a message couched in the thought-forms and imagery of previous generations. We ignore contemporary developments at the risk of seeming irrelevant. One hopes that there is less danger nowadays of our appearing to outsiders like an isolated, self-sufficient community abandoned by the world, a forgotten village of forelock-tugging, cottage-dwelling rustics in smocks, a museum exhibit possessing only historical interest. That sort of village has become a mere picturesque survival instead of a living, working, productive community.

Yet in its determination not to lag behind the times the village can forfeit much of what made it a village and so degenerate into an insignificant outcrop of urban sprawl. And the church, sadly, can strive so hard to achieve contemporary relevance that it ceases to sound a distinctively Christian note. The desire to keep up with the Joneses on socio-political-economic issues often results in church leaders simply aligning themselves with a Western liberal consensus. To assert one's relevance can then mean no more than to confess one's conformity. Within the church, too, there exists a band-wagon movement, a curious amalgam of fashionable concerns espoused by confident propagandists, from which it is difficult to dissociate oneself without seeming by so doing to declare one's irrelevance. The appearance of relevance can be obtained at the enormous and unacceptable cost of losing evangelical and even Christian identity, by submerging into an amorphous trendy fellowship scarcely distinguish-

able from the socially concerned outside the church. I must say that I prefer the picturesque survival to the rows of houses with no centre and no community — at least it looks like a village!

In fact, the picturesque survival probably exhibits many evidences of modernization — plumbing, drainage, electricity, and so on. Where even 35 years ago villagers could still be expected to live in four-roomed cottages with an outside pump for water and an earth-closet situated some distance away, today, for the most part, they enjoy domestic conveniences little inferior to those of urban dwellers. In a similar manner, the doctrinal understanding of many Christians has gained from some of the emphases of modern theology. We now correct ourselves if we ever seem to give the impression that we believe God to be a sort of old

don our belief that the Bible is God's propositional revelation? Much modern theological thinking combines with the powerful influence of the trans-denominational charismatic movement to devalue the rational in favour of the experiential: must we therefore jettison our creed? Concepts are being blurred; the urge to avoid dogma makes everything vague. Christian distinctiveness can be lost, the very definition of God's gracious salvation in Christ rendered unclear. The old idea of the gathered church, a community of the professedly saved, has been deprived of much of its significance. The village of the church can merge into the identical urban sprawl of indistinct and undistinctive Christian profession.

To pursue the analogy a little further, a local Christian church, like the old village,

winning for Christ and adding to its membership, it must present more than a proselytizing and didactic face to its neighbourhood. It should be seen to care for some of the social needs of its members and their friends — in other words, to offer an alternative culture, a Christian sub-culture which satisfies human requirements without depending upon the radically antichristian media of secular society. When the village ceases to be a community, it ceases to be a village as we have understood the term. Of the English village, Muir declares that 'for the first time in a thousand years, it has a population which is ready and able to stand up for itself'. English Christians today are proportionately better educated and therefore more directly aware of the changing spirit of the age than ever before. This fact can work to our disadvantage, in that insidious secular ideas can rapidly penetrate our thinking and endanger our understanding. But it can be equally advantageous, for the church should be the better equipped to develop its agencies in the way best suited to communicate the unchanging gospel.

The village seems to have been successfully modernized without having been compelled to surrender its distinctive communal identity. Some churches, however, have evolved in both practices and beliefs, thereby forfeiting much of whatever distinctiveness they possessed from each other and from society generally, while others have reinforced their distinct-

tiveness by withdrawing almost totally from the modern world. Although the latter development can plead historical precedent, such a church is not much more likely to attract and secure the loyalty of converts than creedless social service Christianity.

Our aim as evangelical Christians, it may be suggested, should be to discover and keep to an acceptable compromise which updates means of evangelism, so achieving contemporary relevance, and simultaneously maintains both the distinctive Christian faith and the attractive Christian community. If the former may perhaps be the province of our elders and preachers and evangelists, the latter is very definitely for all of us to work at. As Muir says, 'There was no opting out of the cottage industry. It gave the individual his role and status, entertainment and companionship.' Our local church can resemble the ideal village community, where every newcomer is welcomed, made to feel at home, and helped to find a fitting role. It can be characterized by the warmth of our fellowship, the Christian quality of our congregational — our communal — life; by the ways in which we strive to adapt our presentation of the changeless gospel to make it relevant to our contemporaries; and by our intelligent commitment to 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints', with its central tenet of personal allegiance to Jesus Christ, who is 'the same yesterday and today and for ever'.



At Appleby, Westmorland, the green takes the form of a broad grassy highway lined with houses, a planned layout dating back to 1110.

From *The English Village*

man in the sky, or that we wish rigorously to apply biblical principles of conduct to every situation without first carefully considering its specific circumstances in a spirit of Christian love, or that we accept doctrine without really trying to grasp its meaning and implications. There exists a healthy concern with worship, outreach and practical Christianity. Our churches have changed so as to satisfy different needs and expectations, and this is good. Have they also resisted the tremendous pressures to modify the foundation truths for which they have so far stood? Is the gospel we preach and practise the same as ever, or has it been altered, however subtly, to suit a surrounding society which is increasingly unwilling to take it seriously? The search for relevance can lead to relativism. The Western world currently rejects authority: are we therefore to aban-

ought to be a self-sufficient sub-culture. Some see this as a criticism — that membership offers a cosy escape from the uncongenial exterior world of secular reality. But to adopt such an attitude is surely to attack something which is of the essence of Christianity — the brotherhood, the fellowship, of the saved. It is true that during the heyday of Non-conformity a large church would offer its members a complete alternative culture that relieved them of the necessity to have anything more to do with the world than to find employment in it, and this was a well intentioned but mistaken extreme. When a church is formed, however, a Christian community where like-minded believers associate and socialize is naturally created. If a local church is truly a congregation of the saved, welcoming and attractive to outsiders whom it is

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

The juxtaposition in the January issue of *The Harvester* of Tony Newell's article on Irony and Coralie Rendle-Short's article on Mother Teresa prompts a question in my mind: Could it be regarded as an instance of the divine irony that Albania, the country which today proclaims itself the only genuinely atheistic state in the world, should have been the birthplace of such an outstanding exponent of the love of Christ as Mother Teresa?

Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 Kings Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 4NX, by 15 April.

INDIAN EXPERIENCE

Barbara Baigent

Mrs. Baigent will be remembered by our former Witness readers for the regular Women's Feature she contributed to its pages. She is continuing contributions to the combined magazine, and here writes of a recent visit to India.

Travelling by Boeing 747 between Karachi and Delhi in the early morning in November gave me the chance to see a most beautiful sunrise — a grey silhouette of land against a band of deep red sky low on the horizon, and successively bands of orange, white and then dark blue. Later I was to see this again at 3,000 feet in the dry deciduous forest jungle of a nature reserve. Although bears and tigers were in the area, we were disturbed only by a pangolin (scaly anteater)! Interestingly, in this area of Andhra Pradesh there are Mennonite Brethren working in the villages and there are several established churches. We met one of the American missionaries in a village. I saw two fantastic sunsets also. In one, between the lower pink and upper blue layers of the sky was a band of hazy white light, due to diffraction of dust particles. In the other, when the sun had disappeared, alternate beams of pink and blue stretched right across the sky from the horizon in the west to the horizon in the east. After watching this sunset, we made a pilgrimage into the darkness of a Hindu temple.

Outwardly it was not dark. The huge white marble building stood on a high rock, dominating the city of Hyderabad. At sunset all the lights came on, and the worshippers flocked barefoot up the marble pavements, winding round and round and up and up until the great black statue of the god Vishnu could be seen within the white marble shrine, ornately decorated with flowers and clothes. Holy men in white robes with shaved heads were chanting, and priests were offering the people coconut for prosperity and blessings from a golden mitre held over the head. Some people were prostrate before the ugly black marble idol, one of the ten avatars (appearances) of Vishnu to whom the temple was dedicated.

We were surprised that the people, many of them wealthy and educated, should still put their faith in

such a crude religion. I was saddened at the darkness of it all, especially in a second temple that we visited, a famous shrine to the god Shiva. This temple at Sri Sailem was also made of white marble, was on a hillside and was full of light. Around the courtyard were many smaller shrines to various gods — the elephant god, Vishnu, etc., but the main image was a huge bull. Each god has a 'vehicle' which represents him on earth, and for Shiva it is the bull. In procession came a little temple elephant and three idols being carried in a litter with food offerings and candles. The climax of the ceremony came when these three idols were set on a pedestal and the priest crowned them with gold, ornamented them and garlanded them with flowers. He then began an incantation over a loudspeaker. Worshippers sat cross-legged on the plinth around; a heavy smell of incense pervaded the place and flower petals were scattered. Meanwhile in an inner sanctuary was 'the god'. We had to pay to go in and see it! Beyond highly ornate gold doors was a very dark room with about seven men sitting cross-legged before what looked to me like a haggis meal offering. It was in fact a stone covered in petals and food. They said it represented the god who was not there visibly. They were rubbing it with their fingers and showering it with petals. It was quite evil and sad to see. We returned fairly quickly down the marble slopes to where we had left our sandals.

These great temples contrast both with the smaller village versions with gaudy paintings outside in garish colours, and with the many mosques which are plain, unadorned, with no idolatry — indeed no representation of any animal form at all in their carvings. Some mosques have ornate floral patterns in the stone. Others are just a wall facing East. The great tombs such as the Taj Mahal, unsurpassable in beauty, are Moslem relics of the great Moghul empire. Moslem women too in their all black attire contrast with the colourful Hindu women in their saris. A great deal of evangelical activity goes on in the cities, by various groups of people. One group covered the entire city of Hyderabad with stickers saying 'I've found it'. The intention was to cover the

stickers the next week with others which said 'New life in Christ'. However before this could be done, another group (of Ahmadiyyah Moslems) covered up the stickers with ones which said 'We found that Jesus Christ died in Kashmir'. I have never seen anything like the city streets with taxis, bicycles, cars, cycle-rickshaws, buses, lorries, bullock carts, cows — all in the middle of the road . . . The only rule seems to be 'Give way to anything entering from a side road'; yet along the main highways are road safety slogans such as 'Undertakers love overtakers'; 'Better be late Mr. Driver than the late Mr. Driver' and 'Time is precious, life is more precious'. While I was there a cycle-rickshaw pedaller died and his death reached the newspapers because he was also a poet. He wrote beautiful poetry, but he had T.B. and had to cycle a rickshaw to support his family.

At the end of my three week trip I unfortunately caught a virus which had been attacking the expatriate community. It was nasty but it could have been worse had it been due to food or the water supply. To quote an article in the **New Scientist** for 6 November '80, the United Nations want 'clean water for everyone in the world by 1990. 50% of the third world have no safe drinking water. 75% have no sanitation. Put another way, 25 million die annually from disease caused by inadequate or unclean water or lack of sanitation. There are more than 1 billion cases of diarrhoea annually, resulting in the death of more than 6 million children in the third world annually. In millions of families one member of the family spends all his or her energy just carrying water. Tens of millions of women and children have to carry water for miles. The target is for 1.8 billion people to get a clean water supply and 2.4 billion to get sanitation. This will mean 500,000 new supplies every day for 10 years.' Impossible? The scheme would involve £40 million a day. But the world spends £700 million a day on arms; £120 million a day on cigarettes and £5 million a day on tranquillisers. These people need the Living Water, yes, but they are also in desperate need of water for life.

*I have seen ox-carts lumbering laden
Ricketty wheels rolling interminably,
Like time here in India, tirelessly passing*

Two hours for a phone call;

Three days for a journey by train.

'Chello, chello!' Why hurry?

Tomorrow will be just the same.

*I have seen women waterpot laden
Upright and beautiful, accepting their fate;
Dignified daughters, bearing diseases;*

Paddy field planting,

Harvesting hot sun or rain.

O cha cha! Why worry?

Tomorrow will still be the same.

*I have seen children wide-eyed, irrepressible,
Laughing and shouting, begging and gaunt,
Leptous and starving, hard-worked and burdened;
No opportunities,
Diet — pepperwater and grain.
Abba Father, Forgive us,
Tomorrow must not be the same.*

SASRA

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THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PEOPLE

We carry this rather startling and unusual personal statement as a moving contribution to the International Year of the Disabled. Our contributor gave his name and address, but we have thought it better to leave him anonymity.

I am glad it is the turn of the disabled, for officially I am one of them. If you saw me you would never guess I am disabled; there are no missing eyes or limbs, no disfigurement, for my disability is supposedly mental. I say 'supposedly' for I am primitive enough to believe the whole thing to have been an interference by malignant spirits, probably one spirit in particular. The attacks were intermittent, but spread over decades. The reasons for my thinking the thing spiritual are too complex to enter into in a short article. Just let me say briefly that I am in receipt of a war disability pension which it seems fraudulent to accept — tantamount to taking blood money. Furthermore, according to all the psychiatry I have read — and that is plenty — schizophrenia usually rears its head between the ages of eighteen and thirty. I was an odd kid as far back as memory itself. But maybe I was not a nut case after all, although it is futile to argue that such abnormalities as standing like a statue carved from stone, walking, talking, and thinking in reverse do not resemble the symptoms of a certain type of schizophrenia; too many medical men will be reading me for that. Yet allow me one more argument. I always knew my actions were zany, but knew they could not be otherwise, for they were the instructions of a malevolent intruder: but a real schizo, and in two locked wards I have met several, is not aware of his peculiarities, in fact he often believes himself to be a world-beater.

Education by the conventional method was just not on for a boy bound by invisible cords in the hands of an intriguing tormentor, although those cords were sometimes slack: I left school unable to repeat the alphabet, and hardly able to tell the time. Yet with the help of an **Odhams Complete Self Educator**, plus a particularly free time in my teens, I accumulated enough knowledge to pass the entrance exam to the R.A.F. No. 9 School of Technical Training. What is it like to be a registered disabled person, and what help can you expect? I suppose that depends upon your disability. If you are mental the green card can be more of a hindrance than a help. When after war service I finally left hospital in 1947 I was still tightly in the grip of my implacable enemy. The psychiatrists of three hospitals had tried, but they had failed — completely failed. Belmont, then Sutton Emergency, handed me over to my mother with the stimulating news that her boy might never work again, indeed, could end up in a real mental hospital. Yet only six months later the Lord had cut the cord, and for the first time probably since conscious life I was free, not for spells but for good. The malignant spirit tried, and still does, to hook the cord on again, but the sure way to beat him is by the Name of Christ. But troubles of a different kind were brewing — troubles to which I particularly draw your attention in this **Year of the Disabled**. I knew I was all right, but it is not easy to persuade the world that a schizophrenic

is all right. The Ministry of War Pensions refused to take my pension back, although I refused to draw it. What I considered conscience they thought to be illness. Even so, when I went along to the Disablement Rehabilitation Officer at the local employment office I expected something, after all I was officially a disabled airman, and I had also served for a longer period in the Air Transport Auxiliary. True at the end of 1944 I had cleared off to sea in the S.S. *Almanzora* — probably doing that was evidence against my sanity. As I said, I expected something when I went along to see the D.R.O. What I got was nothing! Nothing from the D.R.O., nothing from the British Legion, nothing from several other organizations who, according to their hand-outs, were falling over themselves to help the war disabled. At last I was offered a job at an Admiralty base as a labourer. I was there over eleven years, fighting nearly all the time to convince someone I could do something a little more responsible. Perhaps I am blaming men too much, for the Lord told me quite clearly at the beginning of this humiliating period that it was 'to humble thee, and to prove thee . . .'. But I did not find it easy to be humbled and proved when other young men in the assembly were on their way to university. I consoled myself with study, and writing short stories, most of which were accepted by quite a well-known publisher. Perhaps this is why the Lord wanted me to stay, for a manual worker in a

cushy job like I had can let his mind range while he works, which is something I have never been able to do since I donned a white collar. But I am wandering again. Anyhow, the fight with authority became so intense that by 1959 I was again in the locked ward of a mental hospital. I was not very ill, just worn out, frustrated and very angry. The cord was not there, at least I could resist any attempt to hook it on again. But you tell that to a psychiatrist. I imagined I was going into some kind of convalescence, and awoke to find myself locked in with mental cases of almost every category, with a few psychopathic criminals thrown in. Thank God I was only there for four months; four years in such a place might have meant for good. But what help did I receive from the assembly, or believers in general, during this period? I am afraid the whole thing was beyond the experience of most. There were exceptions. Let me introduce some of the most spiritual men I ever met: A. T. Clay, Broad Oak; George Pilbeam, Three Cups; Bert Dorset, Herstonceux, and A. R. Saunders (Dick's father), Hailsham. Maybe it is not strange that in spite of certain doctrinal differences they were all 'primitives'. They believed in original sin. Man had not just slipped up and fractured his little toe, he was a 'hell-deserving transgressor'. Up there in the centre of the Throne was a Lamb; and not just a Lamb, but 'a Lamb as it had been slain'. The only way to cleanse a deep dyed sinner was to wash him in the Blood

of that Lamb. The only gospel was the **Gospel of the Lamb**. Away with any intellectual superiority which belittled the Blood; woe to any who tried to wrap it up in a more palatable form. If nothing else, these brethren taught me that the real war is not between Age and Youth, but between God and Satan. They all sensed the presence of the enemy, especially Dorset who was not elderly, and was a Pentecostal. The Ministry of Pensions used George Pilbeam as a go-between, obviously thinking he was closer to me than most of my own relatives. They even asked the old man to try and get me to take my pension back.

It is truly a good thing that my help has been from the Lord. I sought the help of men, but often knocked hard — very hard — without finding anyone at home. Under the shadow of His wing I have fared better than most disabled people.

Finally, let me assure you that most disabled people do not want pampering, just accepting, and any help you can give. A dear old friend of mine spent the war years on merchant ships. He began to talk and act strangely around 1950. By then it was too late for him to pin the blame upon his war service, although that was obviously the cause. So he gets no war pension. He has had a leucotomy which has not worked. When his loving wife saw it had not worked she packed her bags and left him to it. He comes to me most week-

ends, and after years of his company I have witnessed that inevitable deterioration of character so often seen in the mentally sick. He is becoming grubbier and more scruffy by the month. I once took him to a Christian service and a rather important looking personage said, jokingly it is true, 'He smells'. Of course he smells; every drug-loaded-leucotomy-failed-roll-your-own-chain-smoker smells. Without the wonderful local voluntary Mental Handicap Club, people like poor old Jack would not only be on the street, but in Queer Street. And frankly I cannot see most of the Christian Church doing much to alleviate the position: that is, with the notable exception of the Salvation Army.

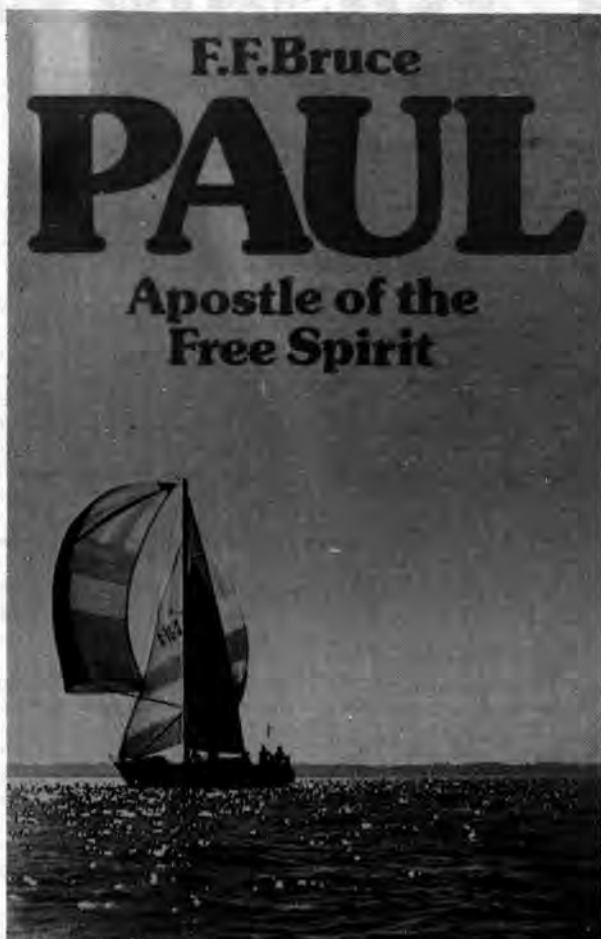
But what about it? Why not adopt your own disabled person during this year? Remember the surprise of the righteous? What were they surprised about? When the King congratulated them on their knowledge of Himself? On the manner in which they talked about Him? No, they were surprised when the King said: 'I was hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in . . . I was sick (disabled), and ye visited me . . . ' 'Lord, when . . . ?' they cry. And the King replied: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' You know I have a feeling that there will be some surprises in Heaven.



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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

'Purifies himself — from what?'

Question 186

In 2 Timothy 2:20,21, from what is Timothy told to purify himself? Have these verses any special significance for predestination or any other doctrine?

In this section of his letter, Paul is advising Timothy to avoid futile philosophical and religious arguments about mere words (14,16,23). He has given examples (17) of men who have been led by this tendency into temptation away from the truth. Although there are such people in the church, yet the Lord knows those who truly belong to him and his own people are marked by righteous conduct (19).

It is in this context that Paul refers to the wide variety of vessels found in a large house. He contrasts those which are intended for special occasions with those which are for everyday purposes (20). He points out to Timothy that Timothy may, if he takes certain action, be a 'vessel for special use' (21).

The use of the word 'vessels' and of the phrase 'to honour' has led some people to suppose that Paul was contrasting those who are predestined to salvation with those who are predestined to condemnation. They assume that the 'great house' is the visible church which Paul here describes as containing believers and unbelievers. For J. N. Darby the 'ignoble vessels' are Christians whose conduct is in some way unsatisfactory. Both these interpretations assume that when Paul tells Timothy to separate himself from 'these' (21), he means separation from individuals within the church. But the only other place in the New Testament where the verb is used is 1 Corinthians 5:7, where the object of the verb is the leaven which must be cleansed out. Yet here Timothy is not told to cleanse out the evil-doers but to purify himself from 'these'.

The best interpretation seems to be that 'these' refers to the evil tendencies referred to elsewhere in the chapter. The **Translators New Testament**

translates: 'If anyone cleanses himself from the evils I have mentioned, he will be a valuable vessel, dedicated to God . . .' If we are to seek a parallel elsewhere in the writings of Paul, it may be better to look in 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, rather than in Romans 9:21,22.

'Two-edged Swords in their Hands'

Question 187

How far is it possible for Christians to take upon their lips such verses as Psalm 149:6-9?

Psalm 149 was written to celebrate a victory (verse 4). This will have involved literal fighting; the background to the Psalm is the Holy War apart from which God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ would not have been possible. So the problem at which you hint is not acute in the case of the people of Old Testament times. (In point of fact, verse 6 may possibly refer to a sword dance celebrating the victory.)

One way of avoiding the problem has been to suggest that these verses may apply to God's people in some future age. But if the coming of Christ has affected the situation in the way that your question implies, it is not easy to see how it could ever again be right for God's people to rejoice in the slaughter of their enemies. Christians of various schools have sadly seen nothing wrong in using the sword to extend the kingdom of Christ. But the results have scarcely been glorifying to God and the repugnance that many people feel toward militant Zionism and Islam today should surely be extended to Christians who want to adopt similar methods. (This raises interesting questions about the validity of the more violent manifestations of the theology of revolution.) Yet even Christians must recognise that they are committed to an unending warfare (*Ephesians 6:12*). Our 'two-edged sword' is the word of God (*Hebrews 4:12*) and, like those of whom the Psalmist wrote, we anticipate total victory.

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

LOOKING AT BOOKS



Our changes over the past six months have meant that we shall not have the space in this Books Issue to carry the extensive reviews of our usual format. In this article, we take a brief look at one or two of the publications of recent months that will be of particular interest to our readers.

Biography

Of pre-eminent interest to readers of this magazine will be the autobiography of Professor F. F. Bruce **In Retrospect, Remembrance of Things Past**, an expanded version of the series of articles that appeared in *The Witness* (Pickering and Inglis £7.50). Then, a venture of great importance is the six volume story of Hudson Taylor and his times that is to be published by Hodder and Stoughton, and written by Dr. A. J. Broomhall. The first volume is now available **Hudson Taylor & China's Open Century** (paperback £2.50): this project will be of first importance to all interested in the history of Christian missions, or that of the nineteenth century world. **Augustine, Wayward Genius** by David Bentley-Taylor (Hodder £1.95 paperback) and **Amazing Grace — John Newton's Story** by John Pollock (Hodder £1.95 paperback) retell the lives of two of the 'great' among Christians. Two contrasting volumes of letters appear in selections from **Letters of John Calvin** (Banner of Truth £1.95 paperback) and **Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison** (abridged) (SCM Press £2.75 paperback).

Missionary

Several missionary stories may interest readers. Dr. Stanley Browne's well-known leprosy work is told in **Mister Leprosy** by Phyllis Thompson (Hodder £1.50 paperback), and a less familiar story of a young doctor in Zaire in **No Fear in His Presence** by Dr. David Dawson (Regal Books \$9.95: foreword by Luis Palau). **Dawn Wind** (OMF Books unpriced paperback) tells the story of the OMF church-planting in Thailand. Finally, in **World Missions in the 80's** (STL £1.40 paperback) we have the addresses by Michael Griffiths and other well known speakers from the Second European Missionary Congress in Lausanne, 1980.

Helps

At the beginning of the list of 'helps' for Christian life and service there is a remarkable booklet

published by the Christian Medical Fellowship that will help many through the valley of the shadow. At the age of 37, James Casson, a young G.P. with a wife and small family, was diagnosed as having inoperable cancer. In the months before his death he recorded his reactions in this moving account **Dying — The Greatest Adventure of My Life** (CMF 60p from 157 Waterloo Rd., London, SE1 8XN).

Church pastoral matters are dealt with in **Caring for New Christians**, a pamphlet from the Baptist 'Mainstream' group (2 Church Rd., Kirby Muxloe, Leics., 45p) and two little pamphlets **How Not to Visit the Sick** and **How Not to Witness** from Marshall, Morgan and Scott at 60p each. **Family Prayers 1981** comes from Scripture Union at £2 (paperback). To help with the Bible and Bible Studies the British and Foreign Bible Society have **For Reading Out Loud** (£1.25) and **In Teaching** (£1.75) in the 'Using the Bible' Series, and — excellent for the enquirer — all the words of our Lord from the Bible in the Good News Version in **Christ's Words** (Softback edn £1.95). In **Jesus, One of Us** (£1.95) IVP have an excellent, simple series of study outlines for groups on the person of Jesus Christ. Scripture Union have **Bible Study Can be Exciting** by Mary Garvin (£1.95), and **Banner of Truth** in pamphlet form **Reading the Bible** by Geoffrey Thomas (50p).

For other aspects of the Christian devotional life, **Hallelujah!** by Herbert Carson (Evangelical Press) deals with the approach to Christian worship, and **Celebration of Discipline** by Richard Foster (Hodder £1.50 paperback) with the spiritual life and spiritual discipline.

Social Relationships

Readers who may have been interested in the reference to Donald Dayton's **Discovering an Evangelical Heritage** in the March editorial, will also be interested to learn of the publication by Louisiana State University Press (1 Gower St., London, WC1E 6HA) of **Southern Evangelicals and the Social Order 1800-1860** by Anne C. Loveland (£18). IVP have issued a revised and enlarged edition of Sir Fred Catherwood's **The Christian in Industrial Society** (£3.95 paperback), while SCM Press issue **Justice in Industry** the result of research by an Anglican clergyman into industrial

HE WAS BURIED

A Meditation for Good Friday

J. H. Hughes

A veteran servant of God, Mr. Hughes has been associated with Counties work since 1933.

The first recorded funeral in the Bible was that of Sarah, when Abraham made the request to the sons of Heth to purchase a certain field 'that I might bury my dead **out of my sight**'. That is burial: the body has gone. It is instructive to learn that when the Gentile Cornelius was converted Peter used a similar expression to the sons of Heth in saying, 'None of us shall withhold his sepulchre from thee' when he said, 'Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized?' Baptism is a burial, through which the body of sin has gone for ever. The present salvation which we enjoy follows from the finished work of the cross in its relation to God. First of all the cross is the work of God in Christ; he is reconciled through the death of his Son. Consider the body in which he was crucified. Unique, sinless, incorruptible, yet in that dark hour he was 'made sin'. God did it, for 'it pleased the Lord to bruise him'. He who had known an eternity of fellowship and unsullied harmony with his father, became what he had never been before. The sin of man and the righteous judgment of God met there in him. Mocked, scourged, spit upon, crowned with thorns and accursed was our part of it.

The wrath which had destroyed the primeval creation because of the evil in it, and will yet destroy the present one, burned against him, so that in him a new creation might come into being — that was God's side of it. We are at peace with God when we can look 'at that sight' and say 'There was I' — *I hear the words of love, I gaze upon the blood; I see the mighty sacrifice, And I have peace with God.* With what joy he cried in triumph 'It is finished', and yielded up his spirit to his father. He parted with the body which had borne it all, to be buried 'out of sight'. So we consider his burial, and the two men involved. They have much to teach us, with the help of the great foreshadowing of the Day of Atonement, and the sin offering which was made once only in the year. Two goats were needed to set forth in type the one sacrifice, and two men were needed to complete it. The High Priest offered the first lamb on the great altar, and with the blood entered the holiest, which he sprinkled on and before the mercy seat. He then confessed all the sins and iniquities of the people on the head of the second goat, which was taken by 'a fit man' into the wilderness, let go, and forgotten. We now have the testimony of the two men at the sepulchre, Joseph of Arimathea

and Nicodemus. The first man comes from obscurity, plays his part in the great transaction, and we hear no more of him. But it is eternally sufficient. On the other hand, Nicodemus was closely linked with the Saviour and the cross. He had hungered for the righteousness which the law could not impart, and, an old man, coming in the spirit of a little child to the great Teacher, to enquire and to learn, with the question echoed in a million hearts since that night: 'How can these things be?'

The Lord gave him the answer, as he does to all who are humble enough to come that way. He took him back to a guilty nation with Canaan in sight, but stricken by serpents: a dead brazen serpent lifted up on a pole, on which only to look was to live — 'So must the son of man be lifted up'. He must have witnessed the fulfilment on that dark night of sin, remembering that the light first shone on his way when he came by night to the feet of the Saviour. Pause and consider — not only was the great reconciliation with God accomplished, but Satan himself was defeated, to be finally destroyed with all the principalities and powers under his control. It was his contribution to the burial to bring a hundredweight of spices to enclose with the linen cloths in which the body was wrapped. There was

little time to spare.

Joseph, however, was the chief actor in the scene, 'a fit man' for this unique service. Wealthy, honourable, a counsellor, and having a new tomb in which 'never before man was laid', this man went boldly to Pilate and obtained permission to take the body down from the cross. All we know is that, with the help of Nicodemus, he buried the body, rolled a great stone over the entrance to the tomb, and went his way. Nothing more. But consider the significance, for doubtless on the resurrection day he would be asked by the Sadducees where the body was, to which he could give but one answer: 'I do not know where it is; it has gone!'

Remembering again the scapegoat lost in the wilderness, what joy and assurance it brings to the humble heart, for in that form **the Lord was never seen again**. Do I see myself crucified with him? Indeed I do, for I was there. But have I also been buried? It is indeed so. Then where is the load of sin and guilt which made death and the throne of judgment a terror? It has gone, lost and forgotten. God has done what we could never do, and across the tomb is written with the point of a diamond, 'Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more' (Heb. 10:17).

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (46)

F. F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

ii. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN (John 9:1-41)

(a) The Pool of Siloam (9:1-12), continued

9:8, 9 So his neighbours and those who were formerly used to seeing him (and knew) that he was a beggar started to say, 'Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?' Others said, 'Yes, it is he'; others again said, 'No, but he is like him'. But the man himself said, 'I am he.'

The blind man had been a familiar sight in his neighbourhood. The only way in which a person so handicapped could get a little money or anything else was by begging; people had been accustomed to seeing him begging (the present participle *theōrountes* in verse 8 has imperfect force). The man whom they now saw obviously seeing his way around was very like the well-known blind man; but it could not be he, could it? John characteristically reports the interplay of uninformed opinion (just as he has done in 7:12, 25-27, 31 when describing the variety of opinions expressed about Jesus at the feast of Tabernacles); it is cut short by the man's assurance that he is the selfsame person.

9:10-12 So they said to him, 'Well, how were your eyes opened?' He replied, 'The man called Jesus made mud and smeared my eyes with it; then he told me to go to Siloam and wash, so I went off and washed and received my sight.' 'Where is he?' they asked him. 'I do not know', said he.

Naturally they wanted to know what had happened to him. He gave them a brief factual account. It may be possible to trace a gradation in his estimate of Jesus in his successive references to him throughout the narrative. To begin with, he is 'the man called Jesus'; at the end, he is the object of his faith and veneration (verse 38). Unlike the cripple at the pool of Bethesda (5:13), the once-blind man knows his benefactor's identity and gives credit where credit is due. The question 'Where is he?' suggests that those who questioned the man would have liked to question Jesus too, to see if the two accounts tallied. But Jesus was not available to abide their question.

(b) Interrogation by the Pharisees (9:13-17)

9:13 They took the man who had formerly been blind to the Pharisees.

Why to the Pharisees? Because they felt that a religious issue was involved, and they respected the Pharisees as authorities on the law and its interpretation. Unlike the Synoptic evangelists, John does not explicitly mention the scribes. In Jesus' day there were scribes attached to the Pharisaic party (Mark 2:16) and scribes attached to other parties, although it is the Pharisaic scribes who normally feature in the Synoptic Gospels. The scribes were the experts in the law, teaching their interpretations to the people in synagogue and elsewhere. By the time John's Gospel was written, there were no scribes except those of the Pharisaic party; he therefore can refer to all scribes as 'Pharisees' without fear of confusion. There were few areas of life which had no religious bearing, and it was natural to consult legal experts rather than medical men about this strange case of healing. Moreover, as now appears for the first time, there was one factor in the situation which made it very much a matter for legal inquiry.

9:14 Now it was a sabbath on the day when Jesus made the mud and opened the man's eyes.

So, Jesus had repeated the offence which led to so much trouble on the occasion of an earlier visit to Jerusalem: he had performed an act of healing on the sabbath. Not that an act of healing as such infringed the sabbath law, but an act of healing was very likely to involve something else which did infringe the law. On the former occasion Jesus encouraged a man to carry a burden through the streets on the sabbath; on this occasion he made some mud with earth and saliva. What was wrong with that? Simply this: one of the categories of work specifically forbidden on the sabbath in the traditional interpretation of the law was kneading, and the making of mud or clay with such simple ingredients as earth and saliva was construed as a form of kneading.

9:15 So they asked him again — the Pharisees this time — how he had received his sight. He told them, 'He put mud on my eyes, and I

washed, and I can see.'

The man may well have told them his story in some detail, but the readers now need only the bare outline; they know what happened. The Pharisees are described as launching a serious inquiry; the man is interrogated as first witness, and when his witness proves inconclusive (from their point of view) they summon other witnesses (verse 18).

9:16 So some of the Pharisees said, 'This man is not from God; he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?' There was a division among them.

Two opposed points of view are expressed, and two opposed conclusions are reached. The one viewpoint was based on the major premise: 'A man who breaks the sabbath law is not a man of God.' Few would have been found to quarrel with that premise. The minor premise was: 'Jesus has broken the sabbath law.' (The sabbath law forbids the doing of any work on the seventh day, and Jesus, according to the accepted interpretation of the law, had 'worked' on that day by making a mud-paste to smear on the blind man's eyes.) The conclusion seemed inevitable: 'Jesus is not a man of God.' The expression *para theou* ('from God') has no metaphysical significance; it is used in the sense in which it is used of John the Baptist in *John 1:6*. John, as a man 'sent from God', declared the word of God: he was a prophet. Jesus was held by many to be a prophet of God, but (it was argued) since he was guilty of sabbath-breaking, this could not be so.

The other viewpoint was based on the major premise: 'Anyone who cures a man of his blindness — especially a man **born** blind — is a man of God.' This premise would not have been universally admitted: in *Deut. 13:1-5* the case is envisaged of a 'prophet' who by means of signs and wonders tries to gain a following and lead people astray from their allegiance to the true God. But some would have argued (and their argument would probably have been valid) that Jesus had not performed a sign or a wonder at random: this 'sign' involved a work of mercy, a work of healing, and such a work is so completely in accordance with

the character of God that anyone who performs it must be in the way of God's will. So they framed their major premise, already expressed. The minor premise was: 'Jesus has cured a man of his blindness — a man, moreover, who was **born** blind.' The conclusion followed: 'Jesus is a man of God — he cannot be a sinner.' (A further conclusion might follow from that: the accepted interpretation of the sabbath law called for re-examination.) As the crowd was divided in *John 7:43*, so the Pharisees are now divided over Jesus' credentials. Adolf Schlatter, who was no mean authority in rabbinical scholarship, thought that the division followed the tendencies attributed respectively to the schools of Shammai and Hillel. The school of Shammai tended to argue from first principles (so here: anyone who breaks the law is a sinner); the school of Hillel tended to have regard to the established facts of a case (so here: Jesus has performed a good work). In a case like this, their conclusions were bound to conflict with each other.

9:17 So they say to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened.' He said, 'He is a prophet.'

The blind man — the man who had been blind until recently — was no authority on law or religion. Still, he had had direct dealings with Jesus; it would be interesting to know his opinion of him. Since they themselves were divided in their judgment, they might do worse than appeal to a third party. He gave his considered opinion: 'he is a prophet'.

The Samaritan woman had perceived Jesus to be a prophet because her life-story was an open book to him. The crowd that had been fed with loaves and fishes and the Jerusalemites who heard his call to come and receive 'living water' identified him with 'the prophet' because in action and word he seemed to be the expected second Moses. The man who had received his sight may have thought of this work of healing as putting Jesus in the succession of Elijah and Elisha. What the Jordan had done for Naaman's leprosy the pool of Siloam had done for his blindness. But perhaps he simply used 'prophet' as a synonym for 'man of God'. In any case, he now gave an assessment much more positive than 'the man called Jesus' (verse 11).

continued from page 30

man who had lost everything might yet hope that it would return to him in the year of Jubilee. But, as Samuel had warned Israel (*1 Sam. 8:14*), once property had vanished into the insatiable maw of royal need and greed, it would never be returned again. Hence, when the perfect king came, he would judge the poor with righteousness, which is far more than simply even-handed justice, and to judge always implies to deliver.

Down the centuries of Christendom there has been a long tradition of hope that a great king would arise who would deliver the poor. Only Christ's return could fulfil the hope, and that is why the masses today have debased the hope into an expectation that it could be brought about by force, either the force of numbers used in the ballot box, or the force of arms in strikes or open bloodshed, both of which end in leaving the poor poorer than ever.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS OR ORGANIZED MINISTRY? (1)

The New Testament Evidence

Ronald Y. K. Fung

Dr. Fung is Director of Academic Affairs and lecturer at the China Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong. We are glad to be able to publish this month and next the substance of an article which appeared in The Evangelical Quarterly (LII No. 4), with the kind agreement of the Editor.

The question of the relation between spiritual gifts and ecclesiastical office has been raised in a radical form by a prominent New Testament scholar, Emeritus Professor Ernst Käsemann of Tübingen University, who sees an irreconcilable conflict between spiritual gifts and all organization of the ministry — except such as results automatically from a free exercise of the charismata.* With this as background, we propose in these articles to take a closer look at the evidence afforded by the Pauline letters.

INDICATIONS OF AN ORGANIZED MINISTRY

Leaving the Corinthian correspondence and the Pastors for later treatment, we shall take the Pauline letters in their probable chronological sequence. The reference to 'him who teaches' in *Galatians* 6:6 suggests that there existed in the churches of Galatia a class of teachers fully supported by the congregation — a form of full-time or almost full-time public ministry. In the exhortation of *1 Thessalonians* 5:12, the Greek construction used (one common article 'governing' three participles: cf. AV, RSV) clearly indicates that one group of persons, not three, is in view; the notion of a leadership over against the rank and file of church members is obvious, and the ground given for the high esteem to be shown towards the leaders ('because of their

work', v.13) seems to suggest a definite, specialized ministry. *Romans* 16:1 describes Phoebe as a 'deaconess' of the church at Cenchreae; whether the original term refers merely to her service to the church or indicates the existence of an office of deaconess is debated, but the latter would seem to be the more probable view.

In *Colossians* 4:17, Paul has a special message for Archippus concerning the latter's ministry; the fact that he has 'received (it) in the Lord' and is now to be solemnly charged with the responsibility of fully discharging it would seem to point to some definite, recognized ministry in the church, even though its exact nature cannot now be ascertained. The high praise accorded to Epaphras (1:7f.) similarly suggests that he probably had a special ministry or even held a special office in the church at Colossae. With the inclusion of 'bishops and deacons' in the salutation of *Philippians* 1:1, we have the first mention of the term bishop (or overseer) in Paul's writings. While it is possible that the terms here describe not holders of ecclesiastical office but functionaries assuming responsibility in the local church, yet the addition of the phrase 'with the bishops and deacons' would have no meaning unless Paul 'has in view individual members of the congregation who are unequivocally characterized by the designation' (H. W. Beyer); perhaps the terms are best taken, then, as denoting church officials, though not in the highly developed ecclesiastical sense of a later age. Another passage which bears upon our investigation is *Acts* 14:23, which tells of the appointment of elders in the churches by Paul and Barnabas during the first missionary journey. There is a con-

sensus of scholarly opinion which points to the elders (*zēqenim*) of Judaism as the origin of the Christian elders; this close connection between the Christian elders and the Jewish elders, together with the fact that the latter had a manifestly official status, strongly suggests that the Christian elders must be accorded an official status. In view of the fact that the early Christians met in private homes and that the hosts of such house churches were, by virtue of their background and ability, likely candidates for leadership, *Acts* 14:23 would seem to mean that when Paul and Barnabas took leave of a house church they had just founded, they would place it under the charge of the host of that group, who, presumably, would assume the official title of elder.

From the above evidence, it may legitimately be concluded (a) that in some of the Pauline communities there was some kind of public or specialized ministry (the teachers in Galatia, Epaphras and Archippus at Colossae), with a rudimentary form of official organization (elders in Galatia, and possibly also in Thessalonica), and (b) that at Philippi there appears to have been a comparatively more advanced system with its twofold division of overseers and 'deacons'. There is thus already ample evidence to show that the Pauline communities, like the primitive church as a whole, were by no means amorphous associations run on more or less haphazard lines.

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH — AN EXCEPTION

A rather different picture of the local ministry is reflected in the Corinthian letters. Not only is there no allusion to church officials of any kind, but the origins of the ministry

here appear to have lain in the voluntary service of men who were both willing and able to render that service (*1 Cor.* 16:15f., RV); this state of affairs supports the conclusion that there was no clearly-defined body of officers in the Corinthian church.

Over against this, however, the following considerations need to be taken into account: (1) There is scant justification for holding up Corinth as the model of church order: the facts of the case rather suggest the opposite. The various disorders, both on the individual and on the corporate level, reflected in *1 Corinthians* shows that Paul's lament in 3:1-4 was amply justified in regard to more matters than that of dissension within the church, and lend colour to the view that Corinth was exceptionally without a clearly-defined body of elders because 'perhaps the qualities of leadership were slow in manifesting themselves in the Corinthian Church' (F. F. Bruce).

(2) The enumeration 'first apostles, second prophets, third teachers' (*1 Cor.* 12:28) must be allowed to shed light on the organizational aspect of the local ministry. While prophets and teachers do not represent office-holders, yet, there is little doubt that they do represent the two most important functions in the ministry of the local church — that is, next to the apostles, who obviously stand apart as a special class by themselves. From this, and from the prominence given to prophecy in *1 Corinthians* 14, it may be inferred that even in the Corinthian church, for all its abundance of spiritual gifts, prophets and teachers (next to the apostle Paul) held the most honoured place, just as they were the recognized leaders of the church at Antioch (*Acts* 13:1).

(3) At Corinth, as in the

other Pauline communities, the Lord's authority was effectively exercised by two means: the apostle's personal presence and teaching, and his presence and teaching through his writings (or through a personal delegate) (cf. 2 Cor. 13:10; 10:8; 1 Cor. 4:21; 14:37; 5:3-5). That Paul should devote three chapters to giving instruction on spiritual gifts is sufficient by itself to show that he did not simply leave the readers to a free and unguided exercise of their abundant charisma.

While, therefore, the ministry in the Corinthian church does appear to have lacked even the simple form of official organization indicated in Acts 14:23, this would seem to be an exceptional situation ill deserving the status of an exemplary pattern of the local church ministry.

THE MINISTRY IN THE PASTORALS

Acts 20:17-35 attests the existence, at the close of Paul's third missionary journey, of elders at Ephesus, as well as the equation of the terms 'elder' and 'overseer' (vv. 17, 28, AV); this testimony is confirmed by, and expanded in, the Pastoral Epistles. While the latter are not primarily manuals of church order, designed among other things to give details on the organization of the ministry, yet they do throw light upon the situation at Ephesus and Crete toward the end of Paul's life.

The apostle appears in a role in harmony with his status: solemnly entrusting the gospel ministry to his understudy (1 Tim. 1:18), delivering false teachers over to Satan (1:20), giving instructions and injunctions to his delegates with authority (e.g. Tit. 1:5). He does not, however, himself figure in the local ministry of the churches, but exercises his authority through his delegates, Timothy and Titus. While neither is given an official title, they are to employ the authority delegated to them by the apostle (a) in the ministry of the Word: preaching and teaching (1 Tim. 4:11, 13, 16; 2 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 2:15), holding forth the sound doctrine (Tit. 1:9; 2:1; cf. 2 Tim.

1:13), transmitting the apostolic gospel to faithful men who can teach others (2 Tim. 2:2), warning against profitless disputations (1 Tim. 1:4) and controlling heterodoxy (1 Tim. 1:3); and (b) in the general oversight of the church's affairs (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15); in Crete appointment of elders and amendment of what is amiss (Tit. 1:5); in Ephesus, management of public worship (1 Tim. 2:1) and superintendence in the choice of officers (1 Tim. 3:1-13; cf. 5:22), exercise of pastoral care over various sections of the congregation (1 Tim. 5:1-6:2), including the administration of discipline (1 Tim. 5:19-21). In short, as Paul's personal delegates — 'Vicars Apostolic', as W. Lock called them — Timothy and Titus exercise supreme authority over the local community in every aspect of its life.

Concerning the exact status of these two men, the most likely view is that they were temporary delegates sent to deal with a specific situation. It would appear that while they were Paul's fellow-labourers on a permanent basis, they were his personal delegates only on those occasions when they were thus commissioned with apostolic authority (as here and at 1 Cor. 4:17, 16:10; 2 Cor. 7:6, 8:6, 12:18).

Under the local ministry, the epistles mention the offices of 'bishop' or overseer (1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7), elder (1 Tim. 5:17, 19; Tit. 1:5) and deacon (1 Tim. 3:8, 12). 'The office of bishop' is a distinct and desirable office (1 Tim. 3:1), and the bishop's function, as deduced from the list of qualifications (1 Tim. 3:2-7; Tit. 1:7-9), comprises the three areas of preaching and teaching (1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:9), pastoral care (1 Tim. 3:5) and administration (v. 4). The word for bishop in both its occurrences appears in the singular with the article prefixed.

On the combined basis of the Pastorals and Acts 20:17ff., the elder's function is seen to include preaching and teaching, holding the rule (1 Tim. 5:17), shepherding the flock (Acts 20:28), exercising watchful care over the community (vv. 28 (RSV) 31),

particularly against false teachers (vv. 29f.). If, as seems likely, the elders are at least in part to be identified with the 'faithful men' of 2 Timothy 2:2, then one of their most important functions is to be transmitters of the apostolic gospel, the deposit of truth which Timothy had received from Paul and was to pass on to them (cf. 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14). All these functions may be subsumed under three heads: the ministry of the Word, pastoral care, direction of the church.

Thus the functions of elders appear to be the same as those of the bishop. This, together with the fact that the terms 'bishop' and 'elder' seem to be used interchangeably in Titus 1:5, 7, indicates that they are, in the New Testament, only different titles for the same office. Whereas elder conjures up the notion of status, overseer (= bishop) brings to the fore the idea of function. The use of the article with bishop in the singular generically refers 'to the bishop as a type and not to the number of bishops in a given place' (H. W. Beyer); and the fact that never in these writings is there mention of 'bishop, presbyters and deacons' in one breath shows that the terms 'cannot be interrelated along the lines of a three-tiered hierarchy' (G. Bornkamm).

Deacons appear as local church officers only in Ephesus, but not in Crete, presumably because in the less developed churches of Crete there was as yet no need for two kinds of officers. Their name and their qualifications imply that their work is primarily one of practical service. It should not be inferred from this, however, that the deacon is an assistant elder or a subordinate of the overseer; he is to be viewed rather as 'an office-bearer to whom a peculiar task was assigned in the proper functioning of the life of the church as the Body of Christ' (H. Ridderbos). Deacons are to be tested and approved before being allowed to serve (1 Tim. 3:10), in the same way as prospective candidates for the bishop's office are to be tested — by a thorough scrutiny of their suitability for

office in the light of the qualifications stipulated.

In the passage dealing with deacons, certain women also receive mention (1 Tim. 3:11). That these are not the wives of deacons or of deacons and bishops seems tolerably certain: two fatal objections to such an identification are the omission of the word 'their' with 'women' (= wives) and the lack of mention of any domestic duties (these are specified in the case of the deacons). The use of 'likewise', indicating a different class, 'the order and parallelism of qualifications in verse 8 and 11' (C. J. Elliott), and the fact that both the preceding and the succeeding context of the verse deal with deacons favour the view that the women in question are a separate order of deaconesses.

Two classes of widows seem to be dealt with in 1 Timothy 5:3-16: (a) those who, being without children or grandchildren, are really destitute and are therefore to receive support from the church (vv. 3-8), and (b) a special class of 'enrolled' widows who are engaged in official duties of the church, probably in the form of counsel and other ministries to younger women (vv. 9-16). The technical term 'enrolled' (vv. 9, 11), meaning 'placed in a recognized list', indicates the existence of a distinct order of widows.

In conclusion, it may be said that the local ministry as presented in the pastorals shows a more advanced degree of organization than heretofore, with apostolic delegates exercising supreme authority and transmitting the authentic gospel, with bishop-presbyters engaged in preaching, pastoring, ruling and in their turn passing on the tradition, with deacons (including deaconesses) rendering service of a more practical and temporal sort, and with suitably qualified widows assisting the whole by providing ministries particularly adapted to the needs of women. (To be continued)

* See E. Käsemann, 'Ministry and Community in the New Testament', Essays on New Testament Themes, E.T. (London: SCM, 1964), pp. 63-94.

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Kingship (continued) H. L. Ellison

Taken all in all, Saul did no bad job as war-leader (1 Sam. 15:4-7), until his final disastrous defeat at Mt. Gilboa. Samuel had anointed him 'prince' (1 Sam. 10:1), i.e. he had handed over only civil rights to him from God, but Saul usurped both the priestly (1 Sam. 13:8-14) and prophetic offices (1 Sam. 15), the latter by claiming to know God's will better than Samuel, and so he was rejected by God. We know little of the way in which he discharged his judicial responsibilities, though his treatment of David gives us little confidence as to his impartiality.

Clearly his final failure did not convince Israel that it had made a mistake in asking for a king, for David's arrival in Hebron led immediately to his being crowned king over Judah (2 Sam. 2:1-3). Significantly there is no suggestion of a divine oracle. This apparently over-hasty action led to a split. Esh-baal, better known as Ish-bosheth was a mere puppet in Abner's hands, which helps to explain why the other tribes only gradually accepted him (2 Sam. 2:9, 10). A period of civil war and Esh-baal's foul murder left the northern tribes no one but David to turn to (2 Sam. 5:1-5). In palliation of Judah's apparently over-hasty action it can reasonably be urged that David's anointing by Samuel had become public property, cf. 2 Sam. 3:17-19. But the damage had been done. David was never able to recreate real unity between north and south. 1 Sam. 15:4 suggests that already in the time of Saul some sort of division existed, which will have been deepened by Judean resentment at the way David was treated. A careful reading of the story of Absalom's rebellion will show that it was the northern tribes (Israel) that followed Absalom, while Judah was prepared to await the outcome of the struggle on the sidelines.

It is a commonplace to condemn the Northern tribes under Jeroboam for turning against the God-appointed Davidic dynasty in Jerusalem. Yet clearly they had as much legal right to do so as Judah had to anoint David. Yet the concept of legitimacy was jealously preserved by appeal to a prophetic oracle, viz. for Jeroboam (1 Kgs.

11:29-39), for Baasha (1 Kgs. 14:6-11), for Jehu (2 Kgs. 9:4-10), and even for the end of Jehu's dynasty (2 Kgs. 10:30, 31). It was this that made Amaziah take Amos' apparent prophecy against Jeroboam II so seriously (Amos 7:10, 11). Consistently with this we find the more important role being played by the prophet in the north, and by the Jerusalem temple in the south.

Both north and south had to learn the hard way that no ordinary man could adequately represent God. There is no evidence that Hosea placed his life in danger by his words,

*Where now is your king to save you;
where are all your princes to defend you —
those of whom you said, Give me a king and
princes?*

*I have given you kings in my anger,
and I have taken them away in my wrath.
(13:10f.)*

Spiritually, legitimacy was even more dangerous. Jeremiah was nearly lynched for condemning trust in the Temple (7:8-15; 26:7-9). When we remember that the sob in

*The breath of our nostrils, the Lord's anointed,
was taken in their pits,*

*he of whom we said, 'Under his shadow
we shall live among the nations'*

(Lam. 4:20)

is for Zedekiah, one of the most worthless of the Judean kings, we see how easily a long-standing institution can be spiritually numbing. There is no church in greater spiritual danger than the one that has convinced itself that in all things it conforms to the New Testament pattern.

God indeed was to affirm that a perfect human representative was his ultimate purpose, but before he could be raised up, all that man trusted in had to vanish. Isa. 11:1 speaks of the sweeping away of the royal house, for there is only a stump left, and it will have fallen into such disrepute that the oracle speaks of Jesse rather than of David. Socially, the greatest evil created by kingship in Israel was that the people's unique system of land-tenure was destroyed. Under the Judges the

continued on page twenty-seven

MEDITATIONS ON MARK (8)

Family Ties and Jesus David Brady

During the Last Supper, when the disciples asked Jesus who it was who was going to betray their Master, Jesus said to them, 'It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread in the same dish with me' (Mark 14:20). Only Mark among the evangelists records the italicized words and we ask ourselves what might be the significance of this inclusion. Perhaps our Lord simply intended to indicate the depth of the betrayer's sin by reminding those present that the betrayer was in fact one who had been specially chosen by Jesus to be with him and to be his messenger of life to others. From such a high calling had Judas fallen. But it is also possible that Jesus identified his betrayer as one of the twelve simply because there were in fact other disciples present at that Last Supper who were not actually part of that inner group of twelve apostles. Who might they have been?

It is quite likely that members of Jesus's own family were present at that time. The brothers of Jesus, on an earlier occasion when they did not yet believe in their elder brother, had wanted him to go with them to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2-9). Since Jesus's brothers, James and Judas, were later to become leading figures in the early church (and writers of letters included in the New Testament), it is more likely that they were in contact with Jesus during this last Pass-

over, which was to transform their attitudes completely. Acts 1:14 informs us that Jesus's mother and brothers were certainly present in Jerusalem with the apostles in the weeks immediately following that last Passover and John's Gospel is quite explicit in recording the presence of Jesus's mother at the cross. It is also quite likely that the Gospels quietly bear witness to the presence of Jesus's brothers at the crucifixion (compare Mark 15:40 with Mark 6:3 and Matt. 27:56 with Matt. 13:55). All this points to the fact that members of Jesus's own family were undergoing a conversion from a previously critical attitude toward their brother. Some of the suggestions made above are put forward in greater detail by V. V. Gunther (*Evangelical Quarterly*, XLVI (1974), p.35).

The relation of Jesus to his own family is full of practical significance for all Christians who are faced with the dilemma of allegiance to God on the one hand and the criticisms of one's family on the other. On one occasion Jesus said, 'Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me'

(Matt. 10:34-38). There is evidence that Jesus had become estranged from his own family on account of his obedience to the call of his Father on his life. We remember the prophetic words of Simeon to Mary his mother: 'A sword will pierce through your own soul also', and how Mary began to feel the sting of this when instead of returning with his parents from celebrating the Feast of Passover in Jerusalem, Jesus stayed behind to dispute in the temple. 'Son', asked Mary, 'why have you treated us so?' But the fact that Jesus returned home with them 'and was obedient to them' is a lesson to all young Christians who have not yet come of age. It is to the glory of God that we obey our parents in all things as far as possible, since our parents are powers ordained by God. But as Jesus grew and as he devoted himself more fully to the mission of his heavenly Father, so his estrangement from his earthly family deepened. This is hinted at in Jesus's words to his mother at the wedding in Cana: 'O woman, what have you to do with me?' and in his reply to the woman in the crowd who shouted out, 'Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that you sucked!' But he said, 'Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!' Other passages in the Gospels record this estrangement even more clearly, and we notice in particular how Mark alone records the poignant

words 'and among his own kin' after Jesus has observed that 'a prophet is not without honour, except in his own country' (Mark 6:4; cf. also Mark 3:31-35; Matt. 8:21-22; 19:29).

These words of Jesus, declaring in what to our ears seem to be rather harsh terms the division in families which allegiance to Christ is likely to bring ('a man's foes will be those of his own household') are perhaps too readily glossed over by us today, but all who take seriously the call of Jesus Christ upon every aspect of their lives and commitments will not be slow to recognize that these words, however harsh they may appear, are nevertheless very fact. But that does not mean that we make it our aim to oppose the ways of our blood relations just for the sake of so doing; it is rather that we may find them opposed to our ways when we try to live the new life as Christians. Our responsibilities to our natural relations are not to be quickly cast aside, whether they are believers or not (see 1 Tim. 5:8; 1 Cor. 7:12, 16; 1 Pet. 3:1); in this we have our Lord's own example in providing for his mother while hanging on the cross (John 19:26-27). It is no wonder that this depth of love, foreshadowed in the Last Supper at which his relatives were possibly present, was able to bring about the conversion of those previously hostile to him. It is an example to us all.

NEWS STORY: Historical Books Leroy Birney

THE PUBLISHING EVENT OF 1981!

A Review

The difference between news and history is when it was written. News has the advantage of immediacy, but history has the advantage of perspective and coherence. A key test for either news or history is significance. How many people does the event or person affect? What influence does it have over succeeding developments? What changes in the course of nations and peoples result from it? In short, what difference does it make?

The 12 Historical Books (*Joshua* through *Esther*) combine the human interest of news with the perspective of history. Above all, they are significant. The events and people involved have made, and continue to make, a tremendous difference in history and in us.

For example, the rape-murder of the Levite's concubine in *Judges* was more than a sensational crime story. It nearly ended the tribe of Benjamin (and therefore their descendant, the apostle Paul, who set the pattern for the worldwide missionary movement), and graphically portrayed for all ages the danger of hasty vows and of anarchy, among other things.

The hot story in *1 Samuel* of David's rising favour in the eyes of the public and dis-favour in the eyes of King Saul was more than the drama of a rising political star. It was the foundation of a dynasty which was to produce a Saviour-King whose significance is cosmic. All who enter His kingdom by personal faith in Him as Saviour and Lord (King) will have a part in His inheritance when He returns to rule the entire world.

The scandalously arrogant answer of Solomon's son Rehoboam to the people was more than a bad press conference (*1 Kings* and *2 Chronicles*). It bore the fruit of civil

war, division of the nation and a confusing succession of good and bad kings. It set the stage for a resurgence of idolatry on the one hand and for God's messages through the prophets on the other hand.

The comings and goings of Elijah, Elishah and other 'speaking prophets' (so called because they did not write separate books) were news stories that still have not lost their freshness nor significance (*1* and *2 Kings* and *2 Chronicles*).

The 'writing prophets', whose books are in the Bible, make sense when the reader is familiar with the events in the historical books. Imagine reading the Magna Carta with no knowledge of the historical situation or Luther's Ninety Theses with no knowledge of medieval church history. In the same way you will understand and enjoy the prophets more by becoming familiar with the news of Israel in the historical books. If the defeat and captivity of Judah at the end of *2 Kings* and *2 Chronicles* were the end of the history, it would be an anticlimax. Instead, it is the kind of news story that cries out 'Then what?' A glimpse is provided in the palace-intrigue story of *Esther*. An important official in Persia (Nehemiah) and a prominent scribe (Ezra) ably report the outcome and their own part in it.

From the original occupation under Joshua to the reconstruction under Nehemiah, the history of Israel is a fascinating news story. It is replete with meaning and importance for us today, both in the individual events reported and in the broad meaning of God's intervention in history revealed by the over-all direction of the events.

Like any newspaper with its legal section and want ads, there are technical chapters

The Illustrated Bible Dictionary. Revision Editor, N. Hillier. Inter-Varsity Press. 3 vols., each £13.95.

We were able to review the first volume of this work in the November issue of *The Witness*. Volumes 2 and 3 are now before us, to complete the set. With such names as F. F. Bruce, D. Guthrie, A. R. Millard, J. I. Packer and D. J. Wiseman as Consulting Editors, we need not say that this is a work of true and accurate scholarship, an essential tool for serious study, except to cancel any impression that because there are pictures, it is therefore trivial. Indeed, the illustrations — of which there are some 1,600, mostly in full colour — greatly add to the information provided. Thus, both jewels and ornaments are better understood from the illustrations. The pictures and tables of musical instruments are likewise very helpful. Numerous archaeological sites — Ebla, Mari, Nuzi, Ugarit and many others are dealt with — are clarified by photographs and charts. Many introductions to biblical books have an interesting plate showing an ancient manuscript. Under 'Hour', a table compares Jewish and Roman time reckonings; under 'Sacrifice', a table of festivals is included; under 'Weights and Measures' there is also an excellent comparative table. Some readers may have wished to see a better picture of the Tabernacle than that given, especially as, say, Taanach and Zoan have full-page colour plates.

The Turin Shroud is considered — but in Part 1 (under 'Burial'); while 'Leprosy' has neither separate article nor

cross-reference, but may be found under 'Health'. These comments highlight the importance of consulting the Index (in Part 3) when you fail to find an article you expected. Comparing old with new, we are pleased to see that 'Jesus Christ, Muslim Traditions about' has been dropped and 'Jesus Christ, Titles of' introduced. A fresh article on 'Homosexuality' faithfully reflects the biblical condemnation. 'Hermeneutics' is now granted a brief treatment.

Much more might be said, but these random remarks should suffice to indicate that we are handling a mine of information, invaluable for consultation or for delightful, if time-consuming browsing. When compared with what people will spend on hi-fi or photographic kit, the price is not high, though it might pose problems to the students who are presumably IVP's prime concern. There are 1728 pages with over 2,000 articles, many of great length (Jesus Christ covers 20pp, Palestine, 11pp, Prophecy, 12pp, Sacrifice, 11pp). This beautiful production bids fair to be the publishing event of the 'eighties and is certainly a 'must' for the Bible student. Reviewed by G. J. Polkinghorne

News Story continued

that you will only skim, but do not refuse the meat because of a few hard spots. Become an informed Christian by reading the news stories in the historical books. They are interesting, exciting and relevant to your life.

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practices in concerns with a reputation for good industrial relations (*Peter Mayhew, £4.95 paperback*). Other readers may be interested in IVP's *The Challenge of Marxism (£1.95 paperback)* by Klaus Bockmuehl, a professor at Regent College, Vancouver.

Two short histories of the Church, in attractive 'near-coffee table' style appear from Lion (*The Story of Christianity by Tim Dowley, £3.95*) and Banner of Truth (*Sketches from Church History by S. M. Houghton, £4.50 paperback*) — the latter considerably fuller.

Reprints of note include a cheaper version of John White's *The Golden Cow (Lakeland, £1.25 paperback)*, Henry Drummond's *The Greatest Thing in the World (Hodder 95p paperback)*, and an excellent 'reduced size' edition of Lion's Bible Encyclopedia *The Lion Concise Bible Encyclopedia* in handy form at £2.95 in paperback (the *Handbook* similarly reduced is also available at £2.95 paperback). They are real value for money. And, to conclude, the 1980 Keswick addresses are available in *The People and the King* from STL at £1.75 paperback.

The Holy Spirit Lord and Life-giver

John Williams. Loizeaux Brothers. 308pp. \$8.50. Dr. Williams has had considerable preaching and teaching experience in Britain, America and Canada, and is well-known in evangelical circles as the author of *Living Churches*, a stimulating work dealing with the concept of church renewal. The comprehensive scope of this new volume is clearly indicated by its sub-title, 'A Biblical Introduction to the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit', a task for which the author is well-equipped. Whether it will reach a large audience is another matter, simply because the market has been saturated in recent years with books of a similar nature. This fact must have been in the author's mind too because he felt it necessary to explain 'that it was born as much of my own need to know what the Word of God has to say about the Holy Spirit and His ministries as of my desire to help other Christians escape from the shifting sands of subjectivism onto the solid rock of God's revelation of His glorious Son in the inspired Scriptures'. This apologia sets the tone and mood for what follows.

Seven major topics are dealt with: 'The Lord, The Holy Spirit'; 'The Holy Spirit And The Word'; 'The Holy Spirit And The Church'; 'The Holy Spirit And The Christian'; 'Baptism In The Holy Spirit'; 'Special Ministries Of The Holy Spirit'; 'The Holy Spirit In The Scriptures'. An appendix discusses the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the days of the early church.

The whole subject is approached from a

continued on page 17

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Thank you, Mr. Broome!

From Mr. A. L. Broome

Dear Mr. Editor, Congratulations appear to be in order! I've just read about the wedding in the November mag. I certainly hope they're appropriate though I can't help wondering how a flighty middle aged girl like **The Harvester** will be compatible with a staid old fellow, which is how I've always imagined **The Witness**. I can't help wondering how his friends will feel about it.

My immediate reaction is a hope for a family (of promise, of course, like Sarah's). Wouldn't it be great if this union produced attractive offspring of a healthy, virile, spiritual character — like ministry on practical, holy, Christian living, the life of faith (not *merely* the hackneyed 'living by faith' — now defunct?), walking with the Lord, practical advice on personal witness, stimuli to give ourselves wholly to heavenly things, to praying in the Spirit, to love, to joy, to peace.

May you prosper and be in health even as your souls prosper — and thank you for many, many years of good reading.

Yours,
A. L. Broome (40 year reader)
35 Cluny Road,
Plimmerton,
New Zealand.

Netherfield Chapel, Milton Keynes

From Dr. Stephen Potter

Dear Mr. Editor, Periodically you have drawn your readers' attention to the work of the South Milton Keynes Christian Fellowship

and our Netherfield Chapel project. As a result we have received many encouraging letters and, in some cases, gifts. These have really brought home to us the responsibility that we hold for developing our Christian witness in Milton Keynes and the trust and faith that many hold in us to do this.

As such, I thought that your readers would like to hear of how we are progressing. When I last wrote to you (May 1979 issue of **The Witness**), we had committed ourselves to build a £95,000 chapel, even though we had but a third of that sum. We had done this because we were convinced that this was the Lord's will. The Lord has not left us, for even though progress has been quite slow, He has provided the resources through His servants in Britain, and at this moment the roof is being put on the Netherfield Chapel.

By the standards of the world, it would be impossible for a small independent Fellowship such as ours to finance such a project. But what may be impossible for men is very possible for God. But the Lord has used this project to test our faith all along. We bought the site before we had enough money even to build foundations, because we were convinced it was God's will. When we had the money for the foundations, that was all we had money for. At each stage of the project the Lord tested us. Now we are working on the roof, and yet we do not have the money for plumbing, heating, electrical work, fittings etc. But this is how God has led us all along and the project has progressed according to His timing. He has tested our faith and used this physical project to help our Fellowship grow spiritually.

If any reader is interested, we have produced a progress

report on our work in Milton Keynes and the Netherfield Chapel project, which is available from myself at the address below.

Yours in the service of the Lord,
Stephen Potter
24 Staple Hall Road,
Fenny Stratford,
Milton Keynes MK1 1BQ

The Law of Copyright

From Dr. G. K. D. Vere

Dear Sir,

With reference to Mr. Stuart Milligan's lengthy letter (February issue) on the subject of Copyright I would like to mention something to which he makes no reference. Not being a lawyer I am afraid I found it difficult to follow the drift of his argument. However the point I wish to make is this. Is it wrong to copy music which is **no longer available**, the Publishers having agreed that they have no intention of printing any more copies? We have a small choir and twice recently have tried to purchase works which are no longer available. On both occasions we contacted the publishers and on each occasion they confirmed that the works were no longer available nor were they to be republished. If it is illegal to copy these, would it not be a case of the publishers eating their cake and having it? I know that in recent times some schools have been prosecuted for copying, but I assume the works in question were available for purchase. I have been told that an individual can copy anything for his private use. Is this correct? I would be grateful if anyone with knowledge of the law could advise us in this matter, as I am sure we are not alone in this.

Yours sincerely,
G. K. D. Vere
119 Grosvenor Gardens,
Woodford Green,
Essex IG8 0AR

G. H. Lang and full-time ministry

From Mr. Jack Green

Dear Mr. Coad, Under 'Replies to Professor Bruce' on page 16 of the current issue of **The Harvester** (February 1981) Mr. Ellison seems to quote the late G. H. Lang outside his intention and certainly against his convictions when he reminds us of the well known judgment of that good man that most assemblies would have no room for Paul to enter their speaking lists for a very long time — being booked up. All this under an imaginary conversation between the modern corresponding brother and Paul ending 'Sorry brother Paul, but we are booked up for six months solid'. Those who have access to his out-of-print, epoch making little work **Departure** will find this on page 56 (and elsewhere in his various works for that matter). If the context be studied it will be found that Lang contended **against** one-man ministry there and ever after he came out of the Pastorate at Unity Chapel in Bristol where he served from 1900 to 1909; as that work and several others will show, he was against the idea that the Spirit in the church gifts only one man for oversight and ministry just as adamantly as he was against central funds, control of workers and federation of assemblies (I am only representing his views here). This stand he maintained at great cost throughout his God honoured life, much used ministry and fruitful written work. In the conclusion to his work **Churches of God** surely the self same Lang gives us the answer to Professor Bruce's original questions i.e., whether 'Brethren' can make room for a ministry such as that of C. H. Spurgeon or Campbell Morgan both of

blessed memory. In the section on Christian Service, Lang points out that this is **individual** and certain gifts are to be rekindled on personal responsibility in view of **the work of God** whether among saints or sinners, teaching or ministry, as shown in *1 Timothy 4:14*, *2 Timothy 1:6/14*, *Acts 13:2* (compared with *Acts 13 and 14* in general). The work gives all needed scope for preaching the gospel, making disciples, planting churches and confirming souls by sound teaching: gathering as **the church** as per *1 Corinthians 14* or *Romans 12*, has regard to the Headship of Christ, the

distribution of gift by the Spirit, the freedom of the word; to put it in brief, our corporate capacity as the body of Christ to gather for worship, prayer or edification. As the church so gathers we enjoy the benefits of the New Testament era (*John 7:37* and *1 Corinthians 12*). Yours sincerely,
Jack Green
'Waveney',
9 Robin Lane,
Hemsworth, Pontefract,
West Yorkshire WF9 4PL

Why This Feast?
From Mr. C. Down
Dear Sir,
So much of Stanley Linton's

article in your February issue re-iterates the long-standing attitude of 'the Brethren movement' to the feast instituted by our Lord for a remembrance of Him. Just two points appear to detract from the spiritual value of that remembrance. First, there is an over-emphasis on the person remembering, which detracts from occupation with the Person being remembered. Secondly, he makes the mistake of using 'unworthily' in the eating and drinking at the feast as applying to the state of the person remembering. Whereas, quite obviously from the context of

Paul's comments in that chapter *1 Cor. 11*, the 'unworthily' is not 'unworthiness' as the article implies but has direct reference to the unworthy manner of verses 20-22 of that chapter. We must ever guard against the inference that we can find ourselves 'worthy' to partake on any other ground than that of the merits of our Saviour, Whom we gather to remember. Yours,
C. Down
35 Park Hill Road,
Old Bexley,
Kent DA5 1HX

LOOKING AT BOOKS *continued*



conservative evangelical stand-point. A most welcome feature is the strong insistence that the Word of God must be the final arbitrator in all matters of faith and doctrine: 'Now while we may long for greater spiritual zeal, deeper devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a more vital knowledge of God, we must exercise all due caution to remain true to the Word of God. In particular, we must guard against any suggestion which makes Christian experience or, rather the experience of some Christians, a norm or standard.' How right and appropriate too is his comment, 'That God should act in a unique way in the primitive churches and that there should be foundation gifts in those churches, gifts which are not with us today, should not surprise us unless we are committed to the view that God is limited in His methodology. Surely our great need today is for heart occupation with the Great Giver, not for high tension obsession with His gifts.'

On the other hand, this book contains several less than pleasing features. One is an occasional imbalance resulting from a disproportionate treatment of certain topics — for example, 'Assurance and Sanctification' are given nine pages, whereas 'Glossolalia' occupies thirty pages. A second is that the analytical study outlines in section 7 — 'The Holy Spirit In The Scriptures' — smack of spoon-feeding. More serious is Dr. Williams's tendency to make assertions without giving detailed accompanying evidence. For example, he says, on page 123, 'Scripture clearly indicates that the healing ministry of Christ was carried on by His disciples. However, nowhere in Scripture are we commanded to go and heal the sick or exercise a supernatural gift of healing

today', then merely adds this footnote: 'If James 5:14-16 appears to refute this, we suggest that James has in view "prayer plus means" (i.e., medicine), not "faith healing"'. These comments are not supported either by the various translations or by the particular emphasis of the relevant verses in *James 5*, where the writer is concerned with the relationship between prayer, sickness and suffering; sickness is healed, and sin is forgiven in response to believing prayer (the prayer of faith), and solely in response to it. To the present reviewer *James 5:14-16* seems to refute absolutely John Williams's argument, which appears at this point in the book to be dictated more by theological preference than by a precise and unbiased reading of the actual text. These few aberrations apart, this volume is a most thorough introduction to a vast subject: it is careful and balanced, and written with a pastoral and practical intent.

Review by John Peters, Charterhouse School

Of great interest to all readers of *The Harvester*

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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The February Question

The reading of CBRF Journal No. 30 prompts me to ask those who use the expression 'assembly principles' if there is any difference between these and the New Testament teaching about the church. If I were to make an intensive study of the New Testament about the church, would I be well grounded in 'assembly principles'?

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

By a curious coincidence in the same issue the 'Readers' Forum' contains seven principles that all would probably accept as based on the New Testament. Some would want to add a few more like women keeping silent, but there is no point in using a fine sieve to discover a few more, which are, or are not there.

We are assured by some cynics that history is what we do not learn from. I believe it is generally accepted that when the 'Brethren movement' began, men from very different and hallowed traditions began to feel their way to one another, even as is happening in the ecumenical movement today. They soon realized that unity would not be created by argument. They realized that common worship and action could be based only on what all agreed was Scripture. There was little or no condemnation — that was to come later — of those who maintained the traditions in which they had been brought up, e.g. some never left the practice of infant baptism.

They were sufficiently open to the work of the Holy Spirit to realize that He was working and blessing in circles that did not conform to their 'principles'. Why not? A closer study of the remaining evidence for the first century church shows that there were not inconsiderable differences between different centres.

Blessing does not depend on New Testament principles, however much they may help, but on a

common devotion and obedience to our Lord and Master, the Lord of the Church. How it must hurt and offend Him, when we charge some of the choicest whom He has saved of disobedience and blindness because they do not see eye to eye with us. Unity in love was His prayer.

Mr. L. Fox replies:

Around forty years ago, a question in a 'Christian Brethren' journal contained the phrase 'in the light of O.B. principles'. The reply began 'This question is badly worded. What are O.B. principles? If they are supposed to be scriptural then why did not the questioner use the words Scriptural principles? Let us avoid sectarianism as we would the plague.'

The brother who replied seems at least to have felt that 'O.B. principles' should be synonymous with scriptural principles. But every branch of God's people has its particular doctrinal emphasis. So it seems that if a person making 'an intensive study of the NT about the church' could be completely dispassionate, the principles he or she might discover could well not be exactly the same as 'assembly principles'. Many could tell of unfortunate, if not horrendous, effects of the imagined application of 'assembly principles' — or were they just man-made traditions? A glance at our history may show why.

Mr. G. H. Lang records that in 1833, A. N. Groves wrote that the 'simple principle of union' of the pioneers of the 'Christian Brethren' was 'the love of Jesus, instead of oneness of judgment in minor things, things that may consist with a true love to Jesus'. By the operation of what I may call 'the law of generation decline' (*Jud. 2:10*), less regard came to be paid to the principle of the love of Jesus, and more to the principle of oneness of judgment in minor matters. Thus legalism triumphed over love, so that F. E. Raven could say 'I do not think we are defective in faith, but there is no doubt we are in love'. How is it with us?

NEWS PAGE



Bible Colleges

All Nations Christian College announces the impending retirement (because of ill-health) of David Morris who has been associated with the College since 1959 and has been Principal since 1961. He has been linked at various times with the assemblies in James Street, Oxford, where he grew up and was converted, Fitzwilliam Street, Sheffield, and in Maidenhead. He was an officer in the regular army when war began. Military service strengthened his faith and following graduation at Oxford he offered himself to the Sudan United Mission. After training teachers there, he returned to England in 1956 and while teaching in a Sheffield grammar school studied theology part-time under Professor F. F. Bruce. His term of service at All Nations has seen a migration from Taplow to Easneye Mansion near Ware, Herts., a merger in 1971 with two women's colleges, Mount Hermon and Ridgeland, and the introduction of a comprehensive programme of modern missiological studies. Today All Nations is amongst Europe's leading missionary colleges. From April 1982, the Principal will be Dr. Raymond V. J. Windsor, who after working as a heart specialist in New Zealand became the International Executive Director of the Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship International. The acting Principal during the two-term interregnum will be Miss Meg Foote who is at present Vice-Principal.

London Bible College announces that the Rev. Dr. Richard T. France has accepted an invitation to become Senior Lecturer in New Testament Studies from

September 1981. Dr. France, who is at present Warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge, will succeed Dr. Donald Guthrie as Head of the Biblical Studies Department when he retires in the summer of 1982.

East Germany

There is no lack of spiritual opportunities in East Germany, said Pastor Manfred Kern when he visited Britain to attend an Evangelical Alliance conference. The strength of Christian witness is illustrated by 2,400 local churches, in over 600 places, that took part in the Evangelical Alliance Week of Prayer early in 1981. The annual EA conference is attended by up to 5,000 people, three-quarters of whom are young people. There is considerable freedom for worship, prayer and evangelism within church buildings, informally in homes and in Christian youth camps and conferences. Although many young people are indifferent to religion, there is a significant proportion interested in religious questions; they respond to Christians who have a distinctive message and manner of life.

Evangelism

Training for Evangelism is the title of a new 12-page booklet produced by the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism providing an index to the large amount of training material which has become available over the last few years. Because there is so much training material available today, choosing is difficult and this booklet is intended to help every church find what it needs. It is available from the NIE at 146 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4BX, price 40p post free.

A Christian dimension on a popular topic: this could provide an excellent starting point for communicating the Christian gospel. The Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism is investigating the possibility of producing Christian viewpoints on a number of topics. Among those suggested so far have been marriage, ambition, football supporters, generosity, attitude to work, life after death and fatalism. **Harvester** readers who would like to help by suggesting a topic, or by summarizing a distinctively Christian attitude (on one side of A4) or by joining an NIE working group, should write to David Taylor, 146 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4BX.

Dick Saunders expects to spend the first part of April in Durban, South Africa. His three crusades there will conclude with a large central rally on Good Friday.

India

The Union of Evangelical Students of India is the Indian equivalent of our Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (formerly the IVF). The work has been in existence for just over a quarter of a century. And the number of student groups has grown fast. But there are still only a hundred local fellowships to serve the five million students of India. The universities of India need prayer no less than the poverty-stricken villages.

Pastors and teachers are trained for an evangelical ministry at the Union Biblical Seminary which has just launched an appeal for funds to extend its work. Among those backing the appeal are Gilbert Kirby, John Stott and F. F. Bruce.

Because its rural base is hampering development, the college plans a move to Pune (Poona) which will mean many more outlets for students' practical training in the different languages of India and generally a far greater range of educational facilities for students, staff and their children. New buildings are already going up in Pune but there are at present insufficient funds even to complete the first phase of the building work including the college library although it is hoped to complete this phase by the end of 1981.

At a meeting held in London early in February, Dr. David Wenham, himself a former staff member of the college, asked, 'Is there anything more strategic than a college which is effectively training some of the ablest men and women in India to be servants of God and missionaries of Christ in that subcontinent?' He urged those present at the meeting to pray and to assist in making the Seminary and the UBS Fund known — through the available literature and audio-visual and also by putting the Committee in touch with others who would be interested in this practical way of sharing Christ's love with others. Contact address: UBS Fund, 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT.

Literature

Christian Books are a very important form of outreach. The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students reports that Certeza, their publishing house in Buenos Aires, has opened a new bookshop situated in one of the city's busiest and most prosperous streets. Prayer is

requested for this new venture, which, besides Christian books, will stock university and college textbooks and others of interest to students and non-Christian public.

Copenhagen has the questionable honour of being known as the pornography capital of the world. The Christian Literature Crusade International have the opportunity of opening a Christian bookstall in space already available in downtown Copenhagen in co-operation with a Christian publishing group. They anticipate the project will cost more than \$50,000 and have accepted it as a faith challenge for 1981.

Media

Easter television will include instalments of a ten part TV series based on the Ladybird/Scripture Union books on the New Testament. Starting on Sunday, March 15 and concluding on May 17, the series will be shown each Sunday at 11.45 a.m. on London Weekend Television and at 1 p.m. on Sundays in other areas with three exceptions. Southern Television is featuring it at 8.50 a.m. on Saturdays. As for Tyne-Tees and Westward — they are not showing it at all. **Harvester** readers may want to ask these companies — not particularly well-known for their religious coverage — why they have rejected the series. Paul Marsh of Scripture Union comments, 'Both the books and these TV programmes demonstrate Scripture Union's commitment to penetrate into homes not normally receptive to Christian literature, but which represent a major area of need for Christian mission.'

Prison Ministry

Many readers will be aware of the blessing experienced recently in various prisons. The Emmaus Bible School reports a growth in their prison ministry during 1980. They enrolled 1,900 men with Bible Study Courses in 1980 compared with 1,300 in 1979. Requests for material come from chaplains all over the country. Some indication of the spiritual work going on

at Strangeways is shown by the size of the student population — currently about 50. The Emmaus workers recognize that they are only one link in a chain. 'God was in these prisons long before we came on the scene in 1954 and through caring chaplains had been preparing men's hearts for the reception of Christ as Saviour and Lord.'

Radio

The Far East Broadcasting Company reports a dramatic increase in mail from Japan. An average of 100 letters a day from Japanese listeners has been arriving at the FEBC 'Voice of Friendship' station in San Francisco since live programming in Japanese began on December 21, 1980.

Statistics just released from FEBC's Hong Kong office indicate a large upswing once again in the mail response from mainland China. December 1980 brought 1,744 letters into FEBC's Hong Kong office compared with 883 in November and 613 in December 1979. This brings to 9,320 letters the total response from China for 1980. Analysis reveals an increasingly high percentage of letters coming from those who had already written. Almost half the response comes from listeners to FEBC's powerful 250,000 watt medium wave station in Cheju, Korea.

HCJB has celebrated its Golden Jubilee. Commemorative postage stamps have been printed by the Ecuadorian Postal Department; a limited number will be available from 63a Main Street, Bingley, West Yorkshire, BD16 2HZ.

Old rags — so useful to the Prophet Jeremiah — are required also by the engineering department of FEBC Seychelles. They are needed for cleaning. Rags for this purpose can be bought commercially but many prove unsuitable, leaving the cost of the useful ones roughly on a par with best steak — at least as far as Seychelles prices go these days. If readers could bundle up some rags and send them off to FEBC this could

be quite a money saver. But the material must be right: cotton or linen are essential. Woollen, synthetic or thick materials will not do. They must be at least 400mm (18 inches) in each measurement; clean, any colour. Bundles of between 5 and 10 kilos should be sent by surface mail to the Chief Engineer, PO Box 234, Mahe, Seychelles, Indian Ocean. And if readers have any spare Christmas cards, they might be of use to FEBC India, Box 2526, Bangalore, India 560 025. But it is important that the customs label is marked 'Used Christmas cards — no commercial value'. Printed paper/small packet rate is applicable.

The USSR and Eastern Europe

are covered by no fewer than nine Christian radio stations. These are: Radio Vatican; TWR (in Monaco and Bonaire); FEBC (in Manila, South Korea and San Francisco, USA); the Voice of the Andes (in Ecuador); IBRA Radio (in Portugal); TEAM radio (in Korea); Family Radio Network (in California, USA); Radio KJNP and Radio Fairbanks (both in Alaska, USA). Thousands of letters are received from the USSR annually. But Nick Leonovitch, Director of the Russian department of TWR, has estimated that only 2% of all letters written from Communist countries actually reach the radio stations. If so, he suggests that the broadcasts are meeting an immense need. Apparently the message is getting through, in spite of the fact that the USSR is spending more than £40million a year and employing 5,000 people day and night to jam Western stations, including Christian radio.

Refugees

The Far East Broadcasting Company (USA) has used its skills to help Indo-Chinese refugees in North America. Media packs have been produced containing cassette tapes, a New Testament and other Christian literature. The cassettes give a clear presentation of the Gospel as well as practical advice on adjusting to life in the USA. 1,500 of these media packs

have been sent out with encouraging results.

Scripture Readers

Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association report that Mr. Graham Stokes, the General Secretary, leaves the Association at the end of September. He will be replaced by Lt. Col. Kenneth Sear, Royal Army Medical Corps, who is shortly leaving the Army after thirty-four years' service. Mr. Stokes, who is in fellowship at Walmer Chapel, Deal, has been released by the Council during part of the summer to engage in ministry with Military Fellowships in America and Canada.

Home Call

Frank Gordon, of Caithness, on December 29, 1980, aged 69 years. Quiet but consistent, he was received into fellowship at Bethany Hall, Wick, in middle life. He and his wife (who survives him) were given to hospitality. The very large attendance at the funeral witnessed to the high esteem in which he was held by the people of Wick. He will be missed by his wife and daughter and by the small assembly whose numbers are decreasing.

Press Day, Monday, March 30 for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.)

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 house, private home, or hotel (see address below).

The Keswick Convention is held
 from the 11th to the 18th July 1981.

Speakers expected this year include:
 The Rev. R. C. (Dick) Lucas - who
 will give the Bible Readings.
 The Rev. Chuck Smith of Calvary
 Chapel, Costa Mesa, USA) who will
 lead the Young Peoples' Meetings.
 The Rev. George B. Duncan,
 Dr. Raymond Brown, The Rev.
 Philip H. Hacking, The Rev. David
 Jackman, Canon Alan S. Neech
 (Chairman of Keswick) and others.

All other enquiries to: The Secretary,
 Keswick Convention, 25 Camden Road,
 London NW1 9LN. (01 267 2264).



The Rev. Chuck Smith

The Keswick Holiday Convention
 is held from the 18th to the 25th
 July 1981. Speakers expected this
 year include:

The Rev. Alan Flavell - who will
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 James Ayre, The Rev. Sinclair
 Ferguson, The Rev. Keith Weston,
 Mr. Derek Cleave (Young Peoples'),
 The Rev. Chuck Smith (USA), and
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PEOPLE AND PLACES

NEW ADDRESS

Wishaw:

Ebenezer Hall, Young Street. Correspondence should be addressed to Mr. I. Dykes, 42 East Thornlie Street, Wishaw, ML2 8BB. Tel: Wishaw 73912.

PERSONAL

Mr. A. E. J. Burnham

of Alton, Hants., wishes to thank the Lord's people for their continued prayers. He is making good progress in health. 'How good is the God we adore!'

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NEW ASSEMBLY

Livingstone, Lothian:

A new assembly has been formed in the east side of the town of Livingstone, comprising some members of the present assembly. The brethren who meet in the Gospel Hall at Deans Livingstone are in full fellowship and commend these brethren for the Lord's blessing in their exercise. They will be meeting in Dedridge Primary School at 11 a.m. for Breaking of Bread and at 1 p.m. for Sunday School from 1 March 1981 and be known as Dedridge Christian Fellowship. Correspondence should be forwarded to: Mr. T. Stirrat, 115 Ambrose Rise, Dedridge, Livingstone, EH54 6JU. Tel: Livingstone 38017.

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund:

Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during the month of February amounted to £186.17.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the Fund for the month of February amounted to £4,871.60.

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.:

Beer 2; Brixham 5; Seaton 12; London 16-21; Kilmington 26.

Burnham, A. E. J.:

Copnor, Portsmouth 12; Swanwick, Hants. 19; Southbourne 25-30.

Galyer, W. S.:

Morden 1; Worthing & Bognor 5-12; Kingston 14 & 21; Enfield Highway 15 & 22; Liphook 19/20; Ash 25; Kingston & Wandsworth 26.

Gillham, S. A.:

Boscombe Mission, March 29-April 5; Poole 4; Yeovil 7; Strouden Park Chapel 8; West Moors 9/11; Merriott 12; Three Cross Mission 13/19; Charminster Chapel, Bournemouth Mission 21/26.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Stradbroke (Holy Land slides) 9; Mableton Kent, Waldensian 10-12; Costessey, Norwich 14; Saxlingham, Norfolk 19; Cromer 23; Hildenborough, Kent 30.

Lowther, G. K.:

Suffolk 1, 2; Felixstowe 3-5; Worksop 12; Martock, and district 25-27, 29, 30; Yeovil 28.

Phillips, C.:

Aylesbury 1, 8, 15; Hemel Hempstead 2, 16; Elmfield, North Harrow 5, 12; Woking 5; Bush Hill Park 6, 13; Potters Bar 7, 14; Chingford 9; Greenford 12; Lewisham 17; Chesham 19, 23, 30; Rossmore, Marylebone 19; Lincoln 25-27.

Pierce, D. H.:

Truro 1-5; Eastacombe 6; Bath 12/13; Torrington 14, 21, 28; Chulmleigh 16; Beacon Heath, Exeter 17-20; Cullompton 29; Also Barnstaple.

Short, S. S.:

Quenington 1; Highgate 5; Mickfield 6; Woolpit 7; Brockford 8; Earl Stonham 9; Berkhamsted 12; Dawlish 15; Clayhidon 17; Burnham-on-Sea 19; Reading 25, 26; Liss 28; Petersfield 29; Weston-super-Mare 30.

Stringer, D.:

Bournemouth 1-14; Saffron Walden 15; Rise Park 16; West Midlands House Party 17-20; Romford 21; Walthamstow 22; Rise Park 23; Quenington 24-25; Gloucester 26-27; Rush Green 28; Folkstone 29; Belfast 30.

Tatford, F. A.:

Wokingham 5; Bexhill 8; Toronto 16-30.

Thurston, A.:

Chillington 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Dartmoor (Prison) 3, 10, 24; Kingsbridge 5, 7, 21; Plymouth (Wolesley) 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Dawlish 12; Torquay (Torr) 14; Swindon 17/19; Strete 6, 13, 20, 27; Plymouth 26; Newton Abbot 28.

Tryon, G. C.:

Kenton 1, 8; Kingston, Hersham 5; Loughborough Junction 10; Speen 12-19; Worthing 22; Peckham 26; Eltham Park 29.

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.

Ayr:
Bible Readings, 9-15 May 1981. Wallacetown Church Hall, John Street, Ayr.
Speakers: A. Leckie & John Riddle. Commencing 4 p.m.
— Epistle to Galatians.
Ministry in Wallacetown Church commencing at 7.15 p.m. 1 Cor. 1-9. Full particulars from the Secretary, T. H. Cooper, The Knowe, 104 Midton Road, Ayr, KA7 2TP.

Chesham:
Monthly Bible Readings: Gospel Hall, Station Road. April 25 at 6.30 p.m.
Speaker: H. A. Tickner (Muswell Hill). Joshua, ch.6.

Croxley Green:
April meetings, Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. 17th at 3.15 & 6 p.m. Speakers: Dr. A. Linton & Dr. R. Townsend. 25th at 7 p.m. Speaker: S. Downs.
(continued overleaf)

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'The cleaner in the launderette looked so disappointed and said: "Oh, haven't you got the Emergency Post? I like that."' (London, NW10)



'Many of the people who enjoy it, are helped by it and look forward to it each month, never go to church.' (Coventry)

'We have sixty copies of your magazine for our Women's Fellowship and they are greatly appreciated.' (Worthing)



'We find it is well received as contact is made around our open air meeting.' (Poole)

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Dunfermline:

Abbot Hall Conference, West Baptist Church, Chalmers Street. 2 May at 3 p.m. Speakers: T. Aitken (Forth), J. Harrison (Aberdeen), A. Jessiman (Edinburgh).

Grimsby:

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. Missionary Meeting, April 11 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: K. Andrewartha (Scripture Gift Mission).

Lanark:

Gospel Hall, Smyllum Road. Christian Conference 2 May. Speakers: A. J. Last, A. Naismith, J. R. Rollo.

Largs:

Netherhall Bible Readings, 4-8 May 1981. Conducted by A. E. Phillips, Westmoors and Albert Leckie, Airdrie. Subjects: John's 1st & 3rd Epistles. Enquiries to: The Manager, Netherhall, Largs., Ayrshire, KA30 8RP.

London, W10:

Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane. April 25 at 7 p.m. Speaker: J. Scott. Subject: Christ in the Gospels.

Luton:

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What is Man?

The earlier chapters of **Genesis** are always good for controversy and speculation: but we sometimes overlook their spiritual implications. These are not always overt: there are some that are implicit in the symbolism and the paradoxes of the story.

One such paradox concerns the nature of man himself. 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness' we find God saying in **chapter one**; and later in the same chapter 'so God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female he created them.' When we come to **chapter three** we find the related promise 'you will be like God'; but the promise is a terrible mockery, a temptation in the mouth of the serpent.

Our readers will be quick to spring forward with explanations, but they are too easy. For, hidden in this shocking paradox, is a wealth of meaning as to the nature of man as we see him on our planet: as we read and understand him in our own hearts. It is not the place to enlarge on the paradox here: any reader with an ounce of imagination will find a hundred different by-paths of thought to explore. And somehow they will all lead to a deeper understanding of that other terrible necessity — the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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PROBLEMS IN BIBLE TRANSLATION

(1) Finding the Right Word

David J. Clark

The problems of the Bible translator are not only a matter for the specialist; they can powerfully illuminate our own Bibles, as they help us to understand the limitations of language as a means of communication, and the degree to which all translations become interpretation. Dr. David Clark is a Translation Consultant with the United Bible Societies. He served in South East Asia for four years before moving to Papua New Guinea in 1974.

Introduction

Most of us habitually read the Bible in English and would not think of attempting to do so in any other language. If we have any such aspirations, they would probably be limited to gaining some knowledge of the original languages of scripture, Greek and Hebrew. Yet at least one book of the Bible had been published in no less than 1685 languages by the end of 1979, and at present there are probably more people engaged in Bible translation work than ever before. Most of this work is located in the third world, and is being done for readers whose languages and cultures are very different from those of the Mediterranean world where the Bible originated. Over the past decade it has been my privilege to work with a wide range of translators in South East Asia and the South Pacific, and to share some of the problems they have faced. These problems vary, of course, from language to language, and throw a fascinating variety of sidelights upon the Word of God. In this short series, we shall explore some of the actual problems and see how translators have taxed their wits in the effort to make the meaning of the Bible plain to their readers.

The main aim of a Bible translator is exactly this, to convey the meaning of the Scriptures to the readers so clearly that they will be stimulated to react in the same way that the original writers wanted their readers to react. Many are the difficulties to be overcome, but at least they can be classified into groups, and in these articles we shall look at the problems in groups that share common factors.

Unknown Items

If a selection of people with no experience of translation were asked to suggest likely difficulties, they would probably think first of vocabulary problems —

how do you talk about items in the Bible which are unknown in the language of the translation (usually called the receptor language)?

One way is to describe the item in question, so long as this can be done fairly briefly. Thus the whips used on the apostles in *Acts 4:50* were described as 'strips of cow skin' in Fuyuge, a language of Papua New Guinea. A lion became 'a tiger with a mane' in the Bawm language of Bangladesh (*Rev. 5:5*), and the three-pronged fork of *1 Sam. 2:13* became a 'three-fingered spoon' in the Falam Chin language of Burma.

In some cases, however, it would be too cumbersome to give a description, especially if the object concerned is not in particular focus in the verse in question. In such cases it may be possible to use some other item known in the local culture, if it fulfils a similar function. Thus the lampstand of *Mark 4:21* became a 'shelf' in the Gari language of the Solomon Islands, and the cheese of *1 Sam. 17:18* became 'curds' in Falam Chin. At other times it may be better to handle this kind of problem by using a more generic term. The Kiriwina people of Papua New Guinea do not have boxing as a sport, so in *1 Cor. 9:27* their translation expresses Paul's thought in a more general way: 'if I play sport, I practise and prepare my body so that it will be matched to the sport'.

Sometimes, however, the boot is on the other foot, and the receptor language lacks a generic term. The Babatana speakers of the Solomon Islands do not have a word for metal, so in *Lev. 19:4* their translation specifies 'gold, silver or bronze' the only metals commonly known.

Detailed Vocabulary

We must not give the impression that exotic lan-

guages have inadequate vocabulary resources. Any language possesses highly specialised vocabulary in those areas of life which are of importance to its speakers. For instance, the Thai language has many different words for rice, depending on the exact species, stage of growth, method of cooking and so on, where in English we use only the one word rice. When my wife and I told a Thai teacher that we grew up knowing rice in only two forms, rice pudding and rice crispies, the look of incredulous horror on her face showed that from her point of view, the English suffered severe cultural and linguistic deprivation!

Forms of Address

Many languages are much more specific in their forms of address than English, and such languages may also require forms of address to be used more frequently than they are in Greek or Hebrew. If such forms of address are not included, then the speakers are understood to be rude to each other, and since this is not usually the case, the result is a mis-translation.

One kind of specific detail which cannot be avoided in many languages is relative age which is usually linked with social status. Often, languages have



Acknowledgement: Wycliffe Bible Translators.

The Gari people have various methods of fishing. In *Mk. 1:16* Simon and Andrew were fishing with nets, and a particular verb in Gari conveys this meaning. In *verse 18*, however, the translator felt that another verb which means 'to fish with a line' was more appropriate to give the idea of fishing for men. Babatana has a specific term meaning 'to roll over in one's sleep', which gives more precision to *1 Kgs 3:19* than it has in English.

In *Jn. 4:12*, English uses the same word, 'drink', of both people and animals. In the Telugu language of S. India, different words are required for the two different subjects. The Bawm language is even more specific in *Rev. 12:4*, where the dragon prepares to eat the woman's child. It has a special word for the kind of eating performed by serpentine creatures such as a dragon, and this is the word required in this context.

In *Acts 10:30*, the time indicator is in Greek 'four days ago' and this is the literal translation of the RSV. Allowing for the inclusive method of counting, the Greek means 'three days ago' in modern English, and is so translated in GNB. The Fuyuge language has a single word which means 'the day before the day before yesterday' or 'three days ago'. The same word also means 'the day after the day after tomorrow' or 'in three days time', but there is no risk of confusion in this verse because the verbs are in the past tense.

terms for 'older brother' and 'younger brother', but no general term for brother without reference to age. Which term would Ananias have used to Saul in *Acts 9:17*? The Greek tells us absolutely nothing about their relative ages, but it seems reasonable to suppose that Ananias was a fairly senior member of the Christian community in Damascus, and would probably have called the newly converted Saul 'younger brother'.

In *Acts 13:15*, by contrast, the leaders of the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch were probably speaking respectfully to Paul and his group and would have addressed them as 'older brothers' whatever their actual ages.

How did Stephen address his audience in *Acts 7:17*? The audience included both the high priest and the council members, to whom Stephen would surely show respect, and the false witnesses, whom he would be likely to treat as no more than equals. The 'brothers and fathers' of the Greek is thus adequately covered in languages like lai of Papua New Guinea by saying 'older brothers and younger brothers'.

The relative ages and social relations of Jesus and the Samaritan woman in *Jn. 4* are even trickier. In *verse 11* in Kui, a language of N.E. Thailand, the woman uses a term for 'sir' which implies that she is older than Jesus. The Greek text gives no information on this point, but if the woman had had five

husbands, it seems quite likely that she was indeed older than Jesus. In *verse 21*, Jesus uses a term of address which means 'aunt younger than my mother'. This is polite enough to use to an older stranger, but not excessively respectful, for in the circumstances, too much respect would hardly be appropriate!

In a somewhat similar situation in *Jn. 8:10-11*, in Falam Chin the correct social distance between Jesus and the adulterous woman is conveyed by the absence of any equivalent to the Greek for 'woman' in *verse 10*. The woman on the other hand, does use a polite form of address in replying to Jesus in *verse 11*, which shows her respect for him.

A very different case is found in *Lk. 17:16* where the Samaritan leper came and thanked Jesus. In Fuyuge, the man comes and says to Jesus simply 'My father', which in that language conveys his gratitude far more clearly and poignantly than a verb would.

Grammatical Information

Many languages either possess grammatical categories unfamiliar to us, or else lack some of those common in European languages. Kahua (Solomon Islands) distinguishes singular, dual and plural forms of pronouns, so in *Acts 7:16*, one must specify whether the bodies taken to Shechem were those of Jacob and all his sons (plural) or just Jacob and Joseph (dual), the only ones actually recorded in the Old Testament.

In some languages, certain nouns, especially kin terms, can occur only with possessive suffixes. Thus in Babatana it is not possible to speak of 'the Father'. One can say only 'your father', 'his father', etc. So in *Jn. 6*, where Jesus is addressing his opponents, he says consistently 'my Father' but in *Jn. 14* where he is talking to the disciples, the decision is more difficult. In *verse 6*, for instance, it would seem that 'my Father' is appropriate, as in *verses 2 and 7*. But what would Philip have said in *verse 8*, 'your Father' or 'our Father'? And how would Jesus have spoken when quoting Philip's words in *verse 9*? Let the reader share the translators' struggles, and reach his own decision!

Another problem area concerns comparatives and superlatives. Many languages do not have these forms at all, and when they occur in scripture, the translator has to resort to some more roundabout way to express the meaning. Thus the greater joy of the shepherd over the one lost sheep in *Mt. 18:13* is expressed in Fuyuge as 'thinking of the 99 sheep he was happy, thinking of the one sheep he was very happy'. In *Mt. 22:36*, some English translations say 'Which is the greatest commandment?' In Fuyuge this becomes 'In the middle of the words of God, which word is big?' In fact, the Greek does not contain a superlative at this point, and in this respect the Fuyuge is closer to the Greek than the English is.

Many languages have no passive forms of verbs, and this can give translators plenty of headaches. Some-

times Greek uses passives in order to avoid mentioning who performed an action. In languages which have no passive, however, this is not possible, and a translator has no choice but to turn the sentence round and state who did what, even if the Greek text does not tell him. For example in *Acts 9:18* we are told only that Saul 'was baptized' (passive). In some languages one can say 'Saul received baptism' but in others the only possible construction is 'x baptized Saul'. In such situations, the difficulty is that the Greek does not tell us who x was. The only other Christian mentioned in the immediate context is Ananias, and so some translations like Fuyuge take the bull by the horns and say 'Ananias baptized Saul'.

In *Acts 3:2* the lame man 'was being carried' to the Beautiful Gate of the temple. Who carried him? We are not told, and it is of no importance for the story which follows. In such circumstances we should say whatever will draw least attention to the matter, and in many languages such as Kahua this will be 'his relatives'.

A knottier problem occurs in *Acts 10:11, 11:5* where Peter saw the sheet being let down from heaven. Who was letting it down? The Greek gives us no answer, but since it was being let down by the four corners, the lai translators felt that the least obtrusive thing to say was that Peter saw four people letting it down.

Unexpected Questions

We close with a couple of problems for the reader to exercise his own ingenuity on.

In *Acts 4:15*, how many men were sent out of the council room? Certainly Peter and John, but what about the man who had been healed, and was standing beside them in the previous verse? In a number of languages the word for 'them' in *verse 15* must necessarily indicate whether two people or more than two are meant. The Greek seems to imply that the man was sent out with them, but is not explicit. And what about *verse 18*, where the accused are brought back? Only Peter and John are mentioned (*verse 19*) and the command given by the council not to teach in the name of Jesus applies to them rather than the healed man. But if three men were sent out and only two came back, what happened to the third? And if three men came back, why is the third not mentioned?

In *Acts 10:13, 15*, whose voice did Peter hear? It may seem at first reading that it must be the voice of God, since Peter replies 'Lord' in *verse 14*. But this is by no means conclusive, as the Greek word *kurios* may be no more than a polite form of address, such as that used by Cornelius to the angel in *Acts 10:4*. Furthermore, if the voice was God's voice, why does it refer to God in the third person in *verse 15*? In some languages, one cannot speak of a voice without saying whose voice. Well, whose voice do you think it was?

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MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Church Praise: the Hymns of the Christian Church

Alex F. McIntosh

*The second article in
Dr. McIntosh's series*

What is a hymn? The word **hymn** is derived from the Greek **hymnos**, a poem. Here is the definition by Augustine of Hippo: 'A hymn is the praise of God by singing . . . For it to be a hymn, it is needful, therefore, for it to have three things — praise, praise of God, and these sung.' **The Oxford Companion to Music**, in its interesting section on hymns, adds a fourth requirement 'and sung by a congregation of people'. Another restraint sometimes imposed by definition is that a hymn should be sung whose words are not taken from Scripture, in order to make a distinction between hymns and psalms or other metrical versions of biblical texts.

During the early centuries of church history, there must have been considerable continuity with the practice of the apostolic church in sung praise. The Greek language common to many of the worshippers, to the various parts of the New Testament which they held and to the Greek translation of the Old Testament which was in general use would encourage such continuity if it did not ensure it. Just as Greek persisted as the language of culture well after the disappearance of the Greek Empire, so Latin was to persist well after the demise of the Roman Empire. There are parallels in the use of English in today's world. Jerome's 4th century **Vulgate** played a major role in the establishment of Latin which was to become the written, spoken and sung language of the Church for centuries to come, at least in its Western sector, within which tradition most of us are

to be found. Ambrose, 4th century bishop of Milan, stands at the threshold of the establishment of a Latin hymnody. Featuring prominently in the subject-matter of the hymns of that time were the great doctrinal themes which had been hammered out in the preceding centuries. Arius had written hymns propagating his heretical views. Ambrose spurned these views but appropriated the same medium to provide praise to the Trinity. His influence was felt in both words and music and Farrar in his **Lives of the Fathers (1889)** said of Ambrose 'He shares with Hilary the high distinction of being the father of Latin hymnology.'

Public worship in a common language, with all of its advantages, was at the expense of public worship in the vernacular. The resultant tendency was towards the development of a sung praise which was unshared by the unlatinized worshipper. During the centuries that were to follow the time of Ambrose the singing that accompanied worship became the province of a select few in trained choirs. Church music was, more or less, professional music.

But the dawn of a new day came with the Reformation. The great reappraisal resulted in a new look at hymns and hymn tunes. Prominent reformers like Huss and Luther were notable writers of hymns, some of which are well worthy of inclusion in a modern hymn book. Persecution brought blessing in its train when the persecuted fled to other countries and returned to their homeland with new hymns or tunes added to their repertoire. 'Old Hundredth' (with Dutch

connections) was brought back from Geneva in this way. Even then there were differences in practice. Calvinists interpreted the permissible more narrowly than did the Lutherans. Spurning 'hymns of human composure' they sang metrical versions of the Psalms. The Scots inherited this tradition although in the run-down in cathedral and collegiate choir schools after the Scottish Reformation in 1560, there was a low period until, in 1635, the great Scottish Psalter was published containing some 200 metrical psalms in 4-part harmony, about one-quarter of the tunes being new. It was not only Scots who were thrilled (to use a Scottishism) to the Psalms. It took until the beginning of the 18th century for hymn books of mixed hymns and psalms as we know them to make their appearance. Watts published his first book in 1707, and John Wesley his in 1737. A cluster of names famous in hymn-writing appears. There is the melancholy Cowper, the prolific Charles Wesley (writing over 6,000 hymns), Doddridge, Newton, Toplady, John Cennick, Kelly and a host of others. To all of these, but particularly perhaps to Watts and Wesley, we owe an incalculable debt of gratitude.

Having observed the tercentenary of Isaac Watts' birth as recently as 1974, it is perhaps allowable to mention him in particular. David Fountain (in **Isaac Watts Remembered (1974)**, Gospel Standard Baptist Trust Ltd., Harpenden) portrays him as a man of great singleness of purpose. He was a man of single state, which the comment of one lady friend 'Mr. Watts, I only wish I could

say that I admire the casket as much as I admire the jewel' did little to terminate. He was not lacking in admirers, being held in high esteem by no less a person than the fastidious Dr. Johnson. He did not lack a home, having the patronage of a family which counted it a privilege to have him spend forty years of his life with them. Posterity was to recognize him as the father of the English hymn. His prodigious output of hymns included among other favourites 'O God our help in ages past' and 'When I survey the wondrous cross'.

As well as breaking the near-monopoly of the Psalms in sung worship, Watts was prepared to paraphrase Scripture. His 'How pleased and blest was I' takes words applied to Israel and gives them a strong New Testament flavour. The break from the monopoly of the Psalms was decisive and surely enriching. Although some Presbyterian groups to this day restrict church song to Psalms, they miss a great deal — the mention of the name of Jesus and direct citation from New Testament writers, to give but two examples.

Some of our finest hymn tunes were produced last century, and to give credit where it is due, were associated with the Oxford or Tractarian Movement of the mid-1800's. These tunes differ markedly in quality from those produced later in the same century in the evangelical fervour of the Moody and Sankey campaigns. Moody was not a hymn-writer and the number of Sankey compositions is not so great as is supposed. The hymns compiled in these days were strong in rhythm, like the popular

music of the time. They were limited in harmonization to not much more than the three chief chords of the key, tonic, dominant and sub-dominant. They have all the marks of ephemeral productions and we must ask ourselves quite seriously why so many of them are still with us. 'The Church Triumphant and Trivial' is Erik Routley's chapter heading for the period (in *A Short History of English Church Music* (1977) Mowbrays, London). His comment on many of the evangelical hymns of the time is all too applicable: 'too strong in calories and short in protein to make a good diet for those who hope to grow'. 'Church music was on the move' adds Routley, 'but it was suffering at this stage from wheelspin that threw up plenty of mud.' Some of these old hymns are anvils on which many hammers have been broken and one of them, in current use, may provide my epitaph as a hymn critic when it says

*My old companions said,
'He's undone, he's undone!'
My old companions said,
'He's undone'
My old companions said
'He's surely going mad!' . . .*
and concludes
*Some said 'He'll soon give
o'er,*

You shall see, you shall see!'
What has been said is by way of generalization and such strictures are not to belittle the great work of Moody and Sankey themselves of whose influence on that period Professor A. C. Cheyne in his recent (1979) historical series in the Church of Scotland's magazine *Life & Work* said generously, 'All in all, they effected a change so sweeping as to entitle them to be regarded as possibly the most important single influence in Scotland's theological revolution.'

Let us return nevertheless to quote a little more extensively from Routley before we abandon his theme. In some of his earlier books (see: *The Music of Christian Hymnody* (1957), Independent Press Ltd., London; *Twentieth Century Church Music* (1964), Herbert Jenkins, London) he had much to say about the evangelical scene. His cheerful, sophisticated, knock-about style is just right for alerting us to our own idiosyncracies.

The church has always had an

evangelistic pop section Routley avers, since Sankey and, possibly, since Wesley. He calls the gospel song half music-hall, half carol, pinpointing such characteristics as ornamental melody, static

describes these evangelistic songs as at best natural, unaffected and unoriginal. 'There is no reason why music should not be like this. It does not make it bad music' he writes, but adds 'what is true is that it



Francis Ridley Havergal — from original photograph in *The Mansell Collection*.

bass, word repetition and 'florid' style. To these we could add features such as size of verse (large, in keeping with other aspects of Victoriana), simplistic rhyming and sentimentality of expression. He

should never claim immortality.' There is more than a grain of truth here. We have invested many of these hymns with an immortality which was never imagined possible by their composers. I for one

would readily admit that in our evangelical world we are still serving up music which is basically short-shelf-life music from another age. Routley declared that Sankey-type music should be to the mainstream of church music what pop is to the mainstream of secular music — music which has a short life and then vanishes. He was only sorry, writing just after the Graham crusades, that these did not create their own temporary songs instead of falling back upon those of two or three generations previously.

Routley puts forward an alternative explanation. It may be that this late-19th-century evangelical music, rather than being classified as 'disposable' or 'throw-away' music, should be considered to be 'music of permanent standing which can be used properly only at a certain stage of spiritual development'. Perhaps 'stage of cultural development' would be a better phrase, for these hymns in unchanged form are immensely popular in certain African and West Indian societies. For our own society today, there is a more modern 'pop' with a wide range of cultural appeal, evinced in the hymns of writers like Beaumont. Of this, Routley would approve. It is refreshingly different and it serves an immediate purpose.

The issue is not a simple one. For a start, today's problem is probably one of wheel drag, rather than one of wheel spin. Most of us are members of congregations which are made up of a wide range of people at different stages of spiritual, cultural and musical development. We cannot segregate them so that they can be suckled on Sankey, weaned on Wesley and introduced to our music delicatessen later on. So we must not expect any one hymn book to be universally acceptable. That having been said, there are many hymn books in use today that are manifestly unsuited to the congregations for which they have been bought.

Thought: Christian Hymnody has undergone continuous development. Does the choice of hymn book for my church reflect this? Are the hymn books in current use in my congregation the best ones we could have?

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F. N. MARTIN

A Personal Tribute

Derek Warren

The late F. N. Martin must have been known to the majority of our readers. We are glad to reproduce this tribute, paid to him at the Thanksgiving Service at Woodcroft Hall in January.

Frederic Nelson Martin (or Fred as most of us knew him) passed into the presence of his Lord on December 16 1980, after 12 or more years of steadily deteriorating health courageously and uncomplainingly borne. He was 83.

I first knew Fred when in the 1930s he came to preach at Lattimore Hall, St. Albans. A Chartered Accountant by profession he was then Secretary of Kemps Biscuits and operated from their head office on the North Circular Road. He was, although a comparatively young man, already then fulfilling an expanding ministry in the preaching of the Word of God to which he brought an informed mind, a thorough first hand acquaintance with the Scriptures, and an intimate knowledge of God. He had the ability to expound truth lucidly and to apply it relevantly. People rarely heard him without being moved and enriched. As time went on, his professional training and experience (he rose to become Managing Director and later Chairman of Scribbans Kemp) together with his personal qualities led to his being invited to join committees of Christian organisations to which he made over the years a significant contribution. One of his principal involvements was the Stewards Company Limited, a property owning trust fulfilling a strategic role in making funds available for Christian Brethren Missionary work throughout the world, and other Christian causes. Fred joined its Board in 1945 and became Chairman in succession to Sir John Laing, retiring in 1967. One of his younger colleagues commented that he was a Chairman who came well briefed, having done his homework well, and who then steered the business through efficiently but without any sense of rush. His Chairmanship was particularly valued when controversial issues arose, for his ability to grasp issues quickly and to view them objectively gave confidence. He was a peace-maker by nature, but not at any price, and he sought positively to bring men together and to heal differ-

ences. He never humiliated people, however stupid they were. And from time to time, whether in the Chair or as a participant, he would lift a debate by introducing a spiritual dimension, the relevance of which was then apparent to all, but which for a time had been overlooked in the cross currents of argument. He was generous in his disposition towards others, and it is difficult to think of anyone being ill-disposed towards him. There were one or two such men however, whom Fred forgave, and never despaired of winning. He did not enjoy the City takeover atmosphere which enveloped the last years of his business life, and was relieved when he was able to retire and devote himself exclusively to the affairs of the Kingdom of God.

Another of Fred's interests was the London Bible College, of which he was a Governor from 1952 to 1968. He was a great encourager of young men and was thrilled to see the rapid development of the College in the 1950s and 60s.

He was also a Trustee of the Hildenborough Evangelistic Trust, another ministry primarily among young people; serving not only on the Board, but also sharing from time to time in the Conferences at Hildenborough Hall.

Apart from the Stewards Company, his major national interest was the Annual Residential Conference of Brethren held first at High Leigh and then at Swanwick. Fred joined the Convenors in 1955 and was elected Chairman in 1961. He continued until, to everyone's regret, his health necessitated his handing over the Chairmanship in 1967, and retiring as a Convenor in 1968. Fred made an outstanding contribution to the Conference not only as a Convenor but also in his Bible Ministry. He gave one of the major addresses almost every year from 1955 to 1965 and these were always significant and arose out of a rich devotional life. Alan Bamford, the present Chairman of the Convenors, recalls meeting Fred first at the 1957 Conference when he gave the address on 'Holiness in the Individual Life and Character'. At that time Alan says his own perception of Brethren faith and practice was under serious review, and it was Fred's ministry at that Conference



PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

There is probably more questioning among our readers and Christians of similar outlook about the doctrine of the Person of Christ than finds public expression. This may be due to a fear of being branded as heretics. For myself, I am as happy as William Kelly was to accept the definition of Chalcedon*, but its terminology is largely meaningless to many Christians today. If I may voice a question which they sometimes ask, we believe that our Lord is God and Man in one Person, but is it helpful to express this truth in terms of two natures, or to discuss how exactly the two natures are combined in him?

Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey by 10 May.

which restored his vision and love. He was particularly moved to hear on that occasion an older man say to a contemporary 'That man Martin is the most holy man I know'. I remember also, when a young man, hearing Fred speak at a Crusader Conference on Paul's statement in *1 Cor. 13* 'Now we see through a glass darkly but then face to face'. His humility in relation to the things of God and awareness that there was yet more truth to be apprehended made a deep impression on me.

At these Conferences, whether High Leigh, Swanwick, or Plas Menai (where he ministered from time to time at the annual retreat for missionaries), he would take one and another for a walk, enquire of family and work for the Lord, and then in a most gracious way make helpful comments and give encouragement. Some, at moments of decision in their lives, have received timely letters of encouragement, always brief, and ending with an assurance of his prayers which was absolutely sincere, for he appeared to know the Missionary Daily Prayer Guide almost by heart, and prayed regularly for very many individuals. The last letter he wrote to Alan Bamford, which due to his infirmities was written for him, ended with the sentence, appended in his own unmistakable hand, 'I pray for you constantly': a truly Pauline touch.

Of course he had his weaknesses and no doubt his faults. He said to a friend of mine that if he had his life over again he would do less and do it better. It is difficult for his colleagues in his many and varied activities to identify the things he did less than well, but perhaps his words may be timely advice for some of us for whom it is not too late. Without eulogising we have to say of him as the Shunammite woman said of Elisha the Prophet, 'I perceive that this is a holy man of God'. And we thank God for him.

Now we can confidently say in the words immortalised by John Bunyan 'Then all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side'. To God alone be the glory.

(**The Definition of Chalcedon (AD 451)* reads: Therefore, following the holy Fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body: of one substance (*ὁμοουσιος*) with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer (*Θεοτόκος*); one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in TWO NATURES, WITHOUT CONFUSION, WITHOUT CHANGE, WITHOUT DIVISION, WITHOUT SEPARATION; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence (*ὁποστασις*), not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us.)

FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

Harry F. Thompson

Harvester readers will know Mr. Thompson as an old contributor. We are glad to introduce new readers to another of his wide-ranging meditations.

In view, on the one hand, of the amazing discoveries of science and their application to industry, commerce and medicine; and on the other hand, of the alarming increase of lawlessness, violence, and the ever present threat of a nuclear war, what do Christians make of the world scene, how do they see it unfolding? Those who look forward to a perfect political and social state — a world of peace and plenty for all, are doomed to disappointment. History can be seen as a long and agonizing conflict between all that is good, true and beautiful, and the dark forces of evil: that is, between God and man's arch enemy, the Devil. The apostle Paul says that our struggle is not against flesh and blood 'but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places' (Eph. 6:12).

Ever since the Fall the human race has been in a state of fundamental rebellion against God. This, of course, is why the world is in such a deplorable state. Modern man, imagining that he can get along quite well without God, boldly proclaims 'God is dead'. This is not altogether a new cry. In the Old Testament it is written: 'The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God' (Psalm 14:1). In order to enjoy real freedom man must relate to the Creator from whom he originated, and from whom all blessings flow.

Then he will understand what Mother Julian of Norwich meant when she said: 'All shall be well, all manner of things shall be well'.

Today, Christians are confronted by two deceptive opposing forces. Atheistic Communism, blind to the realities of the Spirit; and a destructive 'permissive society', which is rapidly undermining the moral fibre of millions of people, specially young people, and, in turn, leading to the abyss of human degradation. In the political sphere it is evident that persecution is inherent in the very essence of Atheistic Communism — indeed, it is the basic nature of its ideology. Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) said that nations are now not threatened by 'hordes streaming down from the Forests of the North or the Steppes of Asia, but by the million scientifically assembled. The million in rank and file on the parade ground: the million standardized in the factory: the million motorized — and all this ending up with Communism and National-Socialism and the most ghastly fetters' (*The Phenomenon of Man*). Christians who for the time being live in a free world should be aware of the dangers which threaten to overwhelm the Church, and pray that Christianity will once again become a united and creative power capable of standing firm against the forces arrayed against it.

Jacques Maritain says the modern age is not a sacred, but

a secular age. This being so, the eternal values of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness are gradually being lost sight of in a welter of godlessness and worldliness. Animated by a burning desire for wealth and power, man is making havoc of the natural world. Clean air is becoming a thing of the past, rivers and oceans are being used as dumps for chemical waste, and the good earth is being saturated with unnatural fertilizers. Moreover, in a frantic effort to produce more and more meat, dumb creatures, in spite of their God-given rights, are being disgracefully misused. The German philosopher, Schelling, said: 'A veil of sadness is spread over all nature, a deep, unappeasable melancholy over all life. This is manifest through the traces of suffering in the face of all nature, especially in the faces of the animals.'

The Christian Outlook

It is a great privilege to see the world from God's point of view. The apostle Paul pictures the whole creation being out of joint because of Adam's sin. But he sees beyond this, and declares: 'The creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God' (Rom. 8:21). Since the world took its beginning in time it is subject to decay. In short, it will come to an end. 'Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind' (Isaiah

65:17). Jesus said to his disciples: 'Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away' (Matt. 24:35). The apostle Peter, following the teaching of Christ, reminds us that the day of the Lord (the Second Advent) will come suddenly and unexpectedly. 'Then the heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be burnt up' (2 Peter 3:10). Following a series of visions portraying scenes of extreme and unrelieved violence, the apostle John sees 'a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea' (Rev. 21:1) (the Jews disliked the sea, symbol of agitation and chaos).

In spite of the fact that Jesus has told us that nobody, not even the angels, but only the Father, knows the day and hour timed for His return (Matt. 24:36) there are people who make false prophecies concerning the end of the world. Teilhard de Chardin, writing of the expectation of the Parousia, says: 'One day, the Gospel tells us, the tension gradually accumulating between humanity and God will touch the limits prescribed by the possibilities of the world. And then will come the end. Then the presence of Christ, which has been silently accruing in things, will suddenly be revealed — like a flash of light from pole to pole' (*Le Milieu Divin*).

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

'Today I Have Begotten You'

Question 188

I have recently seen it suggested that Psalm 2:7 refers to the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus through the Virgin Mary. However, Acts 13:33 seems to relate the verse to the resurrection of Jesus. What is the correct interpretation?

Psalm 2:7 is quoted several times in the New Testament. In *Hebrews 1:5* and *5:5*, it is difficult to distinguish a reference to any particular episode in our Lord's earthly life. The emphasis seems to be upon the unique dignity implied in the phrase. This is contrasted in *Hebrews 1:5* with that of angels and in *Hebrews 5:5* with that of the Levitical priesthood. What you say about *Acts 13:33* is very much to the point; I would relate this to Paul's words in *Romans 1:4* where he says that it was the resurrection that designated Jesus as Son of God. Nowhere in the New Testament is *Psalm 2:7* related to the incarnation. Indeed it seems as if the New Testament deliberately avoids using the language of human reproduction in connection with the conception of Jesus, presumably because of the existence of Greek and Roman myths about gods who had intercourse with mortal women.

It is natural to ask how the word 'begotten' came to be used in a sense so remote from its original one. This can be explained by reference to the original significance of *Psalm 2*. The life setting of this psalm is the coronation of a Hebrew king in Jerusalem (6). Kings of the Davidic line were able to claim the divine promise, 'I will be his father and he will be my son' (*II Samuel 7:14*). But whereas some of Israel's neighbours might regard the divine sonship of a king as having a quasi-physical nature, in Israel the relationship was rather one of adoption or the conferring of status. *Psalm 2:7* thus affirms and confers the king's unique status consequent upon the enthronement ceremony and the divine oracle. For the New Testament writers, who saw this Psalm fulfilled in the Lord Jesus, it was natural to view the resurrection as the occasion on which the divine sonship of Jesus was openly displayed. Interestingly, however, some manuscripts of Luke quote this verse at *Luke 3:22*, seeing the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at his baptism as the occasion when he was (to use Paul's phrase) designated Son of God.

Is abortion murder?

Question 190

The answer to Question 183 ignores the difference between a purposeful termination of pregnancy and an accidental termination. If purposeful termination is not murder, then what is it? Or is it quite in order for Christians to use abortion to avoid the consequences of their actions? (My remarks are not directed at abortion for strictly medical reasons.)

You are quite right to point out that *Exodus 21:22-25* is not concerned with the intentional destruction of the unborn child. Indeed, this was not the point raised in the question. This was concerned with whether the penalty for causing the death of the unborn child implied that the foetus was considered a person or not. There is in fact a procedure described for a case where a person is killed unintentionally (see *Exodus 21:12-14; Deuteronomy 19:4-13*). It seems that the accidental termination of a pregnancy was not treated in the same way as the accidental killing of a person.

Christians may disagree about how much weight should be attached to these verses from the book of Exodus. But, in general terms, it is clear that most people (including Christians) regard a miscarriage rather differently from the death of a child after birth. Miscarriages are not buried, are not named, nor are they (except by Roman Catholics) baptized. The question itself assumes that there are some cases in which the intentional termination of pregnancy amounts to neither murder nor manslaughter.

However, to say all this is not to imply that termination is morally neutral. From the moment of conception, a human being is potentially present, offered by God to the parents. Obviously it is intolerable that abortion should be regarded as an acceptable mode of contraception. Many Christians would say that even when it is necessary (for whatever reason) it is evil. (For a sensitive discussion of this question, see R. F. R. Gardner's *Abortion: The Personal Dilemma*, pp.135ff.) But I cannot see any justification for equating termination of pregnancy with murder.

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LOOKING AT BOOKS



A Long Way From Home?

Reviewed by

Jeremy Sparkes

*A student in management sciences looks at a book published by The Paternoster Press in 1979. **

Two subjects that most of us would normally consider to be at each other's throats are Christianity and sociology. The author of this book believes that sociology can only be of real use in pinpointing man's need when it is placed within a Christian understanding of the nature of man and his society.

Not only that, he also considers that Christians have too often discarded sociology as something evil, without using it as a tool of analysis (which is its correct usage) in order to discern those areas of life of which man must be made aware if the gospel message is to become living and relevant, speaking to the heart of man in every generation. His approach is fresh, and his style makes the book easily readable; a dictionary and cypher book are not needed by your bedside, for there is no jargon or grammatical syntax behind which the author hides. I suspect I will not be the only one to be relieved by its absence.

He argues that the root of man's need is a feeling of 'homelessness', a term he often uses; of man feeling alien in the world. He claims that man has tried to escape that need behind a variety of guises, such as the work ethic, the family, comfortable standards of living and behaving. None of these is intrinsically evil; but the meaning attached to them by man has caused them to be treated as of a higher importance than they are, thus they show signs of 'splitting at the seams', as society expects more of them than they were ever designed to hold. Man has considered them as absolutes, giving him meaning in life and a justification for his existence.

The author's approach is challenging: for, as I read the book, I became very aware of how much the church, as much by its silence as anything else, has endorsed and at times even encouraged these attempts by mankind to clothe its nakedness — a nakedness of which Adam and Eve became

***A Long Way from Home, J. A. Walter,
Paternoster, £4.20.**

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ashamedly aware as a result of the Fall. He maintains that only God is absolute, and that man was created to live in a relationship with God; that man can only really know what it is to be truly human when he is in communion with God, because it is God's grace that gives man the worth for which he is so desperately seeking: that even when there is nothing lovely in man that merits love, God still reaches out to him in a way that is far more wonderful than the world could ever have imagined was possible. This book is a challenge to Christians to sit down and think out what the world's standards amount to in relation to the gospel. We have accepted them by default, and it is high time that Christians

turned against this tide of popular opinion, that cushions man against his need, and declared again the real and radical alternative that is only found in the gospel. Tony Walter highlights just some of the activities of today's society which need to be questioned and subjected to a Christian critique. This is an excellent piece of work, witnessed by the fact that it is already a recommended book for one of my sociology options, taught by a man of no Christian persuasion whatever. This makes it highly suitable for lending to non-Christian friends who have an interest in sociology, which I have already done, for it combines professionalism with a clear proclamation of God's grace.

William Barclay: The Plain Uncommon Man ed. R. D. Kernohan. Hodder and Stoughton. 159pp. £3.75 (paperback). William Barclay (1907-78) spent the whole of his professional life in Scotland, but his influence — as the essays in this volume make clear — spread far beyond the confines of his native land. There were essentially three strands in the rich fabric of Barclay's life. First, the **Scholar**. Educated at Glasgow University, he was awarded a 'First' in Classics, followed by a BD with distinction — the highest award in Divinity at that time. With his mastery of Latin, Greek and Hebrew, as well as his theological qualification, he was admirably equipped for his life's work as a New Testament scholar and teacher. But before embarking on an academic career he spent thirteen years, 1933-46, as a parish minister in Clydeside. From 1946-74 he was successively lecturer,

senior lecturer, and finally professor in New Testament language and literature in Glasgow University's department of Divinity and Biblical Criticism. His literary output was prodigious: nearly eighty books, perhaps the best known being his translation of the New Testament and the **Daily Study Bible** (a guidebook to the NT for general readers). Yet he never considered himself to be a 'real' scholar, owing to his lack of a PhD (especially one earned outside Scotland), and the fact that 'his colleagues in Scotland never showed themselves unambiguously convinced that he was a scholar'. Conclusive evidence to Barclay of this lack of confidence in him was the fact that his appointment to the chair was 'begrudded by his clerical and academic peers', so much so that doubts about his standing as a scholar were never really dispelled even by his possession of a chair. The effect of all this was to keep

Barclay 'scholastically speaking humble for the remaining ten years of his university career'. That he was a scholar is indisputable, but perhaps not a first-rate one, and Neil Alexander, one of his colleagues between 1964-78, explains why Barclay was not a scholar of the highest rating like this: 'He lacked any philosophical bent and he lacked the power (or perhaps only failed to take the opportunity) to grow... We might explain this apparent stagnation by his forever writing and speaking — yes, and leading; his never stopping to reflect and change and grow.' Secondly, the **Teacher**. Unlike many another professor he enjoyed teaching and was superb at it — 'He expended his energies on that without stint, right to the end going carefully over his prepared material beforehand.' Thirdly, the **Communicator**. This was true not only in the lecture hall, but also in newspapers, on radio and

television. The editor of this fascinating book is convinced that he was, in F. F. Bruce's description a 'prince of communicators', 'only because he believed in his communication. He spoke not just with his lips — or from his throat — but with his heart. For all his scholarship, talent and wisdom, his communication had the extra dimension that Christians believe comes from God through Jesus Christ, not only the way and the life but God's truth.' Add to these qualities William Barclay's gifts as an administrator and pastor, his generous and warm personality, and the picture emerges of a truly remarkable man — or, to adapt the words of Shakespeare: 'His life was gentle, and the elements/So mixed in him that Nature might stand up/And say to all the world, "This was a man"!'

*Review by John Peters,
Charterhouse School*

DEVOTIONAL CLASSICS

Four devotional classics of the nineteenth century are now re-issued by Messrs. Marshall, Morgan and Scott. **Daily Light** comes in a gift paperback at £2.95. The other three are available in a similar paperback at £2.50 or in a luxury hardback edition in a slip case at £3.95. They are **Come ye apart** by Dr. J. R. Miller; **God's Message** and **God's Minute**, with

respectively a meditation and a prayer from 365 clergymen and laymen. All four books have a reading for every day of the year, and are so well-known as to need no further commendation. Calculated to appeal to older Christians, the small print perhaps militates against their fullest usefulness. *Reviewed by G. J. Polkinghorne*

STRONG'S CONCORDANCE

Pickering and Inglis have issued a Popular Edition of Strong's famous **Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible** (770pp., £6.50). Besides omitting ninety common words (such as 'a, he, said') and the key to the original words, it also shortens the entries for forty words. As the list includes Christ, God, Jesus, Moses and other important words, it may be

wondered whether this does not seriously impair the usefulness of the volume. The basis is the KJV, and all the references are now in proper sequence. English readers of the Bible will find this a helpful tool for their studies. *Reviewed by G. J. Polkinghorne*

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G.J. Polkinghorne

WHAT IS FAITH?

The concept of faith suffers from both its friends and its enemies. When the gospel preacher calls on his hearers to exercise 'simple' faith, he seldom pauses to consider what impression he makes. And when the agnostic caricatures faith as 'believing the impossible', he takes no account of the full biblical revelation — nor of what Leith Samuel described as 'the impossibility of agnosticism'. But what is faith — and is it so 'simple'? Maybe this very adjective inhibits serious thought. Indeed, Keith W. Clements, the Editor of *The Baptist Quarterly*, notes that the subject has suffered some neglect in recent theological discussion as he supplies something to fill the gap in *Faith* (SCM Press, viii + 126pp, £4.95 paperback). Small in size, it is rich in content and can be followed by the unlettered while it will reward the most erudite.

Concentrating on the subjective aspect, on faith as believing rather than the faith as a body of doctrine, he observes that Christians were called 'believers' from the beginning, because they entered into a relationship with God rather than because they accepted propositions about him. Human life would be impossible without reliance on some reality beyond ourselves. But Christian faith is personal trust in the gracious God known in Jesus, whereby we enjoy the fullness of peace as indicated by the Hebrew word *shalom*. No merit can be claimed for it. It is before all else the gift of God, who makes himself available to us in Christ as Father, or better, in another Semitic term, *Abba*, which can be translated 'Daddy'. A decision to trust is essential. This is the essence of repentance, a turning from self-centred to God-centred living. By confession, this inward experience is brought out into the open. Baptism and the Lord's Supper give individual and communal

opportunities for this.

Commitment — a current in-word which needs re-thinking — is to be regarded as entrusting oneself to God. It also involves obedience if it is (in Bonhoeffer's famous terms), to be 'costly' and not 'cheap grace'. So faith must become faithfulness. Yet it is freedom — not total absence from all constraints, but escape from self-concern into self-acceptance based on a glad realization of God's acceptance. It is freedom also from legalism, moralism, authoritarianism and bondage of every kind. Because intellect is part of our natural constitution, faith involves understanding, an important reminder for times when so much stress is being placed on experience. While we cannot expect to know all about God, we can at least reflect on revealed truth and map out its bearings and coherence. Thus faith is ever exploration, a spiritual adventure of discovery of the riches of our relationship with God in and through Christ.

Much else might be said, but it is hoped that the foregoing bald outline will give some clue to the value of the book. Here and there we might like some further clarification, e.g., on p.47, where 'Holy Spirit' is mentioned impersonally. Presumably this presupposes a distinction between the Holy Spirit, a Person, and Holy Spirit (no article) an influence, but it would be useful to say so. What a pity that there is no index, not even of Scripture references, when there is so much quotation — from Luther and Bonhoeffer, Küng and Pannenberg, Gregor Smith and C. S. Lewis, Kierkegaard and Buber — and so much Bible teaching. Enough, however, has surely been said to indicate that this is a 'must' for every reader. We might even risk a prophecy that it will become a Christian classic.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS OR ORGANIZED MINISTRY? (2)

Some Conclusions Ronald Y. K. Fung

On the basis of the evidence in the first article, we may set down a number of observations regarding the subject of our enquiry.

(1) The existence of some kind of specialized ministry, or more specifically of church officers, is attested for all the Pauline churches, with the sole exception of Corinth. That the ministry should have been organized to greater or less degree is not only consistent with Jewish influence upon the structure of the church. It is consistent also with the practical demands of expanding communities (cf. Galatia — Acts 16:5; Ephesus — Acts 19:10, 17-20; cf. 1 Cor. 16:8f.; Thessalonica — Acts 17:4; Corinth — Acts 18:8); with Paul's own administrative abilities which find illustration, quite apart from Acts 14:23 and the Pastorals, in his organization of the collection for the Jerusalem church (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9); and with the simple fact that the local church, composed as it is of people 'who belong simultaneously to the natural and the supernatural order of life, . . . cannot be severed from the earthly conditions of existence' (J. Schneider) — among which organization is essential and indispensable. Unless, then, Paul's practice was quite inconsistent with his theory, we can only conclude that his doctrine of spiritual gifts is not incompatible with the existence of an organized ministry.

(2) The fact that Paul, though doubtless a 'charismatic' himself, yet possessed an official status and official authority, reminds us that the doctrine of charismata is not in principle at odds with the

idea of official authority. More specifically, there need be no conflict between Spirit and office; the latter is 'not unspiritual just as long as it remains obedient to the Spirit of Christ, and performs that service of the Gospel of Christ for which it was appointed' (H. von Campenhausen). That there is no such conflict in practice is illustrated by the fact that the appointment of the Ephesian elders is explicitly attributed to the initiative and agency of the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28). Similarly, in the case of Timothy's 'ordination' (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6), the fact that the impartation of the charisma occurs jointly with prophecy shows that the present endowment on Timothy, just like the initial choice of him (1 Tim. 1:18), was due to the initiative of God through his Spirit, who sovereignly both inspired the prophecies concerning Timothy and dispensed to him the special charisma for his unique task. Again, if a primary requirement of transmitters of the gospel is that they be loyal to the truth (2 Tim. 2:2), Paul's reminder to Timothy (1:14) shows that such loyalty is possible only through the Spirit's enabling. (3) It follows that there is no intrinsic opposition between spiritual gift and ecclesiastical office. Not only is there no *a priori* reason why function and office should be mutually incompatible terms, or why gifts can be joined to functions only and not to offices also, but the evidence of the Pauline letters point to the conclusion that in Paul's view function, gift and office can and must exist in harmonious relationships. Thus in 1 Tim-

othy 3:1, the juxtaposition of the concepts 'office' and 'task' shows that the ministry of an overseer is at once an office to hold and a task to perform, while the following context goes on to speak of qualifications. It is certainly not without significance that several of the charismata mentioned by Paul find their counterparts in the qualifications laid down for presbyter-bishops and deacons in the Pastorals, thus:

'service'	'let them serve as deacons'
(Rom. 12:7)	(1 Tim. 3:10)
'teaching'	'an apt teacher'
(Rom. 12:7)	(1 Tim. 3:2; cf. Tit. 1:9)
'exhortation'	'... to exhort'
(Rom. 12:8)	(Tit. 1:9, AV)
'pastors'	'the elders who rule . . .'
(Eph. 4:11)	(1 Tim. 5:17; cf. 3:4, 5, 12)

Further, the gifts of being 'helpers' and 'administrators', mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28 between the gifts of healing and speaking in tongues, are most probably to be linked with 'deacons' and 'overseers' respectively. This alignment of gift with office indicates, on the one hand, that gift can find expression in office and, on the other hand, that office must not be severed from gift. As J. A. Robinson has said, 'The apostle would have been startled by the suggestion that bishops and deacons could execute their office aright without the divine aid of the corresponding "charisma"'. The true relationship between function, gift and office, therefore, appears to be this: office and function

are two aspects of a person's ministry (i.e. in the case of someone who holds office), for which he must have the appropriate gifts.

(4) Not all charismata, of course, need or do find expression through office. In the words of Hans Küng, 'The charisma cannot be subsumed under the heading of ecclesiastical office, but all church offices can be subsumed under the charisma.' An examination of the charismata shows that whereas some gifts, such as those of sharing, caring, and showing mercy, are more private gifts which are, indeed, to be used in the service of others as opportunity presents itself; others, like those of apostles, prophets, teachers, exhortation, service, helpers, administrators and pastors, are more public gifts designed to be used regularly and constantly within the community. It is significant that besides apostles and prophets, all the other gifts can be associated with overseers and deacons (administrators — pastors, helpers) and even definitely identified with their qualifications or functions (teaching, exhortation, service, pastoring = administration). Thus it is seen that the more public gifts are intended for, and actually exercised by, those who represent the public ministry of the church: apostles, prophets, teachers, presbyter-bishops and deacons.

(5) A certain basic tendency in respect of the organization of the ministry seems discernible in the Pauline corpus. This may be described as a tendency towards increasing recognition of and emphasis on the regular ministry. The

appointment of elders in *Acts 14:23* marked the provision of an official if simple leadership for the Galatian churches, and apparently in two or three short years the body of elders had acquired the nature of a 'council' (1 *Tim. 4:14*, cf. AV, RV, NASB: 'presbytery'), participating with the apostle (2 *Tim. 1:6*) in the consecration of Timothy to his special function as apostolic assistant, though the term may mean no more than that the elders acted together as a body (cf. NEB, NIV) and should not be regarded as indicative of a highly technical ecclesiastical structure. B. H. Streeter made the suggestion that the practical disorders at Corinth compelled Paul to face more clearly than heretofore the need of a new emphasis on the respect due to church leaders, and that this intention underlies the exhortation in 1 *Corinthians 16:15f.* Such an intention already lies behind the exhortation in 1 *Thessalonians 5:12f.* Streeter further observed that the very fact of Paul's summoning the Ephesian elders (*Acts 20:17*) is 'an important piece of historical evidence of a growing desire on his part to enhance the prestige of, and foster a sense of responsibility in, officers charged with the direction of the church'. This desire, it may be suggested, is all the more intelligible in the light of his premonitions of imminent peril to himself (*Acts 20:22-25*) and impending danger to the church (vv. 29-31); Paul would realize that after his departure these presbyter-bishops would have to serve as a bulwark against heresy. Could it

be that the singling out of the overseers and deacons in the salutation to the Philippians (1:1), occasioned as it probably was by their being responsible for the Jerusalem collection or the gift to Paul — who was now a prisoner facing the distinct possibility of death (*Phil. 1:20-23*) — is yet another indication of the same desire?

In the Pastorals, where the apostle is concerned that church leadership should be exercised by suitably qualified men, the emphasis upon the official ministry clearly comes to the fore. It is only natural that an era of creative enthusiasm and inspired teaching should be followed by a period of consolidation and more normal methods of transmitting the apostolic witness. Paul must have realized that when his personal, apostolic supervision was no longer available, it would be essential to have a continuous succession of men who were loyal to the truth to whom the gospel could be committed (2 *Tim. 2:2*). Now that false teachers were already upon the scene threatening to endanger the purity of the church's faith and morals (1 *Tim. 1:3-7, 19-20; 4:1-5; 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 2:14, 16, 26; Tit. 1:10, 14; 3:9*), urgency was added to necessity to entrust the deposit of apostolic witness to a chain of qualified men who were to be bearers of the tradition of sound doctrine. Streeter's conclusion (which did not cover the Pastorals since he considered them to be pseudonymous) may be accepted for the whole of the Pauline corpus: 'The total amount of evidence yielded up by the

passages considered above . . . all points in the same direction; and taken as a whole it suffices if not to prove, at least to make probable, the fact of a slow but steady movement. And it is a movement away from the state of things implied in 1 *Corinthians* — where pre-eminence in the Church depends on the personal possession of some spiritual gift (of which "government" is one of the least esteemed) — and towards a state of things where importance is attached to the holding of an office invested with recognized authority.'

At the same time, it cannot be overemphasized that even in the Pastorals, there is no question of an institutionally guaranteed ecclesiastical office being set in opposition to spiritual gifts, and of the Holy Spirit becoming the 'ministerial Spirit' locked up in office (E. Käsemann). Neither in the matter of Timothy's ordination nor in the matter of a succession of tradition-bearers is there reason for thinking that the office is institutionally guaranteed. The holding of an office is conditional upon a person's faithfulness to the truth and his possessing the gift to teach it to others, and in both respects the person is directly dependent upon the Holy Spirit. Notwithstanding the more developed ecclesiastical structure of the Pastorals, the Holy Spirit remains sovereign in his prophetic (1 *Tim. 1:18; 4:1, 14*) and enabling (2 *Tim. 1:14*) as well as regenerative (*Tit. 3:5*) power, and the ministry is still, as in the Corinthian letters, recognized to be vitally

dependent on the Holy Spirit. (6) The growing emphasis which Paul attaches to the regular or official ministry becomes all the more intelligible in the light of the distinction between the more private and the more public gifts noted above, and of a further distinction to be observed, viz., that between the miraculous and the non-miraculous gifts. For, as the apostolic age drew to a close, as the apostles and prophets (and teachers as a separate class of 'charismatics') disappeared from the scene and the distinctly miraculous gifts gradually ceased, it was only natural that the presbyter-bishops and deacons, who all along had possessed the necessary gifts but had hitherto occupied a place of secondary importance in comparison with apostles, prophets and teachers, should now emerge into greater prominence as leaders of the communities. They now make up the staple of the regular ministry and they are responsible to take the lead in continuing the apostolic witness and work. Hence, the increasing emphasis upon the regular ministry seems well placed.

To the question raised by the title of this article, then, the above examination provides a firmly positive answer: not only does the concept of charismata allow for the existence of an organized ministry involving ecclesiastical office and official authority, but properly ordered 'the official Ministry is charismatic; every function of it presupposes the presence of a Divine Spirit acting through human weakness' (A. G. Hebert).

continued from page thirty-nine annulled every physical movement. We see therefore that the Lord's words are powerful to bring about what he commands (cf. also his word *ephphatha*), as they were at the creation of the world: 'he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood forth' (*Ps. 33:9*; cf. *John 1:1-3*). We are re-

minded of the re-creative word of Christ on other occasions: the cleansing of a leper with the words, 'Be clean' (*Matt. 8:3*), and the resurrecting call to the entombed Lazarus: 'Lazarus, come out!' (*John 11:43*). The word of Christ is able to give life not only to the physically dead, but also to those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

Let us apply his word 'arise' to our own hearts: 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light' (*Eph. 5:14*). A Christian too may sleep when he becomes careless about the things of Christ and succumbs to the lotus leaves of this world's enticements. To them Christ speaks again: 'Arise, my love, my fair one,

and come away' (*S. of S. 2:10, 13*); 'Hear, O daughter, consider, and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house; and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your Lord, bow to him' (*Ps. 45:10-11*). May the word of Christ dwell in us richly, as it evidently did in the heart and conscience of the Apostle Peter.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (47)

F. F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

ii. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN (John 9:1-41)

(c) Interrogation of the parents (9:18-23)

9:18, 19 So the Jews refused to believe that he was blind and had recovered his sight until they had called the parents of the man who had recovered his sight. Then they asked them, 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind? In that case, how can he see now?'

'The Jews' of verse 18 are presumably the Pharisees of verse 13. The claim that the man had been born blind was a material factor in the incident which they were investigating; but obviously this was something on which his own testimony was not available. Even if he could not remember having ever seen, he might have lost his sight through some illness or accident in early infancy. The people who could testify acceptably whether he was born blind or not were his parents, so they were summoned. They obeyed the summons, but were very ill at ease. It was plain that the authorities were annoyed at what had happened, and although they were naturally glad that their son was no longer blind, they were unhappy that he should be mixed up with someone who was in disfavour with the authorities. But here they were, in a subordinate court of inquiry, and they had to give evidence. Wisely, they confined their evidence to what they actually knew; they gave plain answers to the first part of the question — 'Is this your son, who you say was born blind?' — but refused to indulge in speculation about his cure.

9:20, 21 So his parents replied, 'We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. But we do not know how he can see now or who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age; he will speak for himself.'

'Yes', they said, 'he is our son' (of that they had no doubt). 'Yes', they said again, 'he was born blind' (they were equally sure of that). 'You ask, "How come he is able to see now?" We don't

know. Nor do we know who restored his sight. You must ask himself: he is old enough to bear competent testimony in court.' (To be admissible as a witness in court he had to be at least thirteen; this man was probably rather older than that.) But, limited to matters of known fact as the parents' testimony was, it made unpalatable hearing for the interrogators: they confirmed that their son had been born blind, and since he had plainly recovered his sight, it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that a miracle had been performed.

9:22, 23 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for they had already agreed that if any one confessed Jesus to be the Messiah he should be expelled from the synagogue. It was for this reason that his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him.'

Jesus' presence and activity in Jerusalem since he arrived halfway through the week of Tabernacles were well known throughout the city; and the man's parents were well aware that the healing of their son's blindness was due to Jesus. But anything they might say about Jesus was liable to be displeasing to the authorities; therefore they would say nothing at all about him. After all, they were not present when Jesus accosted their son and sent him to the Pool of Siloam, so they could reasonably plead ignorance of the cause and nature of his healing.

It is commonly suggested today that John, writing towards the end of the nineties, was influenced by a decision that had been taken by the reconstituted Sanhedrin a few years before. The Sanhedrin reconstituted with Roman permission in the period after A.D. 70 consisted exclusively of doctors of the law. One of these, Samuel the Less, reworded one of the blessings recited daily in the synagogues so as to make it impossible for 'Nazarenes' (Jewish Christians) to take part in synagogue worship. This blessing, which traditionally included a curse on the enemies of God ('let all wickedness perish as in a moment'), was revised so that the curse ran: 'let Nazarenes and heretics perish as in a moment; let them be blotted out of

the book of life and not be enrolled with the righteous.' The revision was approved by the Sanhedrin and adopted in synagogues, so that Nazarenes, being forced to keep silence when the new form of words was recited by the congregation, would give themselves away. John probably does allude to this situation when he reports Jesus as saying to the disciples in the upper room, 'They will put you out of the synagogues' (*John 16:2*). The same adjective, *apodynamōgos* (meaning 'excluded from the synagogue'), is used there as here in 9:22. But here (as in 12:42) the reference is to a situation in the context of Jesus' ministry, restricted perhaps to Jerusalem. It is uncertain whether we are to understand temporary expulsion or permanent excommunication here. The most solemn form of excommunication was to put someone under the ban (Heb. *herem*; Gk. *anathema*); that seems to have been involved in the new ordinance of A.D. 90, but it would probably be anachronistic to envisage it at this stage. Even so, the man's parents were sufficiently intimidated to keep their mouths shut and say nothing about Jesus, either good or bad.

(d) Second interrogation of the man (9:24-34)
9:24, 25 So they summoned the man who had been blind a second time and said to him, 'Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.' He replied, 'I do not know if he is a sinner. I know one thing: I was blind and now I see.'

There was no way of getting around the evidence that the man had been born blind. Neither was there any way of getting around the evidence of their senses, that he was now able to see. The natural conclusion was that a miracle of healing had been wrought, but since the evidence also pointed unambiguously to Jesus as the one responsible for the cure, the further conclusion would be that the power of God had manifested itself through Jesus in an exceptional degree — that he was indeed, as the man had said, a prophet. But this further conclusion was inadmis-

sible: in their eyes he was no prophet, but a sinner, because he had broken the sabbath law. Therefore some factor in the situation must be eluding them; perhaps it was being deliberately concealed from them. Hence their charge to the man when he was summoned before them again: 'Own up; tell the truth.' 'Give glory to God' has the same force here as in the story of Achan: when the lot pointed to Achan as the man who had brought disaster on Israel, Joshua said to him, 'Give glory to the Lord God of Israel' — i.e. 'Own up; tell the truth' (*Josh. 7:19*). (It may well be that John plays characteristically on the double meaning of the words — the healing of the blind man did indeed reveal the glory of God — but our present concern is with what the interrogators meant.) 'Own up', they meant; 'whatever you say, we know that this man Jesus is a sinner, and therefore cannot have performed such a miracle of healing as you pretend. Tell the truth; what are you hiding?'

In his first reply the man is as circumspect as his parents: he confines himself strictly to what he knows, which is the duty of a witness. 'You know that he is a sinner; well, you are the authorities whose business it is to know that sort of thing. You wouldn't expect me to know anything about that; but here is what I do know: I was blind, and now I see.' It was frustrating for his interrogators that neither of those statements could be refuted; the former statement was confirmed by the evidence of the parents; the truth of the latter they could see for themselves. Why not admit the conclusion to which these two facts pointed?

The man's testimony has been repeated innumerable times by men and women who have found in his words the means of communicating their own experience of deliverance from spiritual blindness through the in-shining of the Light of the world:

*For thou hast made the blind to see,
 The deaf to hear, the dumb to speak,
 The dead to live; and lo, I break
 The chains of my captivity!*

MEDITATIONS ON MARK (9) The Testimony of Peter David Brady

If Christ's work on Golgotha is the V-day of Christian faith, then his work in Gethsemane is surely its D-day. On Golgotha Christ shed his blood to redeem mankind, but his dedication to that act is viewed in Gethsemane when 'he sweat as it were great drops of blood' in agony of soul for our sakes. On Golgotha Christ's own arm brought him victory and in Gethsemane he trod the wine press alone; he trod all his foes beneath his feet by being trodden down. But Jesus did not wish to be alone. He particularly sought the company of Peter, James, and John when he went to Gethsemane to pray. Peter, the rock, as his name implies, had sworn to remain firm for Christ even unto death and now Christ asks for the proof of that devotion. But Peter, James, and John all fell asleep and left their Master alone in that dark hour. Luke makes mention of extenuating circumstances, informing his readers that it was on account of their sorrow that they slept (Luke 22:45). Theirs was not simply exhaustion, but soul-sapping nervous exhaustion. Nevertheless, a man who had vowed that he would die for Christ could surely have overcome exhaustion of the most severe kind in order to watch for his Master, especially in view of his earlier performance: 'Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep but kept awake' (Luke 9:32).

Personal Address

How touching it is then, as Mark (who, according to a strong tradition, probably wrote his Gospel with Peter as his informant) records, that Jesus addresses Peter personally among the three:

'Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour?' (Mark 14:37). Only on ten other occasions in the Gospels (as I recall) do we read that Jesus addressed any one by name. On two of these occasions he spoke to women: Martha (Luke 10:41) and Mary (John 20:16); once each he addressed Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:40); Lazarus (John 11:43); Philip (John 14:9) and Judas (Luke 22:48); and on four other occasions he addressed Simon Peter by name (Matt. 16:17; 17:25; Luke 22:31; John 21:15-17). It is interesting that in five out of these eleven examples in which Jesus addresses a person by name, he is speaking to Simon Peter, but it is even more interesting to note that in the Gospel behind which we probably have the eyewitness report of Peter (i.e. Mark's Gospel), we only have one of these occasions recorded. It is this occasion in Gethsemane when Peter failed to even begin to fulfil his promise of devotion to the Lord. It is important too that the name 'Simon' rather than 'Peter' is used, since, as Swete has remarked, 'for the time he is "Peter" no more'. He is merely the erring fisherman Simon. How wonderful then is the last chapter of John's Gospel in which Jesus comes again and addresses Simon the fisherman by name, restoring him to the faith and devoted service in which he had failed so abysmally.

But honest Peter selected this event which so clearly demonstrated his weakness and reported it faithfully to Mark the Gospel writer. Why this passage? Surely it is because Peter himself recog-

nized on that occasion how the Lord was able to sound the very depth of his being and to try the quality of his asserted devotion. It was good for boastful Peter to be humbled and to be brought face to face with his own weakness. It is the lesson that we must learn, since, if we are believers in Christ, we stand before one whose eyes are like a flame of fire — searching and purifying. 'Could you not watch one hour?' — one fleeting hour. How different is the sense in which the word 'hour' is used in Jesus' prayer: 'he prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him' (Mark 14:35); and triumphant alone he declared, 'The hour has come; the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners' (v.41). That was no temporal hour to be measured by the passing moon and ended with approaching dawn. It was the eternal hour of reconciliation by Christ's one act of righteousness, to be measured by the everlasting life he purchased for us by his blood. No mere man could follow here and so poor Simon and failing humanity might be absolved. Not in ourselves, but only in Christ may we be strong (cf. 2 Cor. 12:9; Zech. 4:6), and that through his 'weakness' at Golgotha.

Aramaic Sayings

It is probably to Peter also that we are indebted for some details in the account of the raising of Jairus's daughter, especially we believe for the record of the actual words used by Jesus on that occasion. The words addressed by Jesus to the little girl are one of the few examples in the Gospels when we read not only the

actual words which Jesus spoke, but we read them in the actual language used by him, i.e. in Aramaic. The Gospels contain the following examples of this phenomenon: *talitha kum*, 'little girl, arise' (Mark 5:41); *corban*, 'an offering' (Mark 7:11); *ephphatha*, 'be opened' (Mark 7:34); *Abba*, 'Father' (Mark 14:36; cf. Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6); and *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani*, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Mark 15:34). All but the last of these sayings are found only in the Gospel according to Mark (the cry of Jesus on the cross being found also in Matt. 27:46), and in each case Mark gives a translation. Other examples of Aramaic in the New Testament include *raka* (Matt. 5:22); *mammon* (Matt. 6:24); *hosanna* (Mark 11:9-10); *Maranatha* (1 Cor. 16:22); *Rabboni* (John 20:16); and numerous proper names, in particular Cephas (John 1:42) and Boanerges (Mark 3:17), together with some place names, such as Gabbatha, Golgotha, and Akeldama. The language situation in first-century Palestine was probably complex, but we may perhaps generalize with the observation that Greek was the international language understood everywhere for official purposes, Hebrew may have been the scholarly language which probably lingered around Jerusalem (much as Latin once lingered around Oxford and Cambridge), and Aramaic was the domestic language which was first learnt at home.

If we turn our attention to Jesus's use of the expression *talitha kum*, when he raised

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SOUR GRAPES

Charles Oxley

'Sour grapes', we say when we suspect jealousy to be the cause of a bitter or biting remark.

The saying originated with Aesop's fable about the fox who, finding himself unable to reach the grapes, consoled himself with the notion that the grapes were sour. But there was a proverb in Israel in the 6th century B.C. — 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge.' It meant, we suffer for what our fathers did. The people of Judah blamed their misfortunes on earlier generations. 'Wicked kings and corrupt priests have got us into this mess', they claimed. 'No', said the prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. 'It's no good trying to put the blame on others. YOU are responsible for what you do.'

Two-and-a-half thousand years later, we still haven't learned this fact. We still blame our circumstances, rather than accept responsibility for our actions. We are like the schoolboy, who, on taking home a bad report, asked his dad whether the fault lay in his heredity or his environment! Many politically-motivated sociologists, some social workers and a few churchmen make excuses for thugs and vandals today. They blame **society**, and when you ask them to be more specific, they say, 'Bad housing conditions, lack of educational opportunities, unemployment and lack of recreational facilities, etc.' They seem to forget that crimes are also committed by youngsters from 'well-off' homes and by people who have well-paid jobs and who live in luxury. They are usually too young to remember the 1920's and '30's, when housing, education, and recreational facilities were infinitely worse, yet crime was a tiny fraction of what it is today.

There are external factors which compound this situation, the breakdown of family life, the acceptance of sexual promiscuity, easy divorce and blatant materialism, but these are some of the

results, not the basic cause, which is a deliberate rejection of God's laws and an inability to distinguish right from wrong. By making excuses for delinquency, we are denying the fact that delinquents are responsible for their actions. In this we encourage delinquency. We give it the status of an economic weapon, as terrorism is being given the status of a political weapon. Human beings, who claim to be rational, **are** responsible for their actions and should be **held** responsible. To suggest otherwise is to treat them as infants or as mentally defective.

Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, fearless and uncompromising, forcefully reminded the people of Judah that they were **individually** responsible for their actions and that they would be held **individually** responsible in the day of judgment. Their society was ravaged by greed, poisoned by injustice and riddled with bribery. Self-interest was the ethic of that society. Not unlike our own. Jeremiah thundered out the word of the LORD: 'In those days they shall no longer say: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." But everyone shall die for his own sin; each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.' (*Jerem. 31:29-20*). Ezekiel was even more direct: 'The soul that sins shall die . . . the wickedness of the wicked shall be on himself . . . I will judge you . . . every one according to his ways, says the LORD God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions . . . Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed against me and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.' (*Ezek. 18:4, 20, 30, 31*).

Individual responsibility is God's gift to man. Take it away and you make a man of diminished responsibility.

continued from page thirty-eight the daughter of Jairus from the dead, we see that under the circumstances Aramaic was clearly the appropriate language for Jesus to use. He did not address the girl in any formal manner (using Greek), nor did he address her in the language of theological orthodoxy (Hebrew), but rather he spoke to her in the warm and personal language of the domestic scene, in fact in 'the very words by means of

which her mother had probably often awakened her in the morning' (W. Hendriksen). The incorporation of so many of these Aramaic utterances in the text of Mark's Gospel is probably to be accounted for by Peter's actual recollection of the words used by Jesus. (If this be so, then it is possible that, despite Peter's failure to confess his discipleship of Christ on the night of the Lord's betrayal, he was nevertheless not too far

away from the cross to miss hearing his Lord's cry of utter dereliction: **Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?**) Added evidence of the impression that Jesus's words **talitha kum** must have had on Peter is probably to be found in the account of Peter's own act of raising Dorcas from the dead, for when he in turn calls Dorcas to arise from the sleep of death, he uses almost identical words to those of his Master, altering only one

letter: **Tabitha kum** (or **koumi**), 'Tabitha, arise'. We note also other similarities in the two events: the shutting out of those not immediately concerned and the taking hold of the hand of the deceased.

But when we think about the Lord's words, 'Little girl, arise,' the thing that immediately strikes us is that the dead have in fact no power to arise from death, which has *continued on page thirty-five*

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT *Kingship (continued)*

H. L. Ellison

In last month's instalment, we saw how the anonymous writer of *Lam. 4* — assuredly not Jeremiah! — could pour out his heart over Zedekiah's fate

*'The breath of our nostrils, the Lord's anointed,
was taken in their pits,
he of whom we said, "Under his shadow
we shall live among the nations".'*

This is a lamentation over one whom Ezekiel regarded as little better than a perjured usurper (for him Jehoiachin was and remained the true king of Judah). Of all the prophets Ezekiel gives the most devastating judgment on Israel's religion, condemning it root and branch. His verdict on its kings is as thoroughgoing. The only exception to the condemnation in ch. 34 is David and that only by implication.

The idol of the modern political man, and indeed of many Christians, is democracy, for which hardly a good word can be found in Scripture. The biblical ideal is the absolute rule of God, mediated to his people by his representatives, by the king in civil society, by the elders in the Church, by the priests in Israel. It is not unfair to suggest that one of the main purposes of Scripture is to reveal how the sinfulness of men distorts the pattern of God's appointment.

In early Israel, God could raise up a 'Judge', when and how it suited Him, even the very last whom men would have chosen, even a Samson! The attempt to turn him into a type of Christ, still sometimes met, is at the best foolish and at the worst irreverent. But even perhaps the greatest of the judges, Samuel, had to learn that it was a matter of God's choice, and even he could not pass on his authority to his sons (*1 Sam. 8:1, 2*), something that many leading men in the Church have been very slow to learn. The introduction of kingship inescapably involved heredity. It is a study humbling to human pride, that as we go through the lists of kings of both Judah and Israel, we cannot find a single case where the successor of a good king was himself worthy of God's commendation. Ruling ability, but not moral quality, might be inherited. Sometimes the best were followed by the worst. If we say, 'How could this be?' we

shall be forced to suggest that it was God's doing, the more so as the very bad were sometimes followed by the relatively good. God had to destroy man's confidence in man and in the fruits of his own godliness.

There was more involved than the character of the hereditary kings. Except in certain specialized circles, not enough attention has been paid to Samuel's warning in *1 Sam. 8:11-18*. We may, if we so wish, infer from *2 Kgs. 11:12*, that, at least in Judah, the king at his coronation had to accept some form of constitution, which limited his powers for as long as he was willing to be limited, but Samuel envisaged power which would break up family life and tribal unity.

Ruth introduces us to a system of justice carried out by those who knew the facts and had every motive for wishing that justice should be done. We should praise Solomon that two lowly harlots could come before him with their quarrel, but Jehoshaphat's need for action (*2 Chr. 19:8-10*) suggests that the new brand of royal justice had not proved over-satisfactory.

If we take the prophets seriously, we shall infer that the Babylonian exile was needed not merely to eliminate idolatry from Judah but also to enable a new social system to begin. The fact that in the list of those returning from captivity contains a considerable number (*Ezra 2:21-28*) who no longer remembered the families from which they had sprung but only the places their ancestors had lived in, points to a landless 'proletariat' and a breakdown of the family traditions. The story of Naboth shows that the king had the right under certain circumstances to confiscate the land of condemned 'criminals' (*1 Kgs. 21:16*) — of course, Naboth's family may have been included in his 'execution'.

It goes without saying that land that came into the king's possession was automatically excluded from the right of redemption and return in the year of jubilee. All this means that the introduction of kingship meant the bringing in of an element that meant a fundamental distortion of Israelite society. We are not justified, because of the vision of the Messianic king, in assuming that kingship played an essential role in God's purposes.

(To be continued)



READERS' FORUM

Readers' Forum (February)

This month's Forum is devoted to some lively correspondence arising from Mr. Knipe's contribution in February.

From Mr. M. F. Dowsett

Dear Mr. Coad,
It is possible to answer Mr. Knipe's question in the briefest of terms; i.e. the current problems in assemblies are due mainly to our failure to appreciate that adherence to a New Testament 'pattern', without the accompanying appropriate moral and spiritual conditions, is no guarantee of success. Less bitterness and rancour arising from our continuous pre-occupation with disputed points of church order, and more concern for the gospel, with a return to the centrality of Christ in our preaching, teaching and worship, may well bring the blessing that we all so much long for.
Yours sincerely,
Maurice F. Dowsett
18 Vellacotts,
Broomfield, Chelmsford,
Essex CM1 5EQ

From Mr. David Sims

Dear Mr. Coad,
I am prompted to write in response to Mr. John Knipe's 'Readers' Forum' contribution in the February issue, bearing in mind also Professor Bruce's question (though I confess to not being given to speak about 'assembly principles'). Mr. Knipe asks, 'We had it all. What have we done with it?' I have often felt that there is a parallel with the situation which prompted Paul to write his letter to the Galatians. He writes, in *chapter 3 verse 3*, 'Having begun with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh?' What our nineteenth century forebears had, surely, was the right attitude of heart and mind. They saw all round them a church which was largely legalistic, inwardly

divided and making little impact on the community. They saw that 'salvation' lay in appropriating the resources which God had provided — whether for worship, witness or behaviour. We have kept the 'form' of what they began but we constantly deny the 'power' of it. The only answer to decline, which we misleadingly attribute to the 'darkness' of the 'world', is for us to surrender to the life-giving power of the Spirit even if in the process we have to abandon some of our cherished traditions. As a postscript I am inclined to throw out two questions which may provoke further comment or discussion. First, is the antipathy amongst Brethren assemblies towards the Charismatic Movement the result, in part, of their success where we have signally failed? Second, are there historical precedents for the way in which a movement of the Spirit has become shackled by 'the commandments of men'?
Yours sincerely,
David Sims
17 Beaulieu Road,
Christchurch,
Dorset BH23 2EA

From Mr. H. V. G. Morris

Dear Mr. Coad,
May I suggest that the problem facing John Knipe is larger than his contribution to 'Readers' Forum' indicates? To illustrate: as one walks around this town, typical of so many in the North, the eye will recognise many buildings obviously built as non-conformist chapels, but now used for secular purposes. They were built by break-away groups, at roundabout the same time as 'Assemblies' were being formed, built by those who were obsessed with a different slant of doctrine from the parent church. This slant was usually quite unimportant, as we view

matters today. For a time they prospered, but enthusiasm for their ideas died with the generation which produced them.

Brethrenism is a separatist group, which very often represented a break-away from established churches. In the early years of this century, we were encouraged towards a superiority complex, and many developed exclusive tendencies.

Brethrenism is now experiencing the decline which resulted in the extinction of those other break-away groups.

The question is now asked, whether it would have been for the great profit to the whole Church of God, if the enthusiasm of all those who led break-away groups (including Brethren) could have been used for the guidance and spiritual education of the Churches which they left?

Even more pertinent: would not those who are struggling to maintain a dying assembly be more profitably employed in larger and more nominal Churches? Their energy and knowledge of the Scriptures would be so valuable, and would, in many cases, be greatly appreciated. With Christian greetings,
Hubert Morris
'Boma',
121 Birchwood Drive,
Ulverston,
Cumbria LA12 9NY

From Mr. Stanley Linton

Dear Mr. Coad,
The contribution by Mr. John Knipe in the February 'Readers' Forum' poses once more — and in a very effective way — the kind of questions so many of us have been asking over the past few years. What has gone wrong? What have we done with our heritage? Where do we go from here? and so on. I somehow sense that we are

on the move and this encourages me to offer perhaps some more thoughts on the matter. Alas we tend to suffer from a 'frozen' theology. I rather hesitate to quote once more the famous dictum 'The Lord has yet more light to break forth out of his holy Word' but it is, I am afraid, something many of us just do not want to heed! We believe that we have got it all, our doctrine is sound and rounded off — and what ever else may be happening in the big world outside is of no consequence. However a lot is going on in the big world outside and over the past 15 years or so — in a way perhaps similar to 150 years ago — more light is shining forth. But we are not even content with our 'frozen' theology. We tend to ostracise and drive out those who dare to express different views.

As I write this letter I have in front of me a letter from a brother in Scotland received just a month ago. He wrote a letter to *The Witness* some four years ago which suggested that there might be some new light on a particular subject — and to use his words 'this caused a spiritual sandstorm in our area'. There were those who described his letter as 'a dreadful letter that doesn't bear thinking about'. Others said that it was extremely unwise to have written in the way he did and that 'such a letter could do "damage" to the full time evangelist and his family who were in that assembly at the time'. He now meets with a local Baptist Church, but concludes his letter with a rather sad plea — 'Will there ever be a place for us in the assemblies we love dearly with all our hearts (I am told there are thousands in my position in the UK)'. In my

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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

From time to time I hear reports (which I would have difficulty in crediting were they not well authenticated) of places where the authorities insist that women or girls attending a gospel service should have their heads covered. Considering that the most literal interpretation of the one relevant scripture prescribes a head-covering for Christian women when they are praying or prophesying, one would suppose that the state of affairs I mention must be very exceptional — but reports of it come from a wide variety of areas. Do readers ever come across it, and if so, what steps are taken to discourage such a disincentive to evangelism?

Mr. L. L. Fox replies:
It would seem that these authorities feel either (a) that the nature of a gospel service is such that it demands 'covered heads'; or (b) that the 'holiness' of a group of assembly members present together demands 'covered heads'; or (c) that the place where the service is held — 'the hall', presumably — is somehow sacrosanct and therefore demands 'covered heads'. Whichever it is, how much better it would be if women and men felt able to 'slip in' to a gospel meeting as if the hall were a home from home, without there being any regulations about dress to comply with. If (a) is the reason, the authorities fail to distinguish between the gathering together of the members of a local church 'in assembly' (1 Cor. 11:18 JND) — though even then there is no agreement about the necessity for general veiling — and its members 'standing up' with the preacher, as did the eleven (Acts 2:14). If the reason is (b), words fail me.

I think the reason must be (c), because if an assembly were to preach the gospel in the open air, it would not I take it be suggested that unconverted females within earshot should have 'covered heads'. The sad fact is that the phenomenon to which Prof. Bruce alludes is only one of the symptoms of a seemingly widespread malady. That malady is, basically, a failure to understand the difference between the old (Mosaic) covenant and the new covenant. The apostle Paul wrote of able ministers of the new covenant (2 Cor. 3:6). Few of us would qualify for such an accolade. It is otherwise, it would be recognized, not least by the authorities, that always and in everything the spirit should be allowed to prevail over 'the letter'. This would preclude the adoption of Jewish attitudes, with their concern for the niceties of externals in relation not only to dress but to a lot of other matters.

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:
Like Prof. Bruce himself I have a reputation which makes it very improbable that I shall be invited to an assembly where the wearing of hats has become a vexed question, though I have been in some where a carton of mixed headgear was kept in a back room — 'conscience caps' as a mother-in-law called them sarcastically. One of the difficulties he does not mention is that the main pressure for head-covering very often comes from some of the older women. Where I have become involved in these silly questions I have pointed out that if they want to be Scriptural they should ask the women to be veiled (see most modern translations). The immediate result is that they decide to be unscriptural, for

no sophistry can equate a hat with a veil. Should I be so unfortunate as to land up in an assembly, where the question was causing real harm, I should preach on Luke 11:39-44.

Mr. G. E. M. Simmons replies:
I have on occasion been present when ladies were requested to have 'head coverings'; indeed I recall that it was not long ago that such 'instructions' appeared on the advertising for the 'official' Brethren meetings held in London. On a holiday visit to an assembly (where I had been invited to conduct the gospel service) I was once asked if my wife and daughter would like to wear scarves over their heads. (The scarves of various hues were kept in a suitable cardboard box labelled 'Heinz 57 varieties'.) I declined the kind offer, as I was entitled to from the way the question was framed. In our own church it has been the custom for the older sisters to wear hats not only at services but at less formal occasions also. I have no objection to this custom — indeed I quite like it! Incidentally, this hat business is the only way of telling the 'workers' from the 'women' at ladies' meetings and therefore can be useful to a visiting speaker! This custom of the older sisters wearing hats does not affect the younger generation — most of whom don't. Indeed, my wife, who for tactful purposes I must not include in 'the older group' has worn a hat so as not to offend others — but equally will refuse to wear one (and even remove her own) if we have a hatless friend present who might feel embarrassed to be the 'odd one out'. Many years ago I expounded on 1 Corinthians 11 by pointing out in verse 4 Paul

overthrows the Old Testament teaching that priests came into God's presence with covered heads, and if we concentrate only on the 'women' we can miss the amazing transformation which has taken place in Christ so we men can stand before God hatless. Does 'nature itself' not teach us (a) that cultural differences do exist and must be recognised; hats — no hats is one; and (b) that the local church has a duty to lay down rules for its members, and these will differ according to the place, time, age-range etc. This leads on to (c): these rules must be so framed that whilst protecting members' rights they make it easier for others to join: so that they are a plain gateway to show strangers the way in, rather than a forbidding wall that excludes.

Mr. Robert McGechie replies:
I am sure that the wearing of headgear by ladies attending Gospel services has less to do with a desire to be obedient to the Scriptures, than with the wearing of what has come to be regarded as the correct 'ecclesiastical uniform'. Unfortunately the uniform is recognised only by the in-group, so that anyone whose uniform is different could and probably does feel distinctly awkward before a single hymn is sung, and before a single word is uttered.

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CORRESPONDENCE

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Centenary of the Revised Version

From Mr. G. K. Lowther

Dear Mr. Coad,
Not many of your readers will know that May 17th is the centenary of the **Revised New Testament**. On that day in 1881 the Revised Version (New Testament) was published simultaneously in this country and America. In the latter the longest telegram ever sent (before or since) conveyed the text of the Four Gospels to the West Coast, so that it could be received some days before actual printed copies could be taken overland.

How should we best express our gratitude to God for this accurate translation of His inspired Word? Suggestions would be welcome.
While the RV has been subjected to the bitterest opposition from many quarters (some the least expected) it still remains, together with its American counterpart of 1900, 'the nearest approach to perfect accuracy that it is possible at present to have. It has a weight and authority that do not attach to translations made by one man, however learned and spiritually-minded he may be.' (H. P. Barker in **Marching Orders** Feb. 1930 p.28, of which he was then Editor and later, like **The Witness**, incorporated in **The Harvester**.)

Younger readers should be informed that most of the leading assembly teachers during the last 100 years, used the RV in preference to the KJV, for example John Brown (Greenock), C. F. Hogg, G. C. D. Howley, W. H.

Hunter (of Manchester Ship Canal fame), G. H. Lang, W. R. Lewis (Bath), H. St. John, W. E. Vine, and J. B. Watson; also all the 'Needed Truth' brethren.

Yours sincerely,
G. K. Lowther
50 Westminster Drive
Grimsby
S. Humberside DN34 4TY

Change and the churches

From Mr. A. Overt Locke

Dear Mr. Coad,
I very much enjoyed Mr. Ernest Rowson's letter and I hazard a guess that I have been to the church in the West Country to which he refers. The 'two brethren' obviously did not purge their Northern visitant of all his ecclesiastical rectitude, since he still writes of 'a platform', not a pulpit, and communion, whereas as I believe the notice board of the church in question refers to Holy Communion!

I recall that this village church once had a membership of three. It now numbers fifty or so, but I doubt if ten of that number have what might be termed a 'Brethren background'. Elders have continually to study basic principles, and remember that the Holy Spirit is contemporary. Members in open discussion have questioned most of the practices, and honest appraisal has been very salutary and invigorating. One traditional immigrant remarked that on arrival it had been like getting into a cold bath, a shock to the system, but it did a power of good.

Like all live congregations it has had its deep problems, but where love for the Lord and His people abound, together with honesty and openness, solutions are not far away.

Reflecting on our Northern Brother's thoughts last night as I unbuttoned my gaiters, I

thought how good and pleasant a thing it is, when holy erudition in an Elder is combined with a sense of humour!

Your sincerely,
A. Overt Locke
The Old Hall
Somerton
Somerset TA11 7NG

Women on the Mission Field

From Miss Phyllis Blackburn

Dear Mr. Coad,
I am somewhat surprised that the four replies in the March **Harvester** to Prof. Bruce's question on missionary sisters were all by men — has no sister been brave enough? Considering the matter carefully, and mainly from a personal experience of an impossible-to-fulfil long desire to work thus for the Lord, I would say that whilst not being the paramount urge towards missionary service (this can only come from the Lord) there would be an additional strong attraction for many women in the usually greater freedom on 'the field', as compared with our conventional, somewhat (or in some cases very) restrictive attitudes at home. Quite likely this would affect single sisters more than married ones, for obvious reasons.

Yes — I think Prof. Bruce makes a very telling observation, which might usefully spark off some prayerful thought on the Home Front. Convention can, if we are not careful, cloud the Lord's will!
Yours sincerely,
Phyllis M. Blackburn
10 St. Christopher's Way
Morecambe
LA4 6EE

Two Elections?

From Mr. C. R. Boswood

Dear Mr. Coad,
I trust you will allow a further brief comment.
Some see a significant difference between 'from the

foundation of the world' (**Matt. 25:34**) and 'before the foundation of the world' (**Eph. 1:4**), linking such phrases respectively with God's ways and His purposes.

In connection with Mr. Colin Porteous finding it 'incredible that there should be ultimately more than one chosen people of God' (**Harvester**, March, page 17), I make the following points:-

(a) In **Rev. 5:8-13** there are three concentric circles of response. The Lamb is the subject of each and His work the basis of their blessing, but the varying expressions of praise point, I judge, to different experiences of God's salvation.

(b) The names of the sons of Israel being inscribed on the gates of the holy city certainly suggest that Israel will share in the administration of the world to come but can we really say that **Rev. 21:12** teaches that she will be an integral part of the bride, the Lamb's wife?

(c) In **John 14:2,3** Jesus tells His disciples that there are many rooms in His Father's House and that He was going to prepare a place (not places) for them (adding that He would come again to take them to Himself 'that where I am you may be also', i.e. His place would be theirs (**John 17:24**)). We may link this with **Eph. 3:14** 'the Father from whom every family, etc' (RSV, NEB, JND etc). Why should we not envisage many families? (I like the concluding words of Mr. C. E. Oulton Lee's letter (**Harvester**, January, page 17) in this respect.)

(d) I find the prayer of **John 17** uniquely illuminating. The RSV conveniently divides the chapter into three sections. The first one is very wide — 'all flesh, all whom Thou hast given Him'. The second section treats of those to whom Christ had given the

words He had received, His then disciples, and He asks for their unity. In the third section He prays for those who would believe on Him through the apostle's word, seeking that they may all be one. I see no room in this unity for e.g. Abraham or John the Baptist! Eph. 2:19-22 seems to correspond ('built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets'). How can anyone affirm an all-embracing, fundamental, and eternal unity of all true believers?

Yours sincerely,
Charles R. Boswood
16 Lancaster Avenue
St. Annes-on-Sea
Lancs FY8 1DL

The Calvinist Discussion

From Mr. Colin Porteous
Dear Mr. Coad,
May I be allowed to comment on some of the points raised in Mr. Limb's interesting letter on Calvinism in the December *Harvester*. First of all, if I concluded my previous letter by exclaiming that 'we ought to be preaching and rejoicing in these things instead of arguing', this was, I trust, in no hypocritical spirit, nor to discourage serious discussion, but out of the deep conviction that what we call 'Calvinism', rightly understood, is simply the re-discovery of the Gospel to which we owe our civil and religious liberties. While understanding your correspondent's dissatisfaction with such terms as 'Calvinism' and 'Arminianism', they do have the advantage of reminding us that we were born but yesterday, and that centuries before us, men have been searching into the ultimate implications of the Gospel revelation. It is good to remember — or discover — that ideas have a history, and that there is no new thing under the sun!

Now to deal in order with the points raised by your correspondent:

1) It will not do merely to concede that 'one can speak of predestination'; we must recognise that God actually does so speak, and that in no uncertain terms, and we must resist the temptation to explain away the words of God because of our own preconceived ideas. While we

can rejoice that predestination is to life, we cannot overlook such texts as *1 Pet. 2:8*, however uncomfortable we may find them. We must take God's word as it is, and not as we would like it to be.

2-3) We all agree that God created man free to choose, but we now have to do with mankind after, and not before the Fall, which wrought havoc in man's will. Outside of Christ, man is only free to disobey God (*Rom. 6:20*); Christ came to free us from this servile pseudo-liberty! It would be fatal to underestimate the power of sin in the will of fallen man.

4) Man can — and does — resist God's declarative, revealed will, but not His secret or absolute will. This distinction is perfectly valid and necessary. When the unbelieving Jews delivered the Lord Jesus to be crucified by the hands of wicked men, they resisted God's revealed will, the Law 'Thou shalt not kill', and by so doing unwittingly fulfilled His absolute will for our salvation, *Acts 2:23*. This is a far cry from God's 'saying one thing, and meaning another'! Similarly God says that all men everywhere are to repent and believe, and actually means to give repentance and faith to all whom the Father gave to the Son before the world was.

5) In the glorious proposition that the Lord Jesus came to take away the sins of the whole world, the expression 'the whole world' is liable to two very different interpretations. It could mean every individual human being without exception; this is certainly true of the potential power of the death of Christ. If it were the Father's intention that Christ by His death should take away the sins of every individual human being, then every human being would finally be saved, for the simple reason that the work of Christ is inevitably and gloriously effective in fulfilling all that God has ordained thereby. But we know from the words of Christ that it is not the Father's pleasure to save every individual human being without exception, see *Mt. 11:25-26*. So in spite of the temptation of universalism we

are bound to consider the second and more scriptural possibility of understanding the expression 'the whole world' in this context; namely, an innumerable multitude of people drawn from every nation under the sun, the whole spiritual posterity of Abraham. They it is whom Jesus came to save, does save, and will save eternally, the 'many' mentioned in *Is. 53:11-12* and *Mt. 26:28*. This is the great multitude seen in *Rev. 7:9ff.*, fulfilling God's promise to Abraham that his seed would be as countless as the dust of the earth, the sand of the seashore, and the stars of heaven. The great advantage of this position is that it gives us a Gospel which actually works; Christ did not die merely to give men a possibility of being saved, but actually to save men from their sins, including sins of impenitence and unbelief! — by the outpouring of the Spirit of grace and supplication, that is, of repentance and faith.

Any wishing to pursue this matter further should study John Owen's great work, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, republished by Banner of Truth Trust with an excellent introduction by Jim Packer.

6) As Christ suffered of his own free will, so we come to Christ of our own freed will! I am sorry that Mr. Limb is not convinced that *2 Pet. 3:9* refers to Christians, but this does seem to be confirmed by *v. 15* — '... the patience of our Lord is your salvation' (French Version).

As to Spurgeon's prayer, 'elect some more', this if authentic is an example of that language of the heart found in *Rom. 9:3*. As Pascal said, 'the heart has reasons that reason knows not of'. We need rationality, but not rationalism!

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
Colin Porteous
90 Rue Florimond Laurent
76620 Le Havre
France

READERS' FORUM



continued from page 15

case I was, for ten years, the Crusade Director of a major assembly based evangelistic outreach until an article of mine was published last year in *The Harvester*. ('Readers' Forum', March 1980.) The views I expressed were judged to be unacceptably radical — and, I suppose, outside the 'frozen theology'. All over the evangelical scene there are ex-Brethren who have either been driven out or found the way too straight. But I believe the tide is turning! From different letters I receive and from various contacts I sense a growing hunger for change and a healthy desire to break out. The last paragraph of Mr. Knipe's article will yet come true.

Yours sincerely,

Stanley Linton
27 Selborne Road,
Sidcup,
Kent DA14 4QP

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.

NEWS PAGE



Bible Society

As usual, the current World Language Report of the Bible Society contains some fascinating statistics. Twenty-seven languages had their first piece of Christian Scripture last year. At least one book of the Bible has now been translated into 1710 languages. Over the last ten years parts of the Bible have been produced in 299 new languages. Complete New Testaments were reported for the first time in twenty-four languages. The full Bible has been translated in 275 languages, the New Testament in another 497 languages and at least one complete book of the Bible (such as Luke's Gospel) in an additional 940 languages.

Evangelical Alliance

The Evangelical Alliance has moved from 19 Draycott Place, its Chelsea home for the past ten years, and joined four other Christian societies in purpose-built accommodation at 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT. The Evangelical Missionary Alliance has moved with the EA, but **Crusade** and **Third Way** magazines, while remaining linked with the EA, have moved to the Scripture Union office at 130 City Road, London EC4V 2HJ, where a unit of accommodation exactly fits their needs and brings them into close contact with others in the business of Christian writing, publication and creative arts. The building at Kennington has been re-named Whitefield House after the 18th century evangelist George Whitefield who preached to large crowds in the gardens on the other side of Kennington Park Road. All the new occupants of the

building are likewise concerned with the spread of the gospel. The new phone numbers are: Evangelical Alliance and Evangelical Missionary Alliance 01-582 0228; EA Telephone News 01-582 5432; **Crusade** and **Third Way** (temporarily) 01-250 1966; and Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation 01-582 0408.

Brian Mills, known to **Harvester** readers as the General Secretary of the Counties Evangelistic Work since 1966, is to join the Evangelical Alliance staff as Executive Secretary of the Decade of Evangelism. He will start work on June 1 following a short 'sabbatical' time for prayer and reflection. Aged 44, he and his wife and their three teenage boys live in Wokingham, Berkshire. He went to school in Plymouth (where he was converted at the age of 15) and to a college of commerce at Hull, after which he chose banking as a career, working in Hull, Sheffield and Rotherham. Following three years (1963-1966) at the Central Asian Mission, he moved to the Counties Evangelistic Work as Office Manager. Six months later, he was appointed Secretary. Under his leadership the Counties Evangelistic Work has built up its staff of evangelists from 19 to 32 and has greatly widened its scope and geographical extent. The Decade of Evangelism programme has been reviewed during the past six months and Brian Mills has the task of helping churches and evangelistic agencies to build on the impetus already given under Clifford Hill's ministry, to work together better, and to focus on areas where present evangelism is not being effective.

Evangelism

Way to Life reports that a special feature of the London Crusade scheduled for May 23 to June 14 in Roundwood Park, Willesden, is a morning Bible School conducted by John Phillips of Moody Bible Institute. Many churches in the area are committed to the Crusade and a good proportion of the budget has already been met.

Release Publications of Manchester have produced a new evangelistic leaflet by Eric Delye. 'Earth Invader' is based visually on the space invader video game but contains a clear message about Jesus. More than 25% of its area can be overprinted. Sample copies may be obtained from Release Publications, 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester. Also available: 'This is Jesus' Way' by Peter Maiden and 'Is Jesus Christ Alive?' by lawyer Val Grieve.

In Contact Ministries report much encouragement in the Whitechapel work. The church now has almost 70 members and there is a regular meeting for Bengalis on Sunday afternoon. Prayer is requested for premises for another bookshop/counselling centre, this time in Bradford. Also for a couple who feel the burden of souls, and a concern for Muslims to work there. The Henry Martyn Training Centre has now been opened and is beginning to make its intended contribution to the training of missionaries for work in this country and overseas.

Italy

Following the earthquakes in November 1980, the area affected suffered its worst winter for a long time. Relief

work will be necessary for some considerable time. Four centres have been established by Christian Brethren. Among the work groups involved was one formed by five young men from the Shrewsbury assembly. In addition to the practical work involved, a general programme of visitation and evangelism is being proposed to extend to the end of the summer in the Potenza area. Groups of young people, in particular, will be required to help in distributing a Gospel or New Testament to everyone in the 21 towns immediately around Potenza during the period July 4 to September 13.

Literature

Marshall Morgan & Scott Publications Ltd. (which includes Samuel Bagster & Sons, Oliphants and Pilgrim Records) has a long tradition in Christian publishing and recording. For some time it has formed part of the Pentos conglomerate, which has not been altogether pleased with the recent performance of its extensive bookselling and publishing enterprises. Now a consortium of Christian businessmen has bought MM&S for £600,000. A full publishing programme for books and records is planned.

Best Christian Bookseller of the Year, according to a vote taken at the Christian Booksellers Convention in Blackpool, are Pickering & Inglis, whose Glasgow bookstore was voted 'Best Christian Bookseller of the Year' by religious publishers. The award was based on qualities of customer service, range of stock, layout/display and salesmanship. On the same occasion, booksellers voted Kingsway, the Christian Publisher of the Year.

A new Indian publishing company was launched in February 1981. Select Books is managed by representatives of five Christian publishing houses in India and various evangelical churches and agencies. Its target readership is the 60 million English-speaking readers of India who are the opinion-makers and leaders of the nation and who do not normally have access to books written by Christians. Some of the titles selected for publishing in 1981 are university textbooks and books of scientific and general knowledge. On this financial base, and using the public image created by them, other books will be published directed to human concerns and family and social ethics, including titles with an overt Christian message. Chairman of the board of this non-profit making company is Bruce Nicholls, Editor of the World Evangelical Fellowship's **Evangelical Review of Theology**.

London City Mission

Speaking at a meeting arranged on behalf of the Mission, Dr. Brian MaWhinney said that there were a number of interests common to both the Mission and the Palace of Westminster. Parliament spent its time considering international relations — in strategic places in London the Mission daily met people from all over the world and presented to them the message of Jesus Christ which is capable of producing better international relations than any government. In Parliament great stress is laid upon the family — the Mission ministers at first hand to families in need. But while Parliament concerned itself with temporal issues, the Mission had an eternal and spiritual concern.

Money

Christian Stewardship is dealt with in an 8-page pamphlet available from Macedonian Trust. Biblical principles are reviewed and Christians are shown how they can increase their giving by retaining control over the ultimate destination of some, at least, of the income tax they have paid. Copies are available from 1 Frenchgate Close,

Hampden Park, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN22 9EX (postage on up to three copies is 11 ½p and pro rata thereafter).

Physically Handicapped People

Christian homes for the physically handicapped are a concern of Ronald Albon. He put advertisements in five Christian magazines including **The Harvester** and contacted about 50 local churches. At a subsequent meeting of 14 Christians it was decided to establish a Christian home for physically handicapped people in Havering, Essex or the surrounding area. A sum of £100,000 is set as the first target to get this project going. Ron Albon is a member of the Evangelical Free Church at Romford, Essex, and the project is inter-denominational. Donations, offers of help, and requests for the periodical prayer letter should be sent to him at 58 Purbeck Road, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 1NA (tel: Hornchurch 43169).

Radio

A day of prayer for Christian radio will take place on Sunday, May 31. A prayer cassette is available on free loan from the Evangelical Missionary Alliance. It includes a round table discussion among Christian broadcasters to brief a prayer group. This is followed by shorter items designed for use before a period of intercession during a church service. Sheets of prayer information are also available free, giving further details of missionary radio work around the world and the fields to which it is directed. Reference is also made in this prayer material to Christians working in local and network radio in Britain. Both are available from the EMA Radio Committee, c/o Trans World Radio, 175 Tower Bridge Road, London, SE1 2AS.

Half a century of Christian radio. International religious broadcasting began fifty years ago with station HCJB (standing in English and Spanish for 'Heralding Christ Jesus' Blessings') in Quito, Ecuador. Its founders said in 1931 that they were 'building

highways in the skyways for the coming of the King'. At the end of the second world war there were still only two missionary radio stations but today twenty evangelical organisations operate 130 transmitters around the world. There are four major forces in gospel broadcasting today: The World Radio Missionary Fellowship operates HCJB from Quito and broadcasts in fifteen languages to the Soviet Union, Europe and South America. HCJB receives about a quarter-of-a-million letters a year from listeners all over the world — many of them requesting Bible study materials. The Far East Broadcasting Company, which began broadcasting from the Philippines in 1948, now has the potential to reach half the world's four-billion people. Every day FEBC's thirty stations broadcast three-hundred programme hours in over seventy languages to Asia, China, Japan and Russia. The independent, British-financed Far East Broadcasting Association established broadcasting facilities in the Seychelles ten years ago and with a staff of 140 missionaries and national staff broadcast indigenous programming for the Indian sub-continent, the Middle East and East and Southern Africa. Trans World Radio started in Tangier, Morocco in 1954 with one war surplus 2500 watt transmitter broadcasting to Spain. Today, in 83 languages, its transmitters circle the globe with a total of five-million watts of power from stations in Monte Carlo, Bonaire, Cyprus, Swaziland, Guam and Sri Lanka. Africa's oldest missionary radio station ELWA has been broadcasting from Monrovia, Liberia since 1954. It has seven transmitters beamed to western, central and northern Africa in almost fifty languages. Operated by the Sudan Interior Mission ELWA has contributed to the recent upsurge of Christianity in Africa. What is the future of Christian radio? The medium is still relatively new and we are only just beginning to grapple with its unique potential. Some Christian producers are waking to the realisation that they have offered the gospel

in old-fashioned dress, creating an artificial barrier between themselves and the listener. The traditional formats and 'jargon' words are less and less effective in the secular place of today. In practice, the evangelical broadcaster has frequently succeeded in making the message dull and unattractive and has failed to relate to the person to whom he is talking. Communications is the fastest growing industry today and experts predict that orbiting satellites will soon replace earth-based transmitters. The availability of this medium for mass communications is immensely challenging because Christians now have the capability of sharing their faith with ninety per cent of the world's population.

Number two in language coverage is Trans World Radio. Combining all languages carried, Radio Moscow comes first with 72 and Trans World Radio with 69 languages. A secular survey comments: 'It is clear that the airways are dominated by two major concerns, politics and Christian evangelism, and the evangelical missionaries . . . can compete on equal terms with the world's major political voices.'

Relief Work

Tear Fund has sent blankets, food and medicines worth about £5,000 to refugees in Honduras. This aid will help some 20,000 refugees who fled from El Salvador after the recent internal strife. Tear Fund workers were already in Honduras helping refugees from Nicaragua. Now they plan to help the people from El Salvador — many of whom are without shelter. Tear Fund is also looking into the possibility of sending money to help people made homeless in El Salvador.

Scripture Union

A 'Spring into Life' outreach in Nuneaton, Brighton, Hull, March (Cambridgeshire) and Torbay has broken new ground in schools and churches. The Footprints Theatre Company has used sketches which are in effect parables with humour interspersed with brief

interview-testimonies with members of the group. At Nuneaton they performed in the local Arts Centre.

Sunday Football

It is not obscure or intolerant to oppose the recent tendency to extend professional football to Sundays. Surveys have shown that the majority of people do not want professional football on a Sunday and it would of course mean that many people would have to work who have previously valued a free day — police, groundsmen, transport workers and (naturally) the players themselves. Inevitably, family life would suffer.

The Lord's Day Observance Society has written to all 92 league clubs, also to the Football League and the Football Association.

There is a certain irony about the fact that one of the main instigators of the move is Fulham Football Club who at the beginning of the season began featuring Rugby League matches on Sunday. Much opposition was shown by the local residents and at a residents meeting attended by 386 people only 9 voted in favour of the new arrangement. Who, it has been asked, has given permission for this innovation? The ground is not owned by the football club. Nor does the responsibility rest with the local authority. It is — of all people — the Church Commissioners who have helpfully granted Fulham permission to desecrate the Lord's Day. Letters would reach the Commissioners if addressed to Church House, Westminster, SW1, but so far

representations by the local authority and the Lord's Day Observance Society have not succeeded in making them alter their policy. The Football League is to consider the whole question again in June.

West Sussex Good News Camps

David and Wendy Iliffe have given 21 years of devoted service to West Sussex Camps. A younger team is accepting responsibility for the work from 1982 onwards, which will leave David free to give more time to training children's evangelists and teachers. Accordingly, a celebration weekend has been organised for August 21-23, 1983, at Church Norton camp at Selsey, Sussex. Children are welcome at this reunion. Accommodation will be either under canvas or in caravans for those bringing their own, but there is a possibility of limited accommodation being available in the homes of local Christians. Some meals will be provided by those requiring them. A modest charge of about £5 will be made, simply to defray costs. For details contact John Riddell, Keyfox Farm, Kirdford Road, Petworth, West Sussex.

Student Work

Missionary recruitment has been boosted by a series of three missionary tours organised by the EMA and the UCCF. As missionaries visited colleges and universities, so students became aware of the need for action and prayer. The number of opportunities abroad for short term service has mushroomed. But few students think beyond the possibility of serving God for a

couple of years. The tours have led some Christian students to take more seriously the need for long-term commitment.

Massive opportunities in Africa

are reported by Christians working amongst students. In some countries half the population is under the age of 20. Students graduating from university will be determining policies in their own countries after 10-15 years. As believers, they could deal a serious blow at social injustice and corruption in years ahead. It is estimated that there are over 160 million professing Christians in Africa today compared with 9 million in 1900. The number of staff workers among students in English-speaking Africa has risen from 5 in 1970 to 22 in 1980. Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa each have at least one staff worker while evangelical student witnesses are found in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Malawi, Botswana and Lesotho. Angola and Mozambique are Portuguese-speaking and as yet have no evangelical student witness so far as is known. Both governments are Marxist and may not be sympathetic to such a student movement. The largest member movement is found in Nigeria with more than 100 groups and a membership exceeding 15,000. Prayer is requested for more travelling secretaries and more financial support to facilitate communication. Also that graduates may be actively involved in the life of local churches and may continue to provide prayer and

financial backing (also staff) for the student movements.

Wales

A new Christian hotel and conference centre has been established at Tywyn on the North West coast of Wales by Glyn Morgan. The 34-bedroom hotel is on the seafront and it is intended to use it throughout the year, providing senior citizens' holidays in spring and autumn, all-age holidays through the summer months and conferences, house parties, and retreats throughout the winter. Every Saturday from May to October coaches will run from Bristol, Newport, Cardiff and towns throughout South Wales (with a rail/coach link-up) direct to the hotel at Tywyn. It is planned to open the hotel in May. Throughout June and during September there will be holidays for senior citizens. For details of the Glanmor Christian Hotel, Tywyn, write to All-Age Christian Ministries, 3 Gibbs Road, Newport, Gwent, NP7 8AR.

Home Calls

Miss Jessie Fellowes, on February 13, 1981, aged 95. Born into a Christian home and saved when very young, she spent some time in Bournemouth in her early years (Drummond Hall) before becoming a foundation member (1911) of St. John Street Chapel in Godalming. For many years she taught in the Sunday School although attendance meant a four-mile walk three times every Sunday for herself, with her parents and two sisters. She was deaf and retiring by

continued overleaf

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nature but loved to speak of the Lord and his work. She welcomed believers to her home and both prayed for and gave practical support to missionary causes such as Echoes of Service, Africa Inland Mission, the Messianic Testimony and the Scripture Gift Mission. Throughout her adult life she saved and knitted for missionaries and their families.

Sidney Hodgson on February 17, 1981, aged 71. Converted under the ministry of Stephen Olford 40 years ago and in fellowship at Beeches Evangelical Church, Birmingham, he returned in 1975 to his native Carlisle on retiring from work. For the last two years deteriorating health restricted his attending meetings at Hebron Hall. The suffering he patiently bore is over but prayer is requested for his widow.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, on March 1, aged 81. Born in Cardiff, 'The Doctor', as he later came to be known, grew up in the Cardiganshire village of Llangeitho. The traditional Calvinistic Methodist concern for doctrinal soundness and

personal commitment characterised his ministry throughout his life. And he continued to preach in Welsh. When he was 27, he gave up the prospect of a distinguished medical career to become a minister in Port Talbot. Eleven years later, in 1938, he became associate minister at Westminster chapel with Dr. Campbell Morgan. He continued here as pastor from 1943 to 1970. He was at times a controversial figure. A staunch supporter of the IVF (now the UCCF) he nevertheless aligned himself in later years with narrower and even restrictive elements in evangelicalism. Yet the views that he came to hold concerning the baptism of the Spirit were not at all typical of the Reformed party with which he was identified. Martyn Lloyd-Jones was known above all as a preacher. Passionate, logical, doctrinal, practical, his sermons lasted upwards of 45 minutes and might cover no more than a single verse. But he was a pastor too and thousands benefited from his counsel and support. No wonder Westminster Chapel

was full Sunday after Sunday. (Although one may regret that many who travelled in from the suburbs to sit there did so at the expense of witness and fellowship nearer home.) At the memorial service held there, the congregation was too large to be accommodated in the chapel itself. In retirement he continued his ministry of writing and speaking and as a counsellor. Few Christian leaders have commanded such respect. None has done more to commend and exemplify the power of expository preaching to convert unbelievers and build up the church. His wife, Bethan, survives him as do his two daughters, one of whom, Elizabeth, is married to Sir Fred Catherwood.

Leslie William Slark in January 1981, aged 77. Born in Catford, Leslie Slark moved to Sidcup on his marriage. There he was a responsible elder for over forty years. In addition to his ministry of pastoral care, he spent much time in South London assemblies preaching and teaching. A chartered accountant and chartered secretary, he held over twenty directorships in the Gardner Group and in Trust House Forte. Vice-Chairman of Luncheon Vouchers, he was also deeply involved in setting up Safeway Food Stores in this country. The catering industry was his business life and many committees benefited from his expertise. He also devoted himself to a wide range of Christian service and was involved with the Stewards Company, John Laing Trust, London Missionary Meetings, Bloomsbury Meetings, Retired Missionary Aid Fund and Scripture Gift Mission, all of whom benefited from his vast experience of Christian and business affairs. Many younger men were greatly encouraged by him. He was blessed with great administrative gifts as well as the ability to deal with and understand people. As husband, father and grandfather, he was always caring and loving. When 18 years ago Parkinsons Disease was diagnosed he prayed for the strength to endure and this was graciously given to him. His life and witness recall

the words of Micah: '... what does the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?'

Press Day, Monday, March 30 for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.)

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund:

Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during March amounted to £4,803.95.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund for March amounted to £15,045.81.

NEW ADDRESS

North Shields:

The Assembly formerly meeting in Waterville Road now meets in the Gospel Hall, Coach Lane, North Shields just a few minutes walk from the old Hall. Correspondence to W. Archbold, 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP.

Dr. A. Hanton:

has moved to 2 Arlington Court, Arlington Avenue, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5HR. Tel: 0926 312950.

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.

Blackburn, A. G.:

Trowbridge 2-3; Tavistock 7; Beer 10; Plymouth 12; Nailsea 17; Exmouth 19-21; Torquay 24; Plymouth 31.

Burnham, A. E. J.:

Warsash, Hants. 3; Swanwick 7, 14; Maidenhead 10; Fareham 20; Fleet 24; Fareham 26; Guildford 31.

Campbell, A.:

Falmouth 1-6; Bridgwater, Hill House; 8-11; St. Ives 17; Plymouth 19; France and Spain 20-31.

Clifford, D. L.:

St. Leonards 5; Copenhagen 8; Torshavn, Faroe Is. 10-14; Gotu, Faroe Is. 15-18; Torshavn 19-21; Klaksvik, Faroe Is. 22-25; Bournemouth 26; Poulner 31.

Gillham, S.:

Southampton 3; Chickerell 7, 14, 21; Wyke Regis 8; Dorset/Somerset CW Meeting 9; Ebenezer Hall, Weymouth 10; Wyke Regis 11; Wallisdowne 12; Yeovil 17; Swanage 19; Bethany Hall, Weymouth 31.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Stonebridge Park, Middx. 3; New Catton, Norwich 12; Sunbury Court, Middx. 18-21; Poringlnd Christian Caravan Rally, Norfolk 22-27.

Iliffe, D. J.:

Littlehampton 3; London 4-6; Littlehampton 8-10; Bognor Regis 13; London 14; Barnstaple 16-19; Way to Life Crusade, London 21-31.

Lowther, G. K.:

Dagenham 3; Bow (E3) 4; Rochester 5; Crouch End (N8) 5, 12; Sidcup 6, 13, 20; Hampstead (NW3) 7, 14; Fleet 10; Forest Gate 11, 21; Broomfield Road, Chelmsford 11; Hornchurch 17, 18; Plaistow (E13) 19, 20; Grimsby & Humberside 22-31.

Phillips, C.:

Bexhill 2; Queen Edith, Cambridge 3; Llanfairfechan (Missionary) 6-14; Ingrebourne, Hornchurch 16; Roe Green, Kingsbury 17; Folkstone Road, Walthamstow 17; Maidenhead 19; South Ealing 21; Hounslow 24; Guildford 25.

Short, S. S.:

Bexhill 2, 3; Eastbourne 5, 7;

St. Leonards-on-Sea 6; Braunton, Devon 10-15; Cheddar 17; Orkney Islands 22-31.

Tatford, F. A.:

Toronto 1-10; Halifax (Nova Scotia) 11-26; Troon 29-31.

Thurston, A.:

Dartmoor 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Kingsbridge 3, 12, 26; Strete 4, 11, 18, 24, 25; Plymouth (Ladies Cfce) 6; Chillington 6, 13, 20, 27; Truro 10; Coleford 15/17; Newton Abbot 5, 16; Okehampton 19; Dartmouth 3.

PERSONAL

Grimsby:

As the direct result of Sunday School and Bible Class ministry, Mr. G. K. Lowther reports that seven young believers were baptized at Wellowgate Chapel, Grimsby, on March 22. Most of them have no encouragement at home and greatly need prayer support.

Redcar:

Mr. G. C. Tryon reports that in March an excellent mission with over 170 children was held in Redcar, Yorkshire.

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:

Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, Saturday, June 6 at 7 p.m. Conversational Bible Readings. Subject: Upper Room Ministry, John ch. 16. Speaker: Mr. R. V. Court (Isle of Wight).

Bournemouth:

Bournemouth & District

Annual Convention, 5-7 May, Strouden Park Chapel, Woodbury Avenue, Strouden Park, Bournemouth. Speakers: Mr. Geoffrey Bull (Glasgow) and Mr. Peter Cousins (Exeter). Morning Bible Readings 10.45 a.m.-12 noon. 'The Prayer Life of our Lord' (G. Bull). Evening Sessions 7.30-9 p.m. 'The Message of Malachi' (G. Bull), 'Questions People Ask' (P. Cousins). Wednesday Afternoon 3.30-4.30 p.m. 'Trial and Temptations' (P. Cousins). Brochure from V. G. Joseph, 13 Bankside Road, West Way, Bournemouth.

Chesham:

Gospel Hall, Station Road, May 9. Annual Conference 3 & 6 p.m. Bros. Geoffrey Bull & Malcolm Jones.

Croxley Green:

Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Meeting, May 30 at 7 p.m. Speaker: S. Emery.

Croydon:

Cranmer Hall, Sylverdale Road. Annual Conference, May 16, 4 & 6 p.m. Speakers: P. G. Boyes (FEBA) and B. C. Holmes (Nottingham).

East Kilbride:

To mark their 25th anniversary, the church assembling at Threshold Hall, East Kilbride, will hold a Conference on Saturday, May 30, at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: G. Bull (Milngavie), D. Newell (Glasgow), A. Prentice (Wishaw).

Edinburgh:

Brunsfeld Evangelical Church Annual Conference on Saturday, May 2, at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Mr. H. Murphy (Belfast), Dr. A. Noble (Falkirk) and Mr. A. Frame (Eaglesham). Mr. Hedley Murphy will continue in ministry until Sunday (May 10), each evening at 7.30 p.m. (Friday excepted). Sundays, after church rallies at 8.15.

Frinton-on-Sea:
The Annual Thanksgiving Meeting of the Ernest Luff Homes will be held on Wednesday 17 June at 3 p.m. at the Frinton Free Church. Guest Speaker: Rev. Edgar W. Wright, MA, BD.

Lingfield, Surrey:
Mission Hall, High Street. Annual Conference, May 9 at 6 p.m. Speaker: Mr. W. Grunbaum (Tunbridge Wells). Subject: The Victorious Church in Eastern Europe.

Littleport, Cambs.:
Gospel Hall, City Road. Meeting June 6 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Mr. G. K. Lowther.

London, W.10:
Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane, May 30 at 7 p.m. Speaker: D. Hinton. Subject: Christ in the Epistles.

Luton:
Onslow Road Gospel Hall. Monthly Bible Readings. May 16, 6.30-8.30 p.m. Studies in the Gospel of Luke. Speaker: Mr. J. Riddle (Cheshunt). Subject: Pillars of Triumph in the Manhood of our Lord: 'Ascension' (Luke 24:50, 53 & Acts 1:6-11).

Nuneaton:
Lindley Lodge, Watling Street. June 12-14. Grimsby assembly weekend led by Mr.

Kingsley Melling. Details from Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate, Grimsby. Please note the date: **June 12-14** and **not** as previously announced.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Potters Bar:
Counties Evangelistic Work, Herts & North London Rally, Saturday May 9 at 6.30 p.m. (singing from 6.15) at Potters Bar United Reformed Church, Darkes Lane, Potters Bar. Reports from Reg Whithern, Barry Leete (Counties Evangelists) and Michael Lomas (Docks Missioner of Tilbury).

Southampton:
Southern Counties Ladies' Bible Conference, Bitterne Gospel Hall, Commercial Street. May 9 at 3-7 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. D. Harman and Dr. B. D. Holt, with Mrs. M. Carrick & Mrs. M. Dawson for a question panel.

Tolworth, Surbiton:
Pyne Road Church. Annual Meeting May 16, 6-8 p.m. (Refreshments midway.) Speaker: Mr. W. E. Grunbaum. Subject: The Victorious Church in Eastern Europe (illustrated).

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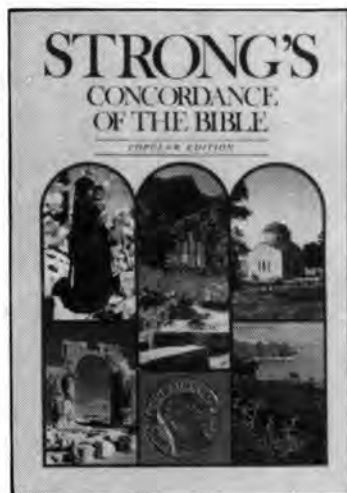
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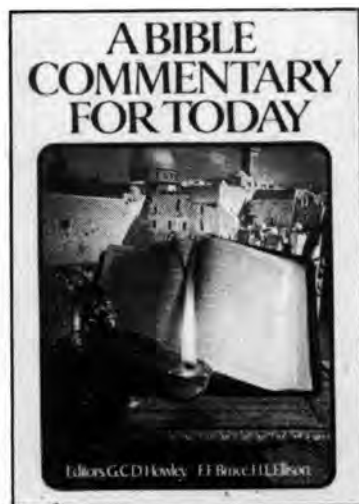
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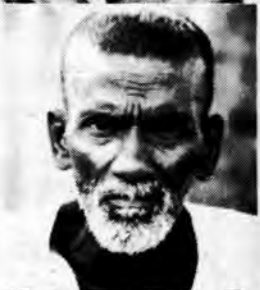
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June 1981 Volume LX No 6 Price 40p
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THE DIVIDING WALL

'He is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility'. So Paul could write to the Ephesians, from the assurance of a transforming experience which before his eyes had united Gentile with Jew 'in one body through the cross'; and the former Pharisee, who knew all about the bitterness of bigotry, and racial hatred, never ceased to marvel at the sheer wonder of it.

On Saturday 11th April, I was present at the Jubilee Thanksgiving of The Gospel Hall, Peckham, in south London: one of those churches which has in the past twenty years united in fellowship believers from black and white communities. It was a time of happy rejoicing, and the proceedings were chaired for part of the time by a white elder, for the remainder by a black elder. Not until the next morning did I learn that, only two miles away as the crow flies, Brixton had that same evening exploded into violent riot of black youth against police.

The latest issue of **Religion in Communist Lands**, the Journal of Keston College, carries an article by the Rev. Michael Bourdeaux entitled 'The Black Quinquennium'. Only now is the West beginning to realise the terrible toll taken of the churches in Russia during the period from 1959 to 1964 when Krushchev (in other matters seen as a liberaliser) was in power: our readers should obtain a copy of the journal that they might understand better the plight of brothers and sisters in Christ (Keston College, Heathfield Road, Keston, Kent BR2 6BA, £2.25).

And meanwhile, in Northern Ireland, fires which we had hoped were beginning to die down, have blazed again. The unhappy province is as far from a resolution of its conflicts as ever, so far as the man in the street can see — and religion, the Christian religion, is used (despite the earnest efforts of many Christian leaders) to exacerbate the conflict.

We sought for peace — and instead, war. Where human hatred flourishes, those dividing walls rise in their strength. It is only Christ, in our hearts, Who can break them down. But **does** He give peace — even there?

THE CHRISTIAN WORKAHOLIC

John A. H. Dempster

Mr. Dempster, a M.A. of Glasgow University, has spent his career, since a post-graduate course at Strathclyde, in librarianship, and for a period with the Scottish Scripture Union. He is currently engaged in the School Library Service in Scotland, and attends Ebenezer Hall, Airdrie.

DIAGNOSIS

Are you trying to justify yourself?

I don't mean in terms of your relationship with God, because we all know as Christians that **that** kind of justification is by faith in Jesus, not by what we do. But are you trying to justify yourself? To justify your existence here on earth? To try and ensure through achieving much that your life as a Christian is worthwhile?

'Workaholism' is a word coined by popular psychology to describe the condition of a person who is never contented if he is not active, working, doing things. Dr. Stephen Katz, psychiatrist at New York's Roosevelt Hospital says that workaholics 'tend always to be justifying themselves, and measure everything in terms of their achievement and success.'*

This workaholic attitude pervades many Christian lives today. The feeling that our lives are rather second-rate if we're not burning the candle at both ends in Christian activity.

Now it is true that God does expect us to accomplish much for Him. He does require a certain kind of life-style from His children. For to Him, love is never separated from action, and a love that never finds expression in what we do is not worthy of the name. But we run into danger when we begin to focus our attention so constantly on the fruit we're trying to bear that we forget to water the soil and fertilize the roots: when we focus on actions exclusively, and lose sight of the state of spiritual well-being which produces those actions.

Dr. Katz is of the opinion that workaholics are 'people who, as children, were rewarded for what they did rather than for what they were.' The Christian workaholic seems to believe subconsciously that God will favour him for what he does rather than

for what, as one of God's children, he is.

This wrong emphasis can be harmful in our estimation of our own lives, and the lives of fellow-Christians.

The Christian workaholic's attitude to his own life
He tends to justify his life

a) In terms of what he accomplishes and does. Spiritual 'results' are not always easy to quantify: thus it is that material results are often counted as a barometer of the more elusive spiritual ones. Hence we, if there's anything of the workaholic in us, feel that our day has been well spent if we have learned X number of Bible verses, witnessed to X number of people, sold X number of Christian books. It is a very small step from this to the point where the spiritual goal drops out of sight altogether, and we are going all out to talk to more people, learn more verses, sell more books simply so that we can feel we've had a worthwhile day.

b) The Christian workaholic also justifies his life in terms of the position he attains. Where the non-Christian indulges in social climbing, the Christian longs for the positions in the church or in Christian organisations which he sees as belonging to those who have accomplished much. He feels that his Christian life will become truly worthwhile if only . . . he can become a lay preacher, get on to the deacons' court, join the fabric committee. There are two reasons for this desire:

1. Because he measures effectiveness in terms of things done, the people who outwardly do most for the Lord have his admiration, and he wants to be among them. At the drop of a hat, he will enter the temple with the rich, money-bag laden men, not giving a second glance to the widow with her mite who is standing by talking to Jesus.

2. Because the position he seeks will give him the opportunity to do more — take more services, visit more people, organise more fêtes to pay for the steeple renovation.

This is, of course, a caricature of the Christian workaholic, but we must confess that there is something of him in all of us. We should pause amid this helter-

*Quoted in a **New York Times** article by Kitty Hanson, syndicated in the **Glasgow Herald** for May 10th, 1978.

skelter of self-justifying activity, and think.

a) It is impossible to make our lives worthwhile by what we do. Because, no matter how much we do, it will always be precious little, negated by the wrong we still find ourselves doing.

b) Because our motivation is all wrong, all the Christian activities we're engaged in may, in fact, be worth very little in spiritual terms. In all things it's true that it's better to do a little well than much indifferently. It is better to build a modest house of enduring gold on the foundation of our faith than a palace of stubble.

c) In concentrating so much on relentless activity, we tend to be missing out on the pleasures God intended in life.

1. There is the pleasure of all that He has created, and of the products of all the creative gifts that He has given to men — great music, great painting, great writing. We miss out on these for two reasons. First, we are so caught up in 'accomplishing' that we have literally no time to enjoy them. Second, because we put such great stress on productivity and accomplishment, we tend to be suspicious of anything that has no obvious purpose. Outwardly, music, art, nature achieve little. But it is our loss as Christians if we are so bound by utilitarian principles as to have no room for the things that God has made and given. Surely they are intrinsically valuable by the very fact of the greatness of their Maker and Giver.

2. There are the pleasures of relationships. Dr. Katz is summarised as saying that the workaholic 'may estrange himself from his family and social relationships'. To be constantly engaged in activity is to put a restraint on the growth of deep relationships. Some psychiatrists feel that 'workaholics are really afraid to get too close to people and use work as a way of keeping an emotional distance between themselves and others.'

I'm sure this has a spiritual validity. We wrap ourselves up in activity for the Lord, and don't take the time to be intimate with Christian brothers and sisters. Perhaps, even more importantly, we're so busy that we've no time to be intimate with the Lord Who says 'Be still and know that I am God' (*Psalms 46:10*).

The Christian workaholic's attitude to the lives of others

Having the attitude of the Christian workaholic makes us evaluate other people's lives in the same terms as we do our own.

a) Our estimate of people comes to be based on what they can be seen to do. We think much of people who are always rushing around taking meetings, handing out tracts, organising campaigns. We think very little of the old man in the corner pew, even though he shuffles into that corner pew for every service. After all, he hasn't much money and he's not very bright, what can he do? What can he

do! If we could only evaluate the position in spiritual terms, how different it might appear! We might find that the brother-on-the-move's activity was empty, and rushed, and wrongly-motivated, regarding people as numbers and not individuals, while the old man in church through constant prayer and deep concern displayed an effective involvement with others.

b) Our estimate of people is based, or tends to be based, on what position within the Church or within Christian work they've reached. We tend to think so much more of someone who leaves his job and goes to work for a Christian organisation (perhaps at considerable financial loss) than the person who quietly and effectively stays put. We fail to realise that each may be being equally effective because they are where God wants them to be.

Further, we have a natural tendency to think more of leaders in Christian work than of followers. Surely this is not right. Each individual is being effective as he fulfils the possibilities he has been given, if in leading, then in leading well, if in following, then in following faithfully.

If we value ourselves in terms of what we do, rather than what we are, no wonder we attempt to evaluate others in the same light. The danger is that we may arrive at the wrong valuation. How awful to come to the end of a long, busy life, and realise that what we thought was immensely valuable is in fact worth very little, as our gold turns to stubble before our eyes.

TOWARDS A CURE

What can be done, then, having identified the problem, to cure our tendency towards Christian workaholicism? Dr. Katz sees little hope of finding a cure for the workaholic in secular life: but for the Christian there is surely more hope.

If we could only realise how petty and futile all our anxious toil is when set side-by-side with the smooth-working omnipotence of God in His universe, if we could only have the uplift of seeing ourselves and our lives as God sees them, we would realise that we don't need to slave away to persuade Him to be gracious. We need to remember first that we are valuable to Him; and secondly that He has laid down certain rules which, if followed, render a life worthwhile.

Our lives — valuable to God

One of the greatest truths that can ever dawn upon us is the truth of our value to God. Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, demonstrates the value to God of the birds of the air (*Matthew 6:26*), and the lilies of the field. They are valuable to God because He made them, and because they are valuable to Him He gives them the provision they require. Jesus reassures us (*v.26*) that we are **more** valuable than these. And if God provides for them, will He not also provide for us? Of course He will. Why then, let's not



Acknowledgement: John Topham Picture Library

be anxious about food and provision. God will give us all we need if we put His kingdom first. May we be preserved from thinking that we need to labour hard to win God's favour. Consider the following points about our value to God:

a) We are valuable to God not because of anything we have done or could do, but rather **in spite** of what we have done, in spite of our inability to improve ourselves. We can understand that His creation in general should be valuable to Him — He made it and it has not rebelled against Him: but we might expect that in the case of human beings, the fall would have devalued them in His sight. In spite of our rebellious nature, He values us.

b) Why? Why does He value us? Wherein lies our intrinsic value to Him?

First, we are valuable because He made us. We appreciate in a general sense that God created the human race. We need to let it dawn upon us as indi-

viduals that God made **us**. God made **me**. A work of art for sale in an auction room is, if it is by a famous artist, immensely valuable simply because of who painted it. The reputation of the artist guarantees the value and quality of the painting. Thus we are valuable, because of the God Who made us.

Secondly, we are valuable because He loves us. Our human way of thinking is to love something because it is valuable, but God's ways are different. If an important person takes a liking to a certain item of dress, everyone wants one. It is seen as being a valuable thing to have because it is valued by someone whose views are respected. In a much deeper sense, God's love for us makes us valuable.

c) How valuable are we to God? We get an indication of this in the lengths that He was prepared to go on our behalf. Jesus — God the Son — died for us on the Cross. It is the greatest price conceivable in the universe. This is the measure of His enormous

love to us, and our enormous value to Him.

d) All human beings are equally valuable to God. All our airs and graces and workaholicism don't affect or influence Him at all. If He had not loved us, then we would have been lost. It has been the turning point in the lives of many down-and-outs to realise that, though society has rejected them, yet there is someone who loves them. And if we have lost sight of the fact that Jesus loves us, perhaps it's because we're too full of ourselves, and have forgotten that we too are in ourselves down and out, completely dependent for everything upon the love of God. We need to stop rushing around, humbly confess that in ourselves we can do nothing, and seek forgiveness from Jesus.

And since He values us all equally, let's make sure that our estimation of our Christian brothers is equal.

e) Finally, it is because we are valuable that God tests, refines, and disciplines us: this may mean tough times, but He is in control, and if we gladly submit to His discipline, He will make us more like He wants us to be. So when difficult times come, let us not feel that they are a sign that God has deserted us, but rather look upon them as indicating that He values us, and is treating us as sons.

Therefore, just as salvation is not to be earned by works, in the same way we can't earn value. Salvation is His loving gift to us. Value is His loving estimation of us.

Our lives — worthwhile for God

It is tremendous to meditate on our value. But we'll want to go on from there. The fact that we are valuable to God, should increase our motivation to lead valuable lives for God. Not lives full of bustle which, we suspect, accomplish little, but lives which accomplish much which is eternally worthwhile.

As we aim at this kind of life, the major criterion is that we must turn the spotlight off the deeds themselves, and focus it on the motives behind them. Christian worth consists first in **being**, and only then in **doing**. Of course, what we are will issue forth in what we do — in the right actions. But in the worthwhile life the deeds we do are an outward manifestation of an inward reality. We are acting out of what we are.

But an over-emphasis on the deeds themselves and a neglect of the motives behind them mean that sometimes our deeds do not reflect what we are inwardly. We are acting out the kind of things we think we'd do if we were the kind of Christian we'd like to be. No wonder we feel sometimes a falsity and a hollowness. The workaholic's life is not a happy one. We need prayer here, and a Spirit-inspired revolution in certain areas of our lives.

First, there is the area of **motivation**. The Christian workaholic is motivated by a desire to get on, to do work for God for the sake of doing work for God, to show what an effective Christian he is. The worth-

while Christian life is motivated by a love for God and others, a desire to share the truth of the gospel, a desire to fade into the background behind Christ. The person with **that** kind of motivation is the one through whose life the Holy Spirit can work. Much will be accomplished, and it will be accomplished in joy, not in the legalistic, quota-filling graft of the workaholic.

Secondly, there is the utilisation of resources given to us by God. We've all been given different quantities of resources. Material resources, spiritual resources, talents; just like the men in Jesus' parable who received different amounts of money (*Matthew 25:14-30*). What matters is not what we've been given — that is God's responsibility — but what we do with what we've been given. Do we grumble that so-and-so's been given a much more spectacular gift than we have? Or do we see to it that we use the gifts we've got, and pray for so-and-so into the bargain, remembering that more spectacular talents lay their owners open to greater temptation? How reassuring that it matters not a bit how humble my resources are in human estimation. God has given them to me, and if I use them with the proper motivation, for His glory, just as much will be accomplished as by the most gifted Christian.

Third, there is the recognition of one's position in relation to God. The worthwhile life is the life that is lived in obedience to God, because only what God wants done is worth doing. Therefore, if we want to be fruitful, we must be responsive, listening for God's leading, and obeying it when it comes.

New horizons

If we get this shift of emphasis in our lives, our workaholicism will be well-nigh cured. Our attitude to our own lives will have changed. We'll still be busy, but it won't take the same out of us, and we'll be conscious that we are accomplishing far more. We'll be properly utilising our resources. We'll know a new peace and contentment, because we'll be acting to please God in love where before we were trying to justify ourselves before Him. We'll have time to enjoy God's creation and provision. We'll find it easier to develop deeper relationships with God and with others.

Our attitude to the lives of others will be changed. We will value people as people, all equally, because thus God values them. We will accept them as they are because thus God accepts them. We will evaluate their lives not in terms of how big a display they make, but in terms of their motives, their use of what they've been given by God, their obedience.

One word of warning. Beware in correcting this imbalance of going too far in the other direction, towards the point of saying 'It doesn't matter what you do: it's **being** that counts.' Remember that there's something wrong with what we are if it doesn't produce a life obedient to God's word.

If it wasn't for a Christian in England Sheba wouldn't be at school in India

Sheba's home is Poroor, a large village not far from Madras.

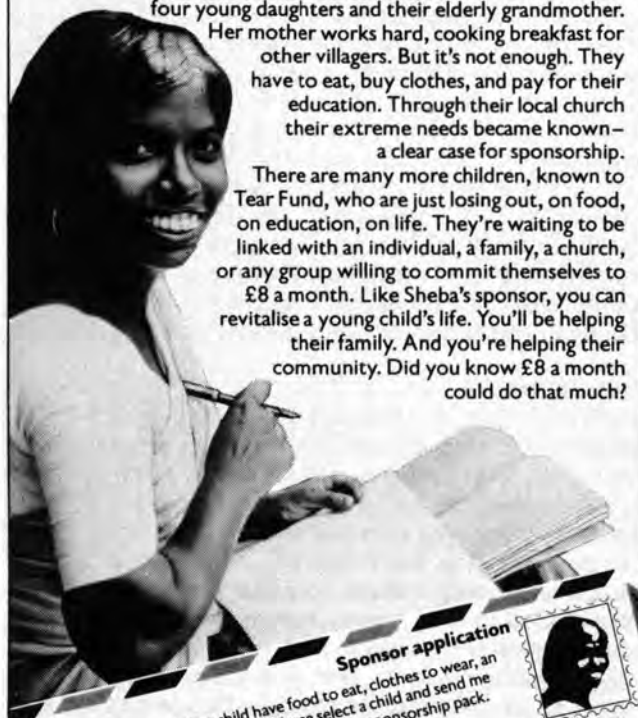
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EXPO-BIBLE

A French Initiative

This article is a transcript of an interview between a member of the French press and evangelist Claude Broux, a France-Mission missionary based in Brittany whose Bible-exhibition ministry takes him all over Northern France. The interview centres on the methods used in maximising the effect of the exhibition, typical responses from visitors, and an estimation of the value of this method of evangelism. Peter Wheeler was involved in the early days of the initiative.

Q. Monsieur Broux, you have just spent two complete months with your Bible exhibition in the Protestant Temple in Houlgate. Why were you so keen to spend an entire summer in one place?

We did not plan it that way! We were originally booked to spend only one month in Houlgate, but when I was asked to stay for a second month, I accepted without hesitation. Why without hesitation? First, as an experiment. I wanted to find out whether a long mission would be more fruitful than one lasting only a few days: this had been the experience of others, who favoured a gospel campaign of a month, or even a year. Second, because I believe that perseverance is biblical. My conscience has often rebuked me for not daring to attempt a prolonged campaign. God calls us to step out in faith. Thirdly, on a practical level, several factors hinted at success: the beach-front church building, the audience of holidaymakers changing almost completely every two to three weeks, the fact that the cost of mounting the exhibition would be more easily absorbed when spread over a longer period of time. And, finally, by staying in a well-known public spot we could rely upon word-of-mouth to do most of our publicity for us.

Q. What exactly does your exhibition look like?

The ExpoBible consists of a series of table-displays and hoardings, which make up a display almost two hundred feet long. (A room, say, 50ft x 30ft is therefore the minimum.) The visitor begins by examining **The Origins of the Bible** (composition, inspiration), and continues by way of the transmission and preservation of **The Text of the Bible**, his interest kept alive by captioned photographs of certain codices and of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Next, he passes by a long display which demonstrates **The Truth of the Bible** by three striking proofs. The next section of the exhibition, **The Diffusion of the Bible** worldwide, never fails to impress the visitor, who continues via a review of twenty centuries of Jewish history to ten hoardings of well-chosen photographs on **The Content of the Bible**. A further table and some glazed display cases present some **antique Bibles** and some **rare Biblical objects**.

Q. What message do you try to convey to your visitors?

A very simple message: the Bible is trustworthy; its author loves us; we should therefore read it, for in its pages we can see God's wonderful plan for our lives. This can be understood in part from the exhibition as a whole, and more particularly from the sixth and final series of tables — **The Message of the Bible** — where a few lines of caption explain clearly the person and work of Our Lord, the plan of salvation and the response which God invites from man.

Q. How do you encourage your visitors to discover this message?

We believe that it is important to greet visitors as they arrive and to make them feel at home. We give a printed Official Guide and a few sentences of explanation at the start of

a visit, and then move aside, explaining that we are available to give further information if required. This creates a good impression, and often leads to deep, fruitful conversations. You see, the ExpoBible is a wonderful opportunity to speak openly about the Bible and its message, for it gives us the excuse to bring these matters quite naturally into the conversation. We also arrange guided tours for groups, in particular for school groups booked in advance. We must convince teachers and headmasters of the value of this!

Q. What supplementary activities do you organise to accompany the exhibition?

There are several short **filmstrip presentations** which are an integral part of the exhibition. One is 'At the end of your visit . . .', another 'In the footsteps of Jesus in Galilee', another 'Archaeological Discoveries', and we have also presented the booklet 'The Four Spiritual Laws' in filmstrip form, which makes for a more striking presentation, especially for those with poor eyesight. But by far the most important supplementary activities to the exhibition are the children's 'Win-a-Bible' competition and the gospel book-stall.

The **children's competition**, which works from table to table on an 'I-spy' basis, increases their concentration and therefore makes their visit that much more interesting. Sometimes their parents join in as well! How many children there are who would only have taken three or four minutes to go round the entire exhibition, yet who, after finding the answers to the first two or three questions, stay there for an hour or more! Those who complete the competition can win a Bible or a New Testament. The organisers of the exhibition receive numerous addresses to follow up, and also have many opportunities to chat with the children when they hand in

their answer-sheets. An optional question about their own personal response often gives a chance for a deep conversation; at the end of the exhibition's stay, there is another good contact at the prizegiving ceremony. Of course, this aspect of the exhibition can be costly, but it makes a most valuable contribution to the total ministry.

The **gospel bookstall** is also an important adjunct to the exhibition since it allows those interested by the display to buy the books that they want on the spot. When they leave the exhibition, therefore, it is with more than a vague feeling of having seen something worthwhile. We also find that long, deep personal conversations can open up when a book is recommended. Obviously, the stallholders should know the books they are selling, be concerned for the spiritual welfare of the visitors, and have an easy and approachable manner. My wife and I are often helped in this ministry by Christians on holiday who find this a worthwhile avenue of service for a few hours each day.

Fact and Faith films, shown non-stop in an adjoining room, add their contribution to the message of the exhibition; as do, obviously, **lectures** given by college professors on subjects which are clearly related to the theme of the exhibition — archaeology and the Bible; science and the Bible; how the Bible came to us, and so on. Since the general tone of the exhibition is serious and well-documented, it is important that any preaching done in its context should be of the same tone; that is why we prefer to organise lectures rather than preach sermons.

A final activity connected with the exhibition would be a simultaneous effort at colportage in the neighbourhood of the exhibition hall.

Q. Surely you don't undertake all these activities on your own?

Obviously, this is team-work, the team being the local church who invite me to help them out for a short time. It is also obvious that if I am invited as a sort of 'miracle man' who can do the work which the church itself doesn't want to do, no lasting result will come! The best results come when my effort is part of an overall programme of witness agreed on by the entire church, and watered with their prayers.

Q. What sort of advertising do you need for the exhibition?

A lot of this can be done by the local church before my arrival. The town centre has to be covered with small posters: there should be one in every shop window. We always try to have a formal opening ceremony to which we invite all the local VIPs, the councillors, religious and military leaders; this is sure to gain coverage in the press and on local radio and TV. A final method is to make sure that there are large posters at the entrance to the exhibition hall itself, and perhaps a banner across the road outside.

Q. And what are the results?

Results vary from place to place, depending upon local conditions and upon the degree of involvement of the local church. In Houlgate, in July and August, we have had crowds of visitors, sometimes too many for the few workers present. In September, the mood changed. Our visitors were fewer in number, less brash, some even crossing themselves as they came into the building! But, because there were fewer of them, we had the time to talk to more of them individually, often using the 'Four Spiritual Laws' filmstrip as a conversation-starter. From mid-July to mid-August we had 1500 visitors, another thousand in the second fortnight of August, and another 350 in the first half of September. The weather seemed to make little or no difference to the number of visitors, but we did notice that more came at weekends and in the evenings.

Q. Amongst all these visitors, were there many who already knew the Bible?

Yes, we had a majority of people who already **owned** a Bible, but I wouldn't say that they **knew** it. Many had no idea what was in it. We were struck also by the number of visitors from the sects, especially Jehovah's Witnesses, and from the charismatic wing of the Roman Catholic church.

Q. How many people did you reach who were not from our church circles?

If we imagine that normal Sunday attendance at the Protestant church

in Houlgate is between 120 and 150, and allow for a change of visitors during the holiday season, we can estimate that at least 90 per cent of our visitors were not from Protestant or evangelical circles.

Q. How many Bibles did you sell?

We sold around 70 Bibles and gave away another 30, either to local VIPs at the opening ceremony or at the children's prizegiving. As far as New Testaments go, fifteen were sold and around 60 given as children's prizes.

Q. And how many other gospel books?

Without counting the Bibles we gave away, we sold more than £1500 worth of books, in these proportions: Bible portions 38%; commentaries and Bible-study books 27%; children's books 18%; books on Biblical history 17%.

Q. Did you have many chances to talk with the visitors?

We always try whenever we can to get into conversation, but on occasions we have let people slip past us, when we have been too tired, or too busy.

Q. Would you say that an activity like the ExpoBible makes it easier to strike up a conversation about spiritual things?

Of course. I am actually convinced that it is better to **avoid** contact at the start of someone's visit, when all that is achieved is an exchange of pleasantries and small-talk; on the other hand, at the end of a visit questions are deeper and the conversation can be easily steered towards the central message which we wish to share. It's absolutely essential that local believers are there to help in this, for it is they who will follow up later. As I have already said, the ExpoBible gives us a wonderfully privileged opportunity to speak about spiritual matters.

Q. Could you give a few typical examples?

Well, I remember a lady who was confused between gospel, Bible, missal and protestant catechism when she looked at the first table,

and asked me all manner of contradictory questions; I stepped back so that the exhibition could speak for itself. By the time she had looked at every table, she knew what the Bible really was, and bought one to read! On the other hand, if a person raises such contradictory questions at the end of his visit, you can be sure that his confusion is deliberate and that you are speaking to a Jehovah's Witness who wants to use your work as a springboard for his own heresies. Generally, I refuse to respond to the bait!

But I could go on with example after example. Perhaps four out of every five Bibles sold are to people who have just discovered what the Bible really is. They ask questions like these:

'Do you have a handbook to help me understand it?'

'I'd like a method to help me read it all the way through.'

'How do you go about reading it without losing the thread?'

Q. Would you say your work is more or less effective than going door-to-door?

It's a long time since I have done much colportage work personally, but I should say that going door-to-door is a very effective method for spreading the gospel, but that it has been brought into disrepute by the sects, and is therefore hard to do these days. On the other hand, the

ExpoBible attracts those who already have a spark of interest and who are struck by the depth and serious quality of our style of presentation. They are already favourably prejudiced towards us, if you like, and their appetite is already awakened. They don't feel trapped as they would if we came knocking on their door, nor do they feel brainwashed as they might in a large scale gospel meeting. All these factors together should encourage us to use the ExpoBible whenever possible; however, there are many assemblies and churches who have never given it a serious thought.

Q. You have been a full-time evangelist for many years. If you had to compare the effectiveness of the different methods of spreading the gospel which you have used personally, which would you choose, and why?

I have already made my choice! And I am even convinced that several other full-time evangelists are out to devote themselves to this style of ministry.

Q. Do you think that such a method is more suitable than others for the French nation?

I don't really know other nationalities apart from French-speaking peoples, and so I can't make a full comparison. But it does seem to me that the French mentality likes to gather in-

formation, documentary evidence, from which it can come to its own conclusions without being influenced by an outsider. Thus, our technique of offering 'information about the Christian faith' and 'about the Bible, the basis of faith' is most appreciated by a Frenchman. But the exhibition on its own will not win souls for the Lord: it is up to us to win them once the exhibition has captured their interest.

The Exhibition is at Vannes from 16-18 June, and at Vendôme from 6-31 July.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

As I read Mrs. Ginnings' account of the Women's World Day of Prayer in our 'Readers' Forum' for March, it occurred to me that, while brethren come together at Swanwick or elsewhere to discuss whether or how far they may properly venture into the sea of ecumenicity, our sisters (perhaps because they are given no 'official' responsibility) simply get on with the ecumenical job. Are there other joint enterprises where the same thing may be seen?

Replies, please, to the Editor at 18 Kings Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 4NX, by 10 June.

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POINTERS FOR THE FUTURE

Harold H. Rowdon

Dr. Rowdon of the London Bible College contributes the first of a series of articles that form a sequel to the recently published survey of assemblies, The Brethren Today (Paternoster Press).

Information about the state of affairs in some of our churches is valuable in itself to a sociologist or historian. But to anyone whose concern is with the health of the churches and the extension of God's kingdom that information is of little value, unless it provides pointers for action that needs to be taken or for practices that need to be amended or discontinued — and unless those pointers are followed.

Inevitably, the pointers for the future that are discerned in the survey under discussion will arise in part from the presuppositions already held by the reader. None of us comes to anything with an empty mind and inactive feelings. So the writer proceeds to share with his readers the pointers he has discerned.

We Need Each Other

Leaving aside matters connected with evangelism and the use of resources (which are dealt with in other articles) one thing that emerges is that we need each other as local churches. This becomes clear from a realistic assessment of some of the salient facts revealed by the survey about the 249 assemblies that responded. Take their **size**. 21% have less than 20 members, and a further 22% have between 20 and 40. And their **composition**. 27% are composed of predominantly elderly folk; 16% contain a predominance of middle-aged people; only 50% have a good balance age-wise. Consider their **growth**. Only 10% have greatly increased in numbers

over the past five years, with a further 33% reporting a slight increase. 20% have remained static, while 30% have slightly decreased and 7% have greatly decreased. How are the 57% that are static or declining to be helped to grow, particularly the smaller ones which (as chapter 2 of the report suggests) figure prominently among the churches that are not growing?

One answer could be the larger, more flourishing churches. Examples could be given from recent Brethren history of dying churches which have been given new life by an infusion of personnel from larger churches. There exists abundant scriptural warrant for inter-church aid of various kinds and — despite our tendency to confuse the principle of autonomy with the practice of isolationism — we do practise it (e.g. in the interchange of spiritual gift on a short-term basis). The survey may be pointing us to an extension of this through an application of missionary principles to a local situation where-by families could be 'sent' in a kind of missionary capacity to strengthen a struggling church. The 'hiving-off' principle has resulted in the planting of many new churches in the past. It seems to be needed now in respect of the encouraging and strengthening of existing churches. The writer knows of some growing churches which have set themselves the aim of becoming strong enough to do this very thing.

An alternative that should surely be considered in some cases is the merging of small, neighbouring churches. In some areas there are several small churches, each of which is struggling to survive. Cases have been known of such churches developing new life, but more often the sequel has been a slow process

of dying. It is questionable whether this constitutes a valid witness to our faith in a living, powerful and almighty God. Might it not be better for churches which are in this condition to join forces so that together, in one location, they could bear a more significant witness to their Lord. (The promise that the gates of hell should not prevail against it was given to the Church as a whole, not to any local manifestation of it.)

The Church is a Body

Another pointer for the future suggested by the findings of the survey is that we need to re-discover the local church as a corporate body. The survey indicates that, by-and-large, the 249 churches have moved away from corporate functioning in everything but worship and have developed various kinds of oligarchic structure. Only 15% have a brothers' meeting (2% have no form of leadership that is recognized as such). The remainder are governed by recognized leaders of one kind or another. No less than 82% believe that the assembly leadership should take all important decisions. All this seems to be a far cry from the Pauline epistles which were addressed to the church as a whole (indeed, in only one case of a letter written to a church is there any reference to the leadership in the address), and which call for delicate matters of church discipline to be administered by the church as a whole (1 Cor. 5:4f.). It looks as though we have mostly taken the prescriptions implied in the Pastoral Epistles without integrating them with the implications of the earlier Pauline epistles. (One puzzling statistic in the survey is the agreement of 29% with the statement that 'the assembly should have a

regular meeting in which all members (men and women) can take the important decisions for the assembly', despite the agreement of 82% with the apparently contradictory view that 'the assembly leadership should take all the important decisions for the assembly'. The editorial comment may be correct in suggesting that the former statistic refers to an expression of the popular will rather than a decision-making process in itself.) What is clear is that the leaders take the decisions in private rather than lead the gathered church to a corporate decision under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as seems to have been the case in New Testament times. This is surely one of the areas in which we need to rediscover the church. No doubt there are others.

Need for Change

The chief pointer that emerges from this survey is the one that calls for changes to take place. Those whose lives are on the long side, whose memories are retentive and whose movements have been fairly extensive among assemblies will surely agree that the statistics show that a good deal of change has already taken place in recent decades. Whereas before the war youth activities were usually confined to Sunday School and a midweek children's meeting, 37% of the assemblies surveyed have a youth club, 29% run a Girl Covenanters group, 28% a Boy Covenanters group, 21% Girl Jucos and 21% Boy Jucos. Then, special services were somewhat rare, whereas now 75% of the assemblies surveyed have them, and 50% have a regular family service. Change is represented also in the fact that 65% of the assemblies surveyed have regular ministry after the breaking of bread, of which 41% is pre-arranged and 24% systematic. Even the fact that 77% of the 249 assemblies have a combined prayer and ministry meeting indicates change. That women participate in church prayer meetings in 36% of the assemblies surveyed and in house group meetings in 83% of the churches which have them, is another indicator of change. And it is surely unlikely that a similar survey if taken pre-war would have disclosed the fact that 5% of 249 assemblies support a part- or full-time worker. The responses to attitudinal questions are even more indicative of

change. Granted the difficulty of interpreting the answers to such questions, the least that can be said is that in 34% of the assemblies surveyed the notion was held that it is a good idea to have a full-time worker, in 46% there were those who held that the assembly should belong to a fellowship of local evangelical churches and in 17% it was felt that so-called charismatic activities should be allowed.

Whether or not such changes have taken place there can be no doubt that there are adequate reasons for change apart from the (invalid) argument that it is desirable for its own sake!

The changes that have taken place in our society, while they must never be allowed to induce us to tamper with the content of the Bible, require us to vary the methods we use in expressing its unchanging truth in terms of institutions, cultural patterns of worship, evangelistic methods etc. There is overwhelming biblical support for such flexibility. It was a cornerstone in Paul's methodology (1 Cor. 9:19-23). It is a consequence of the very nature of the new covenant which — in sharp contrast to the old — lays down no detailed pattern or blue-print for worship, fellowship or evangelism. Rather, it provides us with basic principles which can be applied — under the guidance of the Holy Spirit — to the situations in which Christians find themselves in any part of the world and any period of history. Think of the consequences if God had chosen to provide a permanent blue-print for the Christian Church. In all ages and in all cultural settings the Church would have been required to follow the norm that was appropriate to the Near East in the first century!

It has been rightly said that failure to change when the situation in which we operate has changed is itself change, since we have changed in relation to our situation. (Cf. the change that takes place in an unchanging God when a sinner changes his attitude from impenitent unbelief to repentant faith.)

Full-scale Reappraisal

What seems to be needed is nothing less than a full-scale reappraisal of our churches. We need to clarify our goals and objectives. What functions should be fulfilled by a local church if its supreme guide is the New Testament? Worship, fellowship, edifica-

tion of its members and service (both spiritual and temporal) to the local community in which it is situated are at once suggested. Are there any specific matters arising from the nature of the particular local church and the nature of the community in which it is placed? These will obviously vary from place to place and from time to time.

We also need to establish the extent of our resources in terms of plant, personnel, spiritual gift and financial resources. Nor should we overlook the possibility of increasing these (e.g. evangelistic gift may not appear to be present unless evangelistic activities are mounted).

Then we must discover how to match our resources with the objectives we have identified. It may be possible to do this by continuing present procedures unchanged. More likely, a more or less painful process of change will be required. In order to determine the nature and extent of necessary change two guiding principles must be held in positive and productive tension. They may be posed in question form: 'How would we arrange things if we were starting from scratch?' and 'What effect will the proposed action have upon the people concerned?'

The first question is a liberating one which, if taken seriously, can set us free from the dead hand of tradition to follow the living God who is always moving forward towards the fulfilment of his purposes along a road that twists and turns in accordance with the nature of the terrain. Brethren have always professed to believe that there is nothing sacrosanct about human tradition; it was the ruthless application of that principle to the contemporary religious world which turned them into 'Brethren'. There is no scriptural — or logical — reason why that same principle should not be applied to 'Brethren' tradition. No doubt the inhibiting factor is a combination of temperament and personal preference leading to an inbuilt dislike of change. If, however, we were willing to apply this liberating principle to our church life it might revolutionize it.

However, the second question must also be brought into play; 'What effect would the proposed action have upon the people concerned?' Here the curious thing is that there is nearly always a premium against change. People seem more con-

cerned about the effect on those who resist change than on those who desire it. The former must not be upset: the latter should not complain if they are. The presumption seems to be that the old ways are best — even though the times have changed. Realization that they have, may help to dissipate an objection to change that has sometimes been raised — that it would constitute an implicit condemnation of our predecessors. This might be the case if the situation had not changed — but it has!

A fruitful way of resolving the deadlock that can ensue is to encourage public airing of the issues involved. Both sides can be put forward in a gracious and open spirit, with reference to the Scriptures as well as to the past and the present situations. In many cases, churches have resolved their problems as they have

brought the whole issue to the bar of Scripture. Regrettably, this has sometimes been done by the leadership alone and when the results have been taken to the church, resentment and opposition have ensued. It is here, perhaps, that we suffer most from the lack of prophetic ministry. All too often, ministry of the Word has been seen as calling for nothing more than the reinforcing of scriptural teaching already known with reference to the needs of past generations. Rarely has the Word of God been applied to the unique needs of the present in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We also need to grasp the nettle of the unanimity principle, since this has often prevented needed change from taking place. Unanimity can be reached before the few who disagree move away from the district or depart this life, provided they are

willing to defer to the convictions of the many and agree to drop their objections to the proposed action not because they are personally convinced but because they are willing to sink their differences out of respect for their brethren and to trust the Lord to overrule the situation. If cabinet government can operate along these lines with little difficulty how much more can a Christian community in which the guidance of God is genuinely sought.

'Change and decay' is an unfortunate phrase since growth and development involve change. Unhappy is the baby that does not change into a child, the child that does not change into a young person and the young person that does not change into an adult. Unlike persons, however, churches can be renewed even when they are old.

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EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G.J. Polkinghorne

THE PERFECT CLARITY OF SCRIPTURE

Peter Jones

Peter Jones, who lives in Ottawa, Canada, makes a forcible plea for toleration. The fact that we may not agree with all he says may serve to underline his basic thesis!

'The Scriptures are perfectly clear about it' and thank God they are — clear beyond the possibility of doubt on all things essential to faith and morals. No one reading the Bible with an open mind can doubt that the sacred volume teaches the sinfulness of man and his consequent alienation from God: the love of God for mankind: the incarnation of God the Son and his sacrificial death at the hands of wicked men yet within the purposes of God: his resurrection from death and the resultant possibility of forgiveness through faith in him, reconciliation to God and the eternal blessedness of the believer. No reasonable person doubts that the Scriptures teach these and other fundamental tenets of the faith, though there are many, sad to say, who do not accept these truths while admitting that they are the teaching of the Bible.

However, one rarely if ever hears the claim quoted at the commencement of this article used in relation to these accepted doctrines. It seems that when the statement is made, it relates to something in dispute, some item about which there is disagreement and on which the speaker holds very determined views.

There are, at the present time, differing opinions as to what the New Testament teaches about the public ministry of women: about the continuance or not into this age of certain gifts to the early church: as to who should be baptized — infants or believers only — and about the method of baptism: concerning liberty for the exercise of what might be called the public gifts, i.e. preaching, teaching etc.: on reception at the Lord's table and about perhaps a dozen other church practices.

It cannot be denied that opposing views are firmly held by Christians who accept the Bible as the Word of God, containing all truth necessary to salvation, and who desire most earnestly to follow the New Testament pattern wherever it can be discerned. There are, admittedly, many believers who do not refer to the Scriptures as the final authority for church practice but the writer's present concern is with differences of interpretation even among those who do take the Bible as authoritative. The differences do not arise from a greater understanding of the Scriptures on the one hand than on the other, because there are scholarly men, devoted to the Lord and eager to do his will, on both sides of the different questions mentioned. There are men of God who hold that the New Testament makes little if any distinction between male and female in the role of public ministry, whereas there are other, equally godly, men who believe that a woman's voice should never be heard in mixed company (except perhaps in congregational singing!). There are godly and studious men and women who find that the New Testament teaches that baptism is only for believers, while some claim that children of believers should be baptized. Many hold the belief that 'speaking in tongues' is a gift for Christians today, some even making it mandatory; meanwhile their brethren are teaching that this and other gifts ceased with the apostolic age and that present-day manifestations are unscriptural, even satanic. What is the individual to do?

The simplistic answer is that one should believe what one finds in Scripture but this can give rise to dire consequences. One knows of churches that have divided on the question of whether a believer should be admitted to the Lord's table before being baptized.

To maintain, at all costs, in any of these disputed matters, that one is right and the corollary that

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Kingship (3)

H. L. Ellison

There are many who argue that because the end result of God's dealings with Israel was to be the coming of the Messiah, i.e. God's King, therefore the institution of monarchy in Israel must have been God's will. The argument is fallacious, for Israel would have learnt the ideals and failures of kingship from their contacts with their neighbours. In addition it was in great measure due to their experiences in the past with their kings that the Jews did not recognize their Messiah when He came.

Though there were few in Israel who recognized the fact, there was a fundamental contradiction between Israel's wish for a king and the people's experience of him. It is a part of man's heritage as a fallen being that he rejects God's absolute claims on him. The king as God's representative had absolute claims on his people's obedience, which was equally unwelcome. But the king faced a barrier, which he could not welcome. It is expressed in *Num. 27:21*, *Jos. 1:7,8*. It matters not that Joshua was not king. The restraints on his power, the priesthood and the Torah (Law), to say nothing of the later prophets, restrained the royal power. We are given only an occasional glimpse of the triangular tug-of-war between king, prophet and priest. The outcome was to diminish the authority and power of all three. In a similar way the Church has suffered from the same type of tensions, and as a result the 'crown-rights of

Christ' have suffered.

The biting sarcasm of Jotham's parable (*Judg. 9:7-15*) shows that there were some in Israel who grasped how unnecessary the whole idea of human kingship was.

It seems clear that alongside the Torah (Mosaic Law) there gradually grew up a royal law, which did not necessarily agree with it. The first clear indication of this is found in *1 Sam. 30:25*. Though we have no grounds for criticizing the substance of David's decree, it created a precedent. It may well be that the bitter controversy between Sadducees and Pharisees, which did so much damage to Jewry in the Inter-Testamental Period, was in fact a continuation of the tension between the two concepts of law, in which the Sadducees, the supporters of the high-priestly rulers, maintained the old traditions of the royal law in opposition to the Pharisees, who sought to expand the Torah to cover every feature of daily life.

What might have happened, had the kings accepted the limitation imposed by Samuel, when he anointed Saul as prince (*nasi*) (*1 Sam. 10:1*) i.e. war leader and civil ruler, it is hard to imagine. But the moment they considered it gave them a religious authority as well, it gave them absolute authority, and as Lord Acton said, 'Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely'.

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one's fellow-believers are wrong seems to manifest a spirit of arrogant self-assurance. Is it not tantamount to saying to very many godly and learned men and women; 'I know better than you what the Bible says' or alternatively: 'You are not so concerned for the truth of God, so obedient to God's Word, as I am'?

What is the individual to do? And what is the local church to do? Can we not, while holding fast to

the fundamental truths of Scripture, agree to differ on those things where godly scholars, zealous for the truth differ in their views as to what the Lord has recorded in his Word?

*In things necessary, let there be unity;
In things doubtful, let there be liberty;
In all things, let there be charity;
for such is the mind of Christ.*

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (48)

F. F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

ii. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN (John 9:1-41)

(d) Second interrogation of the man (9:24-34),
continued

9:26, 27 So they said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He answered them, 'I have told you already and you paid no heed. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?'

Thus far the man has given straight factual answers to the questions put to him by the authorities. But now that they begin to ask the same questions all over again, he suspects that it is not the plain truth that they want: they are trying to trip him up, so as to nullify his positive witness in favour of Jesus. He now displays a hitherto unsuspected capacity for ironical repartee. Some authorities (including, it appears, the earliest of all, Papyrus 66) omit the negative from the clause 'you paid no heed', as though the man meant, 'You heard me the first time; why do you want me to tell you again?' He knows very well that his interrogators have no thought of becoming Jesus' disciples, but his ironical question is used by the evangelist as a means of introducing again the subject of true discipleship, touched upon in 8:31.

9:28, 29 Then they addressed him abusively, saying, 'You are that man's disciple; we are disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses; we have no idea where this fellow comes from.'

Naturally they do not appreciate the man's irony; it is too evident that he has seen through their plan to trip him up. They therefore have recourse to abuse. Who would be a disciple of someone whose origin was unknown and whose authority was disallowed by those in a position to judge such matters? An ignoramus like the man who stood before them might know no better than to take such a person seriously; they were better informed. Moses was their teacher; they were his disciples. The tradition of oral law transmitted in

the rabbinical schools was held to stem from Moses, who (they believed) had received it on Sinai together with the written law. No one could doubt that God spoke to Moses: of him God himself had said, 'With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speech' (Num. 12:8). Moses was the pre-eminent prophet of the Lord; the claim to be disciples of his was a claim worth making. The disciples of this nobody from Nazareth were worthy of him whom they chose as their teacher. In all this, indeed, the evangelist practises his own brand of irony: he and his readers know of Jesus' true origin; they know, moreover, that while 'the law was given through Moses', the full revelation of God came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

9:30-33 'Why,' said the man in reply, 'here is the surprising thing. You do not know where he comes from; yet he has opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if any one worships God and does his will, he listens to him. No one has ever heard of any one who opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this man were not from God, he would not be able to do anything.'

The man continues to use the language of plain common sense. The authorities had previously argued among themselves, one group saying, 'This man is a sinner and therefore God cannot have performed a miracle through him', and another group saying, 'This man has worked a miracle which could not be performed without divine aid; therefore he is no sinner.' The man repeats and underlines the second of these lines of argument; he brought an unprejudiced mind to the problem (except in so far as the fact that it was his eyes that were opened prejudiced him in favour of Jesus). The restoration of sight to the blind was not unknown: Tobit was given back his sight in the apocryphal book which bears his name, but he was not born blind. So far as memory and experience could say, congenital blindness was invariably incurable. Yet now, for once, congenital blindness had been cured. In the Synoptic Gospels the restoring of sight to the blind is a token that the new age has dawned, with such signs as the prophets foretold (Isa.

35:5; 42:7); here the emphasis is rather on the authority and character of the one who performs the cure. Without knowing it, the man anticipates a rabbinical maxim later expressed in the form: 'Every one in whom is the fear of heaven, his words are heard.' A miracle of this magnitude must be recognized as an answer to prayer; the man who received this answer to prayer must be no ordinary man. The wonder is that the authorities disclaim all knowledge of him. The man can put two and two together; he has already concluded that Jesus must be a 'prophet' (v. 17), and now he reiterates his conviction by saying that he must have come 'from God'. This does not necessarily express faith in Jesus' divine origin in the sense in which that is taught by the evangelist; it does at least mean that Jesus is acknowledged as 'a man sent from God' (*para theou*), as John was (*John* 1:6). In this sense Jesus must have come from God; otherwise he could never have wrought such a miracle. 'Does the All-merciful perform a miracle for liars?' asked a later rabbi: the answer implied was an emphatic No.

9:34 *They said in reply, 'You were altogether born in sins: are you teaching us?' So they drove him out.*

Their angry rejoinder shows that they realized they were getting the worst of the argument. On their own principles there was no answer to his argument. The context suggests that they not only pushed him out of the place where the interrogation was held, but expelled him from synagogue membership, as his parents had feared might be done to them (v. 22). 'You were altogether born in sins' implies that (as Jesus' disciples had supposed) his congenital blindness was due either to his parents' sins or his own. In any case it was an impertinence for such an untrained member of the common people to argue with the acknowledged interpreters of the law.

(e) The blind man's confession of faith (9:35-38)
9:35-38 *When Jesus heard that they had driven him out, he found him and said, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'And who is he, sir,' said the man in reply, 'that I might believe in him?' 'You have seen him', Jesus told him, 'and he is*

the person who is talking to you.' 'Lord, I believe', said he, and prostrated himself before him in reverence.

The once-blind man now appears as a sample of those who, as the opening words of chapter 10 indicate, are called out of the Jewish fold to become members of the flock of the Good Shepherd. Evicted from the synagogue, he is found by Jesus (whom he had not met since he went off at his bidding to wash in the Pool of Siloam) and is enrolled as one of his disciples. In Jesus' question our textual witnesses disagree about the self-designation used by Jesus — 'Son of Man' (as the oldest manuscripts have it, including Papyri 66 and 75) or 'Son of God'. The fact that the latter is the commoner designation in this Gospel makes it more likely that it has replaced an original 'Son of Man' than vice versa. 'Son of Man', as *John* 5:27 shows, is a designation associated with the role of judgment which the Father has committed to the Son, and prepares the reader for the language about judgment in verses 39-41. There may also be a link here with the role of advocacy assigned to the Son of Man in the Synoptic tradition, where those who acknowledge Jesus on earth are acknowledged by the Son of Man in the presence of the angels of God (*Luke* 12:8). On this occasion the Son of Man acknowledges his faithful confessor on the spot.

Naturally, the man does not know who the Son of Man is, but he is very willing to learn, so he asks. Jesus replies in terms similar to those which he used when the Samaritan woman spoke of the coming Messiah: 'It is I, the person talking to you' (*John* 4:26). The man has no further hesitation. On whom would he more readily believe than on the man who had restored his sight? He had already called him a prophet; now he confesses him as more than a prophet. If the vocative *kyrie* in v. 36 has the courtesy sense of 'sir', in v. 38 it is more than a courtesy title; it implies that Jesus is a fit person to receive worship: 'Lord, I believe', he said, and bowed low in reverence before him. So quickly has an honest and good heart progressed from recognizing the benefactor as 'the man called Jesus' (v. 11) to confessing him as Lord.

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of the Lord and now the 'young man' proclaimed his resurrection and triumph over death. Now, as the risen Lord declares (*Matt.* 28:18-20), it is a time 'to gather stones together' (*Eccles.* 3:5), to construct a new and holy temple for the Lord's own

habitation, the stones of which are to be those who place their faith in Jesus Christ (*1 Pet.* 2:4-5). Now therefore is the time for 'young men' not to flee, but to see visions (*Acts* 2:17), first of the Lord triumphant over sin and death and then

of the fields gleaming at harvest time. Which of Mark's young men do we emulate? *In Christ it is ordained to raise
 A temple to Jehovah's
 praise,
 Composed of all his saints,
 who own*

No Saviour but the Living Stone.

Well then, writes the Apostle Paul, in the execution of these duties, 'flee youthful lusts' and 'let no one despise your youth' (*2 Tim.* 2:22; *1 Tim.* 4:12).

MEDITATIONS ON MARK (10)

David Brady

From time to time we hear of doubt cast upon the reliability of the Gospel records by means of the rhetorical question: 'Who could have been present to report these things?' The implication is that, since we know of nobody who could have been present to report one event or another, it is likely that the written account we have is a pure invention of the early Christians. On occasions this may appear to be a challenge difficult to rebut, as for example when it is urged in connection with the accounts of our Lord's temptations in the wilderness. In this case, it may be that the only possible reply is that Jesus himself reported the temptations to his disciples later in private (cf. *Mark 4:34*: 'but privately to his own disciples he explained everything' — another passage peculiar to Mark's Gospel). But it is perhaps a little more difficult to offer the same explanation of how the Gospel writers came to discover the content of Jesus's prayers in the garden of Gethsemane, since the Gospels themselves tell us that the disciples then present (Peter, James, and John) all fell asleep (*Mark 14:37, 40, 41*).

But the Gospels never profess to give an exhaustive account of every detail in every event of the life of the Lord. As we read the Gospels again and again, we receive the growing impression that 'the half has not been told'. This fact is clearly stated in the last of the Gospels: 'Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book . . . There are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written' (*John 20:30; 21:25*). On occasions, how-

ever, we are almost able to catch a glimpse between the lines of these ancient accounts of the possible way in which the information came to the Gospel writers, as for example when we read of 'another disciple known to the high priest', who introduced Peter to the court of the high priest (*John 18:15-16*). We do not know who he was, but given the fact of this man's special position, we may gain some hint of how the Gospel writers obtained their accounts of the trial of Jesus at a time when all the disciples had forsaken him and fled.

But there is another unnamed and mysterious figure in the Gospel of Mark, described in a brief passage which for reasons unknown to us has been omitted from the accounts of the Lord's arrest given in the other three Gospels: 'And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body; and they seized him, but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked' (*Mark 14:51-52*). Commentators have not been slow in trying to give this young man a name: John, James the Lord's brother, or (most likely of all) Mark, the traditional author of this second Gospel. All that we definitely know about him, however, is that 'he followed with' Jesus, indicating perhaps his close companionship of Jesus at this critical hour, a companionship intentionally closer than that of Peter who followed the Lord 'at a distance' (*Mark 14:54*), and that to his great remorse. The temple guard sought to seize this young man and so he was forced to discard the night-attire in which he was dressed and leave it in the hands of his assailants. So perhaps Mark intended to lessen the guilt of Peter (his

probable informant for much of the material of his Gospel); whether in that hour of the Lord's arrest one sought to follow the Master closely or at a distance, the cause was hopeless, for ultimately all would be forced to flee as the Lord suffered alone for the sins of the world.

But those words, 'he followed with him', may perhaps give us some clue first of all who it was who reported the Lord's prayers in Gethsemane when his nearest friends were asleep. Here was one who may have stayed awake, a young man whose name was not counted as of sufficient weight to include with those of Peter, James, and John, but one who nevertheless followed closely behind and watched with keen interest (cf. how the young man Elihu is not referred to among Job's three friends who came to comfort him until he suddenly speaks up in the thirty-second chapter of the book!). Secondly, we may suppose that he followed on other occasions, as for instance when Jesus gave that momentous teaching concerning the destruction of the temple and his own coming glory (*Mark 13*). On that occasion, the Lord had spoken of the culmination of sacrilege under that most elusive of all New Testament terms 'the abomination of desolation'. No doubt those who heard him then were as puzzled as we still are in understanding the precise import of that expression, but one thing was clear to them: it described a future event of horrific and devastating affront against the holiness of God.

Could it have been that in Gethsemane, this unnamed young man remembered the Lord's words about the 'abomination of desolation' and felt (no doubt erroneously)

that he recognized in the assaults of profane and wicked men upon the holy Lord Jesus Christ, the abomination of which Jesus had spoken? At all events, he acted in the spirit of the Lord's words of warning: 'When you see the abomination of desolation . . . then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains . . . and let him who is in the field not turn back to take his mantle' (*Mark 13:14, 16*). This indeed was a time to flee, even if it meant leaving one's clothing behind, as Joseph fled when confronted by the temptation laid by Potiphar's wife (*Gen. 39:7-12*). 'And he who is stout of heart among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day' (*Amos 2:16*).

But the 'abomination of desolation' of which Jesus spoke was yet to come, for it was specifically associated with the destruction of the Jewish temple and of their nation. Then, as the Lord had said, there would 'not be left one stone upon another'. All was to be cast away like the polluted stones of a 'leprous' house (cf. *Lev. 14:45*). Just as the fathers had put God to the test for forty years in the wilderness (*Heb. 3:9*), so the sons were to be tried for forty years to see if they would repent of their rejection of the Christ. But they would not and so destruction came upon the nation and the stones of men's building were scattered.

But the stones of the temple were not the only stones to be rolled away. It is surprising that in the last chapter of Mark's Gospel we should come upon another 'young man, sitting on the right side (the propitious side), dressed in a white robe' (*Mark 16:5*). The stone that sealed the entrance of the Lord's tomb was cast away by the angel

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PRAISE AND PRAYER ADDRESSED TO THE LORD JESUS

Michael L. Burr

Dr. Burr, M.D., Dip.Th., is in fellowship at Emmaus Chapel, Llanishen, Cardiff. A married man with four daughters, he works in medical research.

A high proportion of our hymns are addressed to the Lord Jesus, including some of the most well-loved of all. Yet there seem to be reservations in the minds of many Christians about the propriety of addressing the Lord Jesus directly in prayer and praise. It may be helpful to see what light is shed on this paradox by the New Testament and the practice of the early church.

CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

One of the terms used to denote Christians in the New Testament is 'those who call on the name of the Lord (Jesus)'. This expression is found in full in *1 Cor. 1:2*, where it is synonymous with 'saints'. In *Rom. 10:12,13* calling on (or invoking) the name of the Lord is the prerequisite of salvation, and the context (*v.9*) shows that 'the Lord' is Jesus. Similarly, Saul of Tarsus was urged to be baptized, calling on the name of the Just One who had appeared to him (*Acts 22:16*). It therefore seems that an invocation of the Lord Jesus normally accompanied the new convert's first profession of faith in Christ.

It might be suggested that this invocation involved no more than the assertion that 'Jesus is Lord', as in *Rom. 10:9*, without any direct address to Christ. But there is one occasion when someone is said to 'invoke' and the actual words are recorded, and here there was a direct prayer: 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit' (*Acts 7:59*).

The Christians whom Saul persecuted are twice described as those who call on Christ's name (*Acts 9:14,21*). Obviously it would seem outrageous to a strict monotheist like Saul that fellow-Jews should pray, in terms appropriate only to God, to One whom he regarded as a deservedly-executed blasphemer. It is quite possible that his powers of arrest were defined specifically with reference to those who invoked Christ in this way.

A further reference to those who call on the name of the Lord occurs in *2 Tim. 2:22*; again, 'the Lord' in Pauline usage signifies Christ. In view of these seven references it is strange that Leon Morris should say that the term is 'an unusual way of describing Christians' (*Tyndale Commentary on 1 Corinthians*, p.35). In fact, in Paul's writings 'the Lord' normally refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, though there are a few passages where this might not be the case.

OTHER NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES

There are several other passages which mention praise or prayer to Christ. Paul expected the Ephesians (*Eph. 5:19*) to sing hymns to the Lord. He thanked Christ Jesus for appointing him to His service (*1 Tim. 1:12*), and besought the Lord three times to remove his 'thorn in the flesh' (*2 Cor. 12:8*).

Rev. 1:5,6 is one of several doxologies addressed to Christ. In ch. 5 are further ascriptions of praise — 'Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain'; it is particularly noteworthy that praise is addressed jointly 'to him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb' (*5:13*; cf. *7:10*). This exemplifies the principle,

asserted by Christ Himself (*John 5:23*), that all should honour the Son 'even as they honour the Father'. The Apocalypse closes with the prayer 'Come, Lord Jesus', and a similar prayer to Christ seems to have been a regular feature of Christian gatherings. The word 'Maranatha' in *1 Cor. 16:22* probably means 'Our Lord, come!', and the fact that it is in Aramaic suggests that its use was already longstanding and widespread. The same prayer occurs at the close of the Eucharistic service described in the *Didache* (probably early second century), so that its position at the end of 1 Corinthians and Revelation implies that from earliest times Christians concluded their meetings by calling on the Lord Jesus to return.

THE PRACTICE OF THE EARLY CHURCH

The early church continued to address prayer and praise to Christ, although perhaps to a decreasing extent. About A.D. 107 both Ignatius and Polycarp mentioned prayers 'to the Lord' in thanksgiving (*Ep. to Smyrna 10*) and for forgiveness (*Ep. of Polycarp 6*); for both, 'the Lord' consistently meant Christ. A few years later Pliny reported that Christians were accustomed to meet on an appointed day before daybreak and to recite a hymn (which may mean any set form of words) antiphonally to Christ as to a god. Thus 'calling on the name of the Lord Jesus' was still the distinctive mark of Christian gatherings.

Several hymns from the early centuries are addressed to Christ, including the two oldest hymns which have been preserved intact (Clement of Alexandria's 'Hymn of the Saviour', and 'Hail, gladdening

Light'), both from about A.D. 200. And Eusebius quotes a document from the same period (*History of the Church* 5:28) which mentions 'psalms and hymns written from the beginning by faithful brethren which sing of Christ as the Word of God and address Him as God'.

The first Christian to discourage prayer to Christ was Origen in the third century. He taught that 'we should not pray to any generate being, not even to Christ, but only to the God and Father of the universe'; if prayer was addressed to Christ, He would convey it to the Father. This was part of his general tendency to regard the Son as inherently subordinate to the Father. He held that 'the Son and the Spirit are transcended by the Father just as much as, if not more than, They Themselves transcend the realm of inferior beings' (Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th ed., p.132). The unsatisfactory nature of Origen's teaching was widely recognized, and his doctrines were later condemned as heretical.

A more extreme position was adopted by Paul of Samosata, who became bishop of Antioch in 260. He seems to have regarded Jesus as a uniquely inspired man, and was excommunicated for heresy and misconduct. The bishops who condemned him complained that 'all hymns to our Lord Jesus Christ he has banned as modern compositions of modern writers' (Eusebius, *op. cit.* 7.30).

Athanasius, the chief defender of the deity of Christ in the fourth century, had no doubt about the propriety of addressing Christ in praise and prayer. 'Being the very Son of His Father's substance, and as truly God as the Father, He is, in as full and

proper a sense, the object of our adoration, and of our faith and obedience, . . . as the Father Himself.' 'Whoever worships and honours the Son, worships and honours the Father in the same act. In those addresses which are made to the Son, the Father has an immediate interest, and the Son has the same in those which are directed to the Father' (*Against the Arians II*, 24; *III*, 6).

CURRENT PRACTICE

In view of the testimony of Scripture and the practice of the early church, we may well wonder why there should be any reticence now to address the Lord Jesus in prayer and praise. Yet such reticence there certainly is. The Book of Common Prayer, the Alternative Service Book, and the Methodist Service Book contain hardly any prayers to Christ apart from the extremely ancient prayers known as 'Te Deum Laudamus' and 'Gloria in excelsis Deo', both of which address first the Father and then the Son. In churches which practise extempore prayer there is naturally great variation, but experience suggests that, hymn-singing apart, many such companies seldom or never 'call on the name of the Lord Jesus'. Why should this be? Perhaps three factors are involved. First, liturgical prayer has always been modelled on Old Testament passages, especially the Psalms, so that God is addressed in Old Testament terms. The title 'Lord' is thought of as in O.T. usage, where (when printed in capitals) it represents the divine Name Yahweh or Jehovah, obscuring the fact that in the New Testament 'Lord' is characteristically the title of Christ.

Second, there has been a very under-

standable reaction against a sentimental 'Jesus-worship', which addresses the Son of God as though He were merely a human hero. This is rightly felt to be objectionable, but its rejection need not preclude that worship which is properly due to the Lord of all.

Third, it is pointed out that in the New Testament praise and prayer are addressed to the Father through the Son, or in His name. This is, of course, perfectly true, but it is also true that all should honour the Son 'even as they honour the Father'. *John* 16:23 ('In that day you will ask nothing of me') has been advanced as precluding prayer to Christ. But several commentators (e.g. Barrett, Sanders and Mastin, Hendriksen, Raymond Brown; cf. NIV) consider that 'ask' here — a different word from the second 'ask' in this verse — means 'inquire' not 'request'. The disciples had not been asking for anything, but they had asked several questions, and things would be made clear to them (vv.25,29,30). Even if 'request' is the meaning, the context may imply that the disciples wanted Christ to ask the Father for things on their behalf (v.26; see also *John* 11:22), and that they would no longer think in this way. Thus there need be no conflict between this verse and *2 Cor.* 12:8.

Finally, it is not uncommon to hear sound and well-instructed Christians thanking the Father for dying for us. Presumably they instinctively want to speak to the Lord Jesus but their habits restrict them to addressing the Father. I suggest that, as on most other occasions when godly Christians' habits conflict with their instincts, their habits are wrong and their instincts are right.

THE FIVE GIANTS

Leroy Birney

The Five Giants of the Old Testament are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. They recount the creation, the promises of God, and the life and law of Moses, the prophet which Israel esteemed most.

The Jews called this section of Scripture 'the five-fifths of the law'. Early Christians gave it the Greek name Pentateuch (five-fold book). The Old Testament itself refers to this section as the book of 'the Law of Jehovah',¹ 'the law of Moses',² and simply as 'the Law'³ (**Torah**). The New Testament uses the term 'Law' of the Pentateuch or some aspect of its contents approximately 165 times. It is worth your time to make a firsthand acquaintance with such significant giants.

It is the Law that first records the revelation of the God who is. God could have chosen to remain aloof and hidden, leaving man to grope and speculate blindly. Instead He made Himself known to us, not as the first principle of a philosophy nor as the logical conclusion of a syllogism, but as the all powerful person who speaks to man and intervenes in their history with His own mighty acts. In the Pentateuch you meet God in action.

This five-volume revelation promulgated a revolutionary and scandalous teaching in the ancient world — the gods were dead! 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord' (*Deut. 6:4*). Not a hundred trickling brooks but one roaring cataract, not two hundred winking sparks but one searing ray of lightning, not three hundred steaming fissures but one mighty, heaving volcano! This one God you can neither ignore nor use. You must come to terms with Him. This God is not merely the theologians' abstract ground of being, nor the Deists' first cause nor the tribesman's unreachable 'high god'. He is personal. He is the God of

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — of people. He cares about you as a person and interacts with you as a person. He wants to be **The Person** in your life.

Nevertheless, He will not be tied nor boxed into the individual plane alone. He is the God not only of people, but also of peoples, not only of individuals, but also of nations. He made a special covenant with one nation, Israel, in order to reveal Himself, His promises and His standards of justice to all nations. He commands not only individual righteousness but also collective justice. He judges not only neglect of individual holiness, but also neglect of social justice.

What a Shock to man it is to realize that God is holy! Mostly men invent deities for their own convenience, to do or explain the things they cannot. And we who have the written revelation of the true God do our best to keep Him from impinging upon our actions or opinions which we wish to keep unchanged. But the Law spotlights God's holiness and our sinfulness. 'Through the law comes knowledge of sin' (*Rom. 3:20*), not only the knowledge of **what** are personal and social sins, but also that terrible firsthand experience of our inner resistance to His demands and overt violation of His commands. Under the merciless floodlights of holiness in the Law, every false hope of contributing to your own salvation evaporates and you are ready to depend upon Jesus Christ alone for your salvation.

It is God's love that prompted Him to reveal so sharply the two poles of His holiness and our sinfulness and the burning ray of judgment that is sparked by these opposing poles. He is warning us of danger and calling us to faith in His saving action. Examples of God's loving, saving grace fill the Pentateuch. He demonstrates His love in historical actions such as the calling of Abraham, the

liberation of Israel from slavery, their preservation in the wilderness despite disobedience and the provision of the promised land. He reveals His love in social legislation in favour of the poor and weak, and in moral legislation of individual relationships. He illustrates His love in the ceremonies which pictured the grace and salvation to be fully provided in Christ.

This one true, personal, holy, loving God, concerned for both individuals and social groups, established His rule in earth through a covenant with the nation of Israel. The Pentateuch tells the story of the establishment of this Old Covenant which prepared the way for the New Covenant established by Jesus Christ in fulfillment of the Old. You may visualize the development like this:

- I. Preliminary History of Israel — **Genesis**
- II. Establishment of the Old Covenant with Israel — **Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers**
 - A. Inauguration of the nation — **Exodus**
 - B. Religious organization of the nation — **Leviticus**
 - C. Political organization of the nation — **Numbers**
- III. Recapitulation and Reconfirmation of the History and Legislation — **Deuteronomy**

The God who spoke to men and performed mighty deeds in their history will also speak to you and do mighty things in your life when you study His Word in the Pentateuch.

1. 2 Chr. 17:9; 34:14; Neh. 9:3.
2. Josh. 8:31; 2 Kgs. 14:6; Neh. 8:1.
3. Neh. 8:2, 7, 13. See Keil in C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, **A Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament**, Vol. 1, pp. 15-16.

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Creation 'from nothing'?

Question 191

I have seen Hebrews 11:3 cited as evidence that the doctrine of creation ex nihilo is biblical. But if Adam was formed from the dust and Eve from Adam's side, can it still be maintained that the Bible teaches creation of all things 'from nothing'?

Creation *ex nihilo* is certainly the biblical doctrine and is nowhere expressed so plainly as in the passage you cite. It does not of course imply (as is sometimes suggested) that there was a pre-existent 'nothing' from which God made everything! What it does is to affirm that everything that exists depends on God's will alone for its being and is thus subject to him since it is he who has called it into existence. The nature of the successive stages by which creation took place is not the point at issue.

'Jews who pray'

Question 192

A prominent church leader in the USA has recently stated that God does not hear the prayers of Jews. What is your opinion of this statement?

I don't know the situation in which the view was expressed nor the context of the words quoted. Perhaps the speaker intended to emphasize the assurance with which Christians can pray in the name of Jesus. He may have been rightly countering the suggestion which is sometimes made that it is unnecessary or even wrong for Jews to turn from Judaism to Christ. Possibly his intention was to warn hearers that it is new birth into God's family which confers the privilege of calling God, 'Father'.

But as it stands, the remark seems questionable in view of *Acts 10:34, 35*. It affords a good example of an attitude that has bedevilled relations between church and synagogue for centuries. It also seems to pre-empt a decision that might more properly be left to God. With friends like this, he scarcely needs enemies.

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

New Testament Quotations from the Old

Question 193

One can read through the whole Bible but never know of the Septuagint or the Targums etc. In consequence, why some of the N.T. quotations seriously differ from their O.T. originals and where some, such as Romans 10:6, 7, have been updated by Paul. Therefore could the "word of knowledge" (1 Corinthians 12:8) apply to such information and its impartation to others both then as necessary and today in particular?

In view of our uncertainty about the precise meaning of "word of knowledge", I would hesitate to link this phrase with the process of supplying the kind of information you refer to. On the other hand, I agree that it would be no bad thing if Christians were made aware of the fact that the New Testament writers had access to a number of different translations and paraphrases of the Old Testament. The difficulty is that it is sadly rare for the biblical text to be studied in such detail that differences between the Masoretic text and that used by the New Testament writers becomes apparent. Where study of this sort is engaged upon with the intention of finding out precisely what a passage means, then it may be extremely valuable to explore the area you have indicated. What I am less certain about is the value of transmitting this information 'cold', so to speak, that is, without showing its practical relevance. On the other hand, one of the most important implications of the way the New Testament writers use the Old is a general one. Sometimes they quote from what seems to be a source similar to that underlying the Septuagint, sometimes from a tradition found in the Targums, and sometimes paraphrase very freely (as does Paul in the case you cite) in order to bring out a hitherto unsuspected meaning. All this suggests that their view of the nature of biblical inspiration may have been rather less restricted than what has been current in some Christian circles since the seventeenth century.

LOOKING AT BOOKS



JESUS AND THE APOSTLES

The Jesus Question

John Ziesler

Lutterworth Press. 149pp.

£4.95 (paperback).

The post-script to this book best explains its aim — 'to introduce some of the debates that go on about Jesus without taking sides too often . . . in an age of unfaith people seem to be under a compulsion to explain Jesus or perhaps explain him away.' From the historical viewpoint Ziesler asks How much do we really know about Jesus? Was he a magical figure? A zealot? What did he think about himself when he said 'Son of Man'?

Looking at the New Testament he asks What does it say about Jesus? Does it always say the same thing? Does it say what the creeds of the church say? Was there an evolution of thought from Jewish beginnings to Hellenistic developments . . . Jesus . . . is . . . Lord? Is Jesus God, real man, sinless man, corporate man? Then we are asked about meanings for today. What must modern man say to convey what was meant by ancient words? Can we retain the definition of Chalcedon 'truly God and truly man'? Should we not now be saying of the phrase 'God was in Christ' that 'God was at work in Christ'?

The author deals with such books as *The myth of God Incarnate*, *The truth of God incarnate*, *The human face of God* and many others which he sets out in helpful booklists. I could not always agree with the arguments of the book but my thinking was stimulated.

Review by Barbara Baigent.

Christology in the Making

James D. G. Dunn

SCM. xvii + 443pp. £10.50 (paperback).

James Dunn, Reader in Theology at the University of Nottingham, has already achieved justifiable fame for his earlier works, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, *Jesus and the Spirit* and *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament*. Now he has turned his attention to Christology. He does not, however, attempt to cover all aspects of NT Christology. His one concern in this book is to enquire into the origin or origins of the doctrine of the incarnation: How and when did it first come to expression? And there is a related question: What does it mean to speak of 'the pre-existence of Christ' in the NT? The investigation proceeds by means of an analysis of the relevant NT titles for Jesus: Son of God, Son of Man, the Last Adam, Wisdom, the Word. In each case the pertinent texts are carefully exegeted and the views of other scholars fully taken into account. Findings and conclusions are clearly spelled out at each stage of the argument. The author also includes a treatment of the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit and a discussion of whether the first Christians thought of Jesus as an angel.

Dr. Dunn demonstrates that 'nothing in pre-Christian Judaism or the wider religious thought of the Hellenistic world . . . provides sufficient explanation of the origin of the doctrine of the incarnation . . .' (p.253). He does not believe that Jesus thought or spoke of himself as having pre-existed with God prior to his birth, but he does claim that the doctrine of the incarnation was 'an appropriate reflection on and elaboration of Jesus' own sense of sonship and eschatological mission' (p.254).

He argues that neither in the Adam Christology of Phil. 2:6-11 nor in the Wisdom Christology of Col. 1:15-20 but only in the Fourth Gospel do we find a doctrine of person pre-existence or incarnation. Nevertheless, he concludes that 'The doctrine of the incarnation began to emerge when the exalted Christ was spoken of in terms derived from the Wisdom imagery of pre-Christian Judaism' (p.259). Incarnation, then, springs from a concept of Christ as 'the climatic embodiment of God's power and purpose' . . . 'Christ showed them what God is like, the Christ-event defined God more clearly than anything else had ever done' (p.262).

This is an important book for the scholar and the student: not that all will find every argument convincing, but that this is the clearest and fullest discussion to date of these vital issues and constitutes a significant contribution to the current debate on Christology.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

The Quest of the Historical Jesus

Albert Schweitzer

SCM. xxii + 410pp. £6.50 (limp)

Students will welcome this re-issue of a classic of NT scholarship. The original German edition was published in 1906. This is a reprinting of the third English edition of 1954 with its new introduction by Schweitzer (who died in 1965 at the age of 90).

The book consists of a thorough and masterly survey of late 18th-century and 19th-century liberal lives of Jesus, from Reimarus to Wrede,

taking in writers like Friedrich Schleiermacher, D. F. Strauss and Ernest Renan on the way. Schweitzer shows how these scholars found in the Gospels what they wanted to find. In attempting to portray a Jesus freed from the theological accretions contributed by the church, they in fact presented a mirror-image of their own ideals: Jesus as they liked to think of him, not the Jesus of history. Schweitzer's own view of Jesus as an apocalyptic prophet who announced the end of the present order but who died mistaken and disappointed, is no more satisfactory. Nevertheless, this book has considerable value because it opens up the whole issue of the historical Jesus and raises questions which still have to be answered adequately.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

Paul: The Man and the Missionary

Bernard T. Smyth

Darton, Longmann & Todd. xviii + 166pp. £3.45 (paperback).

Bernard Smyth is a Columban missionary priest who (like Paul) has travelled widely and (unlike Paul) has appeared on Irish and Ulster television. His fascination with and his feeling for Paul have resulted in one of the best books on the great apostle for the ordinary Christian reader that I have come across. It is a wittily and perceptively written account of one prospector's highly personal discovery of gold in the seams of the mine of the Pauline letters.

The author makes no claim to be a scholar, but he is an addict of Paul and his enthusiasm is obvious on every page. As he considers

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Paul's life of travel and turmoil, Paul's total reliance on prayer, Paul's intimate relationship with Christ, and Paul's commitment to his mission to preach the good news of the cross, Fr. Smyth is constantly offering fresh insights into the biblical texts expressed in lively contemporary language with plenty of modern illustrations. Above all, he depicts Paul as a real man, not a plaster saint. In a final section, he considers how Paul would react to Marxism and concludes that he 'would look critically, searchingly and sympathetically' at it. This is a refreshing and stimulating book in which the author's Catholic origin rarely obtrudes and which should encourage its readers to copy the one who copied Christ.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

The Fifth Evangelist
A. M. Hunter
SCM. 136pp. £2.95
(paperback).

In the first part of this book, A. M. Hunter, Professor Emeritus of NT at Christ's College, Aberdeen, invites us to think of Paul as 'the fifth evangelist' (as P. T. Forsyth once dubbed him) whose gospel 'the heralds of Christ ought to be proclaiming today to a bewildered and sin-sick world' (p.12). From his letters, Professor Hunter has portrayed Paul, in turn, as writer, liberator, pastor, theologian, churchman, friend and saint.

After a chapter on 'the New Look on St John', Part Two offers essays on the Lord's supper, the Holy Spirit, prayer, preaching and the church's hymns. The final chapters consider those three little words, faith, love and hope, which the author believes still today sum up what it means to be a Christian. This heart-warming selection of short essays (or were they once sermons?) by a doyen of biblical expositors are easy to read and yet reflect a deep understanding of and love for the gospel. They are highly

recommended for the ordinary Christian reader as well as for the preacher.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

Men and Movements in the Primitive Church
F. F. Bruce
Paternoster Press. 159pp.
£3.00 (paperback).

Sometimes we get (or give) the impression that Paul was the only early Christian leader who really mattered. But what about Peter and the other eleven apostles? And what about Stephen, Philip (the evangelist), Apollos, James (the brother of Jesus), and John the elder? It is clear even from Paul's own writings that during his life-time there were presentations of the Christian message other than his own. What can we know about these early forms of non-Pauline Christianity? F. F. Bruce (and who better?) examined these questions and presented his answers in four lectures delivered in March 1979 as the inaugural series of annual Didsbury Lectures in the British Isles Nazarene College, Manchester. We are grateful that the publishers have quickly made them available to a wider audience. The picture of diversity in early Christianity which emerges from these studies may well cause us to modify our conception of the primitive Church as a monolithic, homogeneous institution and even to alter our approach towards varieties of doctrine and practice in the modern Church.

As usual, Prof. Bruce's highly readable, lucid style makes this book suitable for any interested reader. But NT specialists will also want to weigh up the conclusions which are based on a life-time's scholarly study and students will be grateful for up-to-date bibliographical references in the footnotes.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

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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.

This month's Forum contribution is a question addressed to his fellow readers by Maurice Dowsett of Chelmsford.

What is the Gospel? Is it fully comprehended in *John 3:16*? If so, why did Paul take the whole of his *Epistle to the Romans* to expound the Gospel? Is not the Gospel as it is popularly preached in our ('Brethren') evangelistic services a rather attenuated version?

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The April Question

The juxtaposition in the January issue of *The Harvester* of Tony Newell's article on Irony and Coralie Rendle-Short's article on Mother Teresa prompts a question in my mind: Could it be regarded as an instance of the divine irony that Albania, the country which today proclaims itself the only genuinely atheistic state in the world, should have been the birthplace of such an outstanding exponent of the love of Christ as Mother Teresa?

Mr. Fred L. Pontin replies:

To Professor Bruce's question in the April issue of your magazine the answer surely is 'Yes, it could be an instance of the divine irony . . .'

Another recent instance of this was when *The Daily Telegraph* gave its front-page headline to the death of John Lennon, who at one time had offended so many by his reference to Jesus. And the little box advertisement at the top left corner

(in juxtaposition) above the headline read 'Thank God for Jesus'!

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

We always need to be careful how we use anthropomorphisms, when we speak about God and His actions. It is true that, 'He who sits in the heaven laughs, the Lord has them in derision' (*Psa. 2:4*), but whether this justifies our use of 'irony' in speaking of God's sovereignty may be doubted, especially in the context of the question, for we cannot reasonably doubt the reality of Sister Teresa's call to Calcutta, nor can we easily think of someone else who could have carried out this labour of love equally well.

There was a game that used to be popular among intellectuals, especially historians, viz. 'IF'. It consisted in imagining what might have happened IF. The general outcome of the game was to show how little the average man understood the effects of his actions, but hardly pointed to irony on God's part.

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Saturday 7 November New Life in the Church?

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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.

Holidays in France

From Mr. Peter Farley
Dear Mr. Coad,
As the summer months approach, no doubt some of your readers will be planning a holiday in France. May I, through your columns, encourage them to make contact with an evangelical church near where they will be staying? Experience shows that holidaymakers and local Christians alike can benefit from this kind of fellowship. I should be pleased to supply names and addresses of French churches, and to provide French tracts and gospels for distribution on holiday.
Yours sincerely,
Peter Farley,
General Secretary,
France Mission Trust,
The Old Chapel,
Chapel Lane,
Minchinhampton,
Glos. GL6 9DL.

A Directory of Independent Fellowships

From Rev. Lew Park
Dear Mr. Coad,
We are attempting to compile a 'Directory' of all Fellowships and Independent House Churches, and other Independents, with a view to distributing a free directory to each, and thus establishing a link, but more important, a contact, in other areas. We must admit that this is a selfish idea, since we also find difficulty in linking young

people, and others, with live Fellowships. Could we appeal through the courtesy of your column, for any people in any area, to let us know of their groups, and in due course, we hope to send the directories forth. Yours in His things.

Rev. Lew Park,
"Flaxley",
Holme,
Hunstanton,
Norfolk, PE36 6LQ.

North Arbury Chapel, Cambridge

From Dr. Hugh Williamson
Dear Mr. Coad,
Some while ago I wrote to tell you of the plans for our congregation at North Arbury Chapel to build a permanent church to house our various activities. I thought you might therefore be interested to know that construction work began last week. We value the prayers of the Lord's people for protection of the site from vandalism, for help for those responsible for the work, and for continuing provision from God, as already manifested, in order to allow this venture to move to completion without interruption.
Yours sincerely,
Hugh Williamson,
51 Roseford Road,
Cambridge, CB4 2HA

Love and Doctrine

From Mr. Frank Betts
Dear Mr. Coad,
Recently there was correspondence concerning a proposition made by Mr. R. Smith. In one of the letters it was stated that 'love' was the practising of doctrine. May I comment, Please? Our Lord Jesus made it very

clear that the two greatest commandments were 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all your heart, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself . . .'. He further taught that loving involved 'keeping His commandments' and 'loving one another'. James and John in their epistles emphasise the need to demonstrate love by actions and help (James 2: 15-16 and 1 John 3: 17,18).

I have been in 'brethren' circles where doctrine had become a mental exercise, with resultant attitudes and actions not in the spirit of God's grace and love at all! As to those whom we consider to have less 'light' than us (!), surely they ought to be welcomed in the spirit of Romans 14:1ff., as born-again ones in the family of God. And, may I add, some of our brothers and sisters in fellowships and denominations are walking in the Spirit and in the blessing of God more than we! Let us be true to God's Word, yet accept and practise all it truly teaches us. Sincerely in the Lord Jesus
Frank Betts,
96 Durban Road,
Beckenham, Kent.

'Chasing the Dragon'

From Mr. Will Cochran
Dear Mr. Coad,
I was delighted to see Mr. Papps's reference to this book in your April issue, but two problems arise and trouble me. First, is just how the other book (which I have not read) helped him to see *Chasing the Dragon* in perspective? The second: why such a strong

recommendation to read 1 Cor. 12, rather than chapters 12, 13 and 14?

I have been challenged by the reading of Jackie Pullinger's story, and before the Lord I am no longer going to be faithless, but believing. I am not convinced that the Lord wants me to speak with tongues, nor to heal the sick (but I do not rule out these as possibilities): He does however want me to make love my aim, to desire earnestly the spiritual gifts, and especially that I may prophesy, so as to edify the church. I am 74, saved as a little child, and I want all the help I can get!

I think the problem arises partly because Paul is writing to a church which practised spiritual gifts and wishes to control the activity, whereas we are not accustomed to the activity and are looking at the matter from the other side, so to speak.

Again, the apparent disagreement between 1 Cor. 14:23 and 24 has for long troubled me, but the answer seems to lie in the word 'all' in verse 23. Paul's rule was that only two or three should speak in tongues, and then only if there was someone to interpret. In such a case an unbeliever will be impressed, especially if the interpretation reveals his personal heart-secrets; but obviously if everyone speaks in tongues, the unbeliever will indeed judge the church-members mad. Can Mr. Papps help me to get all these things into perspective? I should like to add just this: in 2 Tim. 1:6 Paul urges Timothy to *rekindle* his spiritual gift, and from this I

learn that when received, a gift should be used and developed. The receiving of a gift is not a substitute for hard work, but a starting point for further progress, progress consistent with the Bible, and I think this is where many folk go wrong and do much harm. Yours in the Bond of His grace,
Will Cochran,
9 Hillside,
Greystones,
Co. Wicklow, Eire.

Two Elections

From Mr. C. E. Oulton Lee

Dear Mr. Coad,
If I may be permitted to reply to Mr. Colin Porteous's letter in your March issue, I may say at once that I concur in his ultimate conclusion of God's great purpose to 'sum up all things in Christ'. However, it is clear that this glorious consummation will not take place in one epoch-making event. There are many threads in the loom of The Divine Operator (as William Cowper portrayed in his hymn — 'God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform . . .') which are being woven together — some inserted at intervals, others taken out of the course of history from time to time — but in the end producing the foreordained perfect pattern, 'to the praise of His glory' (Eph. 1.). Whilst it is essentially true that there can be but one Gospel, for sinful man must be reconciled to The Holy God and that involves acceptance by faith of God's Message, yet in successive ages the presentation of that Message has necessarily taken different forms suited to the then current need. The gospel preached to the children of Israel in the wilderness (Heb. 4:2) did not take the same form as that presented to us, nor could it have done so, for it had a different objective; contrast their promised Rest with ours. Their venal sin however was precisely ours — disobedience to God's call. The percentage of believers then was comparably minimal, according to the sacred record, through unbelief. If God elects, it is for some specific objective; and this is manifest in the case of

Abraham, whose seed was to comprise a heavenly people having the Hope of a heavenly destiny and glory, and collaterally an earthly people with earthly blessings, an earthly Hope and destiny, and earthly authority and privileges. The whole remained a 'Mystery' until God Himself chose to reveal it; first, by sending His only Son into the world, but only directly disclosed by Him after His resurrection, and ultimately fully expounded by His chosen Apostle Paul whose commission it was 'to complete the Message of God' — in other words, to issue the final declaration of the Mystery which had been 'hid in God from ages and from generations but now revealed through His holy apostles and prophets' (Col. 1:25-29).

'The last shall be first'; and so the last to be revealed and instituted — the Church — will be the first to be completed; and at the moment of her completion she will be caught up to meet her glorious Lord in accordance with 1 Thess. 4:17. That having been accomplished 'to the praise of the glory of His grace', God takes up His purpose for the rescue, conversion and blessing of the earthly nation of His choice — Israel — who will literally be brought to a national recognition of their Messiah in a single day by 'the Epiphany of His Parousia', that is to say, His sudden appearance upon the Mount of Olives 'in power and great glory', to the simultaneous shattering of His and their enemies.

When therefore Christ predicted: 'Except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened' (Matt. 24:22), to whom did He refer as 'the elect'? Surely not the Church, for her election will have been already completed and His people removed from this scene; so that the prediction cannot relate to them. It must therefore of necessity relate to those who are then being almost overwhelmed by their foes and the privations which they are suffering, and in immediate peril of extinction, viz: the nation of Israel

together with those who cleave to them throughout the time of 'Jacob's Trouble', in other words, 'the Day of Wrath', and 'The Great Tribulation'. God will not permit them to be exterminated, because it is to be through them — 'the Remnant' — that He is to bring about the culmination of His great purposes for them as a nation and His global blessing through their earthly supremacy; when 'The LORD shall send forth the rod of Thy strength out of Zion' (Ps. 110:2) and the nations that worship God shall go up to the mount of the LORD, to Jerusalem. Thus all predicted events must take place in succession before that glorious Day when 'all things shall be summed up

in Christ'. And finally, I would commend to Mr. Porteous the interpretation of 'The City Foursquare' as diagrammatically represented as a vast Pyramid of which Christ Himself is the capstone, Israel the earthly base (with its 12 gates) and the Church involved between the two (a heavenly administration) the whole having been glimpsed in the Patriarch's Dream — Jacob's Ladder — and referred to by the Lord Himself in John 1:51, (and see Isa. 25:7). Yours sincerely,
C. E. Oulton Lee,
'Stroma',
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Parkgate,
South Wirral,
Cheshire. L64 6QN

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NEWS PAGE



Evangelism

Dick Saunders concluded a nine-week tour of South Africa on April 17 with a large united rally in central Durban. During this visit, Dick and Betty were able to meet many who had tuned in to the Way to Life broadcasts from Swaziland and Lesotho. Although crowds were not over-large, substantial numbers professed conversion.

Luis Palau is holding a crusade in Scotland for the third year. The Glasgow Crusade will last five weeks from May 3 to June 7 and has already been featured in the Church of Scotland magazine, *Life and Work*. The Team is responsible for the late night religious broadcasting spot on Scottish Television during the week May 3-9. An advisory Council has been set up to help plan Luis Palau's future ministry in Britain. The co-chairmen are the Rev. Richard Bewes and Doug Barnett. The Council's address is 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT.

Eric Hutchings requests prayer for the Hour of Revival team involved in a heavy load of seven different programmes each week. Also for victory over the threat from inflation which has already forced a cut-back in the radio work. *Drama* continues to make an important contribution to evangelism. During the Scripture Union 'Spring into Life' campaign the Footprints Theatre Company made a considerable impact on teachers and pupils. 'In ten minutes, you have revolutionized the attitude to Christianity in this school', said a Brighton headmaster, after they had taken his

school assembly. And a headmaster in March in Cambridgeshire said that Footprints 'certainly bring Christianity alive in a way I have never seen before'. A coffee house featured in the *Egon Ronay 'Just a Bite' guide* is an unusual agency for evangelism. The Good News Centre in Newent, Gloucestershire, was started by members of a local assembly, Glebe Gospel Chapel. A charitable company was formed with seven directors representing three local church fellowships. Although there was no apparent source of finance, the whole project has been paid for by gifts and when the centre opened in March 1980 over £22,000 had been received. It incorporates a bookshop, a coffee house and a display of Third World crafts. A registered charity, it is directed and staffed by volunteers. A full-time manager has responsibility for the day to day organization of this ministry of community service and literature distribution. During the week over thirty people are involved in the ministry. It is intended to develop the centre further especially in the area of counselling. The first floor could provide two living units possibly for Christian workers or missionaries on furlough.

Holiday Activities

Gospel Literature Outreach invites young people to help this summer in various types of Christian witness: open air meetings, beach evangelism, market bookstands, children's meetings, evangelistic film shows, letterbox distribution and door to door visitation with sale of books, cassettes

and gospel recordings. The 21 Crusades will be held between July 4 and September 13. Applicants need to be at least 17 to go abroad (16 if working in this country). Cost of board and accommodation ranges between £12 to £25 per week, according to local circumstances. Some participants spend a month, others give only a week. Fluent French speakers are asked to consider helping GLO's resident team in Marseilles. Facility with the language, although helpful, is not essential for short-term outreach. The work of GLO is not unlike that of Operation Mobilization but is of a more exclusively 'assembly' nature.

India

The Stewards Association in India has now been operating for more than 25 years and the brethren responsible are seeking guidance from institutions and assemblies in India about the future of the Association and how it can best help local churches. Among the activities it has recently engaged in, is a joint effort with various Christian hospitals to sponsor students for medical, nursing and paramedical courses. Three men and twelve women have so far been helped in this way. A *Camping and Convention Centre* is being established in South India. It is intended to provide accommodation for 256 people when the project is completed. The Treasurer is Mr. G. W. Benjamin of 33 Hutchins Road, Bangalore 560005.

Literature

Christian Literature Crusade celebrate their 40th anniversary on November 1,

1981. The list of workers they need offers a striking reminder of the range of their ministry. A Spanish-speaking missionary couple is needed to manage the bookshop in Panama City and other Spanish-speaking literature missionaries for Chile and Venezuela. Visas are available for a couple needed for permanent assignment to Thailand to learn the language and to distribute literature. A couple is needed for literature work in a Muslim area in the Middle East. A French-speaking couple are needed to strengthen the ministry of the store in Montreal. An English-speaking missionary couple is needed in Singapore and another to direct the English language department in Tokyo after completing Japanese language study. Support workers are needed in Liberia, the Philippines and Korea. *Lion Publishing* is working with Puffin Books ('the most established children's paperback list in the world') to publish the *Puffin Children's Bible*. It contains 256 pages and all the major Old and New Testament stories, retold by Pat Alexander. There are large illustrations on every page, many in full colour. It will naturally be reviewed in *The Harvester*.

Homes for the Handicapped

The home for the mentally handicapped at Peacehaven welcomed its first residents, Dorothy, Stephen and Jonathan, during the year 1980/1981. As John and Margaret Mason, the first house parents, move to another area of work, there is a need for single people or a married couple to take day to

day responsibility for the running of the home which offers places to adults who are moderately or mildly mentally handicapped and without any serious physical or psychological disability. Each is expected to attend some form of sheltered work or training although from time to time there will be short periods when this may not be possible. Full details may be obtained from Mrs. Ruth Chipperfield, 124 Butterfield Park, Dublin 14, Ireland.

It is fitting — and quite conceivably part of God's plan — that the International Year for Disabled People sees the opening of a Christian Family Home for the Handicapped in Derby, after five years of prayer, planning, preparation — and God's provision. The project, as the name implies, is to provide and maintain a Christian family home for those who by reason of physical or mental handicap are unable to do so for themselves. The family members will be born-again believers, or people who are used to an evangelical home background. The house is now almost ready, much of the work having been done by the home parents, who have bought the house for this purpose. A charitable Trust has been formed to oversee the work. The cost of alterations to the property to bring it up to the Fire Officer's standards, the complete re-wiring of the property, and many improvements, has been met mainly by donations from the Lord's people. No special grants have been available from authorities, and so the scheme can operate free of obligations to non-Christian bodies and their pressures, which could hinder its Christian character. Interested people (whether as

prospective family members — even for the apparently distant future, or for general Christian fellowship/prayer support/practical help) are invited to contact Mr. & Mrs. G. Mansfield direct for information at 195 Burton Road, Derby, DE3 6AB.

Relief

Tear Fund and World Vision continue to supply information of appalling need in various parts of the world. 1.5 million refugees fled from the Ogaden region of Ethiopia in 1979 and 1980. Many thousands are still in Somalia having been forced to exchange their nomadic life-style for settling in mud huts. Food is scarce and the refugees mainly live on maize, flour and dried skimmed milk. In addition, Somalia has suffered from one of the worst droughts in living memory. Meanwhile in Northern Uganda 500,000 people face starvation, appalling health conditions and a wrecked society in their forgotten barren land. Their economy is in ruins and they have no work. There is little health care and their land is poorly farmed. From tiny El Salvador, at least 50,000 displaced people have fled into neighbouring Honduras with only the clothes on their backs. 10,000 children have been orphaned by the hostilities there. They need the basics of survival: food, medicines, clothes. Meanwhile, in El Salvador itself, two World Vision project leaders have been assassinated. . . . No wonder there are constant appeals for funds to help in meeting the immediate short term needs and also in supporting rural development projects. For the benefit of any readers who may not know the addresses of the organizations mentioned, they are: World

Vision, 146 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4; Tear Fund, 11 Station Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 9AA.

Dr. T. Wilkinson Riddle

Dr. Wilkinson Riddle of Hove, who still writes a popular column in the weekly *Christian Herald*, was 95 on April 18. Congratulations and best wishes came from leading figures in church and newspaper circles. In addition to 35 years as a Baptist minister in Plymouth, London and Essex, his work appeared regularly in the *Daily Mirror*, *Sunday Empire News* (now part of the *News of the World*), the *Western Evening Herald*, the *Life of Faith*, the *Baptist Times*, and the *Witness*. He has worked for 43 years on the *Christian Herald*.

Urban Mission

Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission was established on the day the volcano erupted in Brixton. Over 250 people attended the inaugural meeting in St. Martins in the Bull Ring in Birmingham. The group plans to foster a Christian presence in an area where oppression, poverty and discrimination call for an active expression of God's demands for love, justice and reconciliation. By the turn of the century it is likely that 70% of the world's population will be classed as the urban poor. At present, churches in urban industrial areas are experiencing either death or resurrection. 'A Manifesto for Urban Mission' is available in leaflet or poster form from ECUM, Scripture Union House, 130 City Road, London EC1V 2NJ. *Birmingham City Mission* continues to make its own contribution to urban mission, as the most recent issue of

BCM Outreach makes clear. Among much else, it has stories about open air preaching and the work in the hostel — also a remarkable account of how attempts to open a charity shop and mission base in the Stratford Road in Birmingham led to the establishment of a charity shop in Stratford upon Avon!

Home Call

Frank Crofts, MBE, on April 2, aged 63. He had been in failing health for some time but was able to meet the Queen three weeks before he died to receive his award of the MBE and to share his ministry as senior Scripture Reader of SASRA with her. A winsome and cheerful person, he was greatly supported throughout his long ministry by his wife Vera, herself a Lady Scripture Reader; together they were greatly used of God in the conversion and building up of many. He will be remembered particularly for his active involvement in the assemblies at Aldershot and Camberley.

Thomas F. Scudder on March 1, aged 92. Civil Service appointments took him to various parts of the country including Swanage, Liverpool and Leicester, before he moved to Bromley over 40 years ago. Since that time he was a much respected Elder at Brook Lane Chapel, but his influence for Christ was felt over a wide area, resulting from helpful ministry greatly appreciated by the Assemblies he visited so regularly until prevented by physical limitations.

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

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund:

Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during April amounted to £529.72.

Missionaries' Children's Fund:

29 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund during March and April amounted to £5,666.00 and £463.75 respectively.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during April amounted to £4,193.83.

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.

Blackburn, A. G.:

Salford 4-11; Exmouth Area 14-19; Chard 20; Exmouth 23; Weymouth 28-30.

Campbell, B.:

Estartit, Spain 1-5; Falmouth 6; Rescloggan 7; Falmouth 8-13; Leedstown 14; Penzance 20; Falmouth 21-26; Carbis Bay 28.

Galyer, W. S.:

Epsom Races 5-6; Staines 7; Balham 9; Trafalgar Square 13; Ewell & Morden 14; Claygate & Stretham 16;

Corsham 18-21; Norbiton 22; Walthamstow 24 & 30; Cambridge Fair 26-29.

Gillham, S.:

Sturminster Newton 2 & 9; West Moors 6; Chandlers Ford/Chickerell 7; Wareham for Christ Crusade June 11-July 2.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Farnham, Surrey 7; Morelands Bible College 12-13; Horsham, Salisbury, Wilts, 14; Mattishall, Norfolk 21; Norwich 28.

Lowther, G. K.:

Grimsby 1-5; Littleport 6-7; Hopton, Nr. Diss 10; Lindley Lodge 12-14; Nuneaton 14-16; Grimsby 18-30.

Phillips, C.:

Bethany Kensington 14, 21, 28; St. Albans Thirlmere 16, 23, 30; Enfield Highway 17, 24; Chingford 14, 21; Emerson Park Hornchurch 18, 25; Kingston 28.

Pierce, D. H.:

Copplestone Tent Crusade 1-7; Marwood Tent Crusade 14-28.

Short, S. S.:

Orkney 1; Shetland 2-11; Nailsea 14; Hutton, Avon 15; Bristol 17; Newport, Gwent 21; Neath 22, 24; Bath 28, 29; Coleford 30.

Stringer, D.:

Ilfracombe 1-2; East London 3-4; Norfolk 5-7; Around London Tour 8-12; Long Eaton 13-14; Stapleton 15-17; Saffron Walden 18-20; Rugby 21; Saffron Walden 22-24; Sunderland 25-28; Newcastle 29; Bournemouth 30.

Tatford, F. A.:

France, June.

Thurston, A.:

Strete, 1, 8, 15; Plymouth, Westhill 2; High Bickington 3; Dartmoor Prison 5, 12, 19; Kingsbridge 7, 9, 16; Plymstock 7; Chillington 10; Ivybridge 14, 17; Dawlish School 17; Kingsbridge 19; Dartmouth 21; Holiday 22-29.

Tryon, G. C.:

Guildford 2, 9; Plumstead 3, 10; Fetcham 4; Carshalton 7; Balham 8; Loampit 14; Eltham Park 17; Reigate 18; Holiday 20-30.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Brentwood:

25th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service, Sawyers Hall, Lane Chapel, on July 4 at 6.30 p.m. Speakers: Edgar Hawkins, Len Cook and George Harpur.

Donington, Salop

14th Annual Bible Convention will be held in the Rectory Grounds, Donington, Albrighton, Salop, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 12-14 June. Speakers: Michael Wilcock and Alan Nute. Subject: 1 Cor. 8:1 to 1 Cor. 11:1.

Ealing, W.5.

Conference to be held in Grove Hall, The Grove, Ealing, on 6 June at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Speakers: J. M. Riddle, A. Wiseman.

Hull:

Golden Jubilee of Walton Street Church, Hull, North Humberside, July 11 and 12. Saturday 3.00 p.m. & 6.00 p.m. Sunday 3.30 p.m. & 6.30 p.m. Tea provided both days. Further information contact: L. Young, 7

Greystone Avenue, Hull, HU5 5BD.

Littleport, Cambs.

Gospel Hall, City Road. Ministry. June 6 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther.

London, SE1:

The London City Mission One Day Conference, Thursday, June 18, at 175 Tower Bridge Road, London, SE1. Subject: 'A Christian Perspective on Counselling'. Speaker: Trevor Partridge (Crusade for World Revival). Also to be held at London City Mission headquarters 'Youth Alive Weekend' from June 5 to 7. For further details of both events tel: London City Mission, 01-407 7585.

London, S.W.1.

Convention, Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate, London S.W.1, on July 11 at 10.30 a.m., 3.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. Speakers: W. Barr, M. Hall, R. Hill, A. Leckie.

London, W.10

Annual Conference, Hope Hall, Kilburn Lane, June 27 at 3.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: W. Craig, R. Hill.

Nuneaton:

Manor Court Rooms, Manor Court Road. Ministry. June 15 & 16. Speaker: G. K. Lowther (Grimsby).

Wareham, Dorset

'Wareham for Christ Crusade', 13-28 June, the Dorset Marquee at Wareham Middle School, Worgret Road. Crusade conducted by Stephen Gillham. Details from W. E. Cade, West Lynch Farm, Corfe Castle, Wareham (Tel: Corfe Castle 480293).

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It is sixteen years since the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship published its Special Issue of its Journal on the subject of Pentecostalism: or the Charismatic Movement, as we should call it today. That issue is long out of print, but it is probable that its main thrust would not be greatly altered today. And if any thought that the subject of which it dealt would quickly go away, then the years that have passed have shown them how mistaken they were.

What is a church to do, when it finds its members divided on this issue? Too often the result has been bitterness of spirit and mutual exclusion — leaving one or both parties with a sense of rejection and injury. Of course, if the issue extends to the actual conduct of church members in its public activities, then it may be necessary that there should be agreement to meet separately: no church can prosper if some members feel themselves impelled to practices which cause offence and conscientious difficulties to others. But such a parting of the ways need not be bitter: it should surely be possible for both parties to acknowledge the sincerity and the brotherhood in Christ of each other, and to agree to differ with mutual respect: and to retain such links of fellowship as are available.

The real problems are often expressed in doctrinal terms (even if the root causes may be very different). There can be no doubt that both sides are guilty of doubtful exegesis of Scripture. To insist that the 'gifts' ceased in the apostolic age is based upon a doubtful interpretation of 1 Cor. 13:8-10 elders must recognise that to insist on dogmatic adherence to a questionable interpretation of Scripture, in opposition to what some will consider to be their plain experience of God, supported by what they read elsewhere in the New Testament, must be a recipe for disaster. The same might be said to those who insist on a demonic origin for certain 'manifestations' (Mat. 12:24-31 should surely cause any thoughtful Christian to have care in using such an argument). But, on the other side of the argument, 'charismatic' exegesis of Scripture is often guilty of taking a number of scriptures out of proportion to the testimony of Scripture as a whole, and of using Biblical terms in ways which do not correspond to their Biblical usage. It is no bad thing to take a Young's or Strong's Concordance, to look up every reference to the Spirit, and to write each out under suitably classified headings. Then write out all the passages (say three verses on either side of the reference) in which the term 'the baptism of the Spirit' is used, and consider them carefully. It might take a few hours: but the person who has completed the exercise will have more right to air his views than most of us! Is the unity of a church in the bond of peace worth such an effort, you elders?

WHEN MORNING BREAKS

Tony Newell

*Another of Dr. Newell's appreciated meditations:
this time on life after death*

Last night — as I write these words on a grey March day — I dreamed, as I frequently do, about my father. He died in 1974 and his body lies buried in the city cemetery of St. Albans, but my father himself, as a Christian, must now be 'at home' with his Lord. I have never dreamed about his present state; indeed, I have never deliberately contemplated what my father's condition might be like. Over the years, however, there comes increasing pressure to attempt to visualize the circumstances of the growing number of believing relatives and friends who have passed through death to enter upon an eternal existence with their Saviour. We try not to think of the position of those who did not believe.

Of course, to imagine heaven is notoriously difficult. The attempts of Dante and Milton were not particularly successful, while in his more humble Narnia chronicle C. S. Lewis depicted the imaginary hereafter of his imaginary world as a perfected duplicate of the attractive ethos and landscape of Narnia itself. His vision possesses its peculiar felicities, such as the presence of animals. Compared with heaven's promised eternity our three score years and ten on earth are merely a fleeting moment, and our Lord proffers this future existence with Himself as the supreme blessing, what Catholics call 'the beatific vision'. So sensible speculation about the afterlife seems legitimate enough.

Philosophers of religion still concern themselves with the age-old questions of death and human destiny. Bertrand Russell may have written in **Why I am not a Christian**, 'It is not rational arguments but emotions that cause belief in a future life', but these emotions, if that is in fact all they are, appear sufficiently deep-seated to persist. The Judaeo-Christian conception of death is of 'something real and fearful', John Hick emphasizes in one of his articles. 'Only through the sovereign creative love of God', he claims, 'can there be new existence beyond the grave'; there are formidable problems associated with the idea of continuing personal awareness. Do I

enter the next life with my full quota of lived experience intact to the very moment of death, or does a kindly Providence obliterate disturbing memories? If I die very young, is my unfulfilled potential realized and supplied? For all that the idea of disembodied souls has exercised a powerful influence throughout the Christian era, the Bible presents rather an essential unity of body and spirit which for a continued awareness of personal identity after death demands the doctrine of resurrection. I certainly accept that without this particular body I shouldn't be the same me. So the promised afterlife requires, to use Hick's words again, 'the re-creation or reconstitution of the human psychophysical individual, not as the organism that has died but as . . . a "spiritual body"'. This 'new' eternal being must possess total continuity of identity with the person whose earthly life has terminated. Despite these problems, however, widespread belief in personal existence after death continues to flourish.

Popular art is a reliable barometer of common thinking. Recent books and films in the science fiction genre capitalize on our interest in possible futures. They provide reassurance that the human race will continue (and usually recognize that evil will also persist wherever human beings migrate and colonize). Some envisage longer-lifespans, or periodical rejuvenation so that death is almost banished. Beneath the stories of adventure among the stars there lies this substratum of comfort, this reaffirmation that the race will survive and that personal immortality may become a possibility and the last enemy be finally conquered.

Philip José Farmer has published a sequence of four novels on the theme of resurrection which totals 1,417 pages. With their calculated plotting and rapid American narrative style the books sell well, and appeal both to the expanding fantasy and science fiction market and also to our natural interest in imaginative depiction of the afterlife. The 'Riverworld' tetralogy of **To Your Scattered Bodies Go**, **The Fabulous Riverboat**, **The Dark Design** and **The Magic Labyrinth** makes compulsive reading in which riotous adventure is heavily spiced with mystery. It

explores what could happen if all the human dead were resurrected in perfect and unaging early maturity in one vast, environmentally benign river valley which covers an entire planet. The sequence draws on the archetype of the quest as its heroes struggle to reach the stronghold which houses the beings who constructed and operate the Riverworld. But the outcome is disappointing. Those responsible for the resurrection of humanity on a distant planet turn out, after all, to be themselves advanced human beings whose progress is the result of the initiative of an enterprising and benevolent race, long extinct, from outer space.

As a fiction of ideas the tetralogy fails because its focus is diverted from the exploration of implications to sheer adventure. Farmer allows himself to recount the exploits of too many undifferentiated characters. Structurally insecure, stylistically impoverished, thematically confused, his books fail to attain the level which one feels their imaginative achievement deserves. For Farmer's representative modern outlook, death is simply total extinction, and an afterlife could only be the consequence of scientific advances beyond our present comprehension. There is no place for God nor for anything not susceptible of a 'scientific' explanation.

The writings of the Bible, on the other hand, are impressionistic rather than precise, literary rather than scientific. God wants us to know that our ultimate destiny matters deeply to Him, while it is unnecessary for our wellbeing to have specific details of that future prospect disclosed. Sufficient is made clear for our earthly pathway, so that we may rest in the creative, redemptive, persevering love of God and look forward to the final full enjoyment of His eternal presence. There are many things we should like to be told about that presence — but the Bible leaves our natural inquisitiveness unsatisfied. Human language, of course, may well be totally incapable of conveying the facts about heaven: we can't conceive of experience which is released from the tyranny of time, nor of existence which isn't to be described in terms of physical senses and three dimensions. Hence the often grotesque results of those who have tried to depict heaven, such as Mil-

ton's narrative of the war which led to Satan's expulsion, or Robert Pollok's prolix pre-Victorian poem *The Course of Time*, or Alexander Whyte's ludicrous picture of Lazarus reluctantly hanging his harp on a nail before leaving in obedience to the Lord's 'Come forth!'

Biblical terminology ('mansions above', for example, and similar diction familiar from many hymns) does no harm so long as we realize that we're simply copying the biblical authors' metaphorical language. They uniformly preserve a reverent reticence about the afterlife, and more especially about heaven: the abode of God cannot be spoken of lightly. It is the place of perfection, and we are not yet equipped to appreciate that.

An astonishing revelation has nevertheless been brought to us: that through our Lord Jesus Christ, the transcendent God in heaven has become our Father, and that an 'imperishable, undefiled and unfading inheritance' is being kept there for us (*1 Pet. 1:4*). Details, although fascinating to speculate on, are of no essential importance. If we can grasp this fact, we shall surely see God's revelation, not as an inadequate response to human enquiry, but as a spur to practical Christian living. We shall be truly content with those glimpses our loving Father has permitted of what lies ahead: 'We shall be changed. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality' (*1 Cor. 15:52,53*). And at last we shall even, perhaps, be enabled to echo the apostle's sublime wish, 'My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better' (*Phil. 1:23*).

Human imagination and language may fail, but the Bible gives me valid and powerful assurance that God — our Father! — has His very best in store for me. It affirms that my father, together with all who loved the Lord in this life, is already enjoying something of this promised felicity. 'We know that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into His presence' (*2 Cor. 4:14*). There is really nothing more we need to know now. And there will be all eternity in which to explore the reality while we willingly and perfectly carry out God's perfect will.



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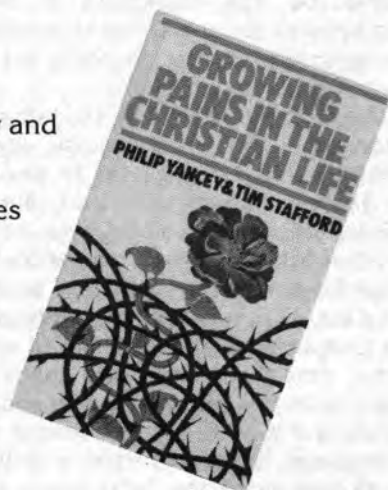
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THE GLENWOOD STORY

A Tent into a Church

Alfred Harker

Alf Harker is a retired local government officer who served the Cardiff City Council for many years. Formerly in fellowship at Mackintosh Hall, Cardiff, he was commended by that church to work in Llanedeyrn and was a moving spirit in the formation of Glenwood Church, of which he is one of the senior elders. He is well known in connection with the South Wales young peoples' camp work, of which he was chairman.

In the mid-sixties the Cardiff City Council commenced the development of the estates of Llanedeyrn and Pentwyn which adjoin the residential area of Cyncoed, an area of well established and generally expensive housing. The two estates have a link road and together comprise some 5,500 homes of which about half are owned by the local authority. This equal balance of private and council homes on the same estates has the advantage that any barrier between the two is avoided: everyone has the common bond of living 'on the estate'. 20,000 people live in the area, 1,000 of whom are pensioners. The rest are roughly divided equally into adults and children up to school leaving age.

Allocations were made in the early planning stages for three churches: one each for the Church in Wales, Roman Catholics and Baptists. The Baptists have built their church at the entrance to the estate and encourage its use by the Methodists and Congregationalists. The Catholics and Church in Wales have schools on the estates which they also use for worship until such time as they

take up their options to build. A large house-group also exists, and the Elim Pentecostal Church has several youth and children's groups meeting in schools and community buildings.

In early 1973 a group of Sunday School teachers from Mackintosh Hall (approximately three miles away) visited the area with a view to transporting children to their Sunday School. Later in the year, however, one of those present at the canvass mentioned the need to Counties Evangelist, Glyn Morgan, and this resulted in a meeting being held in March 1974 which was attended by representatives of local assemblies to discuss a crusade. The organisation of the tent crusade was carried out by a committee of fifteen, the majority of whom were already living on the estates. Application was made to erect a tent on what was considered to be a suitable site but this was refused by the City Council as work was expected to be commenced there on a new school. However, the Council found an alternative site for us; a choice which, under the Lord's plan, was to prove significant.

The tent was erected on three occasions on this site in 1974, 1975 and 1978. The crusades were directed towards children who were encouraged to bring parents (with suitable rewards!). Total numbers ranged from 300/400 in 1974 to 400/600 in 1978. In June 1974, as some readers will remember, the Counties' Tent was damaged by fire at this site, but this again turned to good and gained the sympathy of the local residents who were embarrassed by the vandalism.

Difficulties were experienced in the availability of premises for follow-up work. In 1974 some children met in nearby homes. Others were transported to Sunday School, at first by mini-bus and later by a double decker bus hired by the assembly at Mackintosh Hall. Although this arrangement filled the gap it was not considered a satisfactory solution, since the children were taken away from their environment and groups were created within the Sunday School. The following year, with a change of caretaker, a local school became available for the 'Friday Nighters' children's meetings, and follow-up was now possible within 200 yards of the tent site.

Coffee mornings, young wives and discussion groups were held in homes following the 1974 tent. This enabled contacts, made at the tent, to be maintained. The Young Wives' was a time of 'close' fellowship as all available chairs and space were taken up!

In 1978 Glyn Morgan erected his tent on the site for what was to be the last time. It was then hoped that by the following year work could commence on a permanent building. The value of the tents cannot be over-estimated, for out of this work many contacts were made, and even now our best introduction when visiting homes is 'Do you remember the tent?'

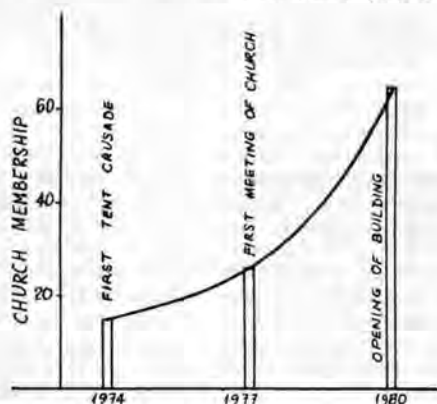
There was a growing feeling among the Christians involved in the tent work that the Lord was leading towards the formation of a local church and that steps should be taken to obtain a site for the erection of a building in which to house it.

The estates are built on ground

owned by the Local Authority. Under the planning proposals, the five acre site on which the tent was erected had been designated as a residential area. Under the proposals the allocation of the three church sites had been considered adequate. It was therefore with much dependence on the Lord that application was made in November 1974 for permission to build a church on the tent site. Unbeknown to us our application coincided with a Planning Authority sample survey of the area to find out which facilities were desired by the residents. The result was a re-allocation of the site for 'leisure and amenities purposes, these to include a kick-about area, children's play area, Scouts' and Guides' Headquarters and a Church building'. The original choice of the tent site referred to above was an indication of the Lord overruling. Outline Planning Permission was given in April 1978. We praised the Lord!

At this time we had envisaged a multi-purpose church building to accommodate 200 people and costing about £80,000. But the Lord, again, had other plans. Gradually, with the prospect of help from the Manpower Services Commission to the tune of £40,000 towards the cost of labour, it was considered prudent to erect a sports hall in addition to the church building. This would give extra facilities at little additional cost to us and appeared very attractive to the Commission. We proceeded along these lines. The Lord was again to remind us of His plan. The difficulty in obtaining the right type of labour under the Commission's scheme and the change of policy of a new

Government, meant that help from the Commission would not be forthcoming. We were sure that the Lord had led us in this matter of the sports hall. Should we abandon this part of the scheme? Could we afford it? As we prayed together we became more sure of His leading and decided to go on. Perhaps we should build in two stages. Which part first? The sports hall? Why that? We considered that we would have more success in inviting people into a building of this type in which we could also temporarily hold services, than into a traditional church building. As we look around us in Wales it is sad to see many of the traditional buildings closing down — the need of God however still remains in the hearts of the people.



£60,000 subject to the usual securities. A further £20,000 was available from another source. In order to guarantee repayment, members of the church, still small in numbers, covenanted almost £300 per week for a period of 7 years. Escalation pushed the final cost of the sports hall complex up to £140,000. Recently an amount of over £10,000 was required to enable a final payment to be made to the builder on completion of the building. A Thanksgiving Day was arranged for February 1st 1981 when offerings totalled £6,000. A further private gift of £5,000 enabled us to complete our commitment. How often we came to the Lord in prayer! Sometimes when the need was urgent we met to-

mitments which must first be met.

The building was opened on 11th October, 1980 with great rejoicing. The opening ceremony was performed by the Rt. Hon. George Thomas, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons. Mr. Thomas represents Cardiff West and bears witness to what God has done in his life. The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of the City of Cardiff, the Chairman of the South Glamorgan County Council, Council Members and members of local organisations, community workers, schools' representatives and others were present to swell the congregation to 500.

It was a most unusual occasion and even guests who were not Christians remarked that God's presence seems to be here.

The national and local press gave us good coverage and the local radio station broadcast a half-hour programme to mark the event. You may consider such a distinguished opening ceremony inappropriate for a Christian commitment, but it stemmed from our desire to be involved with the community and it has been our practice to take part in various local activities including the local carnival and fête. In the last two years we have entered floats on the themes of 'Noah's Ark' and 'All the Children of the World'. We involved children and parents and sought to do our best, with the result that we won the competition for the best float on both occasions. This gave us the opportunity to distribute literature telling folks about Glenwood Church and what we stood for. Interesting and rewarding conversations resulted. With this experience in mind we sought to identify the opening with our neighbours so that they would regard Glenwood Church Centre as their home and Glenwood Church as their church. The following week-end was devoted to the teaching of God's Word with thanksgiving for His provision. In the early stages of our meeting together in homes we made use of tapes on various parts of the scriptures by Rev. David Pawson of Guildford. He had been a great help, though unaware, in the laying of the foundation of the church. It was fitting, therefore, that he be asked to conduct the week-end. Large num-

bers attended with over 600 on the Saturday evening and 730 at the Sunday evening after-Church session. The talk on Sunday afternoon on the subject of the Jews was informative, enlightening and stimulating and reflected his personal zeal for God's ancient people. Many Jewish families live in the adjacent Cyncoed area, and indeed the local Jewish Society who had a representative at the meeting, asked David to return and address them.

The following day Glyn Morgan started two weeks of 'Family Festival'. Particular emphasis was made to reach the older age groups but the prime motive was to forge the vital link between the tent and the new building.

The Development of the Local Church

As we turn to this aspect we must retrace our steps and bear in mind that feelings are often difficult to record in words. At the time of the 1974 tent there were only fifteen people from eight families involved. We continued to meet after the tent, at monthly intervals, in our homes, for Bible study and prayer. This gradually developed into weekly meetings but we all still continued with our commitments to our own various assemblies throughout the City.

At a meeting held in March 1975 it was minuted 'The need to establish a basis for the formation of a local church was necessary and it was agreed that this should be the aim of the Bible studies when the present series was concluded'. Thus we began to examine many of the doctrines and practices of fellowships to which we belonged. We used our experience, seeking to retain those good traditions and discarding those traditions we considered inappropriate. Always we tried to allow the Holy Spirit to work in our hearts and minds by searching the Scriptures. In this way we approached such subjects as the basic doctrines of our faith, the autonomy of the local church, elders, deacons, the role of sisters. The freedom with which we were able to discuss these matters was tremendous. As every aspect was thrashed out we were aware of

The architect set to work. The sports hall, 80 x 50 metres in area and 25 metres high, would be capable of providing a full-size five-a-side football area or 4 badminton courts. A viewing area, facilities for the disabled, changing rooms and showers, a large kitchen and a lounge seating about 70 would be incorporated. The estimate at this time for the sports hall complex was £110,000 rising to about £200,000 with the addition of the church building. Despite many generous gifts it became evident that about £80,000 would need to be borrowed. Members of the church negotiated with various bodies in respect of the finance and indeed became quite expert in setting up finance for projects of this type. (Several groups have since availed themselves of their experience.) A bank was sympathetic and agreed to lend

together in the early mornings. Constantly we prayed as individuals. We reminded ourselves over and over again that 'The cattle on a thousand hills are His' and if we pressed on in the sure knowledge of His will He would provide.

Another example of answers to prayer (and there are many others) is the matter of the annual ground rent on this leasehold property. Imagine our dismay when we were informed that this would drain our resources by £5,400 every year. We praise the Lord that, in recognition of the benefit the building would be to the community, the Council eventually reduced this to £250!

It is not envisaged that the church building will be commenced in the near future, as we feel the need to consolidate and consider the direction in which the Lord will lead us. We now have many financial com-



the fact that we were in a new situation with the advantages that that gives, but also mindful that we were laying the basis for many years to come. Not every subject we discussed reached an immediate conclusion. We studied the Scriptures and considered deeply the role of sisters in the church over a period of some three years. Two years after the time when sisters first took part in the prayer meetings we recognised the contribution our sisters could make, excluding only teaching, in all our activities including our times of open Worship.

When in May 1977 a local school became available to us on Sunday mornings we met, with the commendation of our various churches, to worship. This first meeting was attended by 33 people, 7 of whom were visitors. How exciting it was to sit together around the Lord's table, listen to ministry on the Upper Room passage and lift our hearts in praise! We became aware of the new commandment to love one another and this awareness is still very much a feature of Glenwood today. We continue to work and pray to this end. The format of our Sunday service included a chairman, consecutive Bible teaching, open worship and the partaking of the bread and wine in remembrance of our Lord. It may be thought that this was not the sort of meeting to which to invite the unsaved — but they came.

Slowly our numbers increased as the Lord worked in the hearts of individuals: three Jehovah's Witnesses from one family, a person as a result of a contact at the carnival, and a mother contacted through her child attending 'Friday Nighters'. We met some who had lost touch with their churches as a result of moving house. It has been a special thrill to see several who seemingly almost turned from the Lord having their faith rekindled as individuals and families. Telephone calls were received from churches outside the estate asking us to visit some of their members. A number of these are now active in the church. Other folk, attending churches outside the area, became aware of the possibilities of fellowship and service in their own locality. Others living in areas close to the estates joined us.

At the time of this article about 100 people are committed to Glenwood with a larger number more loosely associated. Although baptism is taught as a matter of obedience to the Lord it is not considered to be a condition of membership. With no baptistry in our present building, Rumney Gospel Chapel graciously and with delight accommodated us on a Sunday evening in February when we had the pleasure of baptising three ladies and three men.

With the Halls of Residence of the University of Wales and U.W.I.S.T. bordering the

estates, many students met with us. They were later joined by other students who came to enjoy the consecutive ministry, the fellowship and the freedom of worship.

One feature worthy of note is the visitation of homes with a survey form which asked questions such as 'How do you feel the church can best serve the estate?/your family?' 'Would you call yourself a practising Christian?' Two hundred and twenty homes were visited during Sunday evenings in June 1978 and follow up visits were made in 44 cases. This type of survey required a lot of time and dedication. During this period many students delayed their return home to enable them to take part in a mission. They visited homes and offered copies of the Gospel according to John. Open-air meetings were held at the shopping centre and two evangelistic meetings were held. We are thankful for the commitment of many students to Glenwood and we seek to encourage this rather than to encourage a separate student community within our church.

Development of Gifts

Perhaps the first and most important feature in the development of Glenwood Church has been the Lord's provision of very good teachers who are gifted, not only with ability to interpret the Scriptures with authority, but with the ability to communicate it to others.

The Lord's generous provision in this regard was necessary in our situation as a new church. The elders and various other teachers meet together occasionally to discuss the basic, but not inflexible, programme of consecutive teaching. These Bible Studies have attracted many including uncommitted people who expressed appreciation of the clear interpretation of the passages. We believe that the policy of solid systematic Bible teaching is essential for the consolidation, growth and outreach of the church. We have found that non-Christians have responded to Christ as a result of this teaching and indeed the fruit has been greater here than in 'evangelistic efforts'.

In a new situation such as ours it takes some time for elders to develop to the point of recognition by the church. During the early days all the brethren met at regular intervals for the day to day running of the church. Even at that time where there were matters of a sensitive and personal nature there were those who took it upon themselves to deal with them privately. It was becoming increasingly important as new people came along that there needed to be a group of men who would have the recognition of the church and authority within it.

The church met to study the scriptures and to share experiences in an attitude of prayer and an openness to the Lord's will. It was easy at this stage to

lay down guidelines for prospective elders and to emphasise that the nature of the work was to be spiritual. They were not to be involved with finance, the maintenance of the fabric of the building or in the general day-to-day organisation except where these affected the spiritual life of the church. Deacons were later appointed to look after the practical needs of the church. In an effort to ensure that the Elders function efficiently and that they continue to have the confidence of the Church, members will be given an opportunity from time to time to indicate which of the elders and, indeed, other members of the Church are performing the role of elders. The results of this confidential survey will be a guide for the elders only and

tellers who had previously been appointed. No limit had been placed on the number of persons, but four brethren were seen to be the predominant choice. All the sheets were destroyed and the results never made public or left on record. The four brethren met to consider their own positions. Each was questioned by the others on his willingness to undertake the work, giving it sufficient of his time, the support of his wife and his ability to work together with the other three. It is worthy of mention that although only one of the 1974 group was among those recognised as elders, the unity of the church was such that there was no ill-feeling on the part of the 'originals' that they should have been included because of their original involvement. We

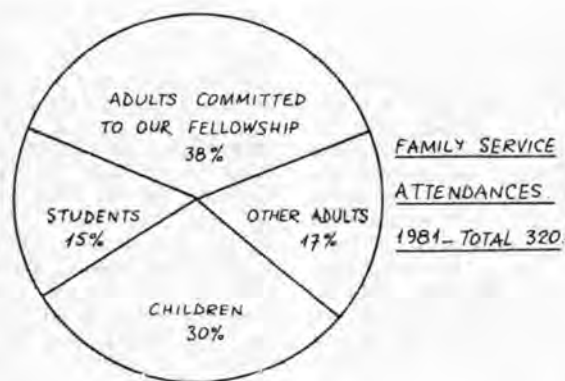
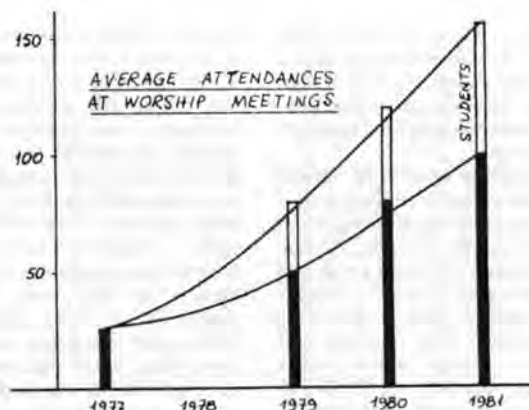
Family Service commences at 11 a.m. each Sunday and lasts for about an hour. It is attended by about 320 people with more on special occasions. About 100 of these are children who meet separately and join the main service after 40 minutes. Each month a different chairman presides and ministry takes about 30 minutes. The children join the service for a story or some other activity. Opportunity is taken to introduce new members to the church.

Sunday evening services are attended by about 160. Thirty to forty minutes of ministry at the beginning stimulates the open Worship which follows. These are precious moments around the Lord's table! The whole service lasts some one-and-a-half hours, but almost

gives the opportunity of inviting our non-Christian relatives, friends and neighbours. This helps in a situation where, for example, the wife is committed and the husband not, and this forms an important part of our present outreach. We see real dangers of becoming too socially orientated, but our aim is to win men to Christ and having won them to cater for the whole man.

Finally . . .

It will be appreciated that much has been left out of this story of Glenwood Church. The depth of our experience cannot be distilled into mere words. Some of what has been related in this article will be controversial but it is given in an honest



not an attempt at democratic election. If a new name appears, prayerful consideration will be given by the elders with a view to extending to the brother involved an invitation to share the responsibilities of eldership. It is also envisaged that the converse would also apply. At present we have no practical experience of this and our ideas may later need reviewing in the light of events as the Lord leads, but we feel that this will be of value in maintaining a healthy eldership and Church. It is in no way a threat to those who are actively exercising the gift of eldership.

In January 1979 after a time of prayer each member present wrote down, on a plain sheet of paper, the names of those persons who they considered were already doing the work of elders. The papers were collected and scrutinised by two

praise the Lord for this as we realise that this could well have caused dissension.

The use of music and drama is being encouraged as we recognise the gifts of accomplished musicians, singers and others with abilities in these fields. The organ and piano are supplemented from time to time in our main services by a small orchestra. Children interested in musical instruments are involved in pre-service singing. Duets, quartets and the choir are of a high standard and feature in our services. A well-sung devotional item can be very effective in drawing us closer to the Lord. The recent Carols-by-Candlelight service attracted a large company.

Some Activities

There are many activities in the new building so it will suffice to describe some and merely name others.

everyone remains afterwards for fellowship. Also on Sundays, youth groups meet at 9.30 a.m. and 8.00 p.m.

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attempt to show the way in which the Lord has led us. We believe that this is the right way for Glenwood Church and trust that these notes will be a help and encouragement to those who read them.

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MUSICAL INTERLUDE (3)

Words of Praise

Alex F. McIntosh

The latest in this attractive series of articles from the pen of Dr. McIntosh of Falkirk

I have heard it said that the angels did not sing at Jesus' birth. The statement was made because the Authorized or King James Version reports that there was with the angel a heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest...' (Luke 2:13, 14). 'Saying' is nearer to literal accuracy, although many of our modern translators find it difficult to imagine the occasion as a grand piece of choral speaking and record it as a singing event. What is important is that the message came over loud and plain. Not for angels was a rendering in which words were mumbled, inconsequential or unclear. Yet where angels fear to tread others rush in and present words in such a way that the message is lost. Even clarity is not all. The clearest of words must fall upon hearing ears if they are to convey their message. In the hymns we use in worship, the words framed by our lips and sung with our voices can be unregistered on our minds.

This insufficiency of attention to the words we sing is somewhat characteristic of our day. In contrast, Scots Presbyterians used to be so conscious of the knowledge that the words they sang were meaningful ascriptions of praise to God that they would not hear of their being sung other than during worship. It would have been sacrilege to them to use the metric psalter in this way. This meant that during choir practices, the singing of half-statements in the way that choirs have as they repeat lines and half-lines to 'get it right', could not be countenanced. The choir had to make do with a metrical placebo, a verse-surrogate, which allowed the choir to practice the tune without desecrating the words. A

well-known common-metre offering went like this:

*There was an old Seceder cat
And it was unco grey.
It brought a mouse untae the kirk
Upon the Sabbath day.
They took it tae the se-ssi-on,
Wha it rebuked sair,
And made it promise faithfully
Tae dae the same nae mair.*

Try singing it to any common-metre tune such as Lyngham (O for a thousand tongues) to bring out its full flavour. Another such is not sanctified by even so little as a church mouse, but I include it for your disapproval.

*O mither dear, Tod Lowrie's lum,
Whan sweepit will it be?
For a' the soot's come tummlin'
doon,
An' spilet ma grannie's tea.*

Such excesses were rectified by earnest sobersides (what is the plural of sobersides?) who opted for an educative approach:

*Come, let us sing the tune of
FRENCH,
The second measure low;
The third ascended very high,
The fourth doth down-ward go.*

A weather eye must be kept open for the vagaries of the versifiers, some of whom ought not to have had their poetic licenses renewed. Pitfalls abound in rhyming, scanning and wording. Take rhyming, for instance. The word 'fraught' may be required to rhyme in the next line with 'draught' which we obligingly sing as 'drawt' instead of 'draft', thankful for the small mercy that 'draught' did not come first and turn the following 'frawt' into 'fraft'.

Then there are problems of scanning. The word 'guerdon' is found today only in verse — 'the guerdon won'. It

is used not because it is a better word than 'reward' (which is what it means), but because 'reward' is accented on the second half of the word and it not so handy for the poet as 'guerdon' which has the first half of the word accented.

There are also problems of wording. Ogden Nash complains about the tangled web the early grammarians spun in that the singular verb has an 's' ('the ear hears') while the plural verb has none ('the ears hear'). All is made easy by the use of the little word 'doth', so that we can say 'the ear doth hear'. Pouring scorn on the subterfuge, he subtitles his Brief Guide to Rhyming 'How Be The Little Busy Doth'. All this leads us to the interesting question of 'Elizabethan' (Jacobean, if you like, or King James Version) wording in our hymns.

Now Dr. Wilkinson Riddle, in a **Witness** article some time ago (April 1979), rejoiced in the fact that the hymn he so much loved, 'O Thou who camest from above', was surely safe from revisionists turning it into 'O You, Who came from above'. His statement highlights an important fact. The vast majority of hymns in current use were written when the King James Version was supreme.

Let us digress for a moment. We are in a period of transition in Bible Translation as the dilemma of our translators makes plain. We can illustrate that by reference to three representative translations. The Authorized Version (AV) uses the Elizabethan 'thee' and 'thy' for both God and man. The New English Bible (NEB) uses these forms to address God but not man. The New International Version (NIV) does not use them at all. What we are witnessing here is not a fundamental difference in translating policy, but a steady and irreversible trend towards modernisation. It was rather too bold a

step for the translators of the NEB to go the whole way, so they chose a half-way house, albeit a rather uncomfortable one. The climate has by now changed sufficiently to allow the NIV to depart from the AV entirely in this fundamental respect.

All this has happened in twenty years. Twenty years can be enough to effect a revolution. So Rip Van Winkle found when he woke up after just that length of time to find that the sign on the inn with the painting of George III of England had been replaced by another portraying George Washington. The revolution in Bible translation is now complete. We can be fairly sure that no new translations will perpetuate Elizabethan language. Instead we may see revised editions of recent translations with updated language.

We return to our theme to note our new dilemma. We shall soon be using hymn books full of 'AV' hymns alongside Bibles in non-AV language. There is likely to be a longer transition period in the change-over of the language of hymn books. This is because of the problems of wording, rhyming and scanning which we have already considered; but the day will surely come when Elizabethan hymns will be as dated as Elizabethan versions of the Bible.

We may attempt to resist change, or we may be convinced that it is inevitable and be determined to influence it. Perhaps the time has come for publishers to set their sights on a general-purpose non-AV hymn book. If Luther can be translated acceptably, why cannot Wesley, dare I ask? With so many major versions of the Bible now completed, there must be many translators awaiting gainful employment. Let us set up a select panel of men and women in sympathy with the great evangelical hymn-writers, who will tackle the task on behalf of us all before someone else does it for us. (Hymns by committee? — tut! Ed.)

At the same time we should be producing a new generation of writers of hymns in the language of the day, which is just what was done by Watts and others of his generation. By using language in current use from the start, infelicities of expression can be avoided. 'O Thou' may be a natural started for a hymn in AV style. 'O You' represents a fairly definite non-starter for a modern hymn even if composed by an indifferent versifier. A hymn such as 'Lord, for the years Your love has kept and guided' is modern, unstrained and dignified. We

need many more such hymns to cover the variety of themes which have to be treated and to allow a certain amount of selection to take place. One attractive feature of recent evangelical hymnody is a return to the very words of scripture. This applies particularly to many of our recent 'choruses' and cantatas. The candy-floss choruses of not so long ago have been replaced by much more substantial and proteinaceous fare which does not cloy the palate. Many of these are still in AV form. Some of our fine modern versions deserve to be used instead, not only for choruses and cantatas, but for audience hymns as well.

Poetic writing is much less common among Christians than it used to be. It needs encouragement all round. Editors of Christian publications do the Christian Church a service when they highlight the subject of hymnody, for hymns play a very large part in our worship. Perhaps space in such publications could be allocated to versification suitable for hymns. There are, of course, good modern writers, hymns and hymn books among us, but not enough of any of them and more helpers are needed. For some, it is an area in which it seems to be difficult to make a contribution. Even then, each of us may determine with the psalmist that the Lord will . . . 'ever be the theme of my praise, although I have not the skill of a poet' (Ps. 71:15 NEB).

Thought: Is the production of new or revised words for hymns

- (i) something which I can promote?
- (ii) something in which I can participate?

Words & Music © 1978
Sydney Carter

BELLS OF NORWICH

Lord are the bells of Norwich and the people come to go
Love like a yel-low daffodil is coming through the snow
Ring for the yel-low daffodil, the flower in the snow

Here by the tower of Jule-an I felt them all I knew
Love like a yel-low daffodil is lord of all I knew
Ring for the yel-low daffodil, the lord of all I knew

Ring out, bells of Norwich and let the winter come to go

All shall be well a-gram I know (I know, and you)
All shall be well a-gram I know (I know, and you)

All shall be well a-gram I know (I know, and you)
All shall be well a-gram I know (I know, and you)

* Singing the whole or part of the hymn may be placed at the end of the service

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

There are some people who believe that the Lord's words, 'If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet' (John 13:14), is a commandment to be obeyed literally for all time. A *Harvester* reader might say to such a person, 'But the literal sense of that injunction is culturally conditioned: when people in open sandals or bare feet walk on dusty country roads or dirty city streets, it is necessary that their feet should be washed when they go indoors. It is the spirit of the injunction that is to be obeyed today.' To this the answer might well be: 'I suspect that that is simply a device for getting round the plain meaning of the Lord's words. In any case, how are we to know when one of his commandments is culturally conditioned or not? Is it not safer and wiser to take his words literally?' What does a *Harvester* reader say to that?

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

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Prayer to the Lord Jesus

Question 194

In view of the fundamental Christian belief in our Lord's resurrection and the general acceptance of his promise to be with us when we meet together, why are Christians, generally, reluctant to address the Lord Jesus Christ directly in public worship except possibly in hymns or by using the ambiguous title, 'Lord'? Is this avoidance part of a genuine scriptural protocol or have we accepted some foreign taboo?

In the New Testament prayer is generally addressed to the Father in the name of the Son through the Spirit, as, for example, in *Ephesians 5:18-20*. But while it is right to recognize the truth underlying this norm and no criticism necessarily attaches to Christians who invariably pray in this way, it is a very serious matter to suggest (as some people have done) that prayer addressed to the Son is in some way unscriptural or defective. As a matter of simple logic, the New Testament unquestionably regards Jesus Christ as being in the fullest sense divine and therefore prayer may rightly be addressed to him. This is made explicit in *John 5:23* which affirms that equal honour should be paid to Father and Son. However, we have more specific guidance. It is by no means clear that the title 'Lord' is not to be understood as addressed to the Son especially in passages such as *Acts 1:24*, where our understanding of the term must be influenced by the references to the Lord Jesus in verses 21 and 22. (For an example of a prayer using the title in a different sense, we may cite *Acts 4:24-30*.)

Nor do we lack examples of prayer addressed to the Lord Jesus, e.g. *Acts 7:59, 60* and *1 Timothy 1:12*. If it be suggested that these are individual rather than corporate, it is difficult to avoid the implication of *Revelation 5* where corporate worship is offered to the Lamb, and *Revelation 22:17,20*, where the individual and the church as a whole utter an identical prayer, 'Come, Lord Jesus!'

This prayer is a remarkable one. It apparently occurs also in *1 Corinthians 16:22*, where the

words *Marana tha* ('Our Lord come!') are cited in Aramaic, the language used by the earliest Christians in Palestine. Here Paul is writing to Greek-speaking Christians. Nevertheless, he assumes that they will be familiar with the Aramaic form of this very early Christian prayer which is unquestionably addressed to the Lord Jesus himself.

In view of all this, any suggestion that prayer addressed to the Lord Jesus should be discouraged must be seen as having potentially serious implication in respect both of our understanding of his deity, our obedience to Scripture and our recognition of his unique position as Mediator and Saviour.

'The Gospel or the Word?'

Question 195

I believe that I am correct in saying that at some time after World War II the Taylorite 'meeting rooms' altered their brief notice boards from reading: 'The Gospel of the grace of God will be preached here . . .' to: 'The word of God . . .' Is there not something to be said for this change, however unhappy we may be about some of their other practices?

One of the most interesting findings of *The Brethren Today* survey was that, while seventy-five per cent of the assemblies which participated gave Evangelism as one of their three chief aims, only three per cent named the Gospel meeting as their most effective evangelistic activity. Indeed it came second among the areas or activities in which evangelism was felt *not* to be effective. If we set out to preach God's word, then we shall find that we inevitably preach "The Gospel" both in its narrower and in its fuller (and biblical) sense. If, on the other hand we set out merely to preach "The Gospel", then experience suggests that those who come to the service will find themselves forced to endure a rather monotonous diet which will be effective neither in saving sinners nor building up believers. In this respect the example of the Taylorites is to be commended.

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

MORE ABOUT FAITH

No apology will be required for returning again to the high inexhaustible theme of Faith. We have to hand R. T. Kendall's little book **Who by Faith** (Hodder and Stoughton, vii + 226pp, £1.95, paperback). Readers of the AV will recognize the title as a quotation from Hebrews Eleven and, in fact, the book reproduces a series of sermons, modified for print, from that very chapter. Dr. Kendall, occupying the pulpit of the famous Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones, is unashamedly a Calvinist, which means that those who do not share his convictions in that regard may not be too happy about some of his interpretations, e.g. 'God sanctioned Jacob's wicked past . . . owned it . . . took the blame for it . . . caused it.' Surely this emphasises the central problem of Calvinism, that its high doctrine of predestination seems to charge God with originating sin? Jacob must be held accountable for his wickedness and if God in grace forgives and restores him, He can in no sense be charged with the blame for the sins.

But caution over such matters must not blind us to the excellences of the book as a whole. First, it is expository preaching at its very best, a valuable object lesson for those of us who attempt the task. That there are thirty sermons here reproduced must make us wonder why assemblies so rarely allow a man to develop his theme extensively. Second, it abounds with heart-searching statements. One example occurs on page 13: 'Every generation of Christianity has its own stigma by which the believer's faith is severely tested.' We may not agree that the modern stigma is the theory of evolution and may be inclined to locate it elsewhere. But we need to face the truth that Christian faith often looks silly to our contemporaries. Do we therefore try to hide it or do we humbly confess it?

Another instance may be found on p.138: 'Regeneration is always unconscious at first.' Dr. Kendall advances this view as an antidote to superficial preaching that brings people to a profession of conversion before the Holy Spirit has truly done His work. Balance in the message will ensure that the conscience is properly awakened, that the truth in Christ is fully appreciated, that the cost of following the Lord is consciously accepted. Do we plead guilty of such superficiality?

We are tempted to quote very extensively from our third example (p.102): 'What is grace today often becomes nature tomorrow . . . What began in the Spirit often seeks perfection in the flesh.' 'Look' he says, 'at many denominations today which were born by God's direct ownership and anointing in a previous generation, but which bear little resemblance to former days.' While it is not our business to criticize 'denominations', we may perhaps think of some bodies of Christians of which this is all too true.

Our final selection comes from p.158: 'The difference between a great man and a small man is this. A great man is ambitious for principle; a little man is ambitious for position.' Most modern 'leaders' are alleged to be followers of the estimated majority view. Do we need to face up to this, that we lose sight of principles and devote our decision-making processes to ascertaining what fifty-one per cent of the church wants? This no doubt is the reason why so many churches are grounded in the shallows. 'It is' says Dr. Kendall 'an ominous sign of the times when God is not preparing men for true leadership.' Match this with the conviction frequently expressed that our problem is lack of leadership. Here is a book for careful and prayerful reading and reflection.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (49)

F. F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

ii. THE HEALING OF THE BLIND MAN (John 9:1-41)

(f) Judicial blindness (9:39-41)

9:39-41 Then Jesus said, 'It is for judgment that I have come into this world, so that those who do not see may see and those who see may become blind.' Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, 'Are we blind too?' Jesus said to them, 'If you were blind, you would not have incurred sin. As it is, you say "We see"; your sin remains.'

There is a **prima facie** discrepancy between this passage and those in which Jesus says that he did not come to judge the world (John 3:17; 12:47). But there is no real discrepancy. Jesus is not saying here that he has come to execute judgment; rather, his presence and activity in the world themselves constitute a judgment as they compel men and women to declare themselves for or against him, as they range themselves on the one side or the other. Those who range themselves against him are 'judged already' (3:18), not because he has passed judgment on them but because they have passed it on themselves. The 'judgment' (*krima*) here is practically equivalent to the 'division' (*schisma*) which more than once developed among his hearers as they took sides over his claims.

The healing of the blind man is presented as a parable of spiritual illumination. Thanks to the coming of the true Light of the world, many who were formerly in darkness have been enlightened; this is not only the effect but the purpose of his coming. But on the other hand some who thought they had no need of the enlightenment he brought, because they could see perfectly well already, turned their backs on him and, without realizing it, moved into deeper darkness. The lesson of John 3:19-21 was exemplified in them. Had they acknowledged their spiritual blindness and allowed him to remove it, they would have been blessed. Had they lived in darkness and found no way out into the light, their plight would have been sad but no blame would have attached to them. Blame did attach to those who, while living in darkness,

claimed to be able to see, like those Pharisees who were present and heard Jesus' pronouncement about the effect of his coming. To be so self-deceived as to shut one's eyes to the light is a desperate state to be in: the light is there, but if people refuse to avail themselves of it but rather deliberately reject it, how can they be enlightened? As Jesus said, their sin remains.

iii. THE SHEPHERD AND THE FLOCK (John 10:1-39)

(a) The parable of the good shepherd (10:1-21)

10:1-2 'Indeed and in truth I tell you, if any one does not enter into the sheepfold through the door but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. He who enters in through the door is the shepherd of the sheep.'

These words follow on directly from the preceding narrative. The double 'Amen' of verse 1 (rendered here 'indeed and in truth') marks the transition from dialogue to monologue. As becomes clear from the course of the parable, the blind man who was healed is a member of the flock of the good shepherd; what was true of him is true of the whole flock.

Who are the shepherds of God's flock? The religious leaders in Israel would no doubt have claimed the title. But it was they who were the most determined opponents of Jesus and his message. The man cured of his blindness looked in vain to them for the care that a shepherd should give; in fact, they expelled him from the flock for which they were responsible. But, having been expelled by them, he found a true shepherd in Jesus. In this context, it is difficult to avoid identifying them with the thieves and robbers, the false shepherds, who sought by some unauthorized means to 'creep and intrude and climb into the fold'.

This parable should be read against the background of Ezekiel 34. There the God of Israel speaks as the chief shepherd of his people, who appoints under-shepherds to look after them. But those shepherds (like the 'worthless shepherd' of Zech. 11:17) are denounced for being more concerned to feed them-

selves than to feed the sheep entrusted to their care. Instead of looking after the sheep they neglected them, slaughtering the fatlings to gorge themselves on their flesh and using the wool to clothe themselves. Those unworthy shepherds will therefore be removed; God himself will seek his scattered sheep and gather them back into one flock from the distant places to which they have been allowed to stray. He will tend all those that need special care, and he will commit them to one who is worthy of the trust reposed in him: 'I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them' (Ezek. 34:23). 'My servant David', as elsewhere in this section of the book of Ezekiel (cf. 37:24,25), is clearly the Messiah of David's line. One who makes the claim voiced in Jesus' parable of the good shepherd is making a tacit claim to be the Davidic Messiah.

10:3-5 The doorkeeper opens to him and the sheep hear his voice; he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he lets all his own sheep out he goes in front of them and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers.

These details were familiar to many of Jesus' hearers; even today they are aptly illustrated by the way of a shepherd with his sheep in the Holy Land. The fold would be a stone enclosure, roughly square in shape, with an entrance on one side. This entrance was guarded by a doorkeeper or watchman whose business it was to admit authorized persons and keep out intruders. If any one were seen climbing into the fold on one of the other sides, it was safe to assume that he was an intruder, up to no good. To discourage such persons the top of the wall might be protected by briars.

More flocks than one might be accommodated in the same enclosure; but all that was necessary was for the shepherd to stand at the entrance and call: his own sheep would recognize his voice and come to him. Not only so: the flock would be small

enough for him to know each of his sheep individually and distinguish them by name. The name might be based on some special mark or feature. In my youth some shepherds in the Scottish Highlands not only called their individual sheep by name, but claimed that an individual sheep would recognize its own name and respond to it. In the picture here drawn by Jesus it is the personal bond between the shepherd and his sheep that keeps them together as they follow his guidance; unlike a modern shepherd, the shepherd of Bible days did not have the assistance of a sheepdog.

10:6 Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what his words meant.

The word 'parable' represents not *parabolē* (the term regularly used for the Synoptic parables) but *paroimia*, meaning a proverb (as in the Old Testament book of Proverbs) or a cryptic saying. A cryptic saying it remained to Jesus' hearers; in the light of the context it may be possible for us to understand it a little better than they were able to do.

The shepherd is Jesus himself: he is pictured as coming to the Jewish fold and calling his disciples out. One of them, indeed, had just been pushed out; others had come out already and yet others would come out before long. The members of the religious establishment could not communicate with the man who had been blind any more than he could communicate with them; to him their voice was 'the voice of strangers'. But when the true shepherd of Israel found him and spoke to him, he responded to him at once.

The sheep in the fold were protected by the walls. But when the shepherd summoned his own sheep out of the fold, what protection had they then? None, except what he provided. So long as they kept close to him, however, all was well: it is the mark of a good shepherd that he defends his sheep, even at the risk of his life. This good shepherd is not only revealed as the true King of Israel; he is also the obedient Servant of the Lord, fulfilling the first part of his commission — 'to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him' (Isa. 49:5).

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Kingship (3)

H. L. Ellison

Jehu, 'son of Omri', bows before Shalmaneser III. From the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III.



Mr. Ellison was united in matrimony on 30th June to Miss Patricia Jean Worrall, a friend of long standing. May the Lord grant them His richest blessing on their future way!

Archaeological exploration at Gibeah, Saul's birth-place and capital, revealed a situation of rustic simplicity. It seems clear enough that in many ways his reign was a transition from the rule of the Judges to the pomp of the later monarchy.

In 1 Sam. 14:2 we find Saul having his tent (NEB) under a pomegranate tree in Gibeah. The only one of his ministers mentioned by name is his nephew Abner, the captain of the host, i.e. the Israelite militia (1 Sam. 14:51).

The moment we come to David we find that the position has become more complicated. We are given two lists of David's ministers, 2 Sam. 8:15-18; 20:23-26. In both we find Joab as captain of the host, but beside him we find Benaiah, the commander of David's foreign mercenaries. In the list of Solomon's officials (1 Kgs. 4:2-6) Benaiah has taken over Joab's position, and from then on increasing stress was laid on professional mercenaries, so the leader of the popular levies ceased to be the leading figure at the royal court. A new name appears in David's second list, viz. 'Adoram was in charge of the forced labour'. Under the name Adoniram we find him again in 1 Kgs. 4:6, but Adoram in 1 Kgs. 12:18. There is very little doubt that the same person is intended in each case. In a society in which money played little part, forced labour was one of the easiest ways to raise the finances. Taxes are always unpopular, but forced labour was exceptionally so. Clearly, the forced labour used by

Solomon in his building programme was one of the main motivations in the division of the kingdom after his death. Adoram's violent death suggests how efficient he had been; he had held his post through three reigns and his murder showed how unpopular he had become. Another man who was able to keep his position under Solomon which he had held under David was Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud, who was Secretary of State (NEB) or recorder. Seraiah or Sheva was Secretary, and under Solomon was followed in his post by his sons Elihoreph and Ahijah. It is believed by many that the variety in the spelling of his name points to his being a foreigner. His work may well have been to organize a new civil service, and he may well have been an Egyptian.

Zadok and Abiathar are also mentioned as priests. Especially in the history of Judah the high priest played a very important role, much greater than in Israel. So much was this the case, that in a time of crisis, like that of Athaliah and Joash, it was Jehoiada, the high priest, who was able to take the initiative against the heathen queen (2 Kgs. 11). Especially in writings from the later monarchy, Jeremiah for example, we repeatedly meet a mention of the princes (*sarim*). This does not mean members of the royal house. When this is intended, 'the king's son' is added to the name. The 'princes' are the high ministers of state.

They were all the king's men; they were made and could be broken by him. In the north they were allowed to become strong enough to overturn dynasty after dynasty, but in Judah the royal control was stricter, and so we find a far more stable society, even under the weaker kings.

MEDITATIONS ON MARK (11)

Simon of Cyrene

David Brady

One word in *Mark 15:22*, which does not occur in this context in the other Gospels, indicates to the reader that Jesus was not simply brought by the Roman soldiers to Golgotha, but that in some sense he was actually supported by those who took him there. This word is regularly used elsewhere in the Gospel of Mark to denote the bringing of the sick and infirm to Jesus to be cured by him. The reason for its use in the account of the crucifixion is not hard to find. Sheer physical exhaustion from the ordeals already suffered in the upper room, in Gethsemane, before the Sanhedrin, before Caiaphas, Pilate, and at the hands of the callous soldiery, had brought Jesus to the dawn of another day in the weakest possible condition. No wonder he staggered beneath the weight of the cross which he was condemned to bear to the place of his execution. It was at that moment that one who was completely unsuspecting met a destiny which could only have been planned in eternity. 'We must not think it strange,' wrote Matthew Henry, 'if crosses come upon us suddenly, and we be surprised by them.' What was the business of Simon as he came from the country we do not know, but it is unlikely that he was returning from work in the field at nine o'clock in the morning (cf. *Mark 15:25*). One suggestion seems to bear more weight than most: perhaps, as may have been the custom (N.B. the practice of Jesus), he may have been passing the night in the adjoining country around Jerusalem during the time of the Passover festival. Indeed, Simon may not have been an inhabitant of Jerusalem and its environs, despite the fact that there was a Cyrenean synagogue in Jerusalem (*Acts 6:9*). He may simply have

been a visitor keeping the command to be in Jerusalem for the great pilgrimage feast of Passover (cf. the Cyrenean visitors at Pentecost, *Acts 2:10*). Simon was about to learn the eternal significance of the ordinance of Passover. At the crucial moment Simon could not escape. He was beset by a group of hated Romans in the very process of leading away three of his kinsmen to execution and one of them was already near to death. There was no way out for anyone or anything that the Romans might choose to requisition. Jesus himself had referred to this foreign imposition when he had taught that 'if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles', but as far as we know Simon was not an adherent to the teaching of Jesus. But he did have in the Scriptures an exhortation to bear a neighbour's burden, even when that person might be an enemy (*Exod. 23:5*). Nevertheless, the people of Cyrene in North Africa (now part of Libya) were noted for their strong anti-Roman feeling, which had more than once been cruelly quenched by blood. Indeed, the Jewish rebellion of A.D. 132-5 under Bar Kokhba first broke out in Cyrene. Edersheim suggested that the laying of the Roman cross on a Cyrenean was in reality a deliberate act of provocation (*Life and Times* (1901) 1.62f.). For Simon it was to be the supreme test of grace and humility. Jesus had said openly that 'if any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me' (*Mark 8:34*) and now Simon was to be the first who in literally doing so would demonstrate the nature of true discipleship. The service which he rendered, though initially forced, turned out not only for his personal blessing, but also for

the blessing of his family after him. Mark alone among the evangelists informs his readers that Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus and our immediate reaction is to try to identify these two sons whose names are provided. But the task is by no means straightforward. There are three more Alexanders in the New Testament, but these are all opponents of Paul (*Acts 19:33*; *1 Tim. 1:20*; *2 Tim. 4:14*). As for Rufus, there is a person of this name in *Rom. 16:13* and it is just possible that this is the same Rufus to whom Mark refers, since the Gospel was almost certainly written in Rome, in which case 'his mother and mine' referred to by Paul would be the wife of Simon. Another intriguing question arises when we compare *Acts 13:1*: did Paul lodge in her home when he stayed in Antioch? But the identification with Symeon called Niger must be tenuous at best. Leaving aside these suggested identifications, however, what does strike us as worthy of note is the fact that in the three names Simon, Alexander, and Rufus we have Hebrew, Greek, and Latin names respectively, an occurrence which, although remarkable, is by no means impossible for a Jewish family of that era. By these three names then we are reminded immediately of the three languages in which the superscription on the cross of Jesus was written (*John 19:20*), as if to proclaim to the whole world the kingship of the suffering one. May we see a parallel in the names Mark associates with the bearing of Christ's cross? In the bearing of the cross we see all mankind implicated in the guilt of Christ's crucifixion, while in the superscription we see all mankind benefiting from the crucifixion of God's anointed.

But there is something else a little peculiar about the way in which Mark writes. He speaks of 'a certain Simon', as if he were unknown (no doubt unknown to those who suddenly met him on that fateful morning), and yet he gives the names of his sons Alexander and Rufus as if they were well known to all his readers. The practice of naming people is indeed rare in Mark's Gospel, so that the naming of Alexander and Rufus does indeed suggest that they must have been well known by all. The language is paradoxical and reminds us of a similar paradox in a list of such paradoxes mentioned by Paul when writing of the ministry of apostles. He speaks of being 'unknown, and yet well known' (*2 Cor. 6:9*). The sense is probably that while God's people are unknown to the world (cf. *1 John 3:1*; *John 16:3*; *Col. 3:3*) and indeed mere 'nobodies' (cf. *Luke 6:22-23,26*), they are nevertheless well known to God and to his people (cf. *John 10:14,27*, as well as *Ps. 1:6*; *Nahum 1:7*; *1 Cor. 8:3*; *Gal. 4:9*; *2 Tim. 2:19*). While there are some whom God 'foreknew' (*Rom. 8:29*), there are also some whom he 'never knew' (*Matt. 7:23*). These words are worthy of our attention and a consideration of these fairly full references should teach us much about our position in Christ and in the world. How unknown Simon was on that eventful morning, and yet how well known he was to God. It was no doubt the events of that day which brought about a revolution in his own life and in due course made his sons to be well known among the brethren. So, when we may feel that our lot is insignificant or even meaningless, let us take heart that it is not in vain in the Lord who 'calls his own sheep by name'.

MYSTERIES IN EPHESIANS

David L. Dexter

We welcome a new writer in David Dexter. Born in Peking, China, to missionary parents, he was reared in Japan, to which country he returned as a missionary in 1976. He is married with three children.

The mysteries of the NT are varied in scope and purpose. There are, for example, the mysteries of the kingdom in *Matt. 13*, of Israel's blindness in *Rom. 11*, of the translation of the saints from mortality to immortality at the last trumpet in *1 Cor. 15*, and so on.

The mysteries of the NT are those truths, which before were hidden but now have been divinely revealed to us. They are not merely mystical but rather unveilings of God's grace and purposes, the depths of which cannot be fully fathomed without revelation and inspiration.

The mysteries in Ephesians deal basically with Christ and the Church. This is first introduced in *ch. 1:9* as a mystery of God ('the mystery of his will . . . which he purposed in Christ'). In *ch. 3:4*, Paul draws our attention to the mystery of Christ, and in *ch. 5:32* he refers to 'a profound mystery'. These three mysteries, all revelations of the mercy and grace of God, have this in common, that they refer to different types of relationship.

The mystery of God is God's purpose for Christ, that all should be gathered to Him who is the Head of the Church. In the mystery of Christ, the emphasis is more on the effects of the work of Christ as the unifying bond between Jew and Gentile. In *ch. 5*, marriage as a type of the union of Christ with His Church is described as a profound mystery.

A Mystery of God (1:9f, 20-23)

The grace of God extended to us sinners is in itself a great mystery, as the verses preceding *v. 9* make evident. Our redemption, acceptance and forgiveness of sins are all linked with His grace. The fact that God has made known to us the mystery of His will is an extension of that abundant grace.

The centre of this mystery is that God has revealed His will for the Son. That will, yet to see full consummation, concerns the centrality of the Son in the universe, which is all to be brought under His authority, whether it be in heaven or on earth. There will be no exception (*v. 10*). All will be unified under this One Head, even Christ. With the resurrection of Christ from the dead, a partial fulfilment of it was effected. From *verses 20-23*, we learn that God has elevated Christ to a position of leadership, of which the full authority is yet to be exercised. It is His by right, for He has been elevated to the right hand of the throne of God. He has been raised 'far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given' (*v. 21*). Furthermore, He will not be super-

seded. The stage is set by the twofold rise to supremacy. God has not only elevated Christ, but placed all things under His feet, and appointed Him to be Head over everything (*vs. 20-22*). It is He and no one else who is Head of the Church. And the Church is seen here as His Body in a unity quite in contrast to all else that is brought into subjection to Him. The Church's part in this mystery is such that His Headship over all things finds fullness in it. This is so because the Church already acknowledges that Headship and 'submits to Christ' (*5:24*). And at the same time, in Him we share in His dominion over all things. What comfort it is to know that He who is our head is supreme in the heavens, and His authority is over all. What a mystery, that we should be so related to the supreme Head of the universe, and, by the grace of God should have a part in His great purposes for His Son.

A Mystery of Christ (3:1-10)

'The mystery made known to me' (Paul), by a revelation of the grace of God found in *v. 3*, is a mystery elsewhere referred to as the 'mystery of the gospel' (*6:19*). This is summarized briefly in the preceding passages, as *v. 3* would indicate, and relates to the whole divine unveiling of the gospel. 'The mystery of Christ' to which Paul refers in *v. 4*, encompasses an aspect of that total revelation, namely, the union of Jew and Gentile in the church.

It is a mystery of Christ for it concerns the 'unsearchable riches of

1. All Scripture quotations are taken from the NIV.

Christ' (v.8) which are available to the Gentiles, the chief recipients of this mystery. The Jew was already in a position to receive abundant blessing from God, but until Christ made it possible through His death, the Gentile has been the outsider, as far as the Jew was concerned.

The threefold blessings of grace found in v.6, introduce relationships previously unknown: 'This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are **heirs together** with Israel, **members together** of one body, and **sharers together** in the promise in Christ Jesus.' Paul in *ch. 2:11-18* reveals how the Gentiles entered into these new relationships. In times past they had no part in the covenants of promise which God had made with Israel. 'But now in Christ Jesus (they) who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ' (2:13). He is the means by which all enmity has been removed, the barrier of separation so strongly enforced by the Jew, has been broken by Christ, who is our peace. He has established peace by uniting both in Himself as one new man. Bringing these two together has had the effect of making peace. The outcome is the constitution of one body, the Church (cf. *ch. 1*). Through the cross we, in the one body, have been reconciled to God, and now have access, and receive the blessings of God in Christ. We are now no 'longer foreigners, but fellow citizens with God's people' (2:19). So Paul moves the thought further in *ch. 3* to speak of heirs together and members together of one body.

God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to use the church, that body of different individuals who through and in Christ have been made one, to make known His manifold wisdom

'to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord' (v.10f).

It was God's grace that revealed this mystery to Paul, and he to us. We have certainly entered into great blessings as a result. Who can comprehend the wisdom and grace of God?

A Profound Mystery (5:25-33)

This mystery is called in *ch. 5* 'a profound mystery' (NIV). Paul to illustrate the oneness that exists between He who loved, Christ, and the object of that love, the Church, His Body (v.30), uses the deepest union of two people he can find on earth, that of a man with his wife. He begins by exhorting husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the Church (v.25). The magnitude of that transcends all human love, for it was sacrificial love of the first order. More than that, this love as seen in His death, fulfilled a redemptive, cleansing and sanctifying purpose in the object of His love, the Church. 'In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies' (v.28). The love a husband should have is elevated to a new plane, unknown to the natural man. His wife is viewed as being so united to him, that she is his body, for the love he is to give her is the same as, if not more than, he gives to himself. This calls for true unselfishness on his part, and a great desire for her general and spiritual well-being, that it will produce spiritual fruit in her life not unlike that seen in vv. 26 and 27.

The quote from *Gen. 2:24* brings into focus the reason why the husband is to love his wife as himself. It is because God in His

wisdom regards a man and woman joined in marriage as one flesh. The very place it has in the creation narrative indicates its importance. The wife is equated with the husband's body, and when a man loves his wife he indirectly loves himself. This is certainly a profound mystery, the depths of which cannot be fully plumbed. But Paul goes on to say that he is in fact talking about Christ and the Church. This is the real mystery.

As we contemplate it, we recall that Paul brought to our attention in the first chapter that we are Christ's Body. There His sovereign rule and authority was introduced. Here it is His behaviour toward His Body. He loves it supremely in unselfish giving and sacrifice. His thoughts are always good towards it. He provides and cares for it in such a way that the full extent of His love is showered upon it. His is a love not divided by different loyalties, but concentrated with singleness of heart on one object. Very God extending such love to us, His own Body, is indeed a profound mystery. These three mysteries portray for us different aspects of Christ in relation to His Body the Church. In *ch. 1*, He is seen as the Head of the Body in the great plan of God where He is central and all supreme. The composition of that Body in *ch. 3* is made up of a wide variety of people who have been brought into union by the work of Christ on the cross and who by this relationship in the Church show forth the manifold wisdom of God. Finally, in *ch. 5*, the unique relationship of the Church to Christ as His Body is portrayed in terms of sacrificial self-giving which is beyond full understanding. How great and unfathomable are the mysteries of the grace of God!

PREACHER'S WORKSHOP

We launch this month a new series designed to help preachers. Many of our readers will have from time to time to occupy a pulpit and will be quite as conscious as — if not painfully more conscious than — their hearers about their shortcomings. Experts (aware or unaware!) in the business will be discussing methods and principles, with practical examples of the handling of biblical passages. Our first contributor, Mr. H. L. Ellison, is well known to our readers both as a profound Old Testament scholar and as a gripping expositor. He brings to us the fruits of his long experience in Preaching from the Old Testament.

Preaching from the Old Testament H. L. Ellison

There are many Protestant churches where no sermon based on the Old Testament is heard from one year's end to another. In others there is the tradition of an Old Testament sermon in the morning, New Testament in the evening. For most who will read these thoughts there is no tradition. In recent years both Old Testament scholars and Christians generally have increasingly come to realize the immense damage done to the Church by its neglect of the Old Testament. This has led to a great deal of discussion as to how the Old Testament should be used in the pulpit.

The problem has to a great extent been created by the superstition that we must proclaim the whole counsel of God in every sermon. As a result we rule out large sections of the Old Testament, because we find it difficult to read salvation through faith in Christ in them, or if we do, it is by means which we realize to be illegitimate.

But, if we start in the Old, is it always necessary to end in the New? The Old was a genuine revelation to the men of the time, albeit incomplete. Though that revelation has been deepened and brought to a climax, it is still valid, because it came from the one unchanging God.

Very much of the Old Testament is an expression of the moral demands and expectations of God from His people. The Sermon on the Mount shows clearly enough how this element of the Old Testament can be applied in a Christian context. Indeed a series of addresses on the Ten Commandments —

or would that constitute one-man ministry? — might well make some take the Sermon on the Mount seriously. They wriggle out of Christ's demands, because they have never been taught the A.B.C. of God's requirements. How can we expect conviction of sin, if we do not preach God's moral requirements?

Then the Old Testament gives an incomparable picture gallery of all sorts and conditions of men, both of saints and sinners — far more extensive than that offered by the New Testament. Unfortunately some cannot resist the temptation to allegorize them.

Allegory and dispensationalism are the two greatest obstacles to a fruitful use of the Old Testament. The latter says, 'That happened then, but it does not apply now!' In other words I am not saying, 'Thus saith the Lord', but 'So say I', and I wonder why my hearers do not take me very seriously. Allegory says, 'Though the story seems very simple, it does not mean what it says; this means that, and that means this.' In other words as one of my teachers said about the rabbis, 'They treat the Scriptures like a wax nose, shaping it to suit their purpose.' Allegory serves to show how clever I am, not necessarily to convey the will of God. Above all it reveals my lack of reverence for the Word of God. Typology is another matter, even though the boundary between it and allegory may not always be easy to draw, but this will be dealt with in the next instalment.

LOOKING AT BOOKS



Where There is Vision Stella G. Heath. The Torch Trust for the Blind. 237pp. £1.50 (paperback). In the Year of the Disabled, it is appropriate that Torch Trust have produced another book about their activities. Far from becoming a large, impersonal organisation, it has retained its original identity in spite of tremendous growth, being based on a small family unit. Many young people arrive there feeling embittered and useless on account of their disability. Practical help and training are given immediately but also each newcomer is made aware of the claims of the Christian gospel. Amazing stories of miraculous personality changes are recorded as also wonderful answers to believing prayer. While listing the fresh challenges of each new area of work, Stella Heath has not however painted a falsely rosy picture. With honesty she has included the many problems, the difficult decisions and occasional setback.

Review by Kathleen White

Green Finger of God Maurice Sinclair. Paternoster Press. 121pp. £2.60 (paperback). There has been welcome evidence over the past few years that evangelical Christians are emerging from a sterile pietism into a fresh realisation of the social implications of the Gospel and an awareness that the Good News is for the whole man. The extent to which this intellectual response is turned into concrete action, however, is a very much more variable matter. All too often the recognition that the religion of the Bible requires justice and integrity is expressed solely as emotional rhetoric proclaimed with all the passion of the new convert, frequently from the

cloistered comfort of an academic study. Unlike the majority of books being unleashed on the Christian public at the moment covering the field of social responsibility, this work by Maurice Sinclair sets out to describe what has been done rather than what ought to be done. It is thus to be welcomed for this reason alone, but more importantly it is to be welcomed as showing what can be done with limited resources, given the will and the right motivation. The book is essentially an account of an Anglican development project in the north of the Argentine among the Matacos Indians. In common with many of the indigenous peoples of South America (and elsewhere) they face increasing poverty, disease and malnutrition as their traditional life styles are eroded and their subsistence jeopardised by forest clearance, pollution and other ills brought about by the greed of short-sighted governments and landowners. Their simple hunter-gatherer economy seems to be doomed and the Indians themselves can only survive by transforming their culture into one based on agriculture. It is with this development that the Anglican church in the area has been concerned. In his account of the project Maurice Sinclair takes the reader through the process of development with all its problems and still unanswered questions, commenting at the same time on the theological implications of such action. It shows the project as an attempt to respond to genuine need with true Christian motivation, at the same time avoiding the pitfalls of a Marxist orientated liberation theology. Indeed, one would suggest that in seeking to meet the need of the whole man, this Anglican project has

shown itself to be far more radical than the 'revolutionary' bishops of the trendy left. The Matacos Indian project is not unique, other churches have become involved in similar developments both in South America and other parts of the world. One cannot help wondering why those called Brethren have done so little in terms of the practical outworking of their faith. This is not to denigrate the often selfless devotion of many overseas workers, especially those in church-based and mission hospitals, but all too often 'doing good' is seen only as a platform for traditional evangelistic activity. A careful reading of this book will help to disabuse us of such attitudes and point the way towards the development of Christian communities that live out a practical obedience to the Lord of the Church.

Review by Dr. J. Keir Howard

The Luminous Cloud Walter Fancutt. Arthur James. £2.25 (paperback). As Editorial Secretary of The Leprosy Mission the Revd. Fancutt was able to travel across India, and he has subtitled this book 'A series of devotional studies in verse and prose set in the context of a visit to Indian leprosy centres.' Each chapter begins with one of his own poems which are based on a phrase from the gospels. They are expressive and moving. The prose sections pick up an idea such as joy; comfort; music; sandals; a father and son; and expand it to include stories of bravery, encouragement or pathos drawn from the leprosy hospitals across India, and related to familiar scriptures which are then seen in a new light. I commend it to all who read

with feeling.

Review by Barbara Baigent

The Journals of Jim Elliot Pickering and Inglis. £5.95. 'What is written in these pages I suppose will some day be read by others than myself. For this reason, I cannot hope to be absolutely honest in what is herein recorded . . . ' Agreed, it is impossible to be totally frank about oneself, yet Jim Elliot gives his readers the impression of making a valiant attempt. His failures, disappointment in himself and his spiritual progress, all are recorded faithfully alongside his triumphs and encouragements in seeking to carry out the Lord's work. To my mind, he comes through much more graphically in Elizabeth Elliot's narrative **Through Gates of Splendour**. Perhaps she has done him a dis-service by publishing his journals 'complete and unabridged'. A little selective pruning might have done away with the occasional monotony of entry and the odd paragraphs of trivia. The book, as a whole, though, will act as a memorial to a completely committed man of God: ' . . . light those idle sticks of my life and may I burn up for Thee'; 'Pour out my life as an oblation . . . ' — two strangely prophetic utterances taken from the text. Gems of spiritual thoughts abound in his Bible studies. Although Elizabeth explains in a preliminary note to the entries for 1950 that 'his Plymouth Brethren background made him highly suspicious of formal religious training of any sort', nevertheless he was an ardent Bible student and an accomplished Greek scholar. Maybe it is some of that austere background which is

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responsible for his unease and uncertainty in his feelings towards the opposite sex. He makes a complete contrast to that other clerical diarist, Francis Kilvert, who, by his artless comments, frankly revels in feminine beauty and rarely chides himself for his enthusiastic and wholly natural reactions.

As Jim Elliot's death was an inspiration to countless young men of succeeding decades to take up full-time missionary service, so this personal account of seven years of his life will be no less of an inspiration in building up members of the Christian church to a deeper understanding of God's word.

Review by Kathleen White

Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding A. L. Maycock.
 S.P.C.K. 305pp. £5.95 (paperback).

Nicholas Ferrar (1592-1637) is probably best remembered today for literary reasons. The poet George Herbert, as he lay dying, entrusted his poems to him, while T. S. Eliot entitled the fourth of his *Quartets* 'Little Gidding'. He was, though, a remarkable personality in his own right. Born into the family of a prosperous merchant, highly talented and able, educated at Clare Hall, Cambridge, and elected at an early age to Parliament, he quite deliberately turned aside from a life of material well-being and political influence to establish a community (Little Gidding) where life could be lived in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. It was, the author tells us, 'a life of obscurity

... of poverty voluntarily embraced, a life in which he and his household dedicated themselves wholly to the service of God. It was a life of incessant labour for the welfare of others, of practical charity, of prayer day and night, of fasting and mortification, of constant anxiety of all kinds, of joy and a serene peace.' In essence Ferrar was attempting a Christian regeneration of society.

Soon after his untimely death in 1637 the community at Little Gidding came to an end,

but its emphasis on joy, holiness, prayer and peace remains imperishably attractive and challenging in an increasingly nihilistic twentieth-century. S.P.C.K. deserve thanks for re-printing this scholarly and sympathetic biography which was first published in 1938.

Review by John Peters, Charterhouse School

Angel with a Bushy Beard
 Dudley Gardiner. St. Andrews Press. £3.95 (paperback).
 This is an attractively produced, large, slim, glossy paperback with almost as much photography as there is writing. In this autobiography, Gardiner explains how he has come to be working alongside Mother Teresa in Calcutta after a life in the army. His job is to provide 7,000 people with one good meal every day which he has done 7 days a week, 16 hours a day for 20 years, with military precision and with help from sponsors like Oxfam and Help for the Aged. Everything he does is under the auspices of the Salvation Army although he is not a member of that group. I found his confession of faith rather sad: 'My attitude to God is rather Hindu. I go to God who is holy but whose message is too lofty to understand ... I must say I envy people like Mother Teresa who have no doubts, who have an absolute certainty that God is a person with whom the closest relationship is possible ...' Nevertheless his sacrificial life is both challenging and humbling.

Review by Barbara Baigent

The Luis Palau Story Pickering and Inglis. 176pp. £4.50
Order! Order! Ramon Hunston. Marshalls. 145pp. £1.60 (paperback).
 The principle that God leads Christians in individual pathways receives interesting illustration in two recent biographies. One will appeal instantly to evangelicals: **The Luis Palau Story** records the development of a preacher from obscure Argentinian beginnings in a local assembly to international fame. This is

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how we expect things to be! About the other we will be less sure: **Order! Order!** tells the story of the Right Honourable George Thomas, M.P., retiring Speaker of the House of Commons, from his upbringing in poverty in a Welsh Methodist family of miners through a career in Trade Unionism and politics to high office. But in neither case can we doubt that God was leading a man who was unmistakably a humble and bold follower of Christ. Jerry B. Jenkins, Palau's recorder, gives not only the outer facts — family background, training, courtship, marriage, Christian service, etc. — but also the inner development, the heart-searching, the dealings with God, the breakthroughs and frustrations alike. It is disarmingly frank and leaves the impression of a charming minister of the Word, through whom God will unquestionably be doing even greater things in the future. George Thomas will channel our minds into other directions — about the social responsibility of the Christian. Have we enjoyed our affluence unmoved by hunger and deprivation all around us? Are we doing what we can and ought about poverty, unemployment, and other burning issues? Has our religion passed the test of *James 1:27*?

Both books make compelling reading, open to us attractive men of God and start us reflecting deeply about our Christianity.

Reviews by John Polkinghorne

John Paul II Ian H. Birnie. SCM Press. 24pp. (paperback)

Man from the Far Country: A Portrait of John Paul II Mary Craig. Hodder and Stoughton. 190pp. £1.00 (paperback).

Pope John Paul II: The Life of my Friend Karol Wojtyla M. Malinsky. Burns and Oates. 278pp.

John Paul II Jef de Roeck. Geoffrey Chapman. 122pp. £2.95 (paperback).

1978 was the year of the three Popes: Paul VI, the gentle John Paul I (in office for thirty-three days only), and thirdly John Paul II. When, on

Monday evening, 16th October, at 6.43 p.m., Cardinal Felici uttered the time-honoured words **Habemus Papam**, followed by the name Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, few outside Poland knew who the new Pope was. Two years later no such mystery surrounds the man who became the first non-Italian pope since 1523, and the first Pope from a communist country: simply because he has been the subject of many articles, commissioned studies and biographies.

The four works listed above rehearse the main events of John Paul II's life in different ways, with differing intentions and degrees of emphasis. All preserve his rise to supreme authority: Priest (1 November, 1946), Bishop (28 September, 1958), Archbishop of Cracow (30 December, 1963), Cardinal (26 June, 1967), and finally Pope (16 October, 1978). They also emphasise his humble background, his sterling intellectual qualities, his unflinching courage in opposing the Nazis as a member of an underground movement, his spontaneity and geniality, and his dedication to meditation and prayer. A careful and conservative man, Pope John Paul II is unlikely to give in to pressure on such contentious issues as priestly celibacy, abortion, divorce and women priests; but according to Mary Craig 'his recent writings and comments show that his mind is not closed to change, and in any case his approach to these matters is pastoral rather than dogmatic'.

Certainly, as a non-Italian, he will not be obsessed with Italian politics, as even Paul VI was, nor will his encyclicals require the church world-wide to fit into a narrow Italian straitjacket. Each of these four books is valuable in its own way. Birnie's is brief, succinct and very useful on the Pope's Polish background. Roeck's is a carefully documented account with lengthy extracts from JP II's letters. Malinski writes as 'a friend', and in this highly personal work he blends two sorts of impressions: his *reaction* to Wojtyla's elevation as it

happened in Rome, and his *reminiscences* of forty years' friendship with the new Pope. Mary Craig's is the most thorough, the most objective, and the most fluent and readable. All four however will give both Catholics and non-Catholics a clear insight into the character, motivation and vision of the youngest Pope to be elected since 1846.

Review by John Peters, Charterhouse School

Fool and Fanatic? ed. Jean Walker. WEC Publication. 128pp. £1 (paperback). This volume consists of a large number of extracts from the letters of C. T. Studd (1862-1931), one of the twentieth century's most dynamic and courageous missionaries. His early life at home, school (Eton College) and university (Trinity College, Cambridge, where he read for a degree in law) had been easy-going, prosperous and dominated by cricket. His exploits for Cambridge and England are now firmly part of cricketer history, but his life came to be dominated by a force other than the desire for sporting prowess and achievement. After leaving Cambridge in 1884 — he had been converted earlier in 1878 — he felt God's specific call to be a missionary, and he went forth to serve in China (1885-94), India (1900-06), and finally Africa where he died in 1931.

The quotations presented here reveal what Norman Grubb in his foreword has rightly described as the 'authentic' Studd. He was absolutely determined to follow Our Lord's commands whatever the cost. Not for him an indifferent, tepid Laodicean Christianity: 'If a fellow does not feel his soul burn with shame at the fact that masses of people are without the knowledge of Christ, he is no soldier of Christ, nay, he is no man and we are better without such chicken-hearts. We want lion-hearted men who rejoice in hardship and difficulties, being cuffed by the devil right and left — that they may get to grips with him and, for the love of Christ, free some of his prisoners!'

Studd was a man who went out from God's presence to perform valiantly, and whose only resource and strength was God. The above quotation may appear to be combative and unduly assertive, but he was in reality a most humble man, as this extract shows: 'I am getting desperately afraid of going to heaven for I have had a vision of the shame I shall suffer as I get my first glimpse of the Lord Jesus; His majesty, power and marvellous love for me, who treated Him so meanly and shabbily on earth, and acted as though I did Him a favour in serving Him! No wonder God shall have to wipe away the tears off all faces, for we shall be broken-hearted when we see the depth of His love and the shallowness of ours.' These are the words of a 'daring fighter for God'. Uninhibited joy is apparent in these letters too: 'The greatest joy anyone can have on earth is to walk with Jesus: and this is what it means to be a Christian. Then you must love Jesus more than your own life or family, if you will follow Him. Only those who walk with God on earth will live with Jesus in heaven.' This book is a gem — it will challenge as its words leap out with burning ferocity. Read it for yourself.

Review by John Peters, Charterhouse School

The Expendable Mary Slessor James Buchan. The Saint Andrew Press. 247pp. £3.75 (paperback). Mary Slessor (1848-1915) was a remarkable woman: in fact, it would not be an exaggerated claim to apply the epithet 'great' to her. Born in December 1848 in Aberdeen, her early life was one of poverty and deprivation, with a father who was frequently drunk. Her mother, a gentle, patient soul, hoped that one of her sons would become a missionary in Calabar, West Africa. It was however Mary, wild and aggressive both as a child and young lady who fulfilled her mother's dreams. She sailed to Calabar on 5 August 1876; she died there in January

1915 after thirty-nine years' heroic effort. When Mary Slessor arrived in Calabar it was one of the most uninviting places in the world: 'Its miles of swamps, where millions of insects swarmed, bred fevers for which, at that time, there was no preventative, and two centuries of the murderous slave trade had cheapened human life, split and mixed the tribes, destroyed their simple way of life, and perverted their religion. The people were living under a tyrannical and corrupt regime which, as Nigerian historians agree, ruled by terror . . . Its

chiefs looked on most of their tribal slaves and most of their women, whether slave or free, as of less importance than their cattle. They killed and tortured these people not only with impunity but as of right under their laws.' Witchcraft, superstition, ritual mass-murder, infanticide, chronic drunkenness and tribal warfare were but some of the problems she encountered. With indomitable courage and fierce determination, she attempted to liberate — first among the Okoyong people, secondly among the Ibo tribes — the Africans from their lives of terror and thralldom to

Satan. Over the years she rescued hundreds of children who had been left abandoned and utterly desolate, and richly deserved to be known as 'Mother of all the Peoples'. Depravity and disease were faced with that particular courage which emanates from a burning faith and confidence in God — she said 'If I did not know that my Saviour is near me I would go out of my mind'; another of her notable sayings was this: 'God and one are always a majority.' She was an enormous influence for good amongst the Africans who had complete confidence in her

because she was totally identified with them. James Buchan's book is absorbing, honest and heart-warming. His portrait of Mary Slessor is wide-ranging and realistic: he does not ignore her faults and failings, or make extravagant claims for the effects of her work, and as a result the picture he paints is a convincing one. Not hagiography therefore, but a 'warts and all' description of one of the most dynamic missionaries of all time.

*Review by John Peters,
Charterhouse School*

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The May Question

There is probably more questioning among our readers and Christians of similar outlook about the doctrine of the Person of Christ than finds public expression. This may be due to a fear of being branded as heretics. For myself, I am as happy as William Kelly was to accept the definition of Chalcedon, but its terminology is largely meaningless to many Christians today. If I may voice a question which they sometimes ask, we believe that our Lord is God and Man in one Person, but is it helpful to express this truth in terms of two natures, or to discuss how exactly the two natures are combined in him?

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

I am not sure that Professor Bruce is correct in suggesting that silence about the Person of Christ is due to fear of being branded as a heretic, though this will play a part in some cases. In my theological studies I was deeply impressed by the fact that most of the controversies about the Trinity found a more or less satisfactory solution; aided, of course, by official secular persecution. Adherents of the old heresies virtually vanished, though some of the old heresies lifted their heads again at the Reformation and in some of the

modern cults. When we come, however, to the controversies about the Person of Christ, I found that none of the conflicting parties ever convinced the others in spite of bitter Imperial persecution. It even went so far that those churches and sects that did not accept the official view held in Constantinople preferred to live under Muslim rule than under the 'heretical' Byzantine empire. I came to the conclusion then, and I have not had reason to change my mind since, that the Divine 'self-emptying' by which God took manhood to Himself, is so wonderful and mysterious, that it is not given to us to understand it. As a result, though I have never spoken on it, I have never hesitated in accepting the Definition of Chalcedon, though I do not profess to understand it. The one point where I have been prepared to stick my neck out is in opposition to what I call the two tap theory, viz. that just as we turn on the hot or cold tap to suit our convenience, so our Lord turned on His humanity or His deity as it suited Him at the moment. I sincerely hope that Professor Bruce's question will not encourage many to air their ignorance on this Divine mystery, even as many seem to be increasingly willing to air their views on the almost equal mystery of predestination.



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 to 'Readers' Forum' is from Professor Coralie Rendle-Short. How should we react to Hebrews 13:2 'Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares'?

Do angels in fact come these days in the guise of strangers to our churches or to our homes? I have often thought about it, and wonder if any readers have experience of this? In Britain we tend, probably quite rightly, to be wary of strangers, but sadly, probably fail to recognise some who are in real need. Overseas, away from the materialistic atmosphere which prevails here, one sees things a little differently. I can recollect two occasions in which I wondered possibly if I had met with angels, both very different. It did not occur to me until long after the event. One was in Kampala, Uganda. It was Christmas time, and one liked to ask a number of fellow countrymen who might possibly be lonely or homesick to share a festive meal. We had invited several to lunch at

our house. Whilst I was getting the things ready, one of the men went down to the Post Office to see if any letters had come in. Nothing is delivered out there! He came back with a young couple whom he found wandering in a deserted street. They were 'doing Africa' as cheaply as possible, they said, and were staying in a small hotel. He invited them to come along and they accepted gratefully. They proved to be a delightful pair, said very little about themselves, but joined in so easily with our festivities, obviously appreciating the Christian atmosphere. They asked to leave during the afternoon, and we took them back to the hotel. We never heard of them again. The other time was in Addis Ababa. Leaving my car in a small street whilst I went to a

shop, I noticed sitting on a low wall, a very old man. He seemed rather distressed and was panting for breath, not unusual in the elderly out there where the height is 9000 feet. He did not look like a beggar, and anyway I knew most of the adult beggars by sight. His lovely face, framed by a white beard, attracted me. Something made me give him five Ethiopian dollars, a day's wages for a labourer at that time, not the usual ten cents one gave to the majority. He took it graciously, held it up aloft, as if in a gesture of prayer. Then he came over and knelt in front of my car and kissed it. Then he seemed to disappear. Why, I wonder, do these two stand out in my memory? Am I being fanciful? What do others think?

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.

Home Workers' Fund
From Mr. A. E. Wakeling
Dear Mr. Coad,
Your colleagues on the Council of the Home Workers' Fund will be most grateful to

see the editorial mention of the work of the Fund in the May **Harvester**. In order to save the cost of unnecessary postage will readers please note that all **donations** should be sent to this address and not to our Almoner, Mr. B. J. Taylor. The Council of the Fund rely very much upon the needs of Home Workers and widows being brought to their attention and in **those circumstances** the person to

write to is the Almoner, Mr. B. J. Taylor, at the address given in your editorial.

Yours sincerely,
A. E. Wakeling
Secretary & Treasurer,
Home Workers' Fund,
Equity House,
450 Hackney Road,
London.
E2 6QL
Tel: 01-739 6927

Counties Evangelistic Work, Essex
From Mr. Reg Richardson, MA
Dear Mr. Coad,
At recent meetings of the Essex Regional Fellowship of the Counties Evangelistic Work, the evangelists have expressed the view that their work could be planned more efficiently if churches or individuals in the County were to send them suggestions for future activities.

There is, of course, no shortage of work for them to do in areas, and in conjunction with churches, that they know; but they have very little information about other areas, where the needs are probably much greater: so it is very difficult for them to judge whether their energies are being deployed in the most useful way.

They would like to hear, for example, of any extensive areas (rural or urban) in the County where there is no evangelical witness; or of small, struggling churches, which might be built up with the aid of an evangelist; or of youthful churches that could benefit from systematic teaching or training. They are concerned that some fellowships that could do with their help are not availing themselves of it because those groups feel unable to meet the evangelists' expenses. They want it to be known that this should be no hindrance.

Churches or individuals having a concern for such needs in Essex are warmly invited to communicate with the Essex Regional Fellowship (Secretary, Mr. Norman Lane, 11, Roundwood Grove, Hutton Mount, Brentwood, Essex. Tel. Brentwood 221457) or directly with the evangelists: Geoff Carr, 11, Orchard Way, Chigwell Row, Chigwell, Essex, Tel. 01-501-0062 (for South Essex) or Andrew Jelfs, 13, Firwoods Road, Halstead, Essex, Tel. 07875 73422 (for North Essex).

Yours sincerely,
Reg Richardson
80 Fifth Avenue,
Chelmsford,
Essex.

The Datchet Evangelical Fellowship

From Pastor J. A. Carter
Dear Sir,

We at the Datchet Evangelical Fellowship are still puzzled as to why, in spite of regular advertising, there are not more Christians applying to fill the vacant flats which we have available. This was further emphasised at a recent Deputation Meeting when some expressed great surprise that there should be any vacant flats at all in these days!

It is difficult to believe that all retired Ministers, Missionaries and other Christian workers are so well accommodated that they do not wish to avail themselves of the units which are offered through this Fellowship, or is it that there is no real concern for outreach into the desperately needy villages of this country?

The accommodation is very comfortable and set in a rural environment, and the majority of the residents have been very happy to serve the Lord for many years in village evangelism.

However, it may not be known generally by the Christian public that, more recently, we have decided to offer these units to younger Christians who are willing and able to live in a village and either become a Leader or helper in one of our chapels, which can be so rewarding. I trust you will see your way clear to publish this letter, and that it will catch the eye of evangelical Christians of all ages and so cause them to be challenged and to ask for further details about vacant flats and chapel leadership. May the Lord continue to bless **The Harvester**. Yours sincerely in Christ and in Village Evangelism.
J. A. Carter
Asst. Supt.,
Datchet House,
Church Lane,
Whitton,
Ipswich,
Suffolk.
IP1 6TJ

Jerusalem: A Presentation *From Mrs. Dorothy Davies*

Dear Mr. Coad,
I was very interested to see, in the March issue of **The Harvester**, an article about the Feast of Tabernacles entitled 'Letter from Jerusalem'. A friend of mine was among the thousand or more Christians who went to join in that celebration, and she has made up her pictures and tape recordings, plus her own commentary in places, into a full programme. This is very much in demand among churches and fellowships. We 'belong' to *Prayer for Israel* (1, Sherman Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 3JH) and as a result of Jill Davidson's travels many more prayer groups have been formed.

The showing lasts about 1 ½ hours, and any of your readers interested could obtain details from the Bromley address. Yours sincerely,
Dorothy Davies
Rannal Croft,
112, Scalwell Lane,
Seaton,
Devon.

Can we accommodate change?

From Mr. William Aitken

Dear Mr. Coad,
I would like to say how much I appreciated the letter by Mr. Stanley Linton in the May issue of **The Harvester**. His comments on Mr. John Knipe's contribution in the February 'Readers' Forum' were most timely and factual. I am the brother from Scotland Mr. Linton quotes in his letter who, paradoxically, found that one of the most glorious and lasting things that had happened to me in my whole long Christian experience, namely the 'Baptism in the Spirit' on November 23rd, 1973, with the confirming sign of 'speaking with tongues', has led, sadly, to many, many of my brothers and sisters, some of whom I have known a lifetime, turning — often bitterly — against me. If it wasn't that our experience had been of God, Scriptural and a real work of the Spirit, we would have been discouraged by the cold, callous terms in which our value as Christians has been impugned. We bear no bitterness whatsoever, because we know that God is so wonderfully and graciously dealing with us day and day, as we praise Him greatly. The hurt is over and the wounds are healed. I have never ceased to testify of the Spirit's 'new wine' in our lives, which after nearly eight years have been well tested; today it flows fresher and stronger than ever. As we use the various 'spiritual gifts', which so many brethren say are 'not for today', it is a joy to see that same power of the Spirit working with us as in Paul's day and which he describes so beautifully in *1 Cor. 12 and 14*. It is a real thrill to pray in the tongues of the Spirit and realise that this is the way Paul prayed 'more

than any other Christian' and wished that every Christian would do the same (*1 Cor. 14:5*). The same apostle says to modern day churches through the unfallible Word: 'Forbid not to speak with tongues' (*1 Cor. 14:39*). I read with great sadness various assembly reports of the rapid fall in numbers among Brethren meetings and the almost pathetic questions: 'What has gone wrong? What can we do to bring vitality to the assemblies?' I am sure the answer is very simple if we are prepared to accept it. If it works wonders in a life it will work wonders in a church. Embrace and practise the Baptism of the Spirit as a valid, Scriptural experience (*e.g. Acts 19:6*) and things will 'flow' from there. I know they would.

These lines are not intended to be caustic or critical. They are sad, as I was reared and brought up in Brethren and spent 40 years among them, knowing all its great potential, i.e. that with the Spirit flowing in the assemblies in NT power they could be the greatest force in the world. Pentecostals have overtaken them and they are now the 'fastest growing church in the world'.

Yours sincerely,
Wm. Aitken
2 Dewar Avenue,
Lochgilphead,
Argyll.
PA31 8NR
Scotland

NEWS PAGE



Africa

Uganda needs spiritual as well as physical rehabilitation to reorient itself for rebuilding the country after the eight years of Idi Amin's terroristic regime. James Katarikawe explained that Uganda was 'in pieces' when Idi Amin was ousted. He said that many people of different nationalities hurried to bring aid to Uganda then, and for such a gesture of love Ugandans were very grateful. 'But at the same time we felt there was a much greater need on the spiritual side,' said Mr. Katarikawe. 'During Amin's regime many Ugandans suffered spiritually because they were affected by hardship and torture as well as by shortage of essential commodities. For that reason we felt Uganda, as well as needing physical rehabilitation, needed also spiritual rehabilitation so that the people could be reoriented to a new kind of life and could start to build a new Uganda'. Conferences have been organized for pastors and an evangelistic team has held meetings which have resulted in conversions and the restoration of backsliding Christians.

All Souls College

All Souls Church, Langham Place, London have launched a training college based on a new concept in theological education — combining critical study and pastoral experience in a church setting. Its aims are to train the student to think 'critically' and theologically, to train the student professionally (for example in evangelism, pastoral care, preaching and group work), to encourage the

personal/spiritual development of each student. The academic year runs from late September to mid-July and the student is not expected to be away for more than two weeks at Christmas and Easter or five weeks in the summer. Part-time jobs may be engaged in up to an absolute maximum of 20 hours per week. The cost of tuition is £19 a month and it is not necessary that students be Anglican. 'We welcome all from Assemblies of God to Zwinglians!' Details are available from The Principal, ASCAT, All Souls Church Complex, Langham Place, London W1N 3DB.

Archaeology

The annual symposium of the Victoria Institute focused on biblical archaeology with papers from Alan Millard, John Ruffle, and Dr. John Kane, under the chairmanship of Terence Mitchell of the British Museum. Alan Millard's paper on Archaeology and Ancient Israel contained a warning against rash conclusions as exemplified in the way that some people claim to find familiar biblical names and towns in the tablets discovered during 1975 at Ebla. John Kane, speaking on New Testament Palestine, rejected the traditional view that Jesus was brought to trial at the Antonia fortress. He also suggested that the stone door rolled over the tomb where Jesus lay was probably like 'a square cork' rather than a large millstone. John Ruffle went so far as to say that archaeology does not prove the Bible is true. The archaeologist can be sure of some facts about the artifacts

and monuments he studies. But interpreting his findings tends to be a more subjective operation. But all the speakers agreed that archaeology can indicate the likelihood that a particular event might have occurred.

Argyle Chapel, Reading

Commended to full time Christian work from Argyle Chapel, Reading, is Alistair J. Hornal, who previously worked with the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship and developing their book sales and Christian literature. With his wife Senga, daughter Lesley aged three years and son Iain aged one, Alistair will be spending a good deal of his time working with the Southcote Christian Mission, an established fellowship strategically located in a large housing complex in the West Reading area. He will also be associated with Reading and District Fellowship of Counties Evangelistic work in Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

Bible Society

Issued in May, the Society's *Annual Report* tells of growth and development. The worldwide membership of the United Bible Societies is 5% up on the previous Council meeting. The number of languages now having at least one book of the Bible has risen to 1,710. In England and Wales Scripture distribution has increased by a massive 40%. A further 83 towns and localities undertook large-scale Gospel distribution. Executive Director Tom Houston reported: 'We produced 27% more Scriptures for overseas, with the largest amount going to

Nigeria.' Giving by supporters rose a full 20% over the previous year to a new high of £1.33 million. The enormously successful Bible-a-month club scheme showed a dramatic increase of 203%. Against such a background, Dr. Donald Coggan laid the foundation stone for the Bible Society's new Bible Centre at Swindon early in May. The Bible Society plans to move its publishing division to Swindon when the Bible Centre is opened early in 1982, leaving the rest of the Society's work at Bible House, London. The warehousing and distribution will be more compact, more efficiently designed and more economical to run. It will move into premises designed around its highly specialised operation and will have the advantage of being once again on the same site as the publishing offices. 'This gives us the opportunity,' explained Tom Houston, 'of getting our Bible publishing operation into the 'eighties and 'nineties technologically'; including computer control of operations and electronic information transfer between London and Swindon. From Poland comes news that the post-war translation of the Bible is currently a main bestseller. The Warsaw Bible Society office is constantly receiving letters of thanks — 'Only now do we realise what the Bible is about.' Church bookstalls from all the denominations, including the majority Roman Catholic Church, are now ordering by the thousand rather than by the score. The problem is paper. The Polish Bible Society could sell with no difficulty half a million colour

illustrated New Testaments a year in the 1975 translation for the next two or three years — but for that they would need upwards of half a million kilos a year of paper. Poland is suffering from a severe paper shortage — and a severe shortage of foreign currency with which to pay for imports. Now the Bible Society in London is mounting a campaign to donate paper for Bible printing to the Society in Warsaw.

Counselling

The last few years has seen considerable interest shown by Christians in counselling. Not only elders and youth leaders but many responsible Christians have come to see that this is one of the ways in which Christians can 'serve one another'. Unfortunately, books on counselling have tended to be either over-technical or else glib and superficial. The fact that they generally came from the USA tended to make them seem irrelevant to conditions in Britain. Three recently published books will be of help to Christians not trained in counselling but concerned to help others. From Lion Publishing come *Coping with Depression* by Myra Chave-Jones who works with Care and Counsel in London as a psychotherapist. At £1.00 for 80 pages, her book is a valuable guide to an important subject that is often misunderstood. Elspeth Stephenson writes about *Enjoying Being Single* (£1.00). Any reader of *The Harvester* is bound to have friends who may be helped by this. And it should be required reading for older people, married or unmarried, who have forgotten what it feels like to be single and vulnerable. Selwyn Hughes, founder and Director of Crusade for World Revival, has for some time been running Christian counselling courses. Now Kingsway have published his book *A Friend in Need* (192 pages, £1.75) which is intended to help people learn how to counsel by encouragement and by exhortation — not counselling by enlightenment. Although the book looks like a throw-away mass market paperback, it is quite solid reading and contains a great deal of very

useful material. A reader who can absorb this will find a great deal of practical help.

Evangelism

The Fishers Fellowship is planning to hold its annual Men's Conference from 9 to 11 October at Windmill House, Alveston, Birmingham. It will be a working conference with practical sessions, discussions and talk-backs. Details are available from Ron Smith, 96 Plaistow Lane, Bromley, Kent. No provision is made for single sisters. But wives and fiancées may be accommodated in single rooms. (As Charlie Brown says somewhere; 'The theological implications are staggering!') Stephen Gillham requests prayer for a schools tour from July 6 to 17 during which he intends visiting 25 schools in Dorset. Many are only visited once each year but the opportunity has come to make a second visit. July 22-August 17 will see up to 170 children attending the Dorset Adventure Time Camps. There is a problem about help, especially among tent leaders. Prayer is requested for more workers and for much fruit this year at Camp. Help will also be needed during the last week in August with work in North Dorset and on September 5 at the Dorchester Show. *In Contact Ministries* reports continuing work on the large church that is being converted for us as a teaching centre. The steel girders have erected and the concrete floor is about to be inserted. But finance is needed for this project. The fellowship in Plaistow has grown and is in the care of Terry and Pat Diggins. The team is seeking the Lord for guidance about new church planting initiatives. During July a concentrated evangelistic thrust is planned for the Asian community. Fifty people will be involved in visitation, evangelistic meetings, etc., in both the New Ham and Tower Hamlets areas. Prayer is requested for God's blessing. *Sid and Joan Mountstevens* thought they were not going to be able to hold their usual August mission as the site had been leased to a

commercial organisation for a beach club. But prayer has been answered and the mission is to go ahead. A new development involves a motor caravan, to be equipped with a portable tent and other necessities and used to extend the witness into other towns and villages. Dick Saunders reports that wherever he travelled on his nine-week tour of South Africa, the WTL radio broadcasts were heard clearly throughout the day. There were campaigns in the Cape, and in three centres around Durban. The summer season commenced with the Pontin's Holiday Week at Christchurch. July will see the team in Hastings, then off to Edinburgh for a Crusade during the Festival. *The Worcestershire Postal Sunday School* half yearly report makes encouraging reading. About 450 scholars are now receiving the lessons each month and 136 of these received certificates for completing all the competitions in 1980. Similar groups are functioning in Wiltshire and Dorset.

Italian Earthquake Fund

Contributions may be sent to Mr. & Mrs. B. Hodges (account no. 2) 22 Clive Street, Hereford, HR1 2SB.

The Leprosy Mission

The Leprosy Mission is apparently free from sexism. Its new Chairman is Lady Richardson. She has also served on the Councils of the African Evangelical Fellowship and of the Unevangelized Field Mission. The Mission reports that over the last year giving has increased by 14% reaching a total of £954,000. This increase, however, seems insignificant when compared with that reported from India. Here giving rose from 38,000 Rs. in 1978 to 340,000 Rs. in 1980.

Middle East

The International Federation of Evangelical Students has been examining the possibilities of work in the Middle East. There is obviously very little chance of forming the normal kind of student movement. So they have formulated four main goals. The first is to discover

where the Christian students are. Colin Chapman, the regional secretary, is assisted in travelling by Vivienne Stacey who spends approximately three months every year visiting the difference countries of the region. In this way it is possible to make contact through the churches. The second goal is to feed in resources. Christian books are needed — there is very little which speaks to students directly in their own language concerning the problems of their particular cultural, social and religious situation. The third goal is to draw students together. By 1980 a regional conference was bringing together students and graduates from more than five Arab countries plus several countries outside the region. The final goal is to reach Arab students studying abroad. Through friendship, through hospitality, and through literature distribution, there are possibilities for Christians in this country to help in this important work. Gospels and Scripture portions in Arabic, English and French, can be obtained from the Bible Society or Scripture Gift Mission. Christian homes are always needed to welcome the thousand Muslim students studying in Europe and North America.

Revival

The European Evangelical Alliance has arranged a conference with Revival as its theme to be held in Holland from September 21 to 25. Among the leaders will be Dr. J. Edwin Orr and Dr. Richard Lovelace. The overall chairman will be the Rev. A. Morgan Derham. Details are available from the European Evangelical Alliance Conference, 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT.

Salvation Army

On April 30, Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth, granddaughter of the Founder of the Salvation Army, received on behalf of the Salvation Army the Variety Club's International Humanitarian Award. This is the highest honour that the Variety Club International can bestow upon any individual. In the past it has been given to such distinguished figures as

Sir Alexander Fleming, and Albert Schweitzer. Six weeks later, however, a disturbing television documentary accused the Salvation Army of harsh treatment of the homeless. As this paragraph is being written, the accusations are being considered. However founded or unfounded the accusations may prove to be, they serve as a reminder that Christian organisations are always liable to come under critical scrutiny.

Superficial?

Writing in *Christianity Today*, John Stott has cautioned his fellow evangelicals against 'Christian superficiality'. Although he hailed the reports of phenomenal church growth in various parts of the world, he added: 'Our euphoria should be tempered by the question of whether the growth is as deep as it is broad. The push for evangelism and church growth must be accompanied by biblical teaching. Biblical history itself reveals that "the prosperity of God's people rose and fell according to their receptivity to his word." ' He stressed, however, that effective biblical preaching should 'take seriously both the biblical text and the contemporary scene'. 'We evangelicals enjoy studying the text with a view to opening it up,' he stated, 'but we are often weak in applying it to the realities of modern life.' The answer, he maintained, was a balanced approach. 'To withdraw from the world into the Bible (which is escapism) or from the Bible into the world (which is conformity) will be fatal to our preaching ministry.' That rigorous, life-related biblical exposition, he contended, would be an effective antidote to spiritual superficiality.

Home Calls

Miss Ruth Elliott on May 13, 1981, aged 90. Eldest daughter of the late Russell Elliott; elder sister of Philip Elliott of Claygate, Surrey and of the late Russell G. Elliot of Sudbury, Suffolk, she was a graduate of Leeds University and was for many years senior French mistress at Christ's Hospital School for

Girls, Hertford. After retirement she lived in Kendal and met with the Sand Area (now Parr Street) assembly. Mrs. Annie C. Philip on December 29, 1980. A native of Caithness, she was saved and baptized in Edinburgh while training as a teacher and then met with believers at Bethany Hall, Wick. In 1929 she married Andrew K. Philip who was for many years an evangelist in the north of Scotland and the Orkney Islands. Their children numbered five — all born again. Moving to Aberdeen before the commencement of the last War she and her husband have met with the believers at Victoria Hall, Torry. Mrs. Lily Yarker on April 8, 1981, aged 86. Saved almost 80 years ago in the Railway Mission, Carlisle, she was in fellowship for over 30 years at Hebron Hall, Carlisle, and was faithful in her attendance there until overcome by illness some four years ago. She longed to go to be with the Lord whom she loved but prayer is requested for the members of her family who lovingly cared for her.



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Retired Missionary Aid Fund:

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during the month of May amounted to £12,463.09, including an anonymous donation of £50.

PRAYER LIST

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Workers are requested to include their names on their cards when returning them each month.

Campbell, B.:

Falmouth 1-4; Redruth 5-7; Hill House, Otterhampton 11-18; St. Ives 19; Falmouth 20-26; Fowey 27-30.

Clifford, Dr. D.:

Ryde, I.O.W. 2; St. Leonards 7; Poulner 8, 15, 22, 29; Gosport 12, 14, 21, 28; West Moors 9, 16, 23.

Galyer, W. S.:

Catford 5; Conference, London Bible College 9-11; Cambridge 11-14; Hounslow 26.

Gillham, S.:

Wareham for Christ Crusade 1-2; Thorncombe 5; Dorset Schools Tour 6-17; Gillingham 12; Budleigh Salterton 15; Poole 19; Dorset Regional Fellowship 20; Dorset Adventure Time Camps 22 July-17 August.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Harlesden, London 5; Balham, London 5; Exmouth and Exeter 12; Briston, Norfolk 26.

Iliffe, D.:

Greenland 1-2; Littlehampton 5, Holland 11-20; Chichester 21; Hailsham & Eastbourne 26; Camps Preparation 27-31.

Lowther, G. K.:

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Enfield Highway 1, 12; Southall 5; Thundersly 14, 19, 21, 26; Croxley Green 16, 23. Hornsey 30.

Short, S. S.:

Corsham 1; Marshfield 2; Seaton 5-7; Bristol 8, 15; Minehead 12-14; Chelmsford 26-27.

Stringer, D.:

Bournemouth 1-28; North London 29-30; Saltburn-by-Sea 31.

Tatford, F. A.:

France 1-3; Salisbury 11, 12; Gloucester, 26, 27, 29; Ross-on-Wye 28.

Thurston, A.:

Holiday 1-4; Woodbury (a.m.) 5; Kingsbridge 5, 7, 21, 26, 28; Chillington 12, 22, 29; Balsall Common 8-10; Weymouth, Ministry Meetings 13-19; Dartmoor (Prison) 10, 24, 31; Paignton 23, 30; Strete 6, 20, 27.

Tryon, G. C.:

Sidcup 5; Beckenham 8; Fetcham 9, 23; Woking 12 (a.m.); Welling 12 (p.m.); Woodford 13-17; Loughboro 19, 23, 29; Cambridge 26.

Grimsby:

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. Missionary meeting, Friday, July 24 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Colin Porteous. Report of work in Normandy.

Hull:

Walton Street Church, Hull, North Humberside. Golden Jubilee July 11 & 12. Saturday 3.00 p.m. & 6.00 p.m. Sunday 3.30 p.m. & 6.30 p.m. Tea provided both days. Further information from L. Young, 7 Greystone Avenue, Hull, HU5 5BD.

Largs:

Brisbane Hall, School Street. Sisters' Missionary Conference Wednesday, August 5, 3 to 6.30 p.m.

Scarborough:

Durham Street Gospel Hall. Annual Conference, Saturday July 25, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Ministry Meetings 27 and 28 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Mr. G. T. Bull (Milngavie).

Press Day, Friday,

July 3, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Boscombe:

Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, Boscombe. Saturday, August 1, at 7 p.m. Conversational Bible Readings. Subject: Upper Room Ministry. Speaker: A. T. Shearman (Worcester). Portion: John ch. 17.

Durham:

Men's Bible Conference, Saturday, September 5. Speakers: Dr. D. L. Cook and Dr. A. Noble. Topic: Dynamic Christianity (Studies in Ephesians). The day starts with coffee at 10 a.m. at Bethany Church, Houghton-le-Spring and goes on until 7.15 p.m. (Booking fee, to include lunch and tea, £4.00). Further details from R. S. Cowie, Sunnymead, North End, Longframlington, Northumberland NE65 8EA. Tel. (066 570) 335.

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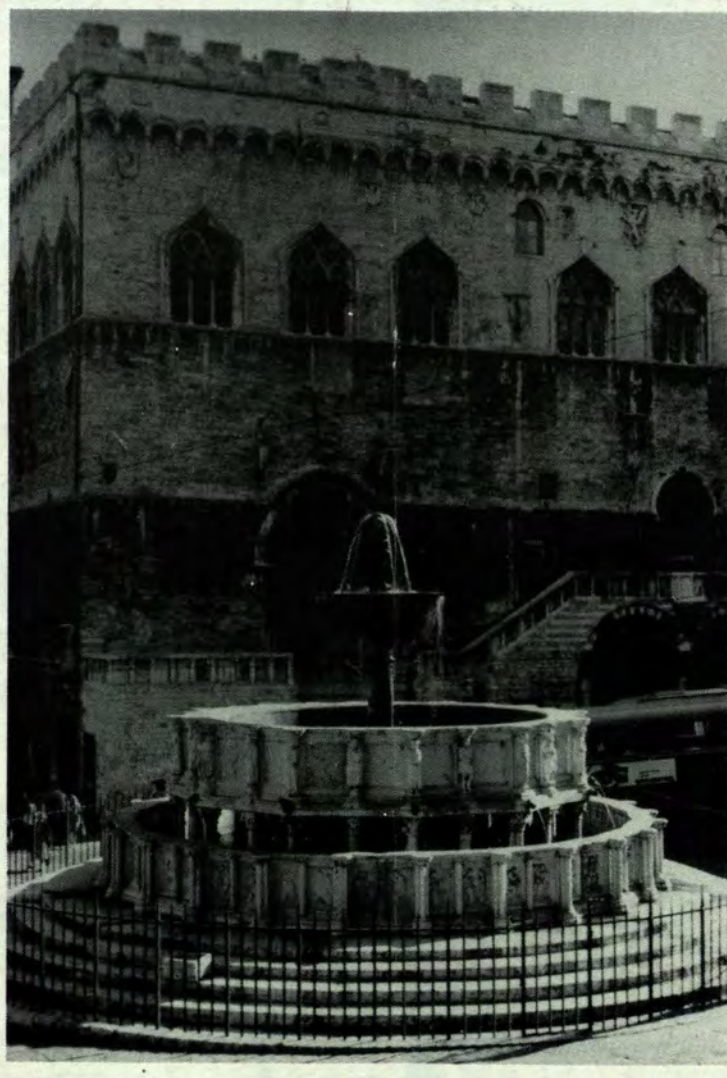


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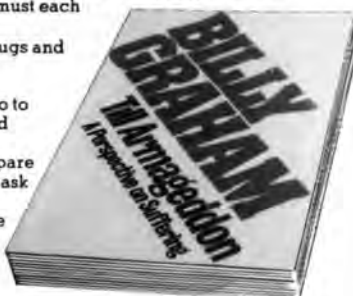
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REALISM AND SELF-DELUSION

To grow older is — for some of us — to sink ever more beyond retrieval into that-which-we-have-always-been. It becomes more and more difficult to think outside our accustomed ways; and because we stay in familiar mental surroundings, those habits of mind reinforce themselves. In many ways, it is a comfortable and undemanding condition; and the more so if we can reassure ourselves that that which we have always known is, after all, the truth. Why should we disturb ourselves with the unfamiliar, the dangerous, the strange? We actively resent those who might upset us.

For others, ageing brings a different and more unsettling condition. We meet a wider circle of people; perhaps we travel into unfamiliar cultures; our young people grow up and bring uncouthly into our lives a mass of conflict and intellectual disturbance. We learn, in small ways, to see ourselves as others see us; or to see our cherished certainties from the standpoint of those who do not share them. Our God somehow begins to seem larger and stranger and more alarming — and some of our youthful certainties take on the colouring of intellectual provincialities. Sometimes the more glib preachers begin to seem less like proclaimers of the Word of God, and more like manipulators of their hearers, or even outright hucksters.

How shall the one speak to the other? For both are in need: the first, lest their faith becomes mere habit; the second, lest they lose it altogether. There is only one answer for each: and that is a surer grasp — a personal and deeply real grasp — upon their God: on God as Person and Father, not as concept or idea. Sometimes that grasp can be mediated best through the fellowship of others who know Him too: sometimes through personal devotion and prayer. Usually, something of both is needed. How do our churches shape in their service to both kinds of people?

THE 'ASSEMBLIES' OF NORTH-CENTRAL ITALY

Samuele Negri

Readers of The Witness will remember an interesting series of articles on the assemblies of 'Brethren' in Italy that appeared in that journal from the pen of Dr. Daisy Ronco of Bangor, North Wales. We are pleased to be able to carry this article written by the editor of Il Cristiano, the Italian 'Brethren' magazine. The article was originally prepared for the recent jubilee of the Wiedenest Bible School in West Germany.

The evangelical movement, which today in Italy is linked with the movement of 'The Brethren', had a completely independent and autonomous beginning, even though very soon contacts and rather close bonds were established with the English assemblies, especially with George Müller. In fact, it was about 1848/49 that some people in the region of Tuscany were converted through the reading of the Gospel, and understood the immediate necessity of leaving the Roman Church. The best-known of these was Count Piero Guicciardini. This discovery of the Gospel was not kept hidden and it provoked a reaction by the authorities of the grand duchy, which had no scruples about persecuting and imprisoning those who adhered to the Gospel or who had had contact with the Reformed Swiss Church in Florence. Owing to the great outcry which the arrest of Count Guicciardini in 1851 caused, it was preferable to send him into exile. He went to London, where he came into contact with some Italian refugees, who were in England for political reasons, as well as with English believers from the movement of the assemblies. Among the Italians which he met in England, there was Teodoro Pietrocola Rossetti who, after his conversion, became one of the best-known persons among the assemblies in Italy and the author of the words of many hymns.

In 1857 Rossetti returned to Italy, to the region of Piedmont, where tolerance had been granted to non-Catholic religions in 1848. The Kingdom of Sardinia (which included Piedmont, Sardinia and Liguria under the House of Savoy) was at that time the only Italian state where it was possible to have a certain freedom of religion. This fact explains the growth

and spread of the assemblies in Piedmont, from where they spread to other regions little by little as political unification with Piedmont came about.

There co-existed in the assemblies at this time persons with different political and ideological trends. Then in 1870 a clear-cut division came about between those who were bound to political movements of the Risorgimento (especially followers of Garibaldi) and those who desired a complete separation of spiritual things from political ideologies. There was, therefore, on one side the Christian Free Church, which was politically oriented and disappeared altogether about 1904, and the Christian Free Churches on the other side, which later dropped this name and became more clearly identified with the movement of the 'Brethren'.

The Diffusion and Work of the Assemblies

Since then, the assemblies in North-central Italy have been quite wide-spread in Piedmont, and at Florence in Tuscany. In other regions, except for large cities such as Milan, Genoa and Bologna, the work is rather recent and goes back to after the First World War, while in some cities the work only goes back to just after the Second World War.

At the present, there are assemblies in about 100 localities of North-central Italy, even though in many cases these are not numerous, but family groups. One interesting fact to note is that the movement of the assemblies has developed as a movement essentially popular and proletarian. Other than a very few, the believers have all been people of humble birth, the working class, especially farmers, who often learned to read and write in order to be able to study the Scriptures. (My grandfather was one of these.) Another category of person who contributed to the spread of the Gospel was workers for the railroad, who, because of the possibility of travelling, were able to become itinerant preachers.

The Assemblies Today

After the Second World War, the depopulation of the countryside, caused by industrialization, greatly diminished the strength of the rural churches, which in some cases altogether disappeared. The loss of



leadership and of Gospel witnesses left these areas spiritually impoverished. We must admit that there is a tendency toward materialism and easy living in the assemblies today, due partly to better conditions of life. This is not conducive to spiritual growth and involvement in Christian work.

The work of evangelization is usually carried out through personal evangelism and through meetings held in the churches. In the sixties, much use was made of tent meetings but now, even though tents are still being widely used, they seem to arouse less interest and in some areas are unsuitable for awakening the interest of the people. One method of evangelization used during the past few years has been through private radio stations, some of which are entirely in the hands of the believers. It seems at the present time that this means of evangelization is effective, even though the listeners do not usually respond to the invitation to write. Results are more readily seen where the radio station itself is evangelical and a telephone number is given out, establishing thereby the possibility of a contact.

Today the North-Central Italian assemblies are undergoing a period of transition. Greater economic and cultural possibilities are pushing many to increase their learning, including Biblical knowledge. This is good, but often is being done without discernment and with a certain theological relativism. One reads about everything, without learning thoroughly and often without having the foundations necessary for healthy discernment. All this may, in a certain sense, cause that which we may call a 'crisis of identity' and in some cases the assemblies risk losing the vision of their calling and

of their spiritual responsibilities. Among current needs there is, therefore, that of more learning, but it must be firmly anchored to the Scriptures and less influenced by fashionable theology or ideologies. There is also a need for the believers to become more conscious of their task of witnessing. For believers of the past, this had a place of priority, and even their work was chosen with a view to witnessing. Now, as we have said, there has been a certain relaxation of efforts and one's career or work has acquired a certain value in itself and often takes precedence.

We must note that there are still zones of Northern Italy which are practically without an evangelical witness by the assemblies. This is true of Northern Lombardy and of all the region to the east: Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli Venezia Giulia, where the believers are few, isolated and in need of fellowship and encouragement. I would particularly like to direct attention to the fact that in Italy there is an entire province, that of Bolzano (the South Tyrol) which has both a German language and culture. Since it is very difficult for an Italian to penetrate into this environment, it might be better and easier if it were done by German believers, who already speak the language.

In conclusion, I would like to add that the Italian assemblies are quite bound to one another and maintain ties of fellowship and collaboration both through annual meetings of representatives from the various assemblies and through the monthly magazine *// Cristiano* ('The Christian'), for which I am responsible. It has been published for 93 years now and has a circulation of about 3200 copies.

ADDICTION AND DISEASE

William Lenters

This article is reprinted from The Reformed Journal of Grand Rapids, USA, by permission. William R. Lenters is executive director of the Calvary Rehabilitation Centre in Phoenix. An earlier version of this essay was delivered as a paper to a meeting of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies of USA.

One of the major dynamics of the theory that alcoholism is a disease is what psychologists call projection: the effort to explain one's problems in terms of forces, powers, or persons outside oneself over which one has no control. The precedent for doing that goes back to Adam in the Garden of Eden: 'The woman you gave me . . . ' The time has come, I believe, to restore some balance to the discussion of alcoholism and recognize the complexity of this problem, which is far more common among Christians than most of us care to admit.

Stanton Peele, a social psychologist writing for the Addiction Research Foundation, has pointed out in a recent article how easily people tend to reject accountability for the difficulties they are having. To disavow responsibility is one way — temporarily at least — to eliminate anxiety. Because reflection about ourselves is so often painful, we avoid it if we can.

That kind of avoidance is encouraged by those who portray alcoholism as an uncontrollable disease with mysterious chemical and genetic origins. There is a prevalent illusion fostered by the concept of the disease of alcoholism, the illusion that alcoholics are born, not made, that the alcoholic is biochemically predisposed to use alcohol addictively from birth to death. Nor is it helpful to view dependence on drugs such as beverage alcohol — or even heroin — as a characteristic of the drug itself. Drugs are not inherently addictive; people are addictable.

Alcohol abuse is in fact a learned behaviour cultivated by a readiness to resort to drinking whenever painful situations arise. Addiction is a life-style, a behavioural disorder first of all. It is a way of coping with reality. My experience in the field and research data confirm this position. While heroin and beverage alcohol have powerful and debilitating effects on body tissues, these effects do not in themselves cause or indicate physical addiction. Physical addiction is, I am inclined to believe, a myth.

Certainly, cellular adaptation takes place in the body of everyone who abuses a drug like beverage alcohol. When he or she stops drinking, detoxification is necessary — and quite often painful. But painful physical craving is present only during the detoxification period. After that, there is no evidence of physical addiction. Once off the drug, the system returns to normal. The bodily results of alcohol abuse often remain — liver or brain damage, dehydration,

malnutrition, damage to the central nervous system, heart disease. But these complications do not in themselves demonstrate physical addiction.

The goal of the disease theory of alcoholism is admirable. It seeks to release the victims of alcohol from an overwhelming sense of guilt while at the same time persuading the public to help these suffering fellow human beings instead of simply condemning them. Certainly this is more humane than reinforcing the image of despicable degenerates fit only for the soup line. But if the disease theory has been successful in creating a more positive and humane context for dealing with alcoholics, it has also distorted the truth about alcohol addiction. Responsibility for recovery has tended to shift from the alcoholic to health care people.

Traditional disease theories view cellular adaptivity in the alcoholic as proof that a disease exists. And it is true that continual abuse of alcohol and other depressants weakens cellular structure. Hence, if an alcoholic returns to the drug after a long period of abstinence, that weakened cellular structure reactivates the tolerance-withdrawal-craving cycle with much more intensity. The typical chronic alcoholic will get physically drunk, even sick, on a half pint of cheap wine because he no longer has tolerance for it. His cellular structure can no longer adapt.

This is the point at which the disease conceptualists argue for their position. They consistently report that alcoholics who return to drinking after a sustained period of abstinence suffer grossly exaggerated physical and psychological symptoms. Their bodies and minds react to the drug as if they had never been off it. Withdrawal symptoms become as chronic as physical craving. What causes this to happen has never been explained. But this does not prove that alcoholism is a disease. It simply fails to explain why the chronic alcoholic returned to beverage alcohol after the drug was out of his system.

Alcoholism is simply not a monolithic problem with one chemical source. Some persons ruin their entire lives by drinking; others rely on it only under certain circumstances. Some steadily increase their intake over the years; others invariably get into legal hassles when they drink. Still others drink violently but periodically. These are examples, not of alcoholism, but of alcoholisms; and they demonstrate the tremendous variety of the problem.

The disease theory of alcoholism strikes me as having served its purpose. The American Medical Association now recognizes that alcoholics need treatment; public drunkenness has been decriminalized in most states; Alcoholics Anonymous is recognized as a creditable organization. We must now get down to finding better ways of treating alcoholics and helping their families. If we see addiction to

the use of alcohol primarily as a behavioural disorder, it will be that much easier to implement an effective treatment, which will combine early intervention, strong confrontation, tough love, and a radical, spiritually based programme of living.

Addiction has to do with the effect a drug produces on a given user — in general the relief of tension. Paradoxically, addiction decreases the ability to cope with life's complexities, thus causing more anxiety, not less. Persons who are addicted are addicted to the experience that the drug creates for them. The depressant effect of beverage alcohol may lessen a person's feelings of pain and sense of the difficulties of life, but at the same time it causes him or her to deal less capably with those difficulties. Eventually, the person who turns to alcohol for the rewards he or she is not presently receiving from life will find that his or her only rewards come from drinking.

The conventional questions used to identify an alcohol addiction problem (How often does the person drink? How often is he drunk? When does he begin drinking during the day? Does he drink alone? Does he act anti-socially when he drinks?) may not detect the addiction until long after the person is readily amenable to an effective recovery programme. To understand an individual case of addiction early enough to help, we must ask what the addict derives from experiencing the effect of the drug. That question will elicit answers along these lines: it fills time; it structures life; it provides a reassuring ritual; it grants power or sexual potency or freedom; it facilitates a positive identity; it alleviates anxiety; it provides the ingredients for successful socializing.

A central theme in these responses is that of power and achievement. North American culture places a high premium on being able to control or manage our environment. We believe that with enough willpower, charm, potential, political clout, *machismo*, muscle, brains, or whatever, we can say to a mountain, 'Be cast into the sea' and it will be done. If the mountain doesn't move, it is because of our personal weakness. This success-oriented life-style is really an extension of Darwin's 'survival of the fittest'. The weak and brutish are sifted through this sieve. If you can't hold your own, too bad!

The addict is one who gets sifted but wilfully refuses to tolerate the frustration of failure. And so he drinks, compulsively, to forget failure, flee fear, run from rejection. The resulting deterioration makes him less and less adequate to meet his personal goals. In addition, as long as he still retains any vestiges of the work ethic, he will also experience guilt feelings for failing to get done what should be getting done. More drinking.

Drinking and intoxication have come to be associated with masculinity and power. It is athletes and those with physically demanding, even risky, jobs who hustle beer in television advertising. Adolescent viewers are taking their cues, not from these athletes' ability but from their drinking. The appeal is on target: a key aspect of the experience of alcohol is the illusion of power it offers, the feeling of potency. But it is a temporary illusion at best. It is laughable (though not funny) how sexually aroused a drunk can feel but how sexually impotent he really is.

The addiction experience has some parallels with the religious high that is staged in some evangelical circles. In the protective custody of spirits — or the Spirit — all pain and anxiety are removed . . . for a time. The world is now manageable. It *feels good* to be high, chemically or religiously. In the face of that, Arthur Holmes' reminder sounds a chilling note of realism:

Personal, private, feelingful experience, in fact, is not what life is all about; it is the reality and truth of things that counts. Experience is not what Christianity is primarily about: it, too, is concerned with the reality and truth of things . . . Experiences can be induced by hypnosis, created by fantasy, duplicated by hallucinatory drugs . . . Experience is a shifting sand. And to focus on having an experience can become egocentric and hedonistic — and that is not what evangelical Christianity is all about (RJ, Sept. 1977).

Holmes goes on to say that authentic Christianity is about the 'reality of God and our place in his creation.' We are contingent and finite beings who are born in need of a Saviour, a power greater than ourselves to sanctify and satisfy. This needs to be emphasized among people who confess with their mouths that Jesus is Lord but whose lifestyle evidences a desperate attempt to be in complete charge of their own lives as well as the lives of others. It is my contention that alcohol abuse of this type is running rampant among Christians. For every obvious addict in the community of believers, there are at least ten others whose drinking secretly fills the inadequacy, inferiority, and impotency gaps in their lives. The pity is that to those who have discovered the toxic power of the bottle, the power of the Gospel is foolishness.

We have been saying that addiction can best be understood in terms of the person using the chemical, because it is primarily an addiction to an experience. The boundaries of the addiction are not exclusively delineated by the substance; the personality characteristics of the user are also an important determinant.

The effect of psychoactive drugs on conscious awareness and feelings is immediate. A three-martini lunch can kill your pain or raise your hopes or even make old Gloria the

waitress look extremely attractive. But many other involvements and activities serve to provide some persons the kind of experience which leads to addiction: gambling, television, overeating, overwork, overplay, overtreatment, hyper-religiosity — all can be regarded as and dealt with as addictions.

What is so addictive about these activities? All offer the opportunity for an all-consuming 'sensation' that minimizes the conscious and painful awareness of life's problems. What makes any activity an addiction is centred in the person who undertakes it. Personality, life-situation, and motivations can work together to develop addictive behaviour. If a person turns to the involvement to escape psychic or physical pain, resorts to it increasingly, experiences relief when engaged in it but anxiety and guilt when deprived of it, that person will then become addicted no matter what the substance or activity is.

Heroin addicts, for example, are known to grow out of the habit when they can substitute methadone for heroin or when they can form a dependency on an institution such as a hospital or prison. It is the act and style of dependency to which the addict is addicted; that is what turns him on. The object — heroin, methadone, the institution — is only incidental. Similarly, what is behind the success of the religious cults that are able to brainwash young adults and teenagers is a totally controlled and dependency-facilitating environment. Uncertainty and anxiety are submerged under the worship of the cult leaders. Identification with its *mores* dissolves all the ambition to be a self-actualizing person.

All religion becomes addictive, sick, when its object so controls and dominates a person that he or she becomes God-obsessed instead of God-directed and focused. Calvinism at its best understands that man at his best is one who seeks God's kingdom in all things and fully appreciates that that kingdom will come to its fulness in all of life's dimensions.

What I want to drive home in this article is that we in the Christian community have addictions of all kinds among us — some more obviously tragic than others. Although addiction can cover many involvements, however, it must be said that alcoholism is number one in terms of lives lost, families destroyed, dollars wasted, accidents caused, and a complex host of psychological, social, and physical problems incurred.

Since addiction can occur within any kind of involvement, we must learn to recognize it as soon as possible. Some characteristics which are helpful to bear in mind are these four:

1. Addiction is a continuum. Only infrequently is a person's life dedicated completely to an addiction. Dwellers on Skid Row, for example, represent only about three per cent of addicted alcoholics. Persons are more or less addicted, depending on the extent to which their habit controls their life.

2. Addiction tends to consume a person, distracting him from all other involvements. Thus the person is diminished; his life undercut. Affection for the object gives way to obsession.

3. Addiction is not a pleasurable experience. The object of obsession becomes the answer to and the root of all the addict's fear, anxiety and guilt. His occasion for using is not one of pleasure but pain; his mood not easy and light but difficult and heavy.

4. Addiction is present when there is an inability to choose *not* to do something. If the person sometimes does not involve himself in a situation which ordinarily calls for it, he is not addicted. Knowing when to stop doing something that it is detrimental to one's life or another's life is what characterizes non-addictive behaviour.

People are less prone to an addictive life-style when they gain enough satisfaction from their personal relationships with others. Such persons will not compulsively seek one thing expecting it alone to provide them with contentment. What makes a Christian, for example, is not being *obsessed* with Jesus Christ but being focused by him and directed by him to be obedient in every area of life. As the Heidelberg Catechism notes, my only comfort in life and death is not simply knowing that I belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ but also that I can be willing, by the power of his Spirit, to live for him in whatever I do.

If people have many involvements which mean something to them, there is less opportunity for them to be dominated by a single involvement which turns into an all-consuming passion. They are less vulnerable to tunnel vision, to short-changing the possibilities for purpose and meaning in life. If people have good feelings about themselves, they will not consciously hurt themselves by becoming enslaved to any one activity or substance. A healthy self-respect is necessary so that they will not want to be persons out of control, vulnerable to destructive forces outside themselves. Non-addicts will have a healthy measure of self-acceptance in order to cope with the wolves of guilt and anxiety at the door.

Finally, the non-addicted person will be able to acknowledge and face his or her problems in order to begin dealing effectively with them and thus avoid self-defeating behaviours.

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PROBLEMS IN BIBLE TRANSLATION

2 — Order and Idiom

David J. Clark

This is the second article in the series by Dr. Clark, Translation Consultant in Papua New Guinea to the United Bible Societies. In it, by pointing to problems met by translators, he also illuminates our understanding of our own translated Bible.

Logical Order

The order in which events are mentioned may be perfectly clearly understood in one language, but very confusing in another. Translators must respect the conventions of the receptor language on matters of this kind. In *Acts 5:5* it is quite acceptable in Greek or English to say that Ananias fell down and died. In some languages, if the verbs are given in this order, the reader will infer that he died as a result of the fall, which is surely not what Luke intended. If Ananias' death is to be seen as the judgment of God, in a language like lai, the events must be reversed, and put into their chronological order, to say 'Ananias died and fell down'.

A similar issue arises in the next chapter, in *Acts 6:6*, though there the matter is perhaps not so clear cut. When the seven men were being commissioned for their work, which did the apostles do first, pray, or lay hands on them? It seems quite probable that they laid hands on them first, then prayed with their hands still in position. If so, then some translations will have to change the order to say 'the apostles laid their hands on them and prayed'.

A similar type of problem may occur also concerning the order in which people are named. In some languages, the older child must be mentioned first. In *Genesis 9:18*, Noah's sons are listed as Shem, Ham and Japheth, but since in *verse 24*, Ham is stated to be the youngest, languages like Falam Chin must list him last in *verse 18*. This convention may cause difficulties in places where relative age is not known. For instance in *John 11:1*, Mary is mentioned before Martha, and would therefore in some languages be assumed to be the older sister. But in *verse 5*, Martha is mentioned first, which would appear to be a contradiction. Since the matter is of no importance to the story, translators in such languages would usually take one order of names and stick to it every time the names are mentioned.

Homophony

Proper names may be a problem to translators in other ways also, as they may have an accidental resemblance to other words in the language. In some cases this will not matter, but in others it could be quite misleading. In Fuyuge the name of Justus in *Acts 1:23* sounds like the name of a certain kind of bird. This would hardly be of importance except that the name of this bird is also used as a personal name for women. In order to avoid giving the impression that Justus was a woman, the translators made a minor alteration in the spelling to remove the likeness to the bird name.

In the same language, a more serious problem arose in *Acts 13:22* where the name of Jesse sounds like a word meaning 'to have sexual relations'. Again the name was altered to avoid the resemblance.

Again in Fuyuge, a related problem arose in *Acts 16:12*. In this case, by the normal rules of transliteration, the town name Philippi came out to be identical with the personal name, Philip. The translation committee felt that this was confusing and decided to make an adjustment to the town name. One member mischievously suggested Filipo as a possibility. This brought a guffaw from everyone else, but was rejected as it happens to mean 'trousers'. The form finally adopted was Filipia.

In Kahua, the place name Berea in *Acts 17:10* was changed to Beroa, since Berea would mean 'to throw a spear'. In the same language, the name Rhoda in *Acts 12:13* was translated as Rosa rather than transliterated as Rota. Rota actually is a female name in that language, but it was considered unsuitable for use in scripture as it has connections with pagan religion.

Occasionally, two words in the receptor language may sound alike, and translators must take care to show clearly which one is intended. In Bawm, the word for 'treasures' in *Heb. 11:26* happens to sound the same as another word meaning 'dry country'. In this particular verse, either word could make sense, so the translators included an adjective, and said 'rich treasures' in order to exclude any misunderstanding.

Misunderstandings

There are cases where translators either misread or misunderstood the English they are translating from, and the finding of such cases is guaranteed to lighten a committee checking session. In one language, the draft of *Eph. 5:19* read 'making melody to the Lord on your guitars'. It seems that the word 'heart' had at some stage been misread or misheard as 'harp', which also makes sense in the context. The guitar was simply the locally known instrument nearest to the harp.

In another language, *1 Peter 3:7* gave rise to difficulties, especially the part rendered 'treat them with respect' in TEV. The man who made the first draft translation knew the English word 'treat' only in a medical sense. However, the context had just spoken about women being 'weaker' and went on to mention receiving 'God's gift of life'. A medical meaning for 'treat' did not seem out of place, therefore. The word 'respect' he knew as something shown to spiritual forces; 'treat your wives with respect' therefore came out as 'put magic spells on your wives to help them get better'. This mistake did not of course escape the committee's checking procedures.

Idioms and Colloquialisms

There are many idioms in scripture. An idiom can be defined as an expression whose total meaning cannot be derived from the meanings of its parts. In English 'a pretty kettle of fish' is a clear example. Idioms cannot be translated literally from one language to another. If they are, they will almost certainly be meaningless to the new readers, or even worse, will carry the wrong meaning. In such matters, translators will usually have to drop the idiomatic form of the original and state its meaning in plain language. However, there will be numerous places where this loss of idioms can be compensated for by using appropriate local idioms, either instead of a Biblical idiom, or in some other place where the scripture uses plain language. For instance, *Mark 7:6* contains no idiom in Greek but it could be translated idiomatically in English as 'Isaiah hit the nail on the head when he prophesied about you hypocrites'. In cases where a receptor language idiom suggests itself, however, the translator must be careful not to introduce into his work any element that would have been culturally or historically impossible in scripture. Even with this restriction, many picturesque expressions can be used to give that vividness to a translation that will make its readers say 'this is really our language'.

For example, in Fuyuge, *Acts 4:25* reads 'Why did the Gentiles have fire in their hearts?' In the same

language in *Acts 5:28*, the idea of responsibility is expressed as 'you want to throw this man's blood upon our backs'. Again in *Acts 17:18*, where the Greek philosophers spoke disparagingly about Paul, Fuyuge can convey their attitude accurately by an idiom which would be, if translated back to English 'What is this birdbrain trying to say?' This is actually quite close in form to the Greek which speaks of Paul gathering seeds like a bird.

In *Gal. 4:19*, Paul uses a picture of a woman in labour. In Kahua this is translated as 'a woman whose back is cracking'. In *1 Thess 2:5* the same language translates flattery as 'we did not bend our heads to please people', and in *1 Thess. 4:11*, 'mind your own business' is graphically expressed as 'don't interfere with your noses'.

Anger is an emotion experienced by people all over the world, and many vivid phrases have been used to speak of it. In *Lk. 14:21* the Mekeo language of Papua New Guinea says 'From the master's inside fire came out'. In *Esther 1:12* in Tiddim Chin the king's anger boiled rather than burned. In Falam Chin *1 Sam 26:19* says 'Perhaps an offering may bring the Lord's mind down', meaning turn away his anger.

Adultery is something which can be spoken of idiomatically in many languages. For instance, in lai in *Lk. 18:11*, the Pharisee says 'I don't play eyes with other men's wives'.

In some cases a translator may even be faced with a choice between two idioms in his own language. In translating 'kick against the goads' in *Acts 26:14*, a Khmer translator considered two possibilities in his own language: 'why do you throw chaff into the wind?' and 'Why do you spit vertically upwards?'. Which of these, if either, would you consider to be a satisfactory rendering?

In addition to idioms proper, there are many colloquial expressions and picturesque combinations of words which find their place in the translator's armoury. In *Mt. 4:9* in Fuyuge, Satan invites Jesus to 'kneel at my roots' (meaning feet). In Falam Chin, the Midianites in *Judges 6:5* were 'as thick as ants' rather than locusts.

In Kahua, Cleopas and his companion in *Lk. 24:29* urge the risen Lord to stay with them because 'the sun is almost going under'. The prodigal son in *Lk. 15:17* complains of his hunger in Kekeo with the words 'I am seeing only the food of the dead'. In Haka Chin, the way to say 'death spread to all men' (*Rom. 5:12*) is 'death soaked all men'. In the same language, the incarnation in *Jn. 1:14* is described with the words 'he made his village among us'. This carries the idea of a permanent resident rather than a passing visitor with no lasting commitment to his hosts.

The depth of Jesus' commitment was of course shown by his willingness to die for us. In English we speak of Jesus being nailed to the cross, but in Gari this is expressed perhaps more forcefully (Mk. 15:13) as 'hammer him to the cross'. As we know the Lord rose again from death, just as he had predicted. In Greek, the resurrection was predicted 'after three days' (Mk. 8:31) but in the Gari method of counting time, this had to be 'after three nights'.

Unexpected Questions

We conclude again with some questions for readers to consider for themselves.

In *Luke 7:14-15*, what happened to the bier? Did the young man sit up while it was still being carried, presumably on the shoulders of the bearers? Did he jump down from there, or was the bier at some stage placed on the ground? If so, when? Some translators need to make a decision on this point.

In *Acts 23:35*, was Paul imprisoned, or merely kept in protective custody? He was kept in the praetorium (RSV) or governor's headquarters (TEV). Many languages have no special terminology for military buildings, and the words used for ordinary buildings have to be pressed into service. But if one says Paul was kept in the governor's house, it sounds as if he was a welcome guest. On the other hand, if one says he was kept in the workroom, it sounds as if he was put to domestic service. Neither of these seems very likely, so what should the translator do?

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

As the end of the twentieth century approaches, I have become aware of an increasing number of confident forecasts that the Second Advent must take place around A.D. 2000 (some forecasters, bearing in mind the error of Dionysius Exiguus,* fix on the year 1996). Have others become aware of this trend? Also, while readers of *The Harvester* are not likely to be taken in by this sort of thing, how can help best be given to those people who are liable to be impressed by such forecasts?

(*The gentleman who miscalculated the first year A.D. — Ed.)

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

LAST SUPPER . . .

What kind of meal was it?
Why do the biblical accounts differ?
Which is the earliest account?
What really happened?
What did the disciples understand by it?

AND LORD'S SUPPER-

How did the early church observe it?
How did they interpret it?
What should it mean for Christians today?

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

What's in a name?

Question 196

Two assemblies in my locality have recently changed their name from 'gospel hall' to 'evangelical church'. Do you think such a change reflects a change in doctrine or practice? If not, why change the name?

It would be interesting if, as you suggest in your letter, brethren who have been involved in taking decisions of this kind were to write to **The Harvester** explaining how far the factors you have mentioned influenced the decision. Let us hope that a fair number will do so.

Having been linked with several fellowships which have taken a similar decision, I should say that the most important factor has been a change in the way in which the assembly thought of itself and its role in the neighbourhood. The term 'gospel hall' (which has in fact acquired a sectarian significance) was chosen partly as a way of emphasizing that the people meeting there did not see themselves as simply another 'church'. In this, and in many other ways they were concerned to show that they differed from those whom they described as 'the denominations'. The last thirty years has seen a rather widespread change of attitude. Many believers in the 'assemblies' (itself often used in effect as a denominational term) have become far more aware than they were formerly of what they hold in common with members of the local churches around them. Names such as '—Chapel' or '—(Evangelical) Church' are in effect a way of saying that the people who worship there stand alongside rather than over against their fellow believers in the locality. Of course, this change in self-understanding is often accompanied by a change in practice. Such fellowships will not be inclined to dismiss a suggested course of action or type of service simply on the grounds that it is 'the sort of thing the denominations do'. They will be concerned to judge the issue on more biblical grounds. I should imagine, for example, that a higher proportion of such fellowships would recognize the arrival of a child within the fellowship by having some act of dedication. It is interesting to see how a title which focuses attention on the building rather than on the community of people who form the church (e.g. 'Gospel Hall') is often replaced by a similar title differing only because it has other associations

(e.g. 'Chapel') rather than 'fellowship' which puts the emphasis where the Bible does. In the same way, I am rather surprised at the way in which the word 'evangelical' is given prominence by some people who are ostensibly concerned to affirm their unity with all other believers.

Was the Kingdom Delayed?

Question 197

Many New Testament passages (e.g. Mark, 9.1, 13.30, Matthew 10.23) suggest that the Lord's return would be during the first century. What do you think of the idea that this was delayed because Israel rejected his claims? Or does this theory diminish the Lord's sovereignty by making his return subject to human behaviour?

In my opinion, your criticism of the theory is a fair one. The Gospel narrative shows clearly that Jesus went to Jerusalem for the last time expecting to die and rise again — indeed, with the express purpose of doing so. Peter saw his crucifixion, not as the unfortunate sequel to an unexpected rejection by Israel, but as 'the definite plan and foreknowledge of God' (Acts 2.23).

Any difficulty that may be found in reconciling the passages you mentioned with a belief in the trustworthiness of the sayings of Jesus is not (as it seems to me) reduced by the theory you mention. If indeed these predictions were conditional upon some future development (such as Israel's accepting their messiah) then some quite different delaying factor might equally be postulated, such as the response of the church to the great commission, apart from which God would be unable to fulfil his purposes. You will find a fairly comprehensive discussion of the passages you refer to in a book by A. A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future*, pp.111-119. Without committing myself to all of his interpretations, I would support his recommendation that in interpreting these passages it is important to consider carefully the relationship between the resurrection of Jesus with the events following it and the parousia; the significance of 'going through the cities of Israel' and the meaning of 'this generation' and 'all these things'. After all, passages such as these should not be interpreted without reference to others, like *Matthew 24.14*, which imply that the Lord looked forward to the passage of a long period of time before his return.

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

LOOKING AT BOOKS



A MEDLEY OF IDEAS

A System of Christian

Doctrine David Cairns. Saint Andrew Press. 218pp. £3.75 (paperback).

David Cairns was an Apologist, that is, a contender for the Christian Faith. In that role he had something of a personal axe to grind. Brought up against a Bible believing background, like so many others he had his faith destroyed as a student, but then came through to Christian commitment once again. This experience never left him. Thereafter he argued his faith against the influences of unbelief.

His spiritual pilgrimage did not leave him unmarked, however. Whereas he resolutely denied the claims of materialism and modernism, he never fully regained his confidence in Scripture. It is this which makes his work unsatisfying in a number of places.

This book was in manuscript form when he died in 1946, and although his son has edited the work, there are still places where it seems a little dated. What is more, his style is reminiscent of the fine Scottish rhetoric of the last century. This makes for poetic reading but not always for clarity.

For him, theology is 'faith clarified and set in order,' and it is abundantly clear that, whatever his presuppositions, underneath lay a real and personal faith. It is a pity that it does not come across as being more objectively based. Truth seems to be somewhat intuitive for him. 'There is a "kind of click" in the mind; we say "that is the truth"'. He had a great interest in science and maintained that we have nothing to fear from it as long as the scientist does not turn philosopher. He also argued against the determinism inherent in a

concept like 'Nature'. Nature was 'plastic in God's hands', and it was this among other things which made him argue for Jesus' miracles. In areas like the Incarnation and the Resurrection, Cairns is orthodox. It was elsewhere that he was not prepared to follow through Biblical teaching. For example, he had a more optimistic view of man and judgement than Scripture warrants. His understanding of the work of Christ seems inconclusive, and he appears to be hesitant about the final condition of unbelievers. He cannot bring himself to say that they are lost and yet he equally denies universalism. Stimulating though this book is, on the whole I found it rather sad that a man with such an obvious faith should be valiantly fighting for truth having really deprived himself of the ammunition of the Word of God.

Review by Rev. John F. Balchin, London Bible College

Introduction to the Reformed Tradition John H. Leith. The Saint Andrew Press. £4.25.

I have to own a vested interest in this book, as I was directly responsible for the British edition. But, lest this should cast suspicion on one's objectivity, allow me to say that publishers are very cautious about spending their limited and hard-earned capital, and that I no longer have a commercial interest in the matter. This book stood up to the rigours of the assessment procedure, and I would commend it to you as a key book with vigour and sincerity. Sub-titles are at least as significant as the titles themselves, and this carries one of the highest importance: 'A way of being the Christian Community'. It is important because the very

essence of the reformed understanding of biblical truth is community orientated; it has a high view of Church and Society. We all know that Jean Calvin sought to make of Geneva a truly Christian city, that he rejected 'the gathered church' concept which so easily divided life off from the real issues of Christianity, and which expresses itself in an inward-looking, defensive mentality. This book seeks to show what it means to hold together the full body of Christian learning in a post-Reformation, post-Renaissance era; which means neither to belittle nor over-emphasise preaching and teaching, being and doing, to hold in balance our dual membership of the Body of Christ and the *corpus humanum*. John Leith, Pemberton Professor of Theology at Union Theological Seminary, has already placed students in his debt with his *Creeds of the Churches* (which was, to cite another sub-title, 'A reader in Christian doctrine from the Bible to the present'), and this book will do likewise for no small number of readers. It has a great deal to say at different levels and in different areas of our lives, and we should not allow ourselves to be put off by the fact that Leith speaks mainly to a body of Christians who differ from us somewhat. We might dare say, indeed, that the majority of folk who read this journal are not only within the reformed tradition, but have and uphold decidedly 'presbyterian' principles insofar as they are led (rather than ruled!) by 'the presbyters'. But this is, of course, an incipient, undeveloped, presbyterianism. This book is not meant to be a comprehensive statement of reformed faith and practice, still less a history of Reformed Churches in the

denominational sense. It contains a certain amount of very useful 'potted' history, and it is at pains to describe faith and order in the reformed churches, but its main intention is one of introduction. It stands in precisely the same relationship to the history, the faith and the order of this tradition as an overture does to a symphony: a small-scale composition which is faithful to the main work in all its parts. *And that is its merit.* Coming, as it does, from the USA, it possesses a characteristic American aspect, both in language ('traditioning the faith'), and in content (it can be faulted for leaning a little too heavily on their inheritance), and there are some very curious syllabic breaks in the typesetting (para-ll-el, knowl-edge) but these must not detract from the many riches of the book. Here you can be taken back to the sources, and the Source, of the faith, be introduced and uplifted and enlarged by the ethos and challenge of the reformed tradition; and — especially dear to our hearts this — be shown that 'simplicity has been a hallmark of the reformed life-style'. Yet simplistic it is not.

Review by Clive Rawlins

The Challenge of Marxism Klaus Bockmuehl. Inver-Varsity Press. 189pp. £1.95 (paperback).

The Professor of Theology and Ethics at Regent College, Vancouver, calls on Christians to respond to the Marxist challenge in three areas of significance. While not systematically considering the full teaching of Marxism, he notes that Marxists are enthusiastic and dogmatic, but above all active, about what they feel to be the truth.

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G.J. Polkinghorne

WHAT PRICE REVIVAL?

Cynics often tell us that we live in the post-religious age and have already delivered the funeral oration for Christianity. Indeed, in our Western world, this seems all too true. Most people have no time for the gospel and our once-Christian society is now multi-faith. Meantime, morality and spirituality have slumped to all time record lows. Yet in other parts of the world, things are different. The Church in Russia is making a bold stand against persecution, while in Brazil, Africa and Korea (to mention but a few places) amazing expansion is taking place. Also, as Latourette reminded us, 'the pulsation of advance, retreat and advance has characterized the history of Christianity.' To cite one instance, never had the cause of Christ been at so low an ebb in Britain as immediately prior to the times of the Wesleys.

All this suggests that revival is desperately needed and theoretically possible. Is there anything we can do to bring it about? Dr. A. Skevington Wood in his book **Baptised with Fire** (Pickering and Inglis, 176pp., £2.95, paperback) originally published in 1958 and just re-issued, suggests some answers. 'No' is the first answer — revival is within the sovereign will of God, who sends it when He judges right. Thus he scouts what J. Edwin Orr called 'The Finneyan Formula' for the production of revival. Even so, 'Yes', there are conditions indicated in Scripture which, if we fulfil them, will lead on to the gracious granting of a revival.

These conditions are set out in the third chapter and re-affirmed many times over. We must humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, laying our pride in the dust. We must pray the

importunate prayer of faith. We must seek God's face and not give up until the light of His countenance shines on us and we know His peace. Finally, we must turn from sin and forsake our wicked ways. Only by these spiritual disciplines can we expect to know spiritual results. Such are the basics in bald outline. To feel the strength of Dr. Wood's pleading, we need to read the sixteen chapters of the book for ourselves.

There is a warning also for us. In a searching chapter on 'The Price of Revival', we are told that revival will be costly in many ways. Holiness will be costly, as we abandon cherished sins. Steadfastness will be costly, as we turn from our self-sufficiency and rest in the Lord. Submissiveness will be costly, as we determine to serve the Lord only. Are we prepared to pay the price?

In view of what is often said about these days being 'the last days' wherein we may expect only declension, as the love of many grows cold, Dr. Wood cites Arthur Wallis, who says that 'before the return of Christ we may expect a season of mighty outpourings, eclipsing all that the church has experienced since the Reformation.' If the title of the book gives rise to misgivings that all sorts of 'charismatic' ideas are mooted, rest assured that no such things are mentioned. The middle ground is held, whereon all Christians will be agreed. Hence, this book can be commended to all who long to see the Church revived and the power of God in salvation manifest among us. It is simple, straightforward and easy to read. And if it were taken seriously, it could revolutionize our churches and our nation.

Revival is urgently needed. It is possible. There are conditions to be fulfilled and costs to be paid. Who among us will heed the call?

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (50)

F. F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

iii. THE SHEPHERD AND THE FLOCK (John 10:1-39)

(a) The parable of the good shepherd (10:1-21), continued

10:7-9 So Jesus said to them again, 'Indeed and in truth I tell you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door: if any one enters in through me he will be safe; he will go in and out and find pasture.'

There is a patent problem in these words, placed as they are in their present context. In the preceding and following verses Jesus speaks of himself as the shepherd who calls his sheep and leads them out of the fold to the fields where they may safely graze; here he speaks of himself as the door through which they enter and leave the fold. It will not help to invoke the possibility that the shepherd himself lay by night across the entrance to the fold, making himself a sort of living door, so that no one could go in or out without his being aware of it: the parable speaks of a porter or door-keeper whose business it was to guard the entrance and prevent any unauthorized person from getting in (verse 3). Nor can we take seriously C. C. Torrey's suggestion that the Aramaic word for 'shepherd' was misread as the word for 'door' and wrongly translated into Greek.¹

It appears that we have a short parable, in which Jesus is compared to the door, inserted into the longer parable in which he is compared to the shepherd. 'I am the door' is not unlike 'I am the way' (John 14:6): Jesus is naturally referred to as the door or the way to salvation. That he did indeed speak of himself as the door is indicated by the story of the martyrdom of his brother James, preserved by the second-century Palestinian writer Hegesippus. James, it is said, was challenged with the question, 'What is the door of Jesus?' (meaning 'the door of which Jesus spoke' or possibly 'the door of salvation'), and was put to death because his answer was construed as blasphemy.

Although Jesus calls himself the door in verses 7 and 9, it is more probably in his role of shepherd that he speaks in verse 8. In verses 1 and 2 the rightful shepherd is contrasted with the thief or the robber, and it is evidently the same contrast that is made in verse 8. The 'thieves and robbers' may be the members of the establishment who had shown themselves such unworthy shepherds to needy members of the flock of Israel like the man whose blindness had been cured. We might think also of false Messiahs, insurgent leaders and the like, who gathered followers around them and led them to disaster, as Theudas and Judas the Galilean did (Acts 5:36,37). The warning of John 5:43, 'if another comes in his own name, you will accept him', is relevant here, even if he is to come in the future and the 'thieves and robbers' mentioned here came 'before' Jesus. (There is some textual doubt about the phrase 'before me', but not weighty enough to require its omission.)

10:10-13 'The thief comes only to steal, to kill, to destroy. I came in order that they might have life, and have it in abundance. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and no true shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and takes to flight; and the wolf seizes them and scatters them. He behaves in this way because he is a hireling and has no concern for the sheep.'

The thief's designs on the sheep are wholly malicious; the good shepherd's plans for them are entirely benevolent. He desires and promotes their wellbeing: he is not content that they should eke out a bare and miserable existence; he wants them to live life to the full, to have plenty of good pasturage and enjoy good health. (It is difficult to translate *kalos* in *kalos poimēn* by any other English adjective than 'good'; there is a fairly obvious contrast with the 'worthless shepherd, who deserts the flock', of Zech. 11:17.) The 'good' shepherd shows himself to be a good shepherd because the welfare of the sheep, not his own, is his primary care. He even risks his life to save theirs: that is probably the sense of the verb *tithēsi* ('lays it on the line') as against the variant

didōsi ('gives his life'). But then, they are his own sheep; he looks after them for their own sake. The hireling is not malicious, as the thief or robber is, but he has not the personal care for the sheep that the true shepherd has. He looks after them for the wages he is paid; he does his duty well enough in normal times, but when danger draws near he is more concerned for his own safety than for theirs. He will not risk his life to defend them against the marauding wolf, as the true shepherd will. It cannot be said certainly if the hireling or the wolf correspond to figures in the contemporary situation: perhaps the hearers drew their own conclusions about this. But there is no doubt who is meant by the true shepherd.

10:14-16 'I am the good shepherd, I know my own (sheep) and my own (sheep) know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep which do not belong to this fold: I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock (under) one shepherd.'

It is the mark of a true shepherd to know his own sheep. The verb 'know' occurs four times in verses 14 and 15, and each time it is the present tense of **ginōskō** that is used, the present here having 'gnomic' or timeless force. The special knowledge which the Father and the Son have of each other in the eternal order (celebrated in the 'aerolite from the Johannine heaven' of *Matt. 11:27* and *Luke 10:22*) is extended to embrace those whom the Son calls his 'own' (cf. the mutual and inclusive love of *John 14:21,23; 15:9*). In the parable, the gender of 'my own' (**ta emē**) is neuter, referring to 'sheep' (**probata**); in reality, the reference is to those who are elsewhere (e.g. *John 13:1*) called 'his own' (**hoi idioi**). There may be an echo here of the LXX wording of *Num. 16:5*, 'the Lord knows those who are his' (quoted verbatim in *2 Tim. 2:19*). The good shepherd's readiness to expose himself to the danger of death for his sheep is now predicated directly by Jesus himself (again there is a variant **didōmi**, 'I give', for **tithēmi**, 'I lay down'). Readers of the

Gospel knew that Jesus did not merely expose himself to the danger of death for his people, but actually 'stood between them and the foe, and willingly died in their stead.' Indeed, this is made plain by the words of Jesus in verses 17 and 18. His sheep who belonged to 'this fold' were of Jewish stock, but he had other sheep who must be brought to him who never belonged to that fold and indeed could not be accommodated within it. It is they who are described later in the Gospel as 'the children of God who are scattered abroad', to be gathered 'into one' by Jesus along with those belonging to 'the nation' of Israel (*John 11:51,52*). The AV 'one fold' is an error going back to the Vulgate **unum ovile**, but King James's revisers had the less excuse in that William Tyndale had got it right ('one flock') in his versions of 1526 and 1534 (some pre-Vulgate forms of the Latin Bible had also done better than Jerome, so that he too was without excuse.)

These words of Jesus, then, point to the Gentile mission and to the formation of the community, comprising believing Jews and believing Gentiles, in which there is 'neither Jew nor Greek' (*Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11*). The Jewish 'sheep' had to be led out of the 'fold' (**aulē**) before they could be united with the 'other sheep' to form one new flock (**poimnē**). What was to hold this enlarged flock together and supply the necessary protection from external enemies? Not enclosing walls but the person and power of the shepherd. The unity and safety of the people of Christ depend on their proximity to him. When they have forgotten this and tried to secure unity or safety by building walls round themselves, the results have not been encouraging. The walls have either been so comprehensive as to enclose a number of wolves along with the sheep (with disastrous consequences for the sheep), or they have been so restrictive as to exclude more sheep than they enclose.

1. The second-century Papyrus 75 and some Coptic witnesses read 'shepherd' for 'door' in verse 7, but this is a patent attempt to ease the sudden change of metaphor.

NOAH

H. P. Wotton

The moving force behind Noah's life was that he believed God. He did not allow the sceptical spirit of his contemporaries to influence him; and so when God told him that He was going to destroy the world of the ungodly by the waters of a flood, Noah took Him at His word, and 'prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith'.

It is a moral law that cannot be broken that righteousness condemns unrighteousness, that goodness condemns evil, and that faith in God condemns unbelief. The underlying principle that moves men to come to Christ for the saving of their souls is that they believe that what God says in His word will most surely come to pass.

In *Genesis 6:9* we read that 'Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.' His justice and perfection flowed from his faith, for just as unbelief opens the floodgates of wrath, so faith opens the door of the heart for the gracious influences of God's Spirit to come in.

True faith leads to obedience because it does not question the truth of the word of God. It has insight into the character of the person who is speaking. This constrains the faithful hearer to renounce his own understanding and wisdom in deference to that of Him who is above him in every way. And so we are told that 'thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so did he' (*Gen. 6:22*).

Noah's name means **Rest**, or **Comfort**. Like Noah's dove that found no rest until it returned to the ark, God has no rest or comfort in the contemplation of a rebellious world, but only in those who have returned to Him via the ark of His choice, even that way of salvation provided for us through the merits of His Son.

NOAH A UNIQUE MAN

So widespread was the moral wickedness of the people in the days of Noah that he was the only man of whom it was written that he 'found grace in the sight of the Lord' (*Gen. 6:8*). Noah was unique in that he possessed the grace of God, but he was not sinless. This honour was reserved for two men only, for Adam the first, who lost it when he fell from his sinless estate; and for Adam the second, the Lord Jesus Christ, who retained His perfect innocence in spite of the temptations of Satan, and will continue to retain it throughout the countless ages of eternity. Noah was unique because he was the only man in the days before the flood of whom God said that he had found grace in His sight. But the Lord Jesus is unique in that He is the only man through whom grace flows to the sons of men. The grace we receive is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

GOD'S WAYS ARE UNSEARCHABLE

How deep and unsearchable are the ways of God! The same waters that destroyed the unbelieving world bore up the ark and its occupants to safety. The waters of the flood speak of sin and the wrath of God, and Noah could see as he gazed upon this terrible scene that outside the ark there was nothing but the consequences of unbelief and unrepentance. Inside, however, there was the reward of faith and obedience to God.

The ark was not only a means of temporal deliverance. It was also a symbol of salvation from sin and its consequences. The ark is a type of Christ. Outside of Him there is persistent sin and continual danger, but in Christ there is deliverance from wrath, as well as forgiveness and a

new creature.

There are a number of reasons why the promises of men are not one hundred per cent reliable. They may be made by those who do not intend to keep them; and though they may be made by some in good faith, for unavoidable reasons they may not be able to fulfil them. Illness, accident, change of circumstance — any of these things may come in the way of a man keeping his promises.

But the eternal, omnipotent God is not subject to contingency. No power or event is against Him, or outside His control. And so, after the flood, when God said to Noah that 'while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease', He not only meant what He said, but was also able to keep His promise; and right up to this present moment of time He has done so.

We may use many things to remind ourselves of what we do not want to forget. But God does not need to do anything like this. Such, however, is His consideration for us humans that He is willing to condescend to our way of thinking, that we might understand Him better.

So when God made a covenant with Noah that He would not again destroy the earth by the waters of a flood, He said, 'And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth' (*Gen. 9:14-16*).

A rainbow should remind us that God always keeps His promises.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (1)

J. E. Todd

Former readers of The Witness will recall many profitable articles from Mr. Todd's pen. A member of Littlemoor Gospel Chapel, Chesterfield, he works with the British Steel Corporation. We now begin a series of studies on the Example of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. . . of Service (John 13:1-17)

The widespread religious teaching that salvation is God's reward to those who successfully follow the example of the Lord Jesus Christ is rightly condemned by all true Christians. But we can be influenced by false teaching in two different ways. Not only by accepting it, but by so utterly rejecting it as to move to the opposite extreme. The Lord is not an example to sinners, he is the Saviour of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15). But by our silence about his example, have we suggested the opposite extreme, that he is not an example to Christians?

The New Testament often teaches that the Lord is an example to his people. Just as surely as we are to obey his teaching, so we are to follow his example, 'Leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps' (1 Pet. 2:21, RSV). For in the consistency of his character, what our Lord taught he also did. His teaching and life were one. Never was it a case of, 'Do as I say, not do as I do.' This was the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. The Lord had to say to the Jews concerning the Pharisees, 'Practise and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practise' (Matt. 23:3). It was never so with the Lord.

When the Lord washed his disciples' feet, his action had a double meaning. First, it was a picture of the cleansing of his people from sin and sins by his own atoning work. In those days when a man had a bath in the morning, he did not need to have another bath that day; but walking through the dusty streets in open

work sandals, he would need to have his feet washed at the end of each journey during the day. Like the man who had a bath, in the spiritual sense we need to be completely cleansed from the guilt of sin (John 13:10). But there must be a continuation of cleansing. Just as the man must have his feet washed from time to time, so the Lord washed the disciples' feet showing that he must continually grant forgiveness for, and cleansing from, day to day sins (v. 7). When a Christian sins, he does not lose his salvation, he does not need to be saved all over again (Heb. 10:10 and 14), but the Christian does need forgiveness (1 John 1:7-9).

Second, it showed that this cleansing from sin was an act of service, his service to them, just as surely as the act of washing their feet. 'The Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (Matt. 20:28). The Lord's atoning work is an act of service, service to both God and man. 'By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities' (Isa. 53:11). It was his past service on the cross as our Saviour which justifies us. It is his present service in heaven as our High Priest which obtains daily forgiveness for us.

His role as the servant of his people is enshrined in the act of washing his disciples' feet. We may protest with Peter that it is degrading for the Lord to serve his followers, 'Lord, do you wash my feet?', 'You shall never wash my feet' (v. 6 and 8). But our Lord consistently taught otherwise. 'For which is the greater, one who sits at table, or one who serves? Is it not the one who sits at table? But I am among you as one who serves' (Luke 22:27). 'Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave'

(Matt. 20:26-27). 'He who is greatest among you shall be your servant' (Matt. 23:11). Therefore if the one who is the Lord and Teacher stoops to such a menial task, then those who are servants and pupils can have no objection to doing so!

So, we are exhorted to wash the feet of others. 'You also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him' (v. 15-16). To wash the feet of others means in plain language to serve them. We, as Christians, should always be kind and helpful to our fellows, no matter how degrading and menial the task.

Then the example is set before us, 'For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you' (v. 15). As he has done to us! He has served us, as believers, by the infinitely more costly washing away of our sins. Hence the responses of love and gratitude are the motives to follow his example.

Then comes the experience, 'If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them' (v. 17). It is not sufficient to know these things, they are not held up for our approval and admiration, much less for our debate and sermon material. Nor are they fulfilled by ritualistic acts, such as the Pope's annual washing of beggars' feet (pre-cleaned?), or by a ceremonial feet-washing as practised regularly by some sects. We are to practise loving service to others in our everyday life, 'Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth' (1 John 3:18).

Happy (blessed) are those who practise service. There is unique pleasure and satisfaction in a good job well done (John 4:34). This should be the constant happy experience of the Christian as he follows his Lord's example by serving his fellows, no matter how menial the task.

PREACHER'S WORKSHOP:

Preaching from the Old Testament (2)

H. L. Ellison

In the last instalment a distinction was made between allegory and typology. There seem to be many who have never grasped the distinction. It can perhaps be best explained by considering The Song of Songs. Both Jewish and Christian expositors have considered it to be an allegory, the former of the love of God for Israel, the latter of the love of Christ for the Church, or more recently of the love of Christ for the individual believer.

Today such an interpretation has been rejected by many, who have none the less regarded the poem as typical of the love of Christ. The difference is that the allegorist denied that the lover and the beloved had any real existence. They were dummies, to whom suitable language of love could be attributed. The typologist argues that we are dealing with a real man and woman, whose pure love is analogous to or typical of the love of God to mankind as revealed in Christ Jesus. In the former case the language can be made to mean more or less anything the expounder wishes; in the latter, provided we allow for the exuberant metaphors and exaggerations of love poetry, it means what it says.

The standard New Testament work on typology is the Letter to the Hebrews, with its argument that the divinely given details of Hebrew worship in the Tabernacle were intended to teach spiritual lessons, though it is important that in 9:5, the writer refrains from going into those minor details, which some today find so very attractive. In fact this outlook on the ritual sections of the Pentateuch underlies all the New Testa-

ment language dealing with Christ's death.

Provided we bear in mind that some of the details of the Tabernacle and sacrificial system were by the nature of things predetermined by the materials available and by a pre-Sinaitic tradition going back at least to the Patriarchs, this is a right and spiritual approach. Since, however, much the details may have been traditional, they were finally fixed by God, they are meaningful. Let us take one example. It was only in certain cases that the sin-offering was burnt outside the camp — the reason for these exceptions are easy enough to find — but it was normally eaten by the officiating priest, thus demonstrating that the transference of sin had not made the offering sinful. This invalidates many of the maudlin meditations on 'He was made sin for us'.

Although Paul in 1 Cor. 10:6 regards details of Israel's experiences in the wilderness as typical of certain Christian experiences, typology based on history, especially outside the Pentateuch, is far more hazardous, because it seems to maintain that God fixed many of the details that typologists love to dwell on, e.g. is it possible to maintain that it was divinely determined that Meribbaal (Mephibosheth) should live in Lo-debar (no pasture) as recorded in 2 Sam. 9:4? There is a big difference between God's commanding that something be done and made and the Holy Spirit's causing something to be recorded. So when we use typology for historical events, the less we stress incidentals the better. Our argument should rather be that since

God does not change, nor does man, left to himself, God's reaction to similar actions is likely to be similar. We should, however, ask ourselves how valuable the approach of typology is likely to be. We may confidently take for granted that the unconverted will not be interested in discourses based on details of Hebrew ritual. Even the Tabernacle, unless it is reinforced by a model — which is almost certain to be inaccurate — will rouse little or no interest. Even among believers the effort put in may well not be commensurate with the results. The widespread falling off of interest in 'Assembly Principles' points in the same direction. The young are apt to regard the whole approach as quite unnecessarily complicated, as a scripturally well educated youth said of an attempt to preach the Gospel on the basis of Joseph and Pharaoh's butler and baker.

The purpose of types was to prepare Israel for the full revelation of God in Christ. There is little evidence that the Old Testament saints understood them, any more than the scripturally illiterate of today. The early Christian missionary carried with him the Old Testament as the God-breathed Scriptures, but it was a crucified Christ, risen from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God, who was coming again, when in His name every knee would bow, that they preached.

If we are to shun allegory and use typology with care and in small doses, how then should we preach from the Old Testament? That must be the subject of our next instalment.

Because of a passing indisposition, Mr. Ellison was not able to prepare this month's 'Sidelights from the Old Testament'. We hope to resume the series next month.

CHRIST, THE WISDOM OF GOD

William E. Quine

Mr. Quine, another former Witness contributor, is a graduate in Arts and Education and a retired Headmaster, now resident in Crewe. Not every one who has the foible mentioned in his opening paragraph shares his sense of guilt about it!

It may appear to be rude at times when visiting a friend to let one's eyes stray to the contents of his bookcase if there is one near at hand. Yet this is a foible of which I am guilty and for which I must apologize. Some years ago when lecturing in Education at a residential training college I noticed in some of my colleagues' quarters that a certain very large book was conspicuous on their shelves. It was entitled **A History of Western Philosophy** by the late Bertrand Russell. Out of curiosity I purchased this book myself and read it from the introduction to the end of its 864 pages in 76 chapters, each about one of the principal philosophers from the Greeks to the present day. Though each chapter is full of the contemporary wisdom of its time, the total effect is confusing and inadequate to explain the purpose of man in this life. His thesis is that philosophy or the study of wisdom began with the Greeks. This premise is still generally taken for granted as the basis of modern education. 'The wisdom of God' as contrasted with this conception of western philosophy is not given consideration because it is of 'religious' origin and therefore not based on reason and scientific evidence as understood by the schools.

A little while afterwards an opportunity arose to address the weekly chapel service at the College. This opportunity was too good to miss to point out the superiority of God's wisdom even over that of the

Greeks, however important that has been to the development of society in the western world. The Greeks were concerned with 'the blessed life' or how to live to the best advantage with the greatest happiness. It has been summed up by saying that Zeus was best served by the harmonious development of mind and body.

When Paul was preaching on Mars' Hill, in Athens, the centre of Greek learning and philosophy, we read as an explanation of those who paused to listen that they 'spent their time in nothing else but to hear or to tell of some new thing' (*Acts 17:21*). But their interest quickly evaporated and they departed immediately when he spoke of Jesus and the resurrection. Yet they were right to seek for wisdom, for so we are exhorted in *Proverbs* (4:7): 'Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding.' Certain Greeks coming to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover to worship approached Philip of Bethsaida with a request that they might see Jesus. Many Greek proselytes lived at Bethsaida, and there may have been some racial affinity in thought and language between Philip, with his Greek name, and the seekers. Such yearnings may have prompted this enquiry.

Before considering this request and the response of Jesus, the time and circumstances of the occasion should be taken into account. The incident took place a few days before the crucifixion which was already exercising and troubling the soul of Jesus, for this was the hour when He was to be glorified. Our Lord explained to them the purpose and result of His sacrifice as He says: 'And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.' When He spoke thus, the Jews evidently understood the

purport of His words without understanding their true significance, for they replied: 'Christ abideth ever, how sayest thou, the son of man must be lifted up? Who is this son of man?' They had no inkling of the imminent crucifixion, the 'one sacrifice for ever' for all mankind, as they made their annual preparations for their Passover.

A million or more people might be gathered in Jerusalem from all parts of the known world to worship at the feast but the great majority were lacking in spiritual understanding. When Jesus had regarded the multitude in the city a few days before this, these words had been wrung from His heart: 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her chickens beneath her wings, but ye would not.' Yet in spite of His yearning for them, the Jewish leaders, the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes and elders were blinded by a formal enslavement to the ritual and letter of the Law without discerning its spirit. Condemned for this by Christ, they were now bent on His destruction.

Upon this scene came these 'certain Greeks' seeking enlightenment. The Greeks had many forms of philosophy the teaching of which has been named after them. The Stoics and the Epicureans at a later date than this procrastinated when Paul in the market place of ideas in Athens spoke to them of 'Jesus and the resurrection' (*Acts 17:18*), and called him a babbler. There were, of course, many other philosophies but these two are so divergent in their claims in their search for the 'good life' that they may be considered as two extremes. The well-known modern philosopher quoted at the beginning of this article described the teaching of Epicurus in these

words: 'Pleasure is the beginning and end of the blessed life . . . The beginning and root of all good is the pleasure of the stomach; even wisdom and culture must be referred to this . . . Virtue is prudence in the pursuit of pleasure.' There are very many people living today, who though never having heard of Epicurus, still live according to similar principles. They believe that as long as they do not harm other people the pursuit of pleasure is the only justification for existence. There is no other happiness beyond this life in their thoughts.

As for the Stoics, the followers of Zeno, their philosophy has been summed up thus: 'In the life of an individual man, virtue is the sole good: such things as health, happiness, possessions, are of no account. Since virtue resides in the will, everything good or bad in a man's life depends upon himself. He may become poor, but what of it? He can still be virtuous. A tyrant may put him in prison but he can still persevere in living in harmony with nature.' In the words of an English poet he can thank whatever gods there be for his unconquerable soul. The Stoics turned a hard shining im-

penetrable surface to the outward circumstances of life. Its sorrows, joys, disasters and triumphs must be ignored. Man had his own means of salvation within himself, so they taught. Many people living today adopt this attitude of self-sufficiency for themselves, for their family, or for their nation.

Andrew and Philip told Jesus that these Greeks desired to see Him. Whether Jesus consented to their request is not stated, but He made a reply which at a casual reading might appear to be irrelevant: 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.' Yet this statement refutes the whole conception of Greek philosophy. In effect, our Lord says that if the Greeks have come to discuss the best way of living, it is sterile without sacrifice. His death alone can save men. He was shortly to become 'obedient unto death, even the death of the cross . . . that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.' Are they seeking to live to the best advantage to themselves? 'He that loveth his life shall lose it,' He says. It is only he that hateth this self-centred earthly life that shall keep it unto life eternal.

The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross has meant that kings, nobles and millions of people have acknowledged Him as Lord of Lords and King of Kings in their hearts. We only live by dying with Him, by giving ourselves up to His service: 'If any man serve me, let him follow me,' He says. The Apostle Paul was inspired to express himself thus: 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.'

After the chapel service that expressed quietly but forcibly these beliefs, one of the principal lecturers in the College above-mentioned, one who afterwards attained some eminence in his profession, said: 'Thank you so much for your talk; it has explained a great deal to me that I had not understood before about the Christian life.'

So it is that, in spite of the manifold philosophies of the world, we can truly say: 'We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but unto us who are called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.'

TWO BOOKS OF BIBLE INTRODUCTION

Introducing the Bible

Gerald Hughes & Stephen Travis. Lion. 128pp. £5.95. To many Christians much of the Bible is a closed book. Some of what we do know means less than it should because we are largely unaware of the culture, history and geography of the people in Bible times. This book does more than fill in the gaps for us. It shows us how the sixty-six books hang together, and relates in clear simple language the main events of the Bible story from Genesis to Revelation. Because the narrative is set against its original background, we in the 20th century are able to recapture the attitudes and circumstances of the biblical writers.

This book really makes the Bible come alive — a vital necessity for every Christian. The writing is easy to follow with the pages intelligently

set out and good use made of sub-headings and bold print, often set against a tinted background. There is no opportunity for readers becoming bogged down since the narrative is frequently interspersed with superb photographs, clear drawings and informative maps, all of which add interest and information to what is read. The quality of this work is well up to Lion's usual high standards. This is definitely the kind of book I would buy for myself if I hadn't been given a free review copy!

*Review by Dr. Derek Copley,
Moorlands Bible College*

Introduction to the Old Testament

J. Alberto Soggin. SCM Press. xxxvi + 508pp. £8.50 (limp study edition). There are a number of Intro-

ductions to the OT available on the market, from the critically orientated works by Eissfeldt, Fohrer, Kaiser and Weiser to the conservative one by R. K. Harrison. This fine volume by Alberto Soggin, who holds the chair of OT in the Waldensian Faculty in Rome, has carved out a niche for itself among the critical Introductions because of its clarity, its readability, its comprehensiveness (it covers the deuterocanonical or apocryphal books as well as the OT proper), and its fairness and balance in presenting the views of other scholars. In this revised edition the annotated bibliographies have been updated to 1979 and a number of amendments and additions made.

The conservative student of the OT need have no quarrel with the aims of the discipline of OT Introduction. To quote

Professor Soggin, it 'sets out to present, where possible, the information needed to identify the authors of a text, its literary genre, the milieu from which it derives and so on, making it comprehensible against the background of the events and the problems which have shaped it.' Where the conservative student may have qualms is over the methodology used and the consequent conclusions reached. Nevertheless, even the reader who is out of sympathy with the type of approach found in this book will find it a most valuable compendium of critical OT scholarship and may well find his understanding of and appreciation for the OT writings increased.

*Review by John W. Baigent,
West London Institute of
Higher Education*

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In contrast, Christians are hesitant and apologetic. The first main area of conflict lies inevitably in religion, wherein Marx followed Feuerbach's psychological theories, which are exposed as deficient in understanding of history, about which Christians need to be strong and clear. Ethics constitutes the second field: here Lenin, though insistent that the end justifies the means, sets Christians an example to follow of dedication to a cause. Textbooks of Christian ethics universally ignore the Great Commission and focus on everyday affairs. If only Christians were as dedicated to mission as Communists to revolution!

Thirdly, Marx saw the need of new men for his new society, but experience showed that revolution and social change did not produce them. Education has been equally unsuccessful. Here, Christianity can educe the power of the Spirit to regenerate. But a genuine and radical rebirth must be demonstrated, a liberation from deep-seated egotism to true transformation of life-style.

Here, then, is a book for the thoughtful Christian, especially those up against aggressive Marxists, to ponder. The English style is somewhat turgid, particularly in passages translated from foreign works, so that a little forbearance and patience are required here and there.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

Patterns in History David Bebbington. IVP. 211 & xi pp. £3.75 (paperback)

Blind Alley Beliefs David Cook. Pickering & Inglis. 127pp. £1.45 (paperback).

Each of these books compares Christianity with rival viewpoints, and each includes Marxism. But whereas Cook's sets out to describe the whole world-view of his 'blind alley beliefs' (materialism, humanism, Marxism and existentialism), Bebbington's is concerned only with 'patterns' seen in history by various schools of thought. Cook is therefore trying to cover a wider field, and, as his book is

considerably shorter, he cannot go into his subjects with anything like the depth Bebbington can. His book is intended to help the Christian in approaching those in the 'blind alleys'; but it can obviously give only an introductory outline in each case, and it would be risky to try tackling (say) a reasonably well-primed humanist armed only with the material given here. Not that Cook misrepresents non-Christians (though surely he should have made it clear that some existentialists have been avowed Christians?), but that he has no space to forearm the reader against their defences. Bebbington's book is less practical, harder going, and more rewarding in the end. He compares the Christian view of history, as given direction and goal by God, with 'cyclical' views (as in Hinduism or Toynbee — though not, surely, Zoroastrianism), theories of inevitable progress, 'historicism' (the belief that the historian's task is one of intuitive empathy with different cultures), and Marxism; and he also discusses philosophies of historiography — those which seek deterministic laws, those which stress the free agency of individuals, and a Christian one, adumbrated by Chladenius in the eighteenth century, which incorporates both, seeing man both as part of creation and as created in God's image. This book should both open the reader's eyes to fascinating debates and make him think seriously about what is really meant by 'providence'.

*Review by Dr. R. L. Sturch,
London Bible College*

The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with special reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Godamer and Wittgenstein. Anthony C. Thiselton, Paternoster Press. 484pp. £15.

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theology is the revelation of God in scripture as communicated by the Holy Spirit and understood Christologically. Their emphasis has been on the illumination which the repentant sinner experiences when he is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. When human need is brought into close proximity to the word of God through the Holy Spirit, then a spark flashes between the two points, and a work of grace springs into life in the human heart. Dr. Thiselton takes all of this for granted. Perhaps too much in view of the unfortunate use of the word 'negative' on page 85. Instead he concentrates on the human act of reading, understanding, and interpreting the Bible through which this miracle of divine illumination takes place. I am full of admiration for the skill and confidence with which the author of this brilliant thesis has entered into dialogue on equal terms with those whose presuppositions are often very different from his own. Those readers who fondly imagine that Paternoster is only in business to render warm-hearted reassurance to eager, if cautious evangelicals, will get a shock when handling this impressive tome. It is a scholarly debate in technical language on the philosophical problems of Biblical interpretation. That is not to suggest it is dull. Quite the reverse. For those who have been initiated into the language of existential or analytical philosophy, it is a masterly and vigorous survey of contemporary thought forms. And so widely does it range, that it is almost half-way through before Thiselton can get down to the real business of explicating Bultmann's 'Hermeneutical Concerns'. Here is no superficial refutation of 'demythologisation' in which so many scholars have indulged. Instead we are treated to a definitive analysis of the roots from which Bultmann's view of scripture grew. It fails to show how Bultmannism at one stage developed into the death-of-God theology. But it lucidly exposes the philosophical

inadequacies which account for Bultmann's inevitable imbalance, and it pays tribute to the valuable advances which he and his mentors made possible, especially in understanding such Pauline concepts as 'body' and 'flesh' (e.g. pp. 278-283). If nineteenth century theology was dominated by Hegel's doctrine of inevitable progress, so that 'evolution' became the key concept in one area of knowledge after another, the twentieth century, so sadly disillusioned with the liberal's dream of utopia, has opted for an existential view of life and an analytical way of doing philosophy. Now mere 'theory' is at a discount, and life is learnt through living (p. 144f). And in course of time, even science has undergone radical change, so that modern physics, for instance, challenges any static view of reality. In Thiselton's comprehensive survey of the present landscape we are shown how this has affected the world of New Testament scholarship. No longer can we stand at a distance from the Biblical text and opt for an 'objective' method of interpreting it, for all that we are and have experienced contribute to our understanding of the Bible, and we cannot be 'detached' observers of the scene. The two 'horizons' refer to the world-view of the Biblical writers and our own very different presuppositions. And if we are to understand the scriptures aright, albeit in a somewhat tentative and growing fashion, we must take full account of both perspectives. That means to say that the distance between New Testament times and our own must be frankly acknowledged, even though the two horizons must be ultimately 'fused'. But how does this 'fusion' take place without doing violence either to the text or our own integrity? At this point I would have welcomed a greater emphasis on 'obedience' as a vital key to understanding (John 7:17). But Thiselton maintains throughout that there must be, in the words of T. F. Torrance, 'a repentant readiness to rethink all preconceptions and

presuppositions' (p. 316). Though why the New Testament should possess this authoritative role is not sufficiently explored. He shows, contra Bultmann, that faith is grounded in objective reality, that the word preached must have *substance* if faith is to be valid, and that Bultmann's historical scepticism is far too exaggerated. He rightly protests against the kind of word-magic which some of Bultmann's disciples practise when they over-stress the numinous power of potent words (pp. 215; 233; 248; 274). And he includes a valuable section on the parables of Jesus which I found particularly suggestive (pp. 342-352). His critique of Nineham is really quite devastating (pp. 53-63). But it is a pity he gives such short shrift to the 'purist' view of scripture which some maintain (pp. 8f). and it is disquieting that he should make no reference to the centrality of the Atonement in his discussion of 'justification' on pp. 415-422, even though it was clearly pivotal for Paul (Rom. 3:24-26; 2 Cor. 5:21). Indeed I am prompted to ask how and why, in Thiselton's view, God can declare a man to be righteous *now* on the basis of what is to happen *later*.

This is a magnificently produced volume using good quality paper and is splendidly laid out. I noted remarkably few mis-spellings, though 'incapsulated' (p. 243) 'intropection' (p. 236) 'Chrisitan' (p. 265), and (with apologies to all Americans) 'humor' (p. 295) rather jarred.

Review by John Wood

International Church Index (Doctrinal) Edited by Roy A. Facey. Index Publications, P.O. Box 52, Plymouth PL1 1XN. 243 pp. £2.75 + postage (paperback)

Anyone wishing to know what a particular Church or Christian group believes has hitherto had no reference work readily available to guide him. The various Dictionaries of the Church give very scanty information. The present volume fills the gap. To compile it, Capt. Facey sent questionnaires on

doctrine and practice to churches of various connections. The replies of nineteen of them are published in alphabetical order. There is not, of course, an extensive treatment of any one body, but sufficient to give a clear idea of the teaching. Presumably because of the prolixity or otherwise of respondents, the length varies — thus, the Brethren take up seven pages, whereas the two Pentecostal groups take eighteen each. It is unfortunate that replies were not made by some churches, notably the Orthodox Churches, the Salvation Army and the various Churches of Scotland. Hopefully, they will be included in a second edition, which is already being envisaged.

We commend this ambitious project to a number of potential users; apart from students and Church leaders, it will be helpful on evangelistic campaigns, to social workers, hospital sisters and other folk who come into contact with members of bodies of which they know little. It is surprisingly cheap for modern times.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

What the Cults Believe Irvine Robertson. Pickering & Inglis. 154pp. £2.25 (paperback)

This book tells us about some of today's cults. The more active and important a cult, the greater the number of pages allocated to it. For example, the Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses have 27 and 18 pages respectively while the Rosicrucians are limited to two. It is obviously not written for those who specialise in working exclusively among the adherents of a particular cult but is suitable for the Christian who is interested in acquiring concise information on the history, statistics and beliefs of a number of cults. For those who wish to study a cult in more depth there is a helpful six-page list of recommended books. Because the Cults' false teaching often occurs within the doctrines of God, Christ, Man, Salvation and Eschatology, there is a useful chapter devoted to the

correct teaching on each doctrine. Since the cults are becoming more active than ever before, this book is worth buying for immediate reading as well as being kept on the shelf for reference purposes. It is written in a lively style and certainly fulfils its aim to 'prepare you to answer cultist claims with the truth from the Word of God.'

*Review by Dr. Derek Copley,
Moorlands Bible College*

SOME BRIEF NOTICES

Among pamphlets recently sent to us which will be of interest to readers we notice the following:-

Fellowship with all Christian believers. Mr. Graham Rubie is from a family that was once well known among 'exclusive' Brethren, and has in consequence studied with practical intent the scriptures which deal with the unity of believers and its expression. He has embodied his convictions in two little booklets which will be helpful to those troubled by these

matters: *Fellowship in the Light and God's Inheritance.* Obtainable at 45p each (postage single copy 15½p) from the author at 20 Knole Way, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3RS.

Books for the Student. The SCM Press have issued another edition of their helpful booklist of books on Religion and Theology from a wide range of different publishers: *Religion and Theology* — 6 price £1.60.

Christian Giving. A subject always in the news! An excellent little booklet on the principles and practice of giving, based on Bible teaching, is published by

Mowbray's — *A Theology of Generosity* by W. W. Badger Berrie, £1.25. The booklet would be useful for discussion group leaders.

The local press. Readers will remember that in his article on Shetland in the February issue, Mr. L. Wilson referred to the regular column in the local paper contributed by local churches, including the assemblies there. A collection of these contributions has now been published under the title of *The Good News Column* (75p plus postage 15½p) by The Shetland Times, Lerwick, Shetland. An example which might be followed elsewhere?



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.

To match the theme of Replies to Professor Bruce, we have a contribution this month from Mrs. Martin Higginbottom. Betty Higginbottom headed her contribution 'A Woman's Witness'.

How do we as Christian women view Women's Lib? For my part, I do not think it is in line with what Scripture teaches us. However, we owe Women's Lib a favour, in that it has given us women an awareness of our potential within the limits of Biblical teaching. In particular I am thinking of woman's part in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I often wonder what has happened to the old-fashioned word 'witnessing'! Nowadays the 'in' phrase seems to be 'communicating our faith', which makes it sound so much more difficult. Difficult it is, of course! I confess to the difficulty of actually mentioning the name of Jesus to my next-door neighbour; I confess to being reluctant to bring Him into

conversation with members of my family who are uncommitted; I confess to fighting shy even of 'talking religion' with my acquaintances down town. This attitude needs to be tackled at the grass roots, for I am sure that I am not alone in this sad situation. Never has there been a greater need for women to take their place in the forefront of Christian warfare. We have far more contacts than most men, far more opportunities for that 'cup of tea and a chat'. I know we are all willing to have the occasional coffee morning or evening, to which we can invite certain people; but, speaking for myself, at any rate, I know that there are large areas still not covered, cross-sections of friends and acquaintances not

being reached, perhaps for the sole reason that we have not bothered to sit down and work things out.

Now don't get me wrong. I know as well as anybody that if there are small children in the family, or an elderly relative being looked after, it is impossible for women to take on extra Christian work; the same applies to farmers' wives very often, and those who go out to work. But this still leaves many women who have the time and energy to tackle the work of soul-winning on an organised and prayerful basis.

Witnessing, of course, should not be a burden. Many a housebound woman has a sense of frustration, but for a woman just to be herself and lovingly to care for her husband and family — if she

is conscious that she is in the centre of the will of the Lord and living to glorify Him — then she will be a blessing to those around her and her standards will rub off on others. She has a ready-made mission field, coupled with the security and confidence of living in the light of His presence and in the fulfilment of His purposes. What I want to impress here is the danger of forced witnessing; who has not heard of cases where a valiant effort at witnessing has resulted in loss of confidence on the part of the other person and the closing of a door?

Direct witnessing is not the only way, of course. Some people are avid readers, and the power of the written word must not be underestimated. The Scriptures themselves are now printed in many attractive and illustrated forms and are extremely acceptable as special gifts. As a best-seller, the Bible, or a handbag-size New Testament, will never be wasted, and for

elderly or partially-sighted people there are the large-type booklets attractively produced by the Scripture Gift Mission.

Secondly, there are numerous paperbacks on sale at every Bible Bookshop which provide light but inspiring reading and are extremely suitable for lending or giving to acquaintances. A paperback enclosed prayerfully with a letter may arrive at just the right moment to fill a desperate need.

Increasing in popularity are the beautifully designed cards for sending to patients in hospitals, for those who have suffered bereavement, or for those who are depressed or lonely, or even those who have just moved into one's district. Produced by the Christian Publicity Organisation, these cards are of special value as the recipient is in definite need of spiritual comfort.

There are many opinions for and against the giving out of tracts. 'My Word shall not

return unto Me void' is absolutely true, but we must guard against insensitive and impersonal work with tracts. I believe they should only be handed over in a personal context and with loving and prayerful concern. Their use can be important during an evangelistic crusade or an in-depth project with the object of reinforcing an ongoing effort in the community. More and more housebound women are turning to writing, and in view of the impact of the media on every household this is something that we should pursue further. Any woman with a love of writing can, with perseverance, find a rewarding outlet by writing scripts both for radio and also for the telephone answering service which is found in many towns. There is also the religious column in the local paper and in most secular women's magazines, to say nothing of opportunities in the new-look religious magazines which are now on the market. A word of warning here —

make sure that you write the sort of article that your particular magazine usually prints. Magazines and periodicals have a specific format, and this must be adhered to.

Indirect witnessing of the sort just outlined is becoming increasingly necessary in the unstable and fluctuating conditions of today, and the would-be writers are not without support, for the Fellowship of Christian Writers exists to help and inspire, as well as to provide Writers' Circles and conferences in the larger cities.

The foregoing, I hope, will serve to eliminate the sense of frustration that women sometimes suffer from, because of a traditional secondary role in the Christian community. The Lord has always used women in a most important way and will continue to do so if we place ourselves in His hands, to serve Him as the Spirit directs.

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The June Question

As I read Mrs. Ginnings' account of the Women's World Day of Prayer in our 'Readers' Forum' for March, it occurred to me that, while brethren come together at Swanwick or elsewhere to discuss whether or how far they may properly venture into the sea of ecumenicity, our sisters (perhaps because they are given no 'official' responsibility) simply get on with the ecumenical job. Are there other joint enterprises where the same thing may be seen?

Mrs. Hazel Lynes replies:-

In answer to the question from Professor Bruce in *The Harvester* this month, I would like to mention the very large number of Christian Lunch and Dinner Clubs operating both in England and Scotland and I believe also in Wales and Ireland. These were started in the early 1960's, I believe, by Mrs. Ruth Graham and some other wives of Christian leaders, as a method of outreach, which is quite undenominational. As Professor Bruce says, in these meetings too 'our sisters simply get on with the

ecumenical job'. Each club is entirely independent in the way it runs its meetings. They may be held in a private house, halls or hotel rooms, and vary in size from a dozen or so people to several hundred. Either a coffee morning, a lunch, or an evening meal is provided for which each person invited pays a small sum. There is always an invited speaker or a husband/wife 'team', and a clear gospel message is interwoven with interesting accounts from the speakers' own experiences. Everybody who comes to

such a meeting has been invited personally by someone — there is no 'advertising' of the meetings. In this way, personal contact is there right from the start. Many clubs invite husbands as well, either at every meeting or perhaps at one chosen one each year. I know that a great many people have become Christians through these meetings and Bible study groups often begin as a further result.

(See also Readers' Forum — Ed.)



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 Revised Version

From Mr. John Martin

Dear Mr. Coad,

It was so good to read Mr. Lowther's letter reminding us of the virtues of the RV in an age of diluted and misleading paraphrases. But many would have to disagree with him in his quoting H. P. Barker because 'the nearest approach to perfect accuracy' we have these days is surely not the RV but the *New American Standard Bible* which is the revision of the *American Revised Version* of 1901. Unfortunately this excellent version, with references which rival even those of the RV, is hardly known in the U.K. Although it was published 10 years ago, the majority of British scholars and Christian bookshops continue to ignore it. It surely preserves the best of the Tyndale tradition of great bible translations, though it does not always match the readability of the RSV, its much publicised and over rated rival.

Yours sincerely,

John Martin,
10 Doggett Road,
Cambridge CB1 4LF

The open Table

From Dr. David Brady

Dear Mr. Coad,

The contribution of Peter Jones to June's *Harvester* leads me to request further light on a dilemma which must face the members of many assemblies. Peter Jones reports that 'one knows of churches that have been

divided on the question of whether a believer should be admitted to the Lord's table before being baptized'. If the loaf on the table is an expression of the unity of all believers (1 Cor. 10:16-17) and if an assembly deliberately decides to exclude from the table believers in good moral standing who for some reason or other have not seen the light of believers' baptism, what should a member of such an assembly who dissents from this policy do? Should he continue to attend the table and thereby condone a sectarian table, or should he withdraw and thus perpetrate a division of another kind? I hope that there are brethren with practical experience of this problem who may wish to share their thoughts on the subject by sending in replies to this enquiry.

Yours in our Lord Jesus Christ,
David Brady,
467 Kings Road,
Stretford,
Manchester M32 8QN

Pointers for the Future

(Writer's name and address supplied)

Dear Mr. Coad,

Once again it was a joy to receive my *Harvester* today and to read 'Pointers for The Future', Mr. Rowdon's sequel to the recently published survey *The Brethren Today* which I have recently read. How true when he says 'we need each other'. We need each other in an assembly sense; but we also need each other in a much broader sense, that of the whole body of Christ. We have much to give and much to receive from other parts of the body who do not 'meet as we do'.

The point in Mr. Rowdon's

contribution which intrigues me is the suggestion that stronger assemblies should help the weaker where numbers in the stronger are growing and numbers in the weaker are diminishing. It is an attractive proposition to which I have given some thought myself, to send to the weaker 'whole families' from the 'stronger and thriving assemblies', but that presents a real problem.

The stronger have become strong because they are really open in their thinking and not exclusive in their outlook, particularly where their relationship touches other parts of the body of Christ sometimes called 'the denominations'. Further, they have become strong because of their vigorous attitude towards youth work with 'Covies' and the like: but if the stronger go to help those numerically weaker, many of whom will not admit that there is anything wrong, they will be expected to conform to the very practices, patterns and taboos which made the declining churches decline. It seems to me that we all have to take a fresh look at ourselves and say 'we know our background, we are not unaware of our failings, we are opening our hearts and our churches to the leading of your Spirit, you may do what you like with us, even if we have never done it before, and if you want to show us something fresh we will be obedient. Change us if you will, we will not resist your Spirit.'

Finally, we might all do well to take upon our lips and pray with our heart, the prayer of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chron.

20:12,

1. 'We have no power'
2. 'We do not know what to

do'

3. 'But our eyes are on you'. (NIV)

Yours sincerely,
In Jesus' name,
Felice e Libero

What is the Gospel?

From Mr. J. E. Todd

Dear Mr. Coad,

In my article 'The Apostolic Gospel' published in *The Witness* of November 1976, I pointed out the contents of the Gospel as preached by the apostles and recorded in the book of Acts. Analysing six gospel sermons by Peter and Paul, one finds that the Gospel consists of the following. Two historical facts, the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (see also 1 Cor. 15:1-4). Two divine blessings, the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Two conditions, repentance and faith. The gospel call is to turn from a sinful past, atoned for by the blood of Christ, forgiven and repented of. Also to turn to a new future by faith in a living Saviour who endows us with new life by his Spirit.

In our gospel preaching we need to emphasise the resurrection as much as the crucifixion, repentance as much as faith and regeneration as much as justification.

Yours sincerely,
J. E. Todd,
47 Rother Avenue,
Brimington,
Chesterfield,
Derbyshire S43 1LG

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,

The implication of the four questions in the June '81 'Readers Forum' is that when

we preach 'the Gospel', more emphasis is placed on the being 'reconciled to God by the death of his Son' than on the being 'saved by his life' (Rom. 5:10). That is, that in fact we pay scant attention to the present aspect of salvation; which is regrettable where congregations are composed mainly of professed believers.

1. Various scriptures might be cited as answers to the question 'What is the Gospel?'. But in view of the tenor of Mr. Dowsett's contribution, the following is suggested: 'The good news of God's way of salvation for sinful men through the sacrifice of His Son, and whereby His Holy Spirit can enable believers to live Christ-like, i.e. sacrificial, lives here and now, in hope of eternal life hereafter'.

2. John 3:16 presents salvation in the context (vv. 14, 15) of recovery from the mortal bite of the old serpent, the Devil, by looking at Christ up-lifted on the cross. John pictures salvation in other ways as well, e.g. as entering a fold through Christ as door, and then going in and out and finding pasture. In John 3:16 the emphasis is on the initial 'act of faith'. However, the scriptures are so wonderful that, as Saphir said, 'The Scripture is a whole in every part'. To those who have just been brought to God through that verse, it must seem that the whole is there.

3. As to the connection with Romans, it will suffice to quote C. A. Coates: 'This epistle presents to us God's glad tidings, not exactly as preached to the ungodly, but as unfolded to saints.'

4. In my experience, the answer to the last question is 'Yes, we certainly have been in the habit of preaching an attenuated version of the Gospel.'

The reason is, I submit, that there has been a failure to understand and teach to those on-coming that the Gospel is not confined to the initial 'act of faith'. Rather, the Gospel is concerned with taking a sinner off the broad road and then conducting him along the narrow road until it ends in the glory. Paul's preaching was such that the Thessalonians not only turned

to God from idols, but went on to serve God — a labour of love (1 Th. 1:9 and 3) — and wait for his Son from heaven. Our need is for expository preaching. The aim should be through our 'gospel meetings' to declare the whole counsel of God. It may be observed that the notice boards outside the halls of some of our Exclusive brothers announce for Sunday evenings that 'The word of God will be preached here —'. That is precisely what is needed. There really are waters to swim in. Yours in His service, L. L. Fox, 9 Warden Close, Maidstone, Kent. ME16 0JL

From Mr. J. W. Forrest

Dear Mr. Coad, I thoroughly agree with the views of Mr. Maurice Dowsett on the subject of the gospel having been reduced, probably in many Brethren assemblies, to a stereotyped message to the unsaved (seldom present). And we need not go much further than the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans, which is the book he mentions, for the answer. The apostle wrote 'the gospel according to Paul' to some Christians he had evidently heard of as residing there. 'For I long to see you' he wrote (v. 11); not to preach the basic message of the gospel, but to 'impart some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established'. Paul longed to enlarge upon their knowledge of the gospel as he was so able to do. This teaches us, I think, that we should endeavour to become acquainted with 'the whole counsel of God' (Acts 20:27). I regard the whole New Testament as the gospel; the Old Testament being the necessary preliminary thereto: giving us the introduction to histories, prophecies, and many illustrations, etc., of the ways of God in righteousness, mercy, grace and love. Sincerely yours, J. W. Forrest, 7 Blandy Avenue, Southmoor, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX13 5DA

Prayer to the Lord Jesus

From Mr. G. K. Lowther
Dear Mr. Coad,

I would like to express my hearty appreciation of Dr. Burr's excellent article in the current *Harvester*, on addressing prayer etc. to the Lord Jesus. The correction is still necessary in some quarters, especially in the North. While Origen may have started opposing it in the third century, it was the 'Needed Truth' Brethren who recommenced preaching that it was wrong in the nineteenth. This notion alas was conveyed by the late John Brown of Greenock, himself an ex-NT, to Isaac Y. Ewen of Abernethy, and so into some 'Open' assemblies, and did untold damage in the 1930's. It is unthinkable that anyone who professes to owe their all to Him, should ever be persuaded that it is wrong even to say 'Thank You'. A brother in a small town received a letter one morning from a quasi-NT friend, stating he should not address the Lord Jesus at all. Putting it in his pocket, he walked to the local shops. On the way he encountered the local Baptist Pastor. Thinking to obtain the latter's unbiased judgment, he inquired what he thought about the letter. After due consideration the Baptist brother declared, 'The writer must be a Jehovah's Witness! One who calls upon the Lord Jesus, G. K. Lowther, 50 Westminster Drive, Grimsby, S. Humberside DN34 4TY

Gaiters and blinkers

From Mr. E. J. Rowson

Dear Mr. Coad, As might be expected of an elder who reflects whilst doffing his (presumably ecclesiastical rather than agricultural) gaiters, Mr. Alan Overt-Locke responds with wit and grace to my rectitudinal ramblings. My denominational reliability would, of course, be called into serious question were I to use such lexical items as 'pulpit' and 'Holy Communion'. Where, might I ask, do we once find the term 'Holy Communion' mentioned in the text of the AV — the normative touchstone wherever we have not made

its tenets of no effect by the dispensational counterpart to the Pharisees' use of Corban? As it is, I shall have problems enough being described as a visitant ('Visitor, esp. supposedly supernatural one', according to *The Concise OED*) when my brethren in this northern Jerusalem hear of it.

But, what a hotbed of radical ferment this chapel, with which Mr. Overt-Locke admits a possible acquaintance, must be! Elders have continually to study basic principles, remembering that the Holy Spirit is contemporary. It suggests a serious departure from the more usual practice of handing on snippets of the faith which was once delivered unto the saints in what Alan Storkey calls a 'culture-bound' context. Worse follows, though, for 'members in open discussion have questioned most of the practices'. That sounds suspiciously like a gathering of Levellers, or an essay in participative democracy. In a good many, but mercifully by no means all, of our northern bastions of assembly truth, such goings on would receive short shrift. True, there is an analogy in Acts 6:1-6. However, as every well-schooled brother knows, that passage is not normative, but descriptive of a regrettable precedent. Reflecting on our Southern Brother's thoughts last night — a Lord's Day — as I removed my blinkers before retiring, I rejoiced at the fact that iron can sharpen iron in this way through your columns.

Yours sincerely,
Ernest J. Rowson
24 St. George's Crescent,
Worsley,
Manchester.
M28 5AN

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NEWS PAGE



Karl Barth

It is almost fifty years since Karl Barth completed the first volume of what most people would regard as the greatest theological work of the 20th century. Since then thirteen volumes have appeared, the most recent in 1967 (English translation 1969). But Barth had gone to his rest on December 10, 1968. Volume Five (*Redemption*) would never appear. Indeed, the fourth part of Volume Four had not been completed. Now T. & T. Clark have published the 'fragments' which were intended to complete Volume Four. The 290 pages of rather small type are not what some people would understand as 'fragments'. But they deal with some of the ethical implications of the doctrine of reconciliation. There are also sections dealing with the first two petitions of the Lord's Prayer. Few readers of these pages will possess the whole of the Church Dogmatics. Those who do may well feel that £7.95 is a reasonable price for Karl Barth on *The Christian Life*. Although the author has gone to his reward, his 'unfinished symphony' remains as a witness to the majesty of its theme.

Bible Society

East German Churches have succeeded in shipping 20,000 Vietnamese Bibles to Vietnam. The production was financed by the Federation of Protestant Churches in East Germany and printing was arranged through the United Bible Society's European Production Fund. Plans for this shipment of Scriptures were first made in March 1980.

Canada

From *Montreal* comes a remarkable story of church growth. Bill and Karen Wolitarsky arrived in Montreal in 1966 and two years later Bill moved into a full time Bible teaching and personal counselling ministry. Karen was actively involved in organizing a day-care centre for children of working mothers. This was located on the second floor of a French assembly and served as a valuable point of contact.

Two years later saw the establishment of what has since proved the first in a group of assemblies now scattered around the greater Montreal area. From a nucleus of nine believers, the little group more than doubled within the first year. By the end of 1974, more than one hundred were regularly sharing in its activities. In February 1975 a small group hived off to begin another witness. 1977 saw a second and a third offshoot.

Something may be glimpsed of the nature of the work in the parent assembly from the fact that in a five-year period leading up to 1979, nearly 150 persons were baptized. A fifth and sixth assembly have subsequently been founded. It is interesting to notice the pattern of the activities at the most recent of these. Sunday morning activities centre around Bible study for all ages. Later in the day, the Lord's Supper is celebrated. During the week, small groups of 10 to 15 persons meet for Bible book studies, 'relational in content'. Saturday evenings are given over to group activities, quite often of an evangelistic nature.

Church Growth

A group of those who have a special interest in the Church Growth field have been meeting for some eighteen months. The group have been sharing new developments in this subject and discussing the means of disseminating the principles and insights of Church Growth among Christians in Britain. In response to widespread interest in the subject of Church Growth in Britain in November 1980, the group formed themselves into a steering group for the formation of the British Church Growth Association. Colleges and denominational leaders as well as others known to have an interest in Church Growth were circulated during March this year giving details of the proposed Association. The response gave strong encouragement to the group to go ahead with its proposals. The inaugural meeting of the *British Church Growth Association* will be held on Monday, September 14, 1981, at 2.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber at Baptist Church House, Southampton Row, London WC1 4AB. It should be noted that the meeting is for teachers, practitioners and researchers in this field. It is not a general training session for interested persons.

Attendance at the meeting will be by named invitation only. This is because the Council Chamber only seats 180 and already 65 people from all over the country have said they wish to attend. A similar number wish their names to be recorded as founder members although they cannot be present at the

meeting. Anyone wishing to receive an invitation to this meeting should apply to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Monica Hill, 59 Warrington Road, Harrow, Middlesex, when further details will be forwarded to them.

Evangelism

Dick Saunders — Way to Life
During August the Way to Life team will be engaged in a three-week Crusade in Edinburgh. It is to be hoped that the weather will be better than that experienced during the London Crusade. Things were worse than the team had ever experienced in 22 years of tent evangelism. The park in Willesden was waterlogged after days of continuous rain. However, people were not deterred from attending and the opening meetings saw 1,000 people attending each night even though all public transport had been cancelled on the opening night due to the England-Scotland football match. Attendances for the rest of the Crusade remained constant until the last few nights when over 1,500 attended. This Crusade was held in a multi-racial area and was organised over two years by the local churches. More than 60 churches backed the Crusade contributing to the budget, work and prayer.

Glasgow About 200,000 attended the five-week Luis Palau Crusade during late Spring. More than 5,000 responded to the public invitation to register spiritual decisions during the Crusade. The 600 participating congregations are now following up the campaign.

'Scotland needs to return to its spiritual roots,' Luis Palau maintained. 'It is either back to the Bible or back to the jungle.'

Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism Dr. John Boyes, well-known for his work in connection with the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship, is a member of the newly formed Initiative Council of the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism. The new Council in effect merges two bodies — the Initiative Committee and the Council of Reference. The Chairman is the Rev. Dr. Donald English. Among other members are Clive Calver, David Pawson and Tom Houston.

Student Teams During this summer teams of Christian students will be joining churches throughout the British Isles for periods of evangelism. The Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship arranges such campaigns with church leaders in order to utilise the considerable manpower within the Christian student community, to give the students experience of working with older Christians in church outreach and to strengthen the church itself in its task of making Christ known. The campaigns are usually held in mid-September and vary in their approach to reaching the local community, although most utilise the existing church services for major evangelistic meetings in the evenings or at weekends. It is intended to extend this programme in the summer of 1982. Interested churches should contact UCCF for further information, writing to Jonathan Lamb at 38 De Montfort Street, Leicester, LE1 7GP.

Tell a Tourist outreach efforts are scheduled for Bath, York, Cambridge, Chester, London, and Fuengirola in Spain. In almost every case (the exception is York) the witness will be carried on during the first fortnight in August. Helpers are still needed in some cases: information from The Pocket Testament League, 16 Holwood Road, Bromley, Kent.

India

Speaking at a meeting to publicize the work of the *Union Biblical Seminary* Yavatmal, Dr. Saphir Athyal described India today as 'a land of opportunity if only God will give us the people and the means to reach them'. He summed up the challenge facing the church in India as: (1) the immensity of the task. India now has 678 million people, more than the combined population of all the countries of Africa and all the countries of South America put together. But only a little more than 2½% of the population is Christian and there is an immense need, not only for the Gospel but in the fields of economics, medicine and education. (2) There is a leadership crisis: too few people are available, from other countries or from India. (3) There is a crisis in theology as theological colleges promote scepticism about basic Christian teaching. Some believe it is wrong to convert others, claiming that Christ is in every religion. (4) There is a general lack of interest in mission: many churches are content to carry on and have no vision for the task. Against this background the importance of the *Union Biblical Seminary* is clear. £5000 has so far been raised in Britain for the move to Pune. But much more support is needed for this strategic investment for God's work in India. (UBS Fund: 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT)

Papal Visit

The proposed Papal visit in 1982 has moved the Protestant Reformation Society to warn Christian people against accepting the religious 'super-star' image of the papacy that is being projected today. The Pope is being presented as a unifying force in a religiously and politically divided world, and as a benign and resourceful spiritual leader. Protestants are invited to set aside their criticism and mistrust of the papacy. But the authoritarian nature of the Pope's office cannot be reconciled with the Gospel of Christ. In fact the claim that the Pope is the Vicar of Christ amounts to

subverting the Gospel. Only by an uncompromising but loving witness can Protestants keep faith with their Roman Catholic friends. Here too is the way to save the nation from spiritual, moral and social bankruptcy — not by fudging the issues involved but by witnessing to biblical truth.

Radio

As *HCJB, Ecuador* celebrates its 50th anniversary, news comes of increased growth of interest in the UK. A 16mm film is available for any age group above 10. Apply to Malcolm Goodman at 63a Main Street, Bingley, W. Yorks. BD16 2HZ. Tel: 0274 568485. Clarence Jones, co-founder of HCJB makes the pointed comment that 'our second fifty years at HCJB may be much like the first fifty except we start at 1 million watts of radio power instead of 250 watts. To God be the glory!'

From the Far East

Broadcasting Association comes a financial statement for the year ended September 1980. The operating expenses for 1979 were roughly £500,000. For 1980, the figure rose to well over £600,000. The budget for 1981 is approaching £800,000. Readers who wish to help by contributing towards the support of a missionary, sponsoring a programme for ten minutes, taking out a deed of covenant, or making a bequest should contact the Home Director at 45 High Street, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey, KT15 1TJ.

Christian Broadcast Training

Ltd. is concerned for the training of 'professional' Christian broadcasters in this country and worldwide. Well-known and generally recognized, the Cambridge Radio Course, an intensive month-long training programme, has functioned with remarkable success since 1974. Members of the Council of Reference include, in addition to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Peter Cousins and Michael Griffiths. Metcalfe Collier is on the Board. Now it is hoped to provide a permanent 'home' in

Newmarket. Details may be obtained from Alan Foster, 3 Bury Road, Newmarket, CB8 7BS (tel: Newmarket 68491).

Sunday School Training

From the *Scripture Union* comes news of a do-it-yourself training pack to help churches run their own courses for Sunday School teachers and Bible class leaders. The pack consists of a cassette, slides, worksheets, visual aids, outlines of talks, discussions and workshops and a comprehensive course leaders' guide. It costs £9.75 (including postage, packing and VAT) and is obtainable from SU's Education in Churches Department, 130 City Road, London EC1V 2NJ. There is enough material in the pack for a series of as many as sixteen training evenings, but the contents of the pack can be adapted for use on one training day and the pack can be used over and over again as new teachers are recruited. The course begins with the teachers' relationships with God, with the children and with one another; it moves on to consider the influences on children and how they learn, and to give practical training in planning lessons, storytelling, making and using visual aids, finding out how much the children have understood and helping youngsters to worship.

Swanwick Conference of Brethren

To hear some people talk, one would think it necessary to travel in a time machine or an aeroplane to find God's power at work in any vital manner. But we do not need to go to Korea or to the 19th century to see spiritual revival. A team of five speakers and over 200 men will confer about spiritual revival over the weekend 25-27 September 1981 at the Hayes, Swanwick, Derbyshire. The programme will review the record of God's intervention in human affairs from Biblical times onwards. The challenge will be not the techniques of church growth but the need for personal revival. (Is it possible, one wonders, that associated with such a revival in the so-called

assemblies, there might be a withering away of the emotional hang-ups and mistrust that underlie the evident necessity for segregated conferences?) Details of this Conference — as in the past of others which God has greatly blessed — may be obtained from Gordon Cartmell, Hyde Mill Cottage, Arlesey Road, Ickleford, Hitchin, Herts. SG5 3UW (tel: Hitchin 55005).

Winchester Conference

The Committee responsible for the Bible Teaching Conference currently held at Winchester and formerly at Oxford, has decided, with regret, that good stewardship requires they do not continue to operate as they formerly did for the pursuit of objects that are now adequately catered for in other ways. King Alfred's College has ceased to be available for the traditional weekend and has in any case become very expensive. The pattern of demand has also changed over the years. It is hoped that the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship — itself promoted by the Winchester Committee during its Oxford days, — might take on board the original vision of the Oxford Committee which was to provide for the assemblies opportunities of exposure to stimulating and spiritually challenging relevant Bible ministry and of training in the development of gift. The balance of the Conference funds will be given to CBRF. (It is hoped to include in a future issue of *The Harvester* some account of the past ministry of these Conferences.)

Home Calls

James R. Bradshaw, A.M.Inst.B.E., on 30th June, 1981. A faithful servant of the Lord and an elder/trustee in Manchester assemblies for many years. Greatly esteemed latterly in the Isle of Man and Capetown (S.A.). He bore much suffering with courage and faith and truly "walked with God". A gifted teacher of the Scriptures.

Harry R. Gilbertson on April 30, 1981 aged 83. Converted

as a youth, he was about 30 when he had a deep spiritual experience through attending meetings of the Faith Mission. Already a preacher when he joined the local assembly, he took an active part in all the work being in fellowship at Ebenezer Hall, Lerwick, for nearly 50 years. An esteemed elder, he steadfastly refused to recognize any denominational barriers and was an acceptable preacher in many churches throughout Shetland. He kept an open home and saw all his family saved and active in Christian service. His wise counsel and godly example will be much missed.

Colin Tilsley on Monday, March 23, 1981, aged 46. The only son of the late Mr. & Mrs. Crawford Tilsley, missionaries for nearly 50 years in Narsapur, India, was the founder of Gospel Literature Outreach (GLO) which has been greatly used by God and has communicated the insights developed within Operation Mobilisation to 'assembly' circles which might otherwise have rejected them. Fatally afflicted since early 1977 with total motor neurone disease, Colin's subsequent witness (not least through his book *Through the Furnace*) has been a blessing to thousands. Prayer is requested for his wife Cynthia who has lovingly and patiently cared for him during the last four years and for the family.

Press Day, Monday, August 3 for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.)

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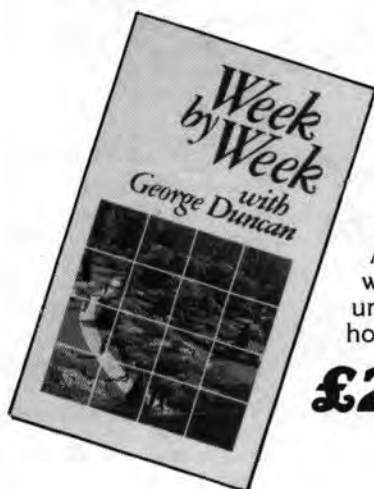
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INCORPORATING THE WITNESS



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Editor: Roy Coad

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Harvesting on a farm near Plympton, Devon.

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CENSOR IN THE HOUSE?

A lengthy discussion with a friend over certain recent incidents in her experience has highlighted for me one rather interesting fact. If there were one fault which might be characterised as a besetting sin in the Christian churches, and as the fault which more than any other serves to make Christians unattractive to their fellow men and women, that fault is censoriousness. To be a victim of censoriousness is almost an occupational hazard in many fields of Christian service; long and devoted work can tend to pass unremarked — but let the worker put a foot wrong, and we can depend upon a dozen remarking on his fault.

Yet the interesting point is that the word does not appear in our Bibles. I suppose that the thing is there — and, after all, the non-appearance of the precise word is probably a matter of semantics and anachronism (though the word goes back to Latin origins). Isaiah knew of those who, in the AV of 29:21, 'make a man an offender for a word'; and we have that wonderful metaphor of our Lord in *Mat. 7:1-5*. Paul, too, hints at the fault in *Rom. 14:2-13*. Yet is it possible that the fault was far less prominent in the New Testament church?

It may well have been. For censoriousness is the fault of those who have become a little jaded in their faith; who have lost the joy of their first love. It is the fault, too, that is produced by too much of a certain kind of preaching; of that kind of preaching which tries to achieve its ends by constantly inculcating a sense of guilt and failure in the hearers. For those who have been taught never to forgive themselves, find it difficult to forgive others. Perhaps the only relief such a tormented spirit can find is to appease its own pain by finding fault in others. It is a sad reflection if those who profess to preach a loving and infinitely forgiving Saviour can produce such a spirit in their hearers.

It is sad, also, to see in the faces and demeanour of some hard-working Christians no sense of joy or laughter in their service, but only a burden of nervous fear of their fellows.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE (4)

Congregational Praise

Alex F. McIntosh

Dr. McIntosh continues his series

Bible song was far from being unorganized. There are many indications in the Old Testament of the quantity and quality of organized assistance given to congregations. There were those who 'took their places to praise the LORD, as prescribed by David king of Israel. With praise and thanksgiving they sang to the LORD:' (*Ezra 3:10-11, NIV*). Musically, there was a strong family tradition. 'Along with their relatives — all of them trained and skilled in music for the LORD — they numbered 288. Young and old alike, teacher as well as student, cast lots for their duties' (*1 Chr. 25:7-8*). Again, 'All these men were under the supervision of their fathers for the music of the temple of the LORD' (*1 Chr. 25:6*). This family tradition is not surprising when we consider the Levitical descent of the singers.

Song leaders played a prominent part. 'Kenaniah the head Levite was in charge of the singing; that was his responsibility because he was skilful at it.' . . . 'Kenaniah . . . was in charge of the singing of the choirs' (*1 Chr. 15:22, 27*). Centuries later Nehemiah reminded the people (*Neh. 12:46*) that 'in the days of David and Asaph, there had been directors for the singers and for the songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.' So 'the choirs sang under the direction of Jezrahiah', or, as the King James Version puts it 'the singers sang loud, with . . . their overseer' (*Neh. 12:42*). In short, the cantor of the Jewish synagogue, the precentor of the cathedral choir or Scottish kirk congregation and the leader of praise in other instances all have their forerunners in the song leaders of the Old Testament. The New Testament gives only a few glimpses of church praise and these we have considered on an earlier occasion. The impression is one of general audience participation.

Audience Participation

The practice of audience participation withered in medieval times. The inability of members of the congregation to read words or music became an excuse for the practice of confining church praise to professional or, at least, trained singers. It has been sug-

gested that it is probably for this reason that medieval church music was near to classical music or even a branch of it, whereas in the period closer to our own day church music is more nearly a branch of folk music. Audience participation reasserted itself as the church emerged from the Middle Ages. Even then audiences were made to serve a long apprenticeship. For long the custom continued of actually reading out to the congregation each line before it was sung, a practice called 'lining out'. It was the usual practice in Scotland where the precentor chanted out the full line of the psalm in a monotone (usually 5th degree of scale); the audience sang the line thereafter. It seems almost incredible that as late as 1860 the Wesleyan Conference passed a resolution which deplored the spread of the practice of discontinuing 'our long-established custom of giving out the verse in successive portions'. How hardly won is the simplest advance. How vigorously fought is the rearguard action. How speedily forgotten is the old, indefensible practice.

We have looked briefly, both biblically and historically, at the degrees of help given to an audience rendering praise. Reference to musical accompaniment has been omitted, since we shall consider that separately. In some traditions however, the audience receives minimal help. No instruments are used and no choirs aid the singing. Some Christian Brethren congregations are among the last bastions of such unaccompanied praise, it being quite common practice for singing to be unaccompanied at one or more of the meetings of a local church. The singing is led (or simply started) by someone whose role is even less obtrusive than that of a precentor in the Free Church of Scotland where singing is also unaccompanied.

Unaccompanied Singing

— Pitch and speed

Getting the pitch right is not easy. There is a strong tradition of not using so much as a tuning fork; that would solve the problem at a stroke. Without such aid, a careful look at the high and low points of the tune helps, but there are few substitutes for long ex-



Acknowledgement: Camera Press

perience. Getting the speed right is not quite so difficult, because it may be modified later. We may be sure that where a tuning fork is unacceptable, a metronome is even more so. Surviving barrel organs designed to play hymn tunes surprise the modern ear by the slowness of the hymns they churn out. Congregations which sing unaccompanied all the time share this heritage of slow singing. Roy Coad recounts how Sir John Laing visited a site on which a 'Brethren' employee painter was wielding a brush in time to a tune sung at a speed to which he was accustomed. Sir John took the brush, hummed a well-known air at a lively pace and showed him the way to a speedier application of his paint.

Beyond a certain point, an increase in speed causes a decrease in volume. A singing audience needs time to breathe and to expand its lungs in order to give full vent to its praise. Listen to a recording of Andrae Crouch and The Disciples singing the phrase 'praise His holy name'. They put so much into it that they need to stop for a breath between 'holy' and 'name', and, if I'm not mistaken, even between 'ho' and 'ly'. But their vitality! This wholeheartedness gets lost when the singing is too fast. For every audience that sings too slowly I find one that sings too quickly.

— *Rhythm*

Rhythm is a vital element in congregational singing. Hanging on for indeterminate periods at the ends of lines destroys the rhythm. The opposite fault, that of cutting short the full number of beats at the end of a line, is just as deadly, discouraging those who are trying to sing in harmony. Unaccompanied singing is usually helped along by a good beginning-of-bar emphasis, producing a strong beat and contributing to a firm tempo from beginning to end.

— *Harmony*

Somewhere or other, Routley (to whom we have referred earlier) lists disciplines in order of im-

portance as follows: melody, rhythm, metre and last by a long way, harmony. How important is harmony?

Plainsong had its greatest period between the 5th and 8th centuries. Unaccompanied melody dominated the first thousand years of church song. Singing in harmony — polyphony — became increasingly popular and made great advances in the 13th and 14th centuries. A series of psalters in harmony was produced in the late 16th and early 17th century. As late as this period singing in harmony could still be viewed as something of a novelty. So, at least, an aside by Kepler, cosmologist and astronomer who died in 1630, seems to prove. Karl Popper cited it in his opening address to the 1979 Salzburg festival. 'Thus the heavenly motions are nothing but a kind of perennial concert, rational rather than audible or vocal' . . . 'There is no marvel greater or more sublime than the rules of singing in harmony together in several parts, unknown to the ancients but at last discovered by man'. Perhaps Kepler's assessment was a bit dated because in Britain, by the time of the Restoration, the wheel had turned full circle. Polyphony was replaced by melody with instrumental accompaniment, a respected, and to many a preferred, combination in our own day. In discussing the revival of church music under Vaughan Williams in more recent times, Routley declares 'part of Vaughan Williams' campaign was based on the assumption that all congregational singing should be in unison'. Whatever may hold good for accompanied singing, the case for harmony in unaccompanied singing is very strong. It lends solidity and strength to the tune, relieves drabness and imparts colour and can contribute to rhythm. It utilizes the full natural range of the human voice with which the company has been gifted.

continued on Page 12

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THE LUIS PALAU STORY

Luis Palau as told to Jerry B. Jenkins

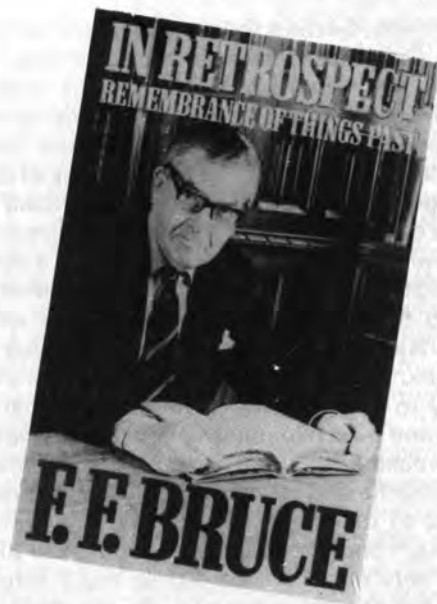
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The Editor received the manuscripts of the two articles that follow, in one and the same post. One is a sequel to the recently published survey of assemblies *The 'Brethren' Today* — a factual survey. The other is a devotional meditation. It seemed to him, on reading them, that something more than coincidence was at work. What do readers think?

DECLINE AND FALL?

Graham Brown

A factual, comparative study of Assembly Life and Witness, by one of the authors of 'The Brethren' Today.

When the Survey of the 'Brethren' was carried out in 1978, a number of assemblies were contacted who had previously participated in a similar venture some 12 years before. 28 of the latest sample fell into this category, although 70 assemblies surveyed in the original were actually approached again. The scope of the present survey was much wider and more ambitious than the original. However, because questions were asked in both about activities, size, location, age and conversions, comparisons can be made between them and some tentative conclusions drawn.

Naturally, we are talking about small numbers — only 28 assemblies. However, we were heartened to note that they are fairly typical of all assemblies surveyed in 1978 in regard to size, location, make-up, activities and results. If anything, they are larger, have more activities and more baptisms than the average run of assemblies, so we should expect the comparisons to be quite favourable. Because of the small number, it means that making fine distinctions on percentages is an unwise undertaking. On the other hand, when variations are substantial and can be corroborated by other evidence, such findings become of more value.

WHAT WERE THE MAJOR CHANGES OVER 12 YEARS? We discovered that the 28 assemblies surveyed —

- had decreased in size
- had an older membership

— were attracting fewer non-members

— were experiencing fewer conversions and baptisms.

Decreasing size

The evidence for a loss of members is seen in different ways. The average membership of the 28 was around the 70 mark in 1966 but was only about 60 twelve years later. So there was a loss of about one-seventh of the membership. Against this, there was a rise in the number of children recorded so that at a future date, biological growth may lead to a swelling in numbers.

There was a decrease in numbers across a wide range of the churches. There were 8 who had over 100 members in 1966; this had reduced to 5 in 1978. While at the other end of the size range where only 2 churches in 1966 had less than 20 members, in 1978 this had risen to 6.

At the same time, back in 1966, 13 of these churches had said that numbers were increasing while 9 indicated a decrease. 12 years later, only 10 claimed an increase while 15 were recording declining membership rolls. So there are clear indications that these churches are experiencing a sizeable decline in membership.

An older membership

While the number of churches claiming 'a good balance' on the age spectrum rose from 11 — 15 over the 12 years, five who reported a predominantly young membership in 1966 had dwindled to none in 1978, while five churches reported an elderly membership in 1966 against ten in 1978.

Thus the churches as a whole appeared to grow older. This was despite a higher than average rate of

baptisms in the two years prior to 1978 (when surveyed) and a much higher level in 1966. Indeed if the level of baptisms shown then had been maintained over the 12 year period, another 40 members (probably mostly young) would have been added to the church. Clearly many of these must have moved out elsewhere.

Fewer non-members were being attracted

In 1966 only three assemblies reported 4 or less outsiders coming to the Gospel service. By 1978 this had risen to 11 assemblies while 17 reported 10 or more attending in 1966, in 1978 this had shrunk to just 8.

The average number of non-members attending in 1966 was around 12; by 1978 it was just 5. Sunday School numbers too showed a decrease — the average Sunday School had around 40 members in 1966. By 1978 it had fallen to around 30.

Young wives groups are now more popular however.

Conversions and Baptisms

While accurate statistics of conversion are almost impossible to obtain, it is fair to point out that in 1966, seven churches reported 10 or more conversions in the previous two years. By 1978, this had fallen to five. Similarly, 8 churches reported 10 or more baptisms in the two years prior to 1966. By 1978, only 4 reported this number in the previous two years.

WHAT HAD NOT CHANGED?

While there had been changes in age, etc., certain things had not changed.

- The aims had changed but little
- The main methods of outreach had not really altered.

continued on Page 7 (top)

DIVINE DEMOLITION

Frank Nickels



Acknowledgement: The Dawlish Gazette

To walk around the towns and cities of our land today is to be struck by the fact that there is one line of business that is booming — Demolition. There has been such an increase of cars, buses, trucks, vans, etc. on our roads that narrow streets which suited the traffic of former days, are now getting choked. Bottle-necks and traffic-jams develop, and tempers get frayed, as too many vehicles want to use the same highway. The obvious need is for wider roads and more of them. And this is where the demolition firms come into their own by being called in to pull down old-established shops, houses and buildings. It does not take them long to raze whole districts to the ground, for they have giant machines which claw away at roofs, walls and girders, and buildings come crashing down. Soon a new area is opened up, and when the rubble is cleared away, the new roads and buildings get under way.

Something akin to this must happen to us as believers if we are to know the Holy Spirit moving more freely in and through our lives. There is a spiritual parallel to be learned from this every-day sight of old buildings being pulled down and new ones rising in their place. The word 'demolition', being a modern one, is not found in Scripture, but the idea behind it is. If the word had been in current use when the Authorised Version of the Bible was being prepared, they could well have used it. Indeed, a parallel idea struck me on reading *Col. 3:5-8*: 'Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry'. And then the thought is repeated in a following verse: 'And now yet also put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth'. If these ugly things, which belong to the

flesh, are still in our lives, then they are the old buildings — as it were — which God would have cleared away so that likeness to Christ, by the Spirit's activity, can be known instead. Although the instruction to clear these things out of our life seems to put the responsibility on us, if we attempt to do so in our own strength, we shall fail. To change the metaphor somewhat, it is essential that, as 'take-over-bids' occur in the business world, so there must be a spiritual take-over in our lives. Too many of us keep Christ at the door of our lives and limit *Rev. 3:20* to a Gospel invitation. We fail to see that Christ is standing outside the Church calling to any within who will open their lives to Him. We are willing to commit our soul's salvation into His hands (*2 Tim. 1:12*) but unwilling to let Him live His life through us. If self were de-throned from our lives and Christ enthroned instead, we could

continued on Page 7 (bottom)

Decline and Fall? *continued from Page 5*

— Success still eluded them.

Aims of the churches

In 1978 (as in 1966), the main aim was to evangelize. But this was not cited by so many assemblies as 12 years previously — just over half as against two thirds before. In contrast 'teaching' and the growth of Christians remained number two priority with slightly less importance. The main positive change was in the number stressing 'fellowship' as being an important aim. Does this mean a withdrawing into the shell, since outreach has not really been successful? Or is it that people are merely becoming more realistic about the functions that the churches have actually been performing for some years?

Methods of Outreach

Gospel meetings were still the favourite forms of outreach. Nearly 9 out of 10 still had them, despite the fact that this service came in for the heaviest criticism for effectiveness back in 1966. By the way, it still does. However, two thirds now have Family Services from time to time as well — only 4 holding them weekly and another 9 once a month. Back in 1966, less than 10 per cent

of churches had these. Now, most rate these more successful than the Gospel service, but the latter still lives on in most churches despite all the complaints — only two had dropped them out of the programme. Sunday schools too are still very popular with churches, if not so much in demand amongst the clients — the children. 3 churches no longer have Sunday schools but the vast majority continue with them, despite reduced attendances. Covenant groups and Young People's Fellowships had fallen in numbers, but Youth Clubs showed a slight increase. The biggest changes were in the 'Young Wives Groups'. In 1966 only 10 churches had these, but by 1978, this had risen to 23.

The major area of decline in evangelistic outreach was the number of churches holding Open Air meetings — 8 in 1966 down to 2 in 1978.

Success eludes these churches still
If the main aim of the churches is to evangelize, then clearly they are having less success, whether reckoned quantitatively, or qualitatively — since they cite much the same problem of lack of interest from out-

siders, particularly adults, in 1978, as in 1966.

SUMMARY

The churches surveyed at the beginning and end of the twelve year period, show unmistakable trends of decline:-

- a loss of membership
- an older age group
- declining numbers of baptisms
- smaller numbers of non-members reached
- a decline in the importance of evangelism.

Some heartening trends were noted in the willingness to use new services, such as the Family Service and to adopt Young Wives Groups. Yet few had dropped admittedly unsuccessful activities, despite a continuing lack of interest from outsiders.

One is led to speculate that what changes are eventually adopted will be too little and too late, and that the innate conservatism which keeps these churches functioning so sturdily, will, in the end, prevent them adapting to their environment so that they will no longer be able to maintain themselves, let alone give a valid, relevant testimony to their Lord.

Divine Demolition *continued from Page 6*

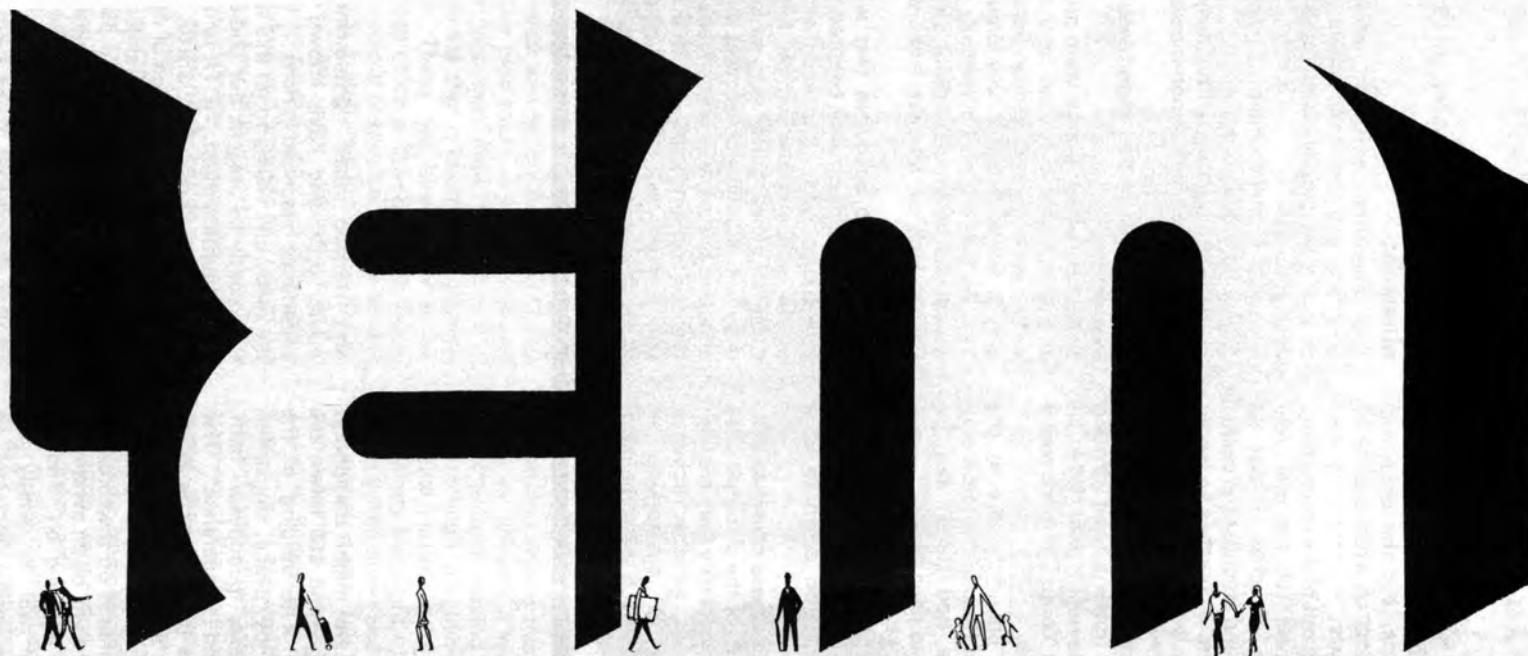
say with Paul: 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me' (*Gal. 2:20*). It is to our loss as churches, that we do not now teach consecration — or to use a more modern word 'commitment' — as is called for in *Rom. 12:1* and *Matt. 16:24*.

Demolition is a negative work which should be followed by the positive work of building up; so what is the new building that will arise? Unlike what goes on in the building trade, where demolition firms do not stay to put up the new buildings, the two stages are the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives that are handed over to Christ. That which will then be built is seen in *Gal. 5:22*, where for the

word 'fruit' we might paraphrase with 'building', and still retain the same sense. 'The building of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance'. This 'building' of a new character is not an over-night's work, but once we have come to the place of commitment, and Christ is on the throne of our lives, there will be an awareness that a work is going on. The old habits of life will be quietly and almost imperceptibly replaced by new, and we shall be happy to co-operate with the Holy Spirit as He demolishes and rebuilds a new character.

It is only those who have 'hungered

and thirsted after righteousness' (*Matt. 5:6*), and have known the experience described in *Rom. 7*, who are ready and willing to go this way. It is costly to present our bodies a living sacrifice (*Rom. 12:1*); to open our lives to Christ (*Rev. 3:20*), and to respond to the challenge of *Matt. 16:24*. We are loath to surrender our wills and forfeit the right to please ourselves. The opposite to pleasing ourselves is to deny ourselves, which our Lord says is the condition of true discipleship. If we have not come to this point we are but paddling in the shallows of Ezekiel's river (*Ezek. 47:1-5*), and have not realized that, in the Christian life, there are 'waters to swim in'.



We are not a mammoth organisation. We do not publish statistical reports about conversions, neither do we fill reams of paper with talk of intended evangelistic schemes. When you have a "congregation" like ours, you are either in the work of reaching souls or you are wasting your time.

We have no greatness of our own. Our God is great though. Please pray for us and the vagrants of London. We may not be a mammoth organisation, but our task is a mammoth one.

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JOHN RICHARD BRADLEY:

A Tribute

Daisy Ronco

From time to time we carry a special tribute to a servant of God who is widely known: this month we are privileged to carry Dr. Ronco's tribute to a 'local' brother who is not, happily, untypical of many who have served their God quietly and faithfully.

The Church which meets at the Gospel Hall, Llanfairfechan, (North Wales) has suffered a tremendous loss in the death of their beloved brother John Richard Bradley.

Born in 1903 in the village of Llanfairfechan, where he was to live all his life, and educated at the local school, at the age of 14 John Bradley was forced by circumstances to leave school to go and earn his living. For 39 years he worked in the Penmaenmawr Quarry, greatly esteemed by employers and fellow-workers alike.

He was a serious-minded and well behaved youth, a choirboy and a regular attendant of the local Anglican Church (now Church in Wales); but one night in 1925, after an open air service conducted by Brethren, he came face to face with Christ's claim in a special way, and what he already believed became a personal reality giving a completely new dimension to his life. At once he became very active in the Lord's service in the newly opened Gospel Hall, in the Sunday

School, amongst young people and at work. In 1930 he married Elizabeth Jones and they had two children, Peter¹ and Priscilla.

Outwardly there is nothing spectacular about the life of John Bradley, nothing to make him widely known, and what calls for a printed tribute is not so much what he did — although in his quiet way he achieved a great deal — but what he was. He walked with God, having so utterly yielded to Him that God could use him and speak through him in a most remarkable way.

Quiet, kind, and always ready to help, he was greatly respected by everyone in the village, in the quarry and in the assembly. He had very deep spiritual discernment and he was a real elder, a true pastor: his was a divinely appointed authority, which needs no human confirmation. Unobtrusive, self-effacing, yet his influence was such that on Sunday morning he was like a magnet polarising everyone's effort into submission to the Holy Spirit and even if he did not minister at all, the worship was improved by his presence.

The quality of his ministry was unique. It was not so much what he said as how he said it and when he said it. He had read widely, spending hours after work, late into the night studying on his own, for he had the Celt's love and respect for education, but he never boasted of it: it was only after his death that I learnt he had taught himself Greek and he read the New Testament daily in Greek! Although Welsh was his mother tongue, his command of the English language was superb, and the choice of words and the frame of his

sentences were such that his statements remained and stuck in one's mind, whilst the deep unshaken conviction and the richly resounding voice with which he pronounced them echoed in one's heart. Once he had been strengthening our faith with the reassuring thought that we are safe and secure 'in God's hand' and then he added, with a delightful human touch 'and what a handful we often are!' A Welshman to the core, a great lover of his country, he longed and prayed ardently for his people 'to return to the Lord'. He was frequently asked to preach in churches and chapels all along the North Wales coast and he always accepted, although this in the past was somewhat frowned upon by some who did not approve of his 'forsaking the assembly' and mingling with other denominations! Hurt he must have been at his brethren's lack of understanding because his was a very sensitive and peace-loving nature, but, nevertheless, he went his way quietly and steadily, obeying God rather than men, and following Christ rather than a doctrine. He was wont to say that one must learn to 'agree to differ' and 'be agreeable about it'.

Although whipped at school for speaking Welsh — an injustice which is hard to imagine — he harboured no bitterness against the English. A little lonely he must have felt in the past as the Gospel Hall congregation was totally English, and the thought of using the Welsh language to reach the village population was never considered, but John Bradley was above any pettiness and had the right priorities: for him

what mattered most of all was that Christ should be preached and glorified, and he graciously accepted the use of the language more widely known. Above all, his true citizenship was in heaven.

During his illness which lasted more than two years, with two operations and several weeks in hospital, he remained serene, patient and uncomplaining; in fact it was a tonic to go and see him in hospital where he would be often engaged in friendly talks with the other patients and was full of praise and gratitude for the work of the nurses and doctors. On one such occasion I was lamenting the fact that we were all feeling his absence so deeply, especially on Sunday morning and, with his astounding spiritual awareness, he realised how frustrated I was feeling at the time. He took my hands affectionately in his and said hesitatingly with a grave smile 'but you know, Miss Ronco, we don't go to Sunday morning meeting to hear one or the other, we go to worship the Lord.' The way he said it was so gentle, so loving, that it wasn't a rebuke; it was an encouraging and timely reminder of an obvious truth and just what I needed then.

As the end approached slowly and his poor body was becoming more and more emaciated, his faith did not fail him: 'The Lord knows the day' he confided to his beloved wife as he patiently waited for release from his 'body of humiliation'; and on April 14th the Home-call came, and he heard the immortal words: 'Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of the Lord.'

1. It is with deep distress that one records the sudden Home-call of Peter himself, aged 49, exactly a month after the death of his father. A faithful deacon in the church, a loving son, husband and father, his loss has stunned us all and we commend to the prayers of all the readers this family so tried.

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Electing Elders?

Question 198

The NIV, in a footnote to Acts 14:23, suggests the possibility of elders being elected, presumably by the local believers. What is your view on this issue (a) in this context and (b) in relation to the teaching of the New Testament?

The word used in *Acts 14:23* is **cheirotoneō**. In classical Greek this can mean to vote or elect by a show of hands. But from this meaning there derived the simple meaning, 'to appoint'. And in later ecclesiastical Greek it was the standard term for ordination. Certainly its use in *2 Corinthians 8:19* might well be regarded as confirmation that it implied some sort of election process. However, although the word would be entirely appropriate if applied to a system involving voting, it would be going too far to say that this meaning was necessarily implied by the use of the word. As your question suggests, the meaning of the verb in *Acts 14:23* must be understood with reference to what is said elsewhere in the New Testament about authority within the congregation.

The first point to be made in this connection is that the source of authority within the fellowship is the risen Christ. In the fellowship of the body above all, 'Jesus Christ is Lord'. His authority is experienced through the Holy Spirit who is given to all the people of God. It is true that Paul recognises that some within the fellowship are 'spiritual' (*Galatians 6:1*), but where arbitration is required within the community or sin is to be judged, it is the community as a whole that has the responsibility of considering the matter (1 *Corinthians 6:1-6*; *5:3-5*).

There is no reason to think that the appointment of elders in *Acts 14:23* — or anywhere else in the New Testament — was preceded by a formal election. But it is impossible to doubt that the guidance of the Spirit within the fellowship as a whole was taken into account before the work done by the individuals concerned received public acknowledgement and recognition. How a fellowship today may act in accordance with these principles is a matter for local consideration. But there should be no question of elders being imposed upon a fellowship apart from the guidance of the Holy Spirit within the fellowship as a whole.

Jesus died in Kashmir?

Question 199

Displayed in local bookshops is a book entitled Jesus Died in Kashmir. What claims does the book make? Has any refutation of it been published?

The Ahmadiyya sect of Islam, which was created in 1888 and has subsequently been expelled from Islam, has been chiefly responsible for familiarising the West with the idea that Jesus died and was buried in Kashmir. The traditional Islamic belief is that God did not allow Jesus to be crucified, although the Koran itself is ambiguous about the death of Jesus. However, the idea that following his rejection he went to Kashmir is not a standard Islamic tenet.

The book to which you refer is based on a variety of ancient documents, to be found in Tibet and Kashmir, on place names in Kashmir, and on traditions. Its thesis is that Moses visited Kashmir and died there, that the 'Lost Tribes of Israel' ended up there, and that Jesus himself both visited India before his Palestinian ministry began and returned, with Mary and Thomas, to Kashmir after his crucifixion (which did not result in his death). I know of no Christian rejoinder to the book which is by a German writer, Andreas Faber-Kaiser, and is available in an ABACUS edition published by Sphere Books.

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

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LOOKING AT BOOKS



BIBLE BACKGROUND

Explaining Bible Truth

Scripture Union have just published a valuable series of nine booklets under this title, covering the principal areas of Bible teaching. Each booklet (price 40p or 55p in large print) is attractively produced in full colour with several pictures. The text sets out the headings of Scripture teaching on its particular theme, with references, and questions (described as 'thought starters'). Obviously, only the elements can be given, but they are given straightforwardly and directly. Controversy is avoided: thus, in *The Last Things*, the millennium is not mentioned; in *The Holy Spirit*, tongue speaking is ignored; while in *The Church*, the manner of baptism is not discussed. These booklets will accordingly afford excellent aids for Bible Classes and discussion groups. They can be issued to members one at a time as the studies progress and form bases for group consideration and private study. In addition, all nine titles have been incorporated into hardback volumes, *The Pocket Handbook of Christian Truth* (£2.95) and a large print edition, *The Handbook of Christian Truth* (£4.95) which can be used by the group leader. A display wallet is supplied free with a complete set of booklets. Richard Bewes, an Anglican minister, and Robert Hicks, from the Christian Brethren, are the authors.

At the rate of one study a week, the whole range of major Bible teaching can be covered in fifty-four weeks by the use of these aids. We commend this to all our readers, not least to church elders, Bible class and Sunday School leaders and similar

responsible people. Here is a ready-made method of grounding people in the whole counsel of God in a relatively short time. Lone Christians will perceive readily their value, while new Christians cannot be introduced to the series too early.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne.

Plot and Purpose in the Old Testament

E. A. Martens. IVP. 260pp. £4.95 (paperback).

Dr. E. A. Martens is professor of Old Testament studies in a Californian biblical seminary. His wide experience in a number of different fields — pastoral, archaeological, linguistic and literary — makes him admirably suited for the task he sets himself in this work: to define the central message of the Old Testament.

The starting point for his study is the assumption that 'the Old Testament supplies the fibre for the Christian faith. But unless the message of the Old Testament is clearly articulated, its relevance to the New Testament and to Christians today will remain fuzzy.' He suggests that the key to the content of the OT is to be found in 'God's design'. To substantiate and elucidate this premise he places the emphasis on biblical theology: exegesis, not systematic theology. He takes as his pivotal text *Exodus 5:22-6:8* and concludes that God's design was to deliver His people, to be their God, to empower them to know Him, and to establish them in their own land. Professor Martens then examines this four-fold pattern as it operated in three crucial phases of Israel's history: pre-monarchy, the monarchy itself, and the post-monarchy period. A further

section considers the divine design in the New Testament, with particular reference to *Matthew* and *Romans*, and he sums up the whole matter in this way: 'All four components of divine design — deliverance, community, knowledge (experience) and land (life, blessing) receive a particular fulfilment in Christ. But the design has not yet come to full realization, for man's deliverance from sin's forces, while decisive through Christ, is not immediately total... In Jesus Christ God's design through the ages is caught and concentrated, as if in a prism, in history: but beyond history is eternity. That design will be not only fully plain, then, but fully realized.' This is a bubblingly fresh and stimulating volume. Crisply written, it will satisfy the needs of both the general reader and the theological student. At £4.95 it's a bargain: it is warmly recommended.

Review by John Peters, Charterhouse School

Exodus: New Century Bible Commentary. J. P. Hyatt.

Marshall, Morgan & Scott. 351pp. £3.25 (paperback). This commentary on Exodus was originally issued in 1971 and is now re-issued with the bibliography up-dated by the series editor, the author having died in 1972. Based on the RSV text, it is a solid work of scholarship and good value for money. For theological students needing to know the games scholars play with Scripture, it will, with judicious supplementing, enable them to satisfy their examiners. Anyone concerned with the problems in the text will find here the questions to think through rather than the answers. But those who seek the Word of God will find

nothing at all to meet their quest. The confused results of modern sceptical criticism are all here — the birth of Moses is a legend, the view of the manna is critical, the tabernacle never existed, except on paper, the golden calf incident is a cult legend and the Israelites had neither material nor skill to make such an idol — these random examples will reveal clearly enough the general approach. Nowhere is the possibility that in Exodus God speaks even mooted.

In short, this is hardly a book to be commended to the general reader, though the tough-minded student will find some cases to develop the muscular strength of his jaw in it.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

The Book of Job: New Century Bible Commentary H. H. Rowley. Marshall, Morgan & Scott. 284pp. £3.25 (paperback)

Welcome to the new, new, New Century Bible Commentary which now assumes its second (at least) revised format, and hence the reissuing of the late Professor Rowley's 1970 volume in a softback edition. Alas, the commentary is still in small print and now with the removal of the Biblical lemma which headed each page the unfortunate effect is to make the commentary look like a 241-page appendix to the 25 pages of introduction. On the other hand, there is a great deal of information on such household names as Budde, Guillaume and Dhorme, at a very reasonable price! Those who like their philology less obtrusive, with more attention to the movement of argument in this great book, will probably prefer Francis Andersen's excellent

contribution to the Tyndale series (1976). Still, this is a valuable study by Professor Rowley and well worth reissuing.

Review by Dr. Robert P. Gordon, Cambridge University

Jerusalem: The Tragedy and the Triumph Charles Guston. Pickering and Inglis. 302pp. This is a piece of high-class religious journalism offering a vivid and readable introduction to Jerusalem, the city and its history. It is illustrated with 11 colour and 60 black-and-white photographs, and 21 maps.

In the three parts of the book, corresponding with the Old Testament, New Testament, and post-Biblical periods of Jerusalem's history, the author focuses in short chapters of half-a-dozen pages each on key moments in the story of the city and its people, and sketches in the background with broad strokes. Under the heading *The Gathering Dusk* we have, for example, 'The Courageous Jeremiah', 'Return from Babylon', and 'Nehemiah the Patriot'. In *The Darkest Hour* we find 'The Romans Arrive', 'Rendezvous with Death' and 'Masada shall not fall again'. In *The Final Dawn* we move from 'War against Rome' through 'Kingdom of the Crusaders' to 'The Bones that Rattled'.

The author has researched his material well and the reader may be assured of the accuracy and general balance of this production as a popular

history for Christian readers. As will be evident from some of the chapter titles, Mr. Gunston has a weakness for a somewhat florid style, and squeezes sentiment out of the story whenever possible. The last chapters are written from a stance that is perhaps too uncritically pro-Israeli, and a dispensationalist framework is taken for granted though it is not annoyingly obtrusive. Indeed, the chapter on 'The Next Temple' is remarkably indecisive. This book, though written especially for the American market, where it is published by Zondervan, would be very suitable background for anyone about to visit Israel; it would make a good present too for armchair travellers. The blend of fact, human interest, and Christian concerns makes this well-told narrative a very good example of its kind.

Review by David J. A. Clines, University of Sheffield.

The Land of The Bible Yohanan Aharoni. Burns & Oates, 481pp. £14.25. Most, if not all, of us tend to think of the biblical narratives in terms of their chief characters. That is because we were brought up on the *biographical* approach to Scripture. Later we may have progressed to the *historical* approach — setting the biblical narratives within the broad sweep of what is known of ancient Near Eastern history — but we probably still concentrate on

the main persons involved. A visit to the Holy Land, however, may well persuade us to begin to think *geographically*: to consider what happened at a particular place and how the events were related to the geographical features. Just visiting the sites is not enough; we need an expert guide to supply the technical information which will enable us to interpret the significance of what can be seen. That is what this book provides. Professor Aharoni (who died in 1973) had a profound acquaintance with and love for the land of Palestine and a detailed knowledge of the vast mass of research and exploration that has been conducted in it. In 1962 he published (in Hebrew) the first edition of *The Land of the Bible*, subtitled 'A Historical Geography', which assembled for the first time between two covers the available records and geographical descriptions of Palestine in the Canaanite and Israelite periods. A second, revised edition (translated and edited by A. F. Rainey) is now available, bringing the work up to date (with references to publications up to 1976). The first part of the book introduces us to the geography of Palestine (its regions, roads, boundaries and place names) and to the historical sources (the Bible, epigraphical documents, archaeological discoveries). The second part traces the history of Palestine against the backcloth of its geography

from the Canaanite period, through the conquest, the settlement, the united and divided monarchy, up to the post-exilic period. It does not, however, cover the inter-testamental period nor (despite the blurb) take us up to the NT era. In other words, 'Bible' in the title means the *Jewish Bible* (our Old Testament). The text is illustrated by 34 simple line maps (not always absolutely clear) and a number of tables or lists, the most extensive and valuable of which being a list of site identifications. What is really needed is a large-scale coloured contour map — but we are presumably expected to have access to a Bible atlas! The volume is well supplied with indices (including biblical references). Although the blurb says that it is intended for both the scholar and the general reader, and although the detailed notes are segregated at the end of the chapters, this is a highly technical treatment (Hebrew and Greek are not transliterated) which is likely to appeal most to the student as a text-book to supplement the standard OT histories. Nevertheless, the enthusiast who is not put off by the technicalities will derive great benefit from this fine book.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

Musical Interlude continued from Page 3

— Accretions

In unaccompanied singing, tunes suffer from accretions as they get filled out with inflections, grace notes, roulades and twirly bits. Common psalm tunes sung in the Highlands of Scotland can be quite unrecognizable to Sassenach ears. In the production of these accretions, the common factor is not Highlanders, but people who sing without accompaniment. The additions of one locality will differ from those of another, but they are off-putting to the casual visitor. One writer has called them 'these nonsensical graces'. The bad habits become ingrained. Hardly ever are they an improvement on the original tune.

We make one final point. The singing of the hymns is often the only way in which members of a congregation make an audible contribution to the praise. Taking into account this total involvement of the assembled company, the singing of the hymns deserves much more care in execution, much greater input from members of the audience and much more general consideration than it usually receives.

Thought: Perhaps the time has come for a constructive discussion about the hymn singing in our congregation.

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

A CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES

J. Mayberry

Do I have special responsibilities as a Christian? Am I prepared to meet them? The concept of responsibility is associated with maturity and moral accountability. A newly saved Christian should grow in similar ways to the young child. Initially, he has a limited sense of responsibility to his unsaved friends, but this should develop into a concern for all of people, especially for the spiritual well-being of his fellow Christians. We will consider then, some of the responsibilities which are an integral part of the Christian life.

1. RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD GOD:

Our relationship with God is a very dependent one in which He supplies all of our needs (*Phil 4:19*). However, as Christians we are called on to worship, praise and serve Him. The nature of our worship was explained by the Lord Jesus in His conversation with the sinful woman at Sychar's Well. 'Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.' (*John 4:23*).

The Samaritans' worship was based on idolatry, although it was directed towards the God of Abraham and had some of the characteristics of Jewish worship. It is our responsibility to ensure that our worship is as it should be. Because of sin we are particularly unworthy and our worship can only be accepted if it is through the person of the Lord Jesus. 'Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that confess his name.' (*Heb. 13:15*) The sacrifice of the Old Testament has in some respects been replaced by a verbal sacrifice of adoration to God. It may be spoken or sung, but in all ways it praises God and His Son.

In addition to worshipping, we are expected to serve God in all our actions: 'Whatever you do,

work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.' (*Col. 3:23*)

This service is part of an act of worship and should be done 'acceptably with reverence and awe' (*Heb. 12:28*).

2. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CHURCH:

Our responsibilities in the church include those of fellowship and work.

The natural progress in the Christian life is one of salvation, baptism and fellowship in a local church, followed by active involvement in its outreach. In any fellowship, the members have a direct responsibility for the physical and spiritual needs of each other. When there is no family or when the family fails to meet its responsibility, the church through its individual members becomes responsible for the elderly, widowed and orphaned. A practical involvement in meeting their physical needs requires an individual commitment by each member of the fellowship.

Such a commitment should characterize the work of each Christian in the local fellowship. The work should be both fruitful and in the will of the Lord. If it is in His will, then it will be fruitful. It is interesting that the Bible never considers unfruitful work to be part of God's plan, and even where the gospel message was received with scorn and antagonism there was always some fruit. Our work should be done without fuss and with individual responsibility for it. It should encompass an effective outreach to the unsaved and the building up of individuals in the church fellowship. As society changes the mechanisms of outreach may change, but the message never shall.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES TO OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS:

Our main responsibility to our Christian brothers *continued on page sixty-seven*

THE IMPERATIVE OF UNITY

G. H. Forster

Mr. Forster reflects on 1 Corinthians, with special reference to the disunity of that unhappy church. A retired Chartered Accountant and Public Finance Accountant, he was at one time the financial editor of a local government journal. He and his wife now live at Chester, after forty years in Newport, Gwent.

Disunity in a local church usually results from differences on points of doctrine, practice or discipline, often arising from views sincerely held. There may be a clash over the use of talents in the activities of the church due to variations of temperament, approach or method. Frequently, more warmth than love is evident. The New Testament provides unhappy instances of disunity so it is not a new, strange thing. But it should not be contemplated hastily or without prayerful anxiety, in the light of Scripture teaching and precedent. The epistle which deals most with these strains on church fellowship is First Corinthians. Let us consider its teaching in a spirit of enquiry and hope. The subjects discussed in that letter with such a compound of tact and frankness are significant, as is the order in which they are treated.

The first topic is persons. How revealing! Let the reader say whether personalities were not prominent in any divisions he has sadly been associated or acquainted with. Some of the Christians in Corinth favoured the apostle to the Gentiles who had founded the church, some the eloquent Apollos, and some naturally (and so to this day!) the leader among the twelve, Peter. Some boldly claimed to belong specially to the Lord Himself and to be distinguished thereby from all other members of the church (1:12). Corresponding stances have been

known in more recent church history.

Paul, a late-comer to the apostolic circle, was erudite, wide in experience and sympathies, yet firm on first principles: he believed in the liberty of the Gospel but not liberty with the truth of salvation all of grace. If he was a familiar type, so was Peter in his different way. He was more flexible, more yielding, with a less firm grasp of the significance of the Gospel for those with whom, by upbringing, he was not well acquainted. Apollos, not an apostle, was less thoroughly grounded, but was teachable and gracious, as well as fluent. All three, to their abiding credit, repudiated the sectional groupings associated with their names: party leaders of more recent history have not always been so reluctant.

Who then should be our leader? Whom should we follow, be guided by, be loyal to? Paul applied a penetrating test when he asked; 'Is Christ divided?' If He is not, should His people divide? Here is weighty reasoning to be pondered well before we separate from our brethren and sisters. It is undergirded by two further questions, in effect: 'Who was crucified for you?'; 'In whose name were you baptized?' (1:13). Can we follow anyone with another name, or lightly part company from others who own the one name? The apostle refers to the Lord as the foundation of the church (3:11), as both the head (11:3) and the body (12:12). If we wound the conscience of a fellow Christian we sin against Christ. (8:12)

SPIRITUAL AND MORAL QUESTIONS

Then the apostle enters the realm of spiritual polemics with some telling arguments. Division was a sign, not of spiritual faithfulness, but of

fleshly zeal. It indicated, not maturity or a superior grasp of truth, but spiritual infancy — the primary school, not adult education (3:1-4). Moreover, if one had a greater knowledge or understanding of the truth than some others, that ability was a gift from the Lord and so should be exercised with humility, reflecting His mind in us (4:7).

While contention and conflict flourished in Corinth, the church seemed to lack the wisdom or the will to deal with serious moral evil in their ranks. Niceties of doctrine and debate monopolized their discussions, to the neglect of serious defects and dangers affecting the personal lives and happiness of several of their members. Let the church unite under the one name in a solemn act of putting away: that would help restore the spiritual health of the church — and soon that of the offender. There is a time (usually rare) to put away, when there are grave enough grounds (Chapter 5). There is also a time to restore, with equal decisiveness and without delay, as the second epistle urged on the church.

Business or financial disputes and other personal differences should be settled within the fellowship, so as to maintain its good name and unity. It would be better to turn the other cheek than to agitate the quiet waters of church life (6:1, 7). The sacredness of each member as the Holy Spirit's shrine called for utter moral purity. The standard was not that of the market place but of the sanctuary; not of national law but of the Lord. (6:15, 19)

Then the apostle said that one-ness, giving no offence to another, was a more important principle than meticulous distinctions. I must not insist on my own conscience but rather be tender towards the consciences of others. Association with a false

religion would be inconsistent with partaking of the Lord's table, but within the church love was the principal thing. Variety of talent or function could easily lead to stresses, but that variety was of God's ordination and He said there was but one body (*Chapters 10 and 14*).

When the Corinthians assembled as a church to eat the Lord's supper divisions would be checked if they waited for one another — homely counsel! (*Chapter 11*). The implications of the Lord's resurrection made their work for Him of eternal worth (*Chapter 15*). The epistle ends on a note which carried the ideal of consideration for others beyond Corinth's shores (*Chapter 16*). Love did not insist on its own way (*13:5*).

Let all they did be done in love (*16:14*).

After reading and reflecting upon this masterly epistle to a church undergoing severe internal stress, it is impressive and instructive to return to its first chapter and read:

'I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.' (*1:10 NIV*.)

After the opening greeting, we enter the epistle by that *verse 10*. It states the first, the primary, the over-riding obligation placed upon the local church by the inspired apostle in the Lord's name. The teaching in the subsequent chapters depends for its

effectiveness on our observing, obeying, submitting to this prior condition. We must not divide merely because we differ: rather it is our duty to agree together, to be perfectly united in mind and judgment.

The apostle had as exemplar his Lord, whose prayer for His own contains the same emphasis:

'Holy Father, keep them in Thy name that they may be one, even as we are one. I pray also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one.' (*John 17:11, 20, 21*).

Since the Lord died to gather into one all the children of God (*John 11:51, 52*), unity is an imperative for his followers.

A Christian's Responsibilities *continued from Page Sixty-Five*

and sisters is to ensure that we do not give them offence. In the time of Paul arguments about dietary restrictions were common, but his spiritual advice was to regulate one's conduct by the principle that offence should not be given to one's brother or sister. Instead of boasting about freedoms, Christians were to ensure that they did not cause a 'weaker' brother to fall. 'We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.' (*Rom. 15:1*) In fact our concern for fellow believers may require that we 'lay down our lives for our brothers.' (*1 John 3:16*)

Our relations with fellow Christians in the church are of great importance. If there is dissension between members of a body it is unable to act effectively. Only in a fellowship where we have concern for each other and each other's views can we have united effective action.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES TO OUR FELLOW MAN:

One reason for our salvation is the further

evangelization of the world. We have responsibilities to the unsaved and Peter gives us the clue that this includes: 'Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.' (*1 Pet. 3:15*) Our responsibility does not simply end with a clear exposition of the gospel; but our daily life should be such that we win the respect of the unsaved (*1 Thess. 4:12*), and are free from criticism. Although we are anxious to dissociate ourselves from a purely social gospel characterized by doing our best for our fellow man, it is important that we do not forget that we have a responsibility to the hungry, the poor, the sick and the imprisoned (*Matt. 25:35-36*).

As Christians we have many responsibilities including those towards family and work, but we can meet none of them outside of Christ.

'Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.' (*1 John 2:6*)

Note: All Scripture quotes are from NIV

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (51)

F. F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

iii. THE SHEPHERD AND THE FLOCK

John 10:1-39

(a) The parable of the good shepherd (10:1-21)
continued

10:17 This is why my Father loves me — because I lay down my life, in order to receive it again.

The Father loves the son (cf. *John 3:35; 5:20*) because of the Son's utter self-dedication to do the Father's will, even when this involves the laying down of his life. The Father would indeed glorify him with the glory which he had with the Father before the world existed (*John 17:5*), but the laying down of his life was not only the necessary precondition of his receiving that glory: it was the first stage in his being glorified (*John 12:23*). If he was to impart resurrection life to others, he must receive resurrection life himself, and to receive resurrection life he must first pass through death. Only by falling into the ground and dying could the grain of wheat 'bear much fruit' (*John 12:24*). Only by laying down his life and receiving it again could the shepherd bring his 'other sheep' together with the sheep from the original fold into his 'one flock'.

10:18 No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to receive it again. This is the commandment which I have received from my Father.

In this Gospel one side of a complex truth is frequently emphasized to the point where it appears to be the whole truth — the particular truth which the evangelist wishes to bring out. Elsewhere in the New Testament our Lord's enemies are said to have 'killed' him — as of course they did. But at the same time he submitted to being violently taken and put to death; in the hour of death he seized the initiative and offered himself as a willing sacrifice to God: while at one level his enemies killed him, at a deeper level he laid down his life of his own volition. This he accepted as the Father's will; this he acknowledged obediently as the Father's commandment

— and with the Father's commandment he received authority from the Father to fulfil it, both by dying (cf. *John 19:11*) and by rising again. Similarly, he is repeatedly said elsewhere in the New Testament to have been raised from the dead by God (cf. *Acts 2:32; Rom. 6:4; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 1:21*, etc.), but here he rises of his own volition. John does not contradict the testimony of other New Testament writers; the difference is one of emphasis. If Jesus by his own choice resumes the life that he laid down, his choice is (in this respect as in all others) to do his Father's will, to obey his Father's commands. It is by the Father's authority that the Son acts as a free agent (*John 5:19-30*). This is no doubt a paradox, but it is a paradox inherent in the unique relationship subsisting between the Father and the Son.

10:19-21. A division broke out again among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, 'He is demon-possessed; he is mad. Why do you listen to him?' But others said, 'These are not the utterances of a demon-possessed person. Can a demon open blind people's eyes?'

As earlier during the week of the festival of Tabernacles (*John 7:43*), so now Jesus' words precipitate a division among his hearers, as they take sides for or against him. (His words are called *logoi* in verse 19 and *rhēmata* in verse 21, but in using these two terms John is probably indulging his fondness for synonyms.)

The charge of demon-possession is raised once again, as in *John 7:20; 8:48*. But it is easily exploded: it is not by the power of a demon that a work of mercy, such as the restoring of a blind man's sight, is performed. That particular work of mercy had occasioned another division, between those who argued that one who disregarded sabbath restrictions was a sinner and those who argued that a sinner could not make a blind man see (*John 9:16*). Now the unprejudiced members of Jesus' audience argue that words of such sanity and grace as he spoke were not compatible with the charge of demon-possession.

THE HARVESTER STUDENT'S CHURCH DIRECTORY 1981

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
ABERDEEN Hebron Evangelical Church, Thistle Street (off Rose St., which turns off Union St. Most city buses).	Dr. David Short, 48 Victoria St., Aberdeen AB9 2PL (Tel. 53853)	<i>Sun.</i> 10:30, 18:30, 20:00 (YP), <i>Wed.</i> 19:45	Lunch available at 48 Victoria St., every Sunday during term.
ABERYSTWYTH BANGOR, Gwynedd (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, N. Wales (Tel. 53874) or Dr. Daisy Ronco, 1 Hendyrpeg, Penmynydd Rd., Menai Bridge, Anglesey (Tel. 714073)	(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 Students' Union Coffee Lounge <i>Sat.</i> 19:30 etc. Students welcome at Dr. Beer's house <i>Sun.</i> 19:30-22:00.
BECKENHAM, Kent — see London (Beckenham)			
BELFAST 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) or 9 Wynchurch Ave., Belfast (Tel. 793543). (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.
BIRMINGHAM (see also Walsall) (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 <i>Sun.</i> 11:00, 18:30 <i>Wed.</i> 20:00	Birmingham and Aston Universities: students are regular visitors. Students from Aston University, Birmingham Polytechnic etc. attend regularly.
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> 10:45, 18:30, 20:00	Annual students' service, 1st <i>Sun.</i> in Sept. 18:30.
3. Duke Street Chapel, Duke St., Sutton Coldfield. (Buses 102, 103, 104, 110 to Cottage Hospital stop)	Mr. Nigel Crowther, 36 South Drive, Lichfield Park, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B75 7TF	<i>Sun.</i> 10:15, 18:30, 20:00 YPF, <i>Tues.</i> 20:00 Prayer & Bible study	<i>Tues.</i> Bible Study in rear hall.
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. R. J. Partridge, 11 Wirral Rd., Northfield, Birmingham B31 1NX (Tel. 021-476 1958)	<i>Sun.</i> 10:30, 18:30 <i>Thurs.</i> 20:00 <i>Fri.</i> (YPF) 20:00	
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.		
6. Pheasey Evangelical Church, Romney Way, Pheasey Estate, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 7TL (Buses 90 from City centre, 452 from W. Bromwich or Sutton Coldfield to 'Trees' Hotel)	Mr. J. B. Crowton, 264 College Rd., Perry Barr, Birmingham B44 8HE (Tel. 021-356 9958).		
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.	<i>Sun.</i> 10:15, 12:00 (Bible Study), 18:30 20:00 (Youth). <i>Thurs.</i> 19:45	5 mins. from University, Hospital & local Colleges. <i>Sun.</i> 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, 12 Brucher Drive, Orrell, Bootle, L20 6JF

Sun. 10:45, 14:45,
16:00, 18:30
Tues. 19:00
Wed. 19:00

Small assembly in populous working-class area affording excellent opportunities for outreach. Real need for help, especially with Sunday School, Covenants & youth work. 4 miles from centre of Liverpool. Student accommodation available.

BROMLEY (Kent) — see London**BRISTOL**

1. Bethesda Church, Alma Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2ES (Buses 1, 22, 23, 87, 88, to Clifton Down Station)

Timothy Steer (full time elder/pastor), Bethesda Church, 29 Alma Rd., Bristol, BS8 2ES (Tel. 0272-38776).

1st Sun. in month
10:30 Evang. Guest Service and coffee
18:30 Worship & Communion Service.
Other Suns. 10:30 Worship & Communion
11:30 Bible Address and Junior Bible Group,
18:30 Evening Service, (students informal after).
Thurs. 20:00 Prayer at church/home groups (alt. wks.)

Students welcome to Sunday tea, either in the church or at a home. Opportunity for student involvement in y.p., evang., visiting.

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. Youth Fellowship Sun. 19:30

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 (Tel. Bristol 507194).

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. Cambridge 833081) or Dr. R. P. Gordon, 31 St. Laurence Rd., Foxton, Cambridge CB2 6SF (Tel. Cambridge 871789).
Dr. Brian Heap, 8 Fendon Rd., Cambridge (Tel. 48509).

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Tues. 19:45

Near city centre and most colleges: a warm welcome is given to students.

2. Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan Way, Cambridge. (Tel. 45584) (Buses 185, 186 to Queen Edith's Way)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30,
20:00 (YP) Wed. & Thurs. Bible Study Groups.
Sun. 11:15, 18:30
Tues. 19:45

Lunch at chapel, 1st Sundays. Active welcome to students. A number of students and past graduates are members. Care is exercised by some who specialise in student activities.

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).

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 Road, Cambridge (Tel. 58149) or Mr. David Ball, 34 Madingly Rd., Cambridge (Tel. 62459).

Sun. 10:00, 11:00,
18:30 Tues. 19:45

A new fellowship (started May 1976) on a large urban housing estate.

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.)
2. Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Corporation Rd., Grange-town, Cardiff. (Buses from all parts of city; alight Cambridge St. or Avondale Rd.)
3. Glenwood Church Centre, Llanedeyrn
4. Leckwith Gospel Hall, Leckwith Ave., Leckwith. (City Circle bus to Leckwith Rd.)
5. Mackintosh Hall, Mackintosh Place, Roath Park, Cardiff. (Buses 1, 8, 9, 54, 56, 57, 58, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 109, 112 to Mackintosh Place.)
6. Minster Evangelical Church, Sturminster Rd., Roath, Cardiff. (Bus 24 to Arran Place: right down Albany Rd., into Newport Rd., 1st left Minster Rd.)

CHICHESTER

Swanfield Chapel, Swanfield Drive, Chichester, Sussex.

COLCHESTER

Maldon Road Chapel, Maldon Rd., Colchester. (Buses 1, 1a, 6 & 6a to Burlington Rd.)

COVENTRY

Canley Evangelical Church, Charter Ave., Coventry CV4 8DA. (Bus 18 to 'Half Sovereign' from Lanchester Polytechnic: walking distance from Warwick University.)

DUBLIN

Merrion Hall, Lower Merrion St., Dublin 2, Eire. (approx 100 yds from Merrion Square: buses 6, 7a, 8, 44, 45, 46a, 62, 84. Pearse Rly. Stn. 3 mins. walk.)

EDINBURGH

1. Bruntsfield Evangelical Church, 70 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh EH 4JU. (Buses 9, 10, 11, 16, 23, 27, 45.)
2. Ferniehill Evangelical Church, 19 Ferniehill Rd. (off A7), Gilmerton, Edinburgh. (Buses 3, 8, 31 or 33 to Ferniehill Drive at Gilmerton Rd.)

Mr. B. Osbourne, 20 Millbrook Rd., Dinas Powis, Cardiff (Tel. 513376).

Mr. John Elliott, 180 Cardiff Rd., Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2AD.

Mr. A. R. Harker, 216 Hillrise, Llanedeyrn, Cardiff (Tel. 732724).

Mr. Keith Matheson, 14 Redcliffe Ave., Victoria Park, Cardiff.

Mr. R. G. Tetstall, 50 Llanedeyrn Rd., Cyncoed, Cardiff (Tel. 492136).

Mr. Roger Cruwys, 52 Syr Stafford Close, Caerphilly (Tel. Cardiff 884204) or Mr. I. Howe, 32 Axminster Rd., Cardiff (Tel. 496569).

Mr. P. R. Grosvenor, 43 Grosvenor Rd., Chichester (Tel. 783893) or Dr. C. E. Turner, The Lodge, Farm Close, Fishbourne (Tel. 786301).

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).

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).

Mr. Reginald H. Fry, 'Aureen', 37 Farmhill Rd., Goatstown, Dublin 14 (Tel. 984075).

The Secretary, c/o the Church

Mr. J. Gordon Birss, 21 Gracemount Rd., Edinburgh 16 or Dr. J. Hannah, 46 The Spinney, Gilmerton, Edinburgh.

Sun. 11:30, 18:30
Tues. 19:30

Young People's
Fellowship Sun. 20:00

Sun. 11:00, 15:00,
18:30 Mon. 19:30
Tues. 19:30 Fri. 19:30
(YP Bible study)
Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Wed. Home
Bible Groups

A very warm welcome will be given to students and other visitors. Popular with students who are involved in the church. Indoor sports facilities. A small fellowship which would warmly welcome visitors, and help from students.

Sun. 11:00, 14:45,
18:30 Mon. 19:45
Fri. 19:30 (YP)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Wed. 19:30

Sun. 11:00, 18:00
Mon. 14:30 (Women's
mtg.) Wed. 19:30
2nd Tues. Ladies
night

Sun. 9:45, 16:00,
18:30 Thurs. 19:30
Sat. Rallies Oct.-Apr.

Half mile from Bishop Otter College and St. Richard's Hospital.

Sun. 11:00, 15:00
(Bible Class), 18:30
Mon. 19:45 Wed. 19:45
Fri. 19:30 (YPF)

Sun. 9:30, 18:30
Wed. 20:00

Attended by students for many years. Also caters for students from Hereward College for physically handicapped.

Sun. 10:30, 11:45,
15:30, 19:00 Mon.
20:00 Fri. 20:00

Highway Club, Sats.
18:30, YPF Sats. 19:30

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.

EXETER

1. Belmont Chapel, Western Way (near city centre).
2. Buller Rd. Gospel Hall, St. Thomas, Exeter EX4 1BJ. (Buses B, C, D, F to St. Thomas shopping centre.)

GLASGOW

1. Albert Evangelical Church, Skirving St., Shawlands, Glasgow. (Buses 21, 23, 38, 38a, 45, 48, 57 to Shawlands Cross.)
2. Greenview Hall, 1439 Pollokshaws Rd., Pollokshaws, Glasgow G41. (Nr. Leckie St. and Shawlands Station. Buses 45-57 to Shawlands Station.)

GRIMSBY

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate (which is near Town Centre, Rail and Bus Stations).

GUILDFORD

Manor Road Hall, Manor Rd., Stoughton, Guildford, Surrey. (98 bus to Grange Rd.)

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.)

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.)

LEEDS

Hope Hall Christian Fellowship, Scott Hall Grove, Leeds LS7 3SL (near Prince Philip Playing Fields — off Scott Hall Road).

LEWES

at Christian Alliance Hall, Mount Place, Lewes.

Mr. Peter Cousins, 3 Fairpark Rd., Exeter, or Dr. Cecil Heron, West Winds, Exton, Nr. Exeter or Dr. Charles Sims, 'Gairloch', Hensleigh Drive, Lyndhurst Rd., Exeter.
Mr. J. Crews, 29 Queens Rd., St. Thomas, Exeter (Tel. Exeter 72971).

Dr. Robert Walker, 'Rominar', Erskine Rd., Whitecraigs, Glasgow (Tel. 041-639 4808).

Mr. Ian MacDonald, 5 Hillside Rd., Glasgow G43 (Tel. 041-632 5470).

Mr. & Mrs. D. A. Roy 61 Welholme Rd. (Tel. 55634/5 and 42464)

Mr. J. Knight, 241 Stoughton Rd., Stoughton, Guildford (Tel. Guildford 70388).

Mr. David Ingleby, 41 Bankfield Park Ave., Taylor Hill, Huddersfield HD4 7RD (Tel. 41911) or at Computer Section, Huddersfield Technical College.

Dr. John S. Andrews, University Library & 270 Bowerham Rd., Lancaster (Tel. 66856), Mr. Graham K. Rand, Operational Res., University & 36 Newmarket Ave., Lancaster (Tel. 69071), or Mr. Richard E. Ash, Church Sec., 3 Belle Vue Terr., Lancaster (Tel. 2690).

Laurie and Nancy Beynon, 15 St. Chad's Rise, Far Headingley, Leeds LS6 3QE. (nr. Beckett's Park College) (Tel. 785388) or Nigel McQuoid, 4 Wharfe Close, Adel, Leeds LS16 8JE (Tel. 611602).

Mr. H. E. Pope, 25 Prince Edwards Rd., Lewes, Sussex.

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Mon. 19:30

Sun. 11:00, 18:30,
21:45 (YP summer)
Tues. 19:30 Fri. YP
(varies)

Sun. 10:30, 18:30
Wed. 19:45

Sun. 11:00, 19:00
Thurs. 19:30

Sun. Bible Hour 11:00,
Lord's Supper 15:00,
Family Service 18:30,
Wed. Bible Study 19:30

Sun. 10:00 (SS & YP)
11:15, 18:30
Tues. 19:45

Sun. 11:15, 18:30
Wed. 20:00

Sun. 10:45*, 18:30
Once a month 11:00
(family service) 18:30*
*Breaking of Bread
Wed. 19:30 (Prayer &
Bible Study) held once
a month in members'
homes.

Sun. 10:15, 18:30
Informal home fellow-
ship 20:00 Tues. 20:00
Prayer & Bible talks
(Sunday Schools, Family
Services, Fellowship
Meals and Strolls & other
activities involving young
people.)

Sun. 11:00

A favourite student
church for many years

A smaller fellowship
warmly welcoming
students.

Students are warmly
welcomed by the
fellowship.
Youth Fellowships
Sun. 20:30. A good
number of young
people.

Welcome to all students
at Coll. of Technology.

Several years of
contact with the CU
at the University.

Opposite Royal
Infirmary and within
walking distance of
Holly Bank Technical
Teachers Training Col-
lege and Huddersfield
School of Nursing.

A small assembly
(about 30) which
warmly welcomes
visitors and would
appreciate help,
especially during the
week with YP and
children.

A very warm welcome
is given to students
& other visitors.
Hospitality is always
available.

For University of
Sussex.

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 Smithdown 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. (Beckenham, Kent) The Hall, Cromwell Road, off Croydon Rd. (Buses 54, 289, 725, 726 to Cromwell Rd. Rail — Beckenham Jn. and Clockhouse Stations.)
2. (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.)
3. Cholmeley Evangelical Church, 272 Archway Rd., Highgate, N.6. (Buses 43, 104, 134 etc., Underground to Highgate (Northern Line) exit signs to Shepherds Hill.)
4. Endlesham Church, Endlesham Rd., Balham SW12. (Buses 88, 155, 181, 189. Balham Stn., SR. & Underground.)
5. (Kingston-on-Thames) Canbury Park Christian Fellowship, 234a Canbury Park Rd., Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey. (Buses 57, 85 & 213a to bottom of Kingston Hill, 131 to Norbiton Church, 65 to Canbury Park Rd., 281, 406 & 418 to Kingston bus station. Rail to Norbiton or Kingston Stations.)
6. Paragon Chapel, 233/241 Glyn Rd., Clapton, London E5 OJP. (Corner of Lockhurst St., buses 22, 22a to Chatsworth Rd., 38, 55, 106, 253 to Hackney Baths.)
7. 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.)
8. (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.)
9. Rossmore Hall Evangelical Church, 1 Rossmore Rd., London NW1 6NJ (off Lisson Grove, by Marylebone station).
10. Salway Evangelical Church, Salway Hill, High Rd., Woodford Green, Essex IG8 9BP. (20a bus, Central Line to South Woodford.)

Mr. John Nipe, 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 convenient for Edge Hill College of Education.
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.

Mr. Harry Bennion, 44 Cromwell Rd., Beckenham, Kent.

Mr. Roy Woolgar, 21 Hayes Rd., Bromley, Kent BR2 9AF (Tel. 01-460 7604).

Dr. Neil Summerton, 52 Hornsey Lane, London N6 5LU (Tel. 01-272 0643) or Mr. Kenneth Brownell, 52 Middle Lane, London N8 (Tel. 01-348 0727).

Mr. Richard Harris, 3 Queensville Rd., London SW12 QJL (Tel. 01-674 0092).

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).

Mr. L. W. Claydon, 43 Burwell Rd., Leyton, E10 7QG (Tel. 01-556 5430).

Mr. E. Davidson, 132 West End Lane, West Hampstead NW6 (Tel. 024 8875) or Mr. G. Simpson, 35 Estelle Rd., Hampstead NW3 (Tel. 01-267 4151).

Mr. D. Bell, 40 Grosvenor Ave., East Sheen, London SW14 8BX (Tel. 01-878 2973).

Mr. M. Flatow, 20 Pennyford Ct., Henderson Drive, St. John's Wood Rd., London NW8 8UF (Tel. 01-286 5304).

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).

Sun. 10:30, 19:00
Wed. 19:45 Fri. 21:00
(senior youth group)

A new work in new building with vigorous youth work.

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)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Wed. 20:00

We have been pleased to have had happy and helpful fellowship with students over the years.

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Tues. 20:00

Sun. 10:30, 11:30
18:30 Wed. 20:00

A familiar student centre for many years.

Sun. 10:30, 18:30
Tues. 20:00. House groups on various evenings.
Sun. 10:45, 18:30
Tues. 20:00

Youth activities Fri. 19:30 and Sun. 20:00

YPF Sun. 20:00 (differing venues) and Sat. activities. (Kingston Polytechnic and Gipsy Hill College of Education.)

Sun. 11:00,
14:30 (sch.),
15:45 (covenanters),
18:30 Wed. 20:00

A small assembly (15/20 members) in an inner city area who would be glad of active help. Also regular conversational Bible readings.

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Thurs. 19:45

Sun. 09:45, 18:30
Wed. 20:00

Hospitality on Sun. usually available. YPF 20:00 Sun.

Vast scope for local outreach!

Sun. 11:00, 18:30,
20:00 Mon. 20:00

Much local work, in conjunction with 'In Contact' team. Near to Halls of Residence, Queen Mary College, University of London.

11. (Uxbridge, Middx.) Gospel Hall, Cowley Rd. (corner Derby Rd.), Uxbridge.
12. 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, 12, 56, 57, 64, 66, 67, 68 to Langworthy Rd.)
3. Stretford Gospel Hall, 8-10 Derbyshire Lane, Stretford, Manchester M32 8BJ. (Buses 112, 113, 222, 230, 253-259, 263, 264, 269 to Davyhulme Rd.)

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, 69 Chomlea Manor, Claremont Rd., Salford M6 8PE (Tel. 061-736 1094) or Mr. E. E. Costello, 50 Worsley Rd., Worsley, Manchester M28 4SH (Tel. 061-794 2632).
Dr. David Brady, 467 Kings Rd., Stretford, Manchester M32 8QN (Tel. 061-865 4790).

Sun. 10:45 Mon. 20:00 Near Brunel University
Thurs. 20:00
Sun. 10:15, 18:30 Hospitality for lunch
20:00 Thurs. 20:00 & tea usually available
(Suns.). Active Youth Group.

Sun. 11:00, 18:30 Many youth activities
Wed. 19:45
Sun. 10:00, 11:30 Basic Bible teaching
19:00 Wed. 19:45, at 11:30 Sun.
20:30
Sun. 10:45, 18:30 Small assembly in
Tues. 20:00 populous working-class
area with little other
evangelical witness.
Ripe for growth, but in
real need of devoted
workers in every aspect
of service.

NEWCASTLE ON TYNE

Regent Chapel, Regent Farm Road, Gosforth (adjacent to Northern Rock Building). Close to Newcastle Metro Regent Centre terminal, and buses from City Centre. Secretary will advise on buses from Student residences in the City.

Mr. Alan Parker, 44 Woolerton Drive, South West Denton, Newcastle on Tyne NE15 7RX (Tel. 0632 679562 — Secretary) or Mr. R. Bearn, 36 Mitchell Ave., Jesmond (Tel. 0632 813635).

Sun. 10:15, 18:30
20:00 (YPF)
Tues. 19:45

A warm welcome is given to all visitors. Newcastle University, Newcastle Polytechnic and Newcastle Area Hospitals students are regular attenders.

NEWPORT, Gwent

1. Caerleon Christian Fellowship, Lodge Farm Evangelical Church, Lodge Hill, Caerleon, Gwent.
2. Nant Coch Church, 68 Fields Park Rd., Newport, Gwent. (Bus 1 to Jews Wood, 13, 19b to Ridgeway public house.)

Mr. Glyn Jones, Lodge Farm, Lodge Hill, Caerleon, (Tel. 420800) or Mr. W. Plumley, 'Nythfa', 18 Glen Usk View, Caerleon, Gwent (Tel. 420791).

Sun. 11:00 Family Service
11:45 Communion
Wed. 19:30

Coffee bar Tues. 20:00 at Memorial Room, Town Hall. Other YP activities at the Farm. Near Gwent College of Higher Education. Near Allt-yr-yn College of Technology.

NORTHAMPTON

Duke St. Gospel Hall, Northampton

Mr. John Lawes, 34 East Leys Court, Moulton Leys, Northampton (Tel. 0604-46300).

Sun. 10:30, 18:30
Wed. 19:30

Nene College CU meets Thurs. lunch time. Moulton Institute of Agriculture CU.

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.

Mr. G. A. Oakes, 1 Bluebell Crescent, Bluebell Rd., Norwich (Tel. 0603 52730) or Mr. P. H. Earl, 19 Park Lane, Norwich (Tel. 0603 24753).

Sun. 11:00, 18:45
Tues. 19:45 YP rallies
last Sats. Sep.-Apr.

Formerly meeting at Dereham Rd. Gospel Hall, now in a new development area.

Mr. J. H. Rout, 'Inverloch', 34 Spixworth Rd., Norwich NR6 7NF.

NOTTINGHAM

1. Aspley Evangelical Church, 531 Aspley Lane, Aspley, Nottingham. (16, 16a, 32, 74 buses to Ambleside Rd.)

Mr. B. M. Harris, 8 Court Crescent, Wollaton, Nottingham (Tel. 0602 284711) or Mr. H. J. Riisnaes, 3 Shepherds Wood Dr., Aspley, Nottingham.

Sun. 11:15, 18:00
Wed. 19:45

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.)

Mr. J. G. Reed, 83 Highfield Rd., Nuthall, Nottingham NG16 1BN or Dr. I. F. Storey, 22 Sandy Lane, Bramcote, Nottingham.

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Wed. 19:30

Squashes in main hall
Sun. 20:00 well
attended by students
from University &
Polytechnic.

ORMSKIRK, Lancs. — see **Liverpool** (Maghull) and **Parbold**

OXFORD

James Street Church, St. Mary's Rd., Oxford.

Mr. & Mrs. R. Bell, 10 Ramsay Rd., Headington, Oxford (Tel. 66284) or Mr. & Mrs. D. V. Clay, 19 Ashlong Rd., Marston, Oxford (Tel. 61902).

For Edge Hill College
of Education.

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

A warm invitation to
students at Wigan
College of Technology,
Edge Hill College of
Further Education
and Wroughton
Hospital.

PORTSMOUTH

South Road Church, South Rd., Drayton, Portsmouth. (23, 24 Corp'n. buses, 331, 327, 357 Southdown.)

Dr. D. Rosevear, 50 Brecon Ave., Cosham, Portsmouth (Tel. Cosham 384467) or Mr. C. Hopkins (Tel. Hornmean 591101).

Sun. 11:00, 19:00
Thurs. 19:30

YP Bible Studies Wed.
20:15 in various homes.

READING

Argyle Chapel, Argyle Road (off Oxford Road), Reading. (Buses 17, 18 to stop before Reading West station.)

Mr. J. Horal, 'Allyn', 28 Ashcroft Close, Caversham Heights, Reading (Tel. 476003) or Mr. A. Baker, 48 Prospect St., Reading (Tel. 582106).

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Thurs. 19:45

Consecutive Bible
teaching and study
groups. Also weekly
youth and choir activi-
ties. An active and
homely centre for all
'born again' believers,
hospitality.

RICHMOND, Surrey — see **London** (Richmond)

SALFORD, Lancs. — see **Manchester**

SHEFFIELD

Lansdowne Chapel, Cemetery Rd., Sheffield. (Buses 4 from Pond St. bus stn., 97 from High St., both to Cemetery Rd., 81, 82, 83, 84, 88 to Eccleshall Rd. Boston St.)

Mr. D. J. Holme, 59 Den Bank Drive, Sheffield S10 5PF (Tel. 0742 304972).

Sun. 10:30, 12:00,
18:30 Mon. 19:30
Fri. 19:30 Sun.
Student supper 20:00
at various homes

'At Home' fellowship
tea at the chapel Sun.
11 Oct. 17:00 — all
students welcome.

SOUTHAMPTON

Portwood Church (Evangelical), Portwood Road, Southampton. (Nr. junction of Portwood Ave. and Brookvale Rd., with Portwood Rd. Buses 11, 11a, 12, 13, 14 and 17 to Brookvale Rd.)

Mr. John Carrick, 25 Belmont Rd., Portwood, Southampton (Tel. 556659) or Mr. E. J. Martel, 60 Bassett Green Close, Southampton (Tel. 766550).

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 pastor.

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)
Sun. 10:30, 18:30
Tues. 19:30, 20:00

2. Castleton Chapel, Newton Rd., Mumbles, Swansea. (Buses 1, 2, 3 to Oystermouth bus station.)

Mr. P. E. Davies, 3 Willowbrook Gdns., Mayals, Swansea SA3 5EB (Tel. 0792 67956).

TIVERTON

King St. Gospel Hall, King St., Westex, Tiverton, Devon.

Mr. S. J. Webber, Higher Crazelowman, Tiverton (Tel. 253482) or Mr. R. J. Thomas, 1 Anstey Crescent, Canal Hill, Tiverton (Tel. 256508).

Sun. 11:00 Worship
14:30 YP Bible Study,
18:30 Gospel Service,
20:00 Youth Fellowship
Wed. 19:30
Prayer Meeting *Sat.*
20:00 Focus Youth
Group (fortnightly)

Within walking distance of East Devon College.

UXBRIDGE, Middx. — see London (Uxbridge)

WALSALL

Caldmore Gospel Hall, West Bromwich St., Walsall. (Walsall-W. Bromwich bus, Little London stop.)

Mr. E. H. Miller, 17 Leigh Rd., Walsall (Tel. Walsall 34430) or Mr. J. D. Owen, 15 Longwood Lane, Walsall (Tel. 23568).

Sun. 10:30, 18:30
Thurs. 20:00 (*Sun.*
after-service activities
20:00)

Ten minutes walk from W. Midlands College of Education. Members would be pleased to offer hospitality.

WARWICK

Saltisford Evangelical Church, Warwick (just below new Shire Hall County Offices on Birmingham Road).

Peter & Colette Wales, 2 Northumberland Rd., Leamington Spa (Tel. 37521) or Ian & Sue Atkinson, 31 Verdon Place, Barford (Tel. 624593).

Sun. 11:00 Family 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 Fellowship 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. Andrewgate, York. (3 mins. walk S.E. of Minster, in Aldwark district.)

Dr. R. A. Reid, Provost, Alcuin College, University of York or Mr. R. C. Rollinson, Barbican Bookshop, 24 Fossgate, York.

Sun. 10:30, 18:30
Thurs. 19:30

An open fellowship committed to teaching, evangelism and social work. Students are welcome and encouraged to participate in church activities, including postal Sunday School, teenagers' work, old peoples' homes, seminars and debates on contemporary issues.

(b) Encounter in the Temple (John 10:22-30)
10:22, 23. Then came the festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's colonnade.

The festival of Dedication was of relatively recent institution. After the temple had been defiled for three years (167-164 B.C.) by the installation of a pagan cult under Antiochus Epiphanes, and the idolatrous altar, the 'abomination of desolation' (a mocking pun on the pagan divinity's name), had been erected on top of the altar of Israel's God, the sacred site was recaptured by Judas Maccabaeus and his followers and the temple was reconsecrated to its proper use on Kislev 25, 164 B.C. The festival of Dedication (Hanukkah), commemorating this event, may have had a prehistory as a festival of the winter solstice, but from then on it was given a place in Israel's religious calendar, and to this day it is celebrated as the Feast of Lights (so called from the lighting of lamps or candles in Jewish homes to honour the occasion).

Jesus evidently had spent the two months since Tabernacles in or near Jerusalem (he is not said to have 'gone up' to Jerusalem for this festival). The note that 'it was winter' may be intended to explain why he was in a covered part of the temple precincts. Solomon's colonnade was the name given to the portico which ran along the east side of the outer court of Herod's temple. It is mentioned in Acts as the place where Peter addressed the crowd that congregated to see the man who had been cured of his lifelong lameness at the Beautiful Gate, and again as the place where the Jerusalem believers regularly gathered for their public witness to Jesus as the Christ (Acts 3:11; 5:12).

10:24 So the Jews came around him and said to him, 'How long do you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.'

Jesus had not so far said outright in Jerusalem that he was the Messiah. His description of himself as the good shepherd was as near to such a claim as made little difference, but he had not used the actual designation 'Messiah'. It was one thing for him to tell the woman at the well of Sychar who he was (John 4:26); to her the term 'Messiah' (or its Samaritan equivalent) had purely

religious connotations. But among the Jews it had political and military implications, which Jesus was careful to avoid. In this Gospel indeed he never makes an explicit messianic claim before the Jewish authorities — not even at his trial (as he does in the Synoptic record, Mark 14:62 and parallels).

The adverb 'plainly' represents Gk. *parrhēsia*, which has been used three times in chapter 7 to denote Jesus' speaking out publicly (verses 4, 13, 26). But the authorities would not have been any more inclined to believe in him as the Messiah if he had made the claim 'plainly'. If his works and teaching did not convey their proper message, no words from him would have been any more convincing. The evangelist reckons that, quite apart from any express claim from Jesus' lips, the record of his ministry should suffice to bring readers to believe in him as 'the Christ, the Son of God, and believing to have life in his name' (John 20:31). If readers were expected to be led to faith by the written record, those who saw his works and heard his teaching might have been expected to recognize him even more promptly for who he was, but too many of them had their eyes blinded (John 12:40).

10:25 Jesus answered them, 'I told you and you do not believe. The works which I do in my Father's name, it is they that bear testimony concerning me.'

Jesus had appealed to the testimony of his works after the healing of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:36). Now he makes the same appeal after the restoration of sight to the blind man. Such works were those which the Father gave him to do; he did them in his Father's name (that is, by his Father's authority), and they should have been sufficient to show those who saw them that the Father had sent him. The restoration of health, the restoration of sight, and the forthcoming restoration of life (in the Lazarus incident) were all works declaring the character as well as the power of God to those whose hearts were not totally insensitive. But where the heart of the spectator was insensitive, each successive work served but to harden it the more: it was the raising of Lazarus that made Jesus' enemies finally resolve to encompass his death (John 11:53).

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (2)

J. E. Todd

2. . . Of Cross Bearing

Three times during his ministry, the Lord said that in order to be his disciple one must take up his cross and follow him. 'He who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me' (*Matt. 10:38 RSV* also *Matt. 16:24* and *Luke 14:27*). Bearing a cross has come to mean in common parlance, to carry a burden, to endure a certain trouble, 'We all have our cross to bear'. But this is not the meaning of our Lord's statement. In the context of that time and that society, a man carrying a cross meant only one thing: he was a condemned criminal carrying his cross to the place of execution, where he was to be crucified. This was the path our Lord himself trod, 'So they took Jesus, and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called the place of a skull . . . There they crucified him' (*John 19: 17-18*). Jesus said that if we are to be his true disciples, we must follow in his steps. What did he mean?

His own explanation is recorded on two of these three occasions. 'He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it' (*Matt. 10:39* and *16:25*). If a person lives his life for himself, he will ultimately lose it at the last judgement; but if he gives his life to the Lord Jesus Christ, he will ultimately keep it for himself in eternal life. So those who would be his true disciples must die like him,

die to their natural life with all its rights, privileges and self-will. Then, having finished with that life, to live in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first recorded occasion of our Lord's use of this metaphor was when he addressed the twelve apostles prior to sending them out on their first preaching tour, (*Matt. 10:1-11:1* see *10:38*). As they leave their homes and families for a time, he is pointing out to them that service to him can even take priority over their dearest natural ties. Not only must they be prepared to give up the companionship of their loved ones, but even to endure their opposition for his sake (*verses 34-36*). The lesson for all his disciples, both then and now, is that we must recognize the importance of the Lord and his work as being greater than all else, even our most cherished earthly relationships. We must die to them in the sense that when the call comes and the choice has to be made, we must give first priority to the Lord and his requirements. This is not easy. It was never meant to be! But he relinquished all ties of love for our sake. Heavenly ties at the incarnation, and earthly ties at the cross. He calls us but to follow his steps.

The second occasion when the Lord spoke of self-crucifixion was when he told the disciples and would-be disciples that he was going to Jerusalem to die and rise

again. (*Matt. 16:21-26, Mark 8:31-37, Luke 9:21-25*). Just as the Lord would be rejected by the world, even the religious world, so would his followers. As his followers, fame, fortune and acceptance would not be their lot. This would be a bitter disappointment to the natural man: it was too much for Judas! So they must die to the honours of this world, to escape disappointment, disillusionment and despair. How necessary this has been for our brethren and sisters in communist lands, where they are often denied fully equal citizenship. Perhaps if we were more bold in our testimony (our actions not words), being more on the side of God and less on the side of men (*Matt. 16:23*), we too would find the necessity of joining Paul, 'The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world' (*Gal. 6:14*). But Luke adds one more word, 'Daily' (*Luke 9:23*). Our dying to the world is not a once and for all decision, it must be a continuous attitude, re-exerted every day in every situation.

The last occasion on which the Lord spoke of the necessity of this complete self-denial, he did not address his disciples directly, but the people at large (*Luke 14:25-27*). The cross was drawing nearer. He wanted no one to misunderstand the cost of being his disciple, 'Whoever does not bear his

own cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple'. (*v.27*). Again our Lord explains the meaning of this, 'So therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple' (*v.33*). We must relegate everything to second place, in preference to him and his will. This is the true meaning of repentance, a complete and basic change of mind. To the crowds he says, 'Count the cost', in the parables of the building of the tower and the king going to war (*Luke 14:28-32*). Then to his disciples he says, 'Salt is good; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is fit neither for the land nor for the dung-hill; men throw it away' (*verses 34-35*). Profession of faith without the discipleship of obedience is useless, like insipid salt. It will rightly earn the contempt of the people of the world.

This truth of following the Lord so as to die with him to the old life of sin was later enshrined in Christian baptism (*Rom. 6:1-14*). The new believer is lowered into the water and then raised up again, symbolizing a death, burial and resurrection. This signifies that the person being baptized is willing to die to the old life of sin and self-will, and rise to a new life yielded to the Lord who lives within by his Spirit. To be his true disciple we must take up our cross and die to our natural way of life. And that daily!

PREACHER'S WORKSHOP

A Man of One Book

J. Wood

John Wood, B.D., M.Phil., Head of R.E. at Gilbert School, Colchester and author of The Preacher's Workshop, underlines in this paper the immense importance of biblical preaching.

Preachers are an endangered species. At least in parts of Britain. Elsewhere they might well be fêted and followed with almost exaggerated reverence. But in the land which gave birth to some of the greatest preachers in the world, there is a tendency to cut everybody down to size: including ministers of the Word of God.

Sometimes it is our own fault. If men play fast and loose with the very foundations of the faith, they cannot be surprised if their edifices crumble. And there are those who now destroy the faith that once they preached, as one wag commented on Gal. 1:23! When William Booth was once asked if he had read the latest radical reinterpretation of Christianity being published at that time, he is reported to have said: 'No thanks, I've got enough doubts of my own without paying seven and sixpence for somebody else's!' But there are plenty of men whose saintly lives and conscientious ministries meet with stony-hearted indifference if not outright hostility. 'It is not hard work that kills ministers, but prayerless churches' C. P. Spurgeon once remarked.

Of course there are those who make a virtue out of necessity by playing down the role of the pulpit in favour of sacramentalism or gimmickry. But I believe the late Martin Sullivan of New Zealand, one time Dean of St. Paul's, was wise to write in his autobiography:

I still attach enormous importance to preaching, and I deeply regret its

decline. When one allows for all the substitutes which seem to have overwhelmed or replaced it, its place remains. The spoken word continues to have power. The modern cleric is either too busy or too lazy to work upon it.

Not that all would agree with what is meant in that context by 'preaching'. Dr. Blackwood once called it 'truth through personality', — though sometimes 'personality' has obtruded to such an extent it has obscured the 'truth'. Dr. Campbell Morgan aptly analysed its essential ingredients as 'truth, clarity, and passion' — a formula ably embodied in his own great ministry. While that eminent Congregationalist of yesteryear, Bernard Lord Manning of Cambridge University, once described preaching as 'a manifestation of the Incarnate Word from the written word by the spoken word'. It's a definition well worth weighing still. Perhaps we need to recognize more than we sometimes do that there is a rich variety within the Christian ministry. The Creator seems unimpressed by uniformity! A church where the pulpit is monopolized by a man whose major gift is evangelism is sure to be superficial, just as the man himself is bound to be frustrated. Another doctored by a dry-as-dust pedant will either be bone hard or soporific. We need the prophetic word to challenge immorality, and the teacher's gift of explicating truth to counter immaturity. For just as it requires the whole people of God to display the many-coloured wisdom of God to angels and men (Eph. 3:10), so it demands the rich variety of Christian ministry dispensed by the Ascended Christ to equip the Church for time and for eternity (Eph. 4:8-13).

But having said that, it is clear that

whatever type of ministry one might have, the Bible alone is the one divinely authenticated source-book for that ministry (2 Tim. 3:16), and therefore it is an expository handling of the Scriptures which must lie behind our public utterances. H. H. Farmer was surely right when in the title of his famous book he depicted the Christian minister as 'the servant of the word'. Like Wesley he is a man of one book: and that book the Bible.

If the Risen Jesus expounded in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, we can surely ask no better method for ourselves. Yet it is an incredible irony of our times that with all the learned works of Christian scholarship at our disposal, and the many new versions of the Bible which make its meaning clear, there is a woeful ignorance of the Scriptures not least within those fellowships hitherto noted for their knowledge of the word, and there is a lamentable lack of urgency on the part of those who preach to make the Bible's message both vivid and relevant for those who hear.

Our aim as preachers is to nourish our souls on the profound utterances to Scripture; to be grasped by the truth to such an extent that we ache to make that message luminous for men and women by relating it to the life they live in the world today; and to plead with God to graft the word into their minds and hearts so that it will save their souls (James 1:21). Could there possibly be a nobler task than that?

To stand on a platform or in a pulpit in the context of Christian worship facing a company of people waiting on the word from God we have to give, will strain every nerve of the body and stretch every sinew of the soul. At times, the sermon will have

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Queen Mother

H. L. Ellison

Polygamy is bound to cause jealousy, however much the husband attempts to treat his wives with equal respect and love. The problem is aggravated, when one of the wives is treated with special favour. Jacob's family troubles went back to his special love for Rachel, but as the story in *Gen. 29:30* shows, he could not deprive Leah of her marital rights. The story of Elkanah and his two wives (*1 Sam. 1*) shows how difficult the position could sometimes become. When the husband did not wish to become embroiled in his wives' quarrels and bickerings, he would set one of them in authority over that side of his household. Where there were no special factors involved, she would normally be the mother of his first-born son.

Popular views of the king as super-human, combined with the possibility of alliances with other states through marriage, encouraged the kings to have large harems, e.g. we are not told how many wives Ahab may have had, but the fact that he had seventy sons (*2 Ki. 10:1*) is in itself suggestive. Peace in the palace and the avoidance of intrigues made it essential that one of the king's

wives should be dominant. In Judah she was called the *Gevirah*, i.e. the Great Lady. We find this title only in the annals of Judah, but though it is not found in those of Israel, doubtless some such position existed there, though not necessarily with the same title.

Rehoboam's wife was Ma'acah, the daughter of Abishalom (*1 Ki. 15:2*) but we still find her holding the position of *Gevirah* under Asa (*1 Ki. 15:10*). Obviously here 'mother' has the force of 'grandmother', (as is not uncommon, with father meaning grandfather or ancestor). If *2 Chr. 11:20* is correct in calling her daughter of Absalom, i.e. granddaughter (so Josephus) — the difference in spelling causes no difficulty in Hebrew — it would explain her ability to hold on to the position of *Gevirah*, even after her son's death. But that could not save her from being deposed from the honour because of her idolatry.

Apparently the first to hold the honour was Bath-sheba, though the title is not given to her, as may be seen in the accounts in *1 Ki. 11:11-31* and above all in *1 Ki. 2:13-19*. It is reasonable to suppose that whenever the mother of a king

of Judah is named, which is always the case, except for Joram, son of Jehoshaphat, and Ahaz, that she was the *Gevirah*.

Some small hint is given of the 'Great Lady's' importance by her being specially mentioned among the captives taken off to Babylonia with Jehoiachin (*Jer. 29:2*); similarly Jeremiah's oracle in *15:18* gives special mention to her.

This helps us to understand how Athaliah (*2 Ki. 11*) found it so apparently easy to seize power in Judah when Ahaziah had lost his life at the hands of Jehu.

One of the only partially explained mysteries in Judah's history is the alternation between 'good' and 'bad' kings. This is not normally attributed to the work and influence of a prophet or priest. The most natural explanation is that it was largely the influence of the *Gevirah*, who would not merely exercise influence over her son, the new king, but also have a big say in the choice of his ministers and advisers.

There is no evidence for any woman exercising similar influence in the post-exilic and inter-testamental periods.

Preacher's Workshop continued

all the creative flair of a work of art: the poetry of words, the music of cadence and tone, the unfolding plot of a good book, the vivid colour of verbal imagery, and the immediacy of great drama. But always it must be as 'the oracles of God', for the preacher is Christ's ambassador, and it is God who makes His appeal through him (*2 Cor. 5:20*).

Luke tells in rich symbolism of the Spirit's coming to the followers of Christ at the very beginning of the

Church's history. There was a sound like the mighty rushing wind of power; there were leaping tongues of flame and fire which made them glow with warmth and love; and there was the gift to communicate above all the jangling discords of the world in words that lit the mind with truth and pricked the conscience with conviction. Now that is the great anointing that we need. The word might make the dry bones fit neatly into place. But only the breath of God can make them live.

*May the gales of heaven
Sweep through us now
With God's reviving,
Cleansing power.*

*May the flame of love
Leap high and bright,
To warm men's hearts.
And pierce sin's night.*

*May the tongue of truth
Make meaning clear,
That all the world
His word may hear.*

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READERS' FORUM

Reader's 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.

A 'senior citizen' poses us a question in this month's Readers' Forum. The contributor is Mr. C. Down of Old Bexley, Kent.

I am puzzled by the pre-occupation with the fellowship known as 'the Brethren' (though it is well known that the name is not claimed by those so addressed) by so many of your contributors nowadays; most of them present or ex-members of that fellowship, including some well-known names. If it is truly the decadent fellowship your contributors allege, why waste so much of your valuable time and space? When are we to hear of the 'new' fellowship which is free of the alleged failures and misconceptions of the old? In a corner of your 'News Page' of May 81 is a small note that 'Following the earthquakes in Nov. 80 (Italy) . . . four centres have been established by Christian Brethren. Among the work groups involved was one formed by five young men from the Shrewsbury assembly'. 'Brethrenism' is still responsible for a substantial share in those prepared to 'go'; it is still one of the very few fellowships giving more than a brief acknowledgement of the 'Lord's supper' (if Paul's term is acceptable). Could not the considerable cost and effort in denigrating those who still worship the Lord in the 'old-fashioned way' be used to greater advantage in obeying the Lord's commandment to 'go and teach all nations'? WE are not claiming to be 'the perfect church', nor to have all the gifts but we DO claim to be part of the 'one body, and one Spirit' owning 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism'.

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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The July question

There are some people who believe that the Lord's words, 'If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet' (John 13:14) is a commandment to be obeyed literally for all time. A Harvester reader might say to such a person, 'But the literal sense of that injunction is culturally conditioned: when people in open sandals or bare feet walk on dusty country roads or dirty city streets, it is necessary that their feet should be washed when they go indoors. It is the spirit of the injunction that is to be obeyed today.' To this the answer might well be: 'I suspect that that is simply a device for getting round the plain meaning of the Lord's words. In any case, how are we to know when one of his commandments is culturally conditioned or not? Is it not safer and wiser to take his words literally?' What does a Harvester reader say to that?

Mr. Robert A. Limb replies:
The problem underlying Professor Bruce's question is a perennial one. Witness the lady who told a young man that his hair was too long, whilst insisting that the silence of women in the early church was culturally conditioned! How is one to decide these questions? Might I suggest three criteria.
1. The New Testament is our absolute and our only rule, on faith and conduct (2 Pet. 1:3). The whole of the New Testament must be taken into consideration. This is obvious, but too often neglected.
2. Consideration of the Old Testament may well throw light on the subject, but it is imperative to remember that the Old Covenant is no longer in any way binding to Christians (Gal. 3:24f.).
3. Let us by all means err on

the side of literal interpretation in order to be safe — but without forgetting the principle of tolerance (Rom. 14); conversely: let us enjoy our Christian freedom — but not let it become an excuse for playing fast and loose with Christ's law (Gal. 5:13).
But what about the washing of feet? Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, and told them to do the same for one another. This incident is recorded only by the fourth evangelist, and there is but one other reference to the practice (1 Tim. 5:10), where the context is hospitality. There is no record of the Apostles having taught this practice to the young churches as a part of their formal 'ritual'. This is in marked contrast to, say, baptism, which had no particular antecedents in Greek society, and yet was from the first a prominent part of church practice. The washing of feet was a part of eastern hospitality which Jesus might reasonably have expected of Simon, for example (Lk. 7:44). It is manifestly not accepted behaviour in our culture. Thus its only significance to European Christians today would be as a symbolic gesture in the context of formal worship, and as such was not taught by the Apostles. I therefore have no hesitation in concluding that it is not a necessary part of Christian practice today — and that Jesus meant to impart the principles of humility and service.

Mr. Donald B. Reid replies:
I acknowledge that the literal v. 'cultural background' debate on interpretation is a real one, but this passage does not come into the general ambit of that debate. My reasoning is that in order to qualify for such debate the

command or injunction in question must have been intended, in the first instance, to be obeyed literally. For example (to use the standard trouble stirrer!) Paul clearly expected literal compliance on the part of the Corinthian Christians with his instructions in the first part of Chapter 11 of his first letter to them. Whether his commands there are to apply literally now is *par excellence* the stuff of the literal/cultural debate. To return to John 13:14, I do not think it satisfies the foregoing test. I simply do not believe, from the context, that Christ was looking for a literal and, it follows, limited response to his command. Furthermore, I cannot believe that his disciples accepted the command literally, nor is there any suggestion elsewhere in Scripture that they do so. Christ was unafraid of teaching by parable — using a specific picture to illustrate a general truth. Nor did he shrink from giving literal commands which clearly were to be interpreted generally e.g. 'Turn the other cheek', 'Feed my sheep' or even 'You must be born again'. It should be noted that the foregoing will accommodate the literal view within it, so that in appropriate situations Christ's disciples, (then or now) might well have a duty literally to wash one another's feet. But that would be a specific application of a general command where, coincidentally, the instant context was the same as the original.

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:
The Lord Jesus often spoke in a thought-provoking way. For instance: his advice to those whose right hand or eye gave offence: cut it off (Matt. 5:29:30)! This is, obviously, hyperbole (exaggeration for emphasis). Paul seems to give

similar advice when he says: 'make no provision for the flesh' (Rom. 13:14) which means, in other words, do not risk unnecessary temptation. Other examples of the Lord's style could be given, but with little bearing upon the subject in question. Some scholars tell us that if it is possible to understand parts of Revelation literally then do so, but if not, then, symbolically. Similarly with the Lord's difficult words: if it is appropriate to follow them literally in one person's circumstances, but not necessarily with another, then do so. But always follow the principle so far as possible.

Mr. L. L. Fox replies:
Prof. Bruce's question asks in effect whether the Lord's injunction about feet washing should not be taken literally. This raises a broad issue and the following comments are offered.
Under the old covenant, God gave instructions about many external ordinances. Christians are in the good of the new covenant, under which God writes His laws upon our mind and puts them upon our heart. The question therefore arises — but is rarely if ever asked — 'How can it consist with their new covenant "position" for Christians to observe any external ordinance?'. This question relates not only to baptism and the Lord's supper but also to such matters as feet washing, the holy kiss and head covering; and its answer would involve consideration of symbolism, which is so important in life generally.
A cogent question about any external ordinance that we observe is 'What is our reason for doing it?'. The usual answer, in relation to the Lord's supper, is 'Because He asked us to'. That reply might be acceptable provided the

motive for observing the ordinance was love, and there was no trace of formalism. But it can smack of legalism; and it is instructive to ask, further, 'What was the Lord's objective in asking us — if He did — to observe a particular ordinance?'

Concentrating on feet washing, we can pose the last question thus: 'What would be the spiritual purpose in the Lord's wanting us to literally wash one another's feet?'. Obviously the Lord did not wash the disciples' feet just to remove loose sand; because they could have understood that kind of washing, but He said that they did not understand what He had done. So His action had a symbolic meaning. Essentially it was that it becomes a Christian to humble himself and so serve his fellows, in ways that the Spirit (note the 'hereafter' in verse 7) would indicate (*cf. Rom. 12:3; Gal. 5:13; Phil. 2:3*).

Suppose now there were a group of Christians who practised literal feet washing, not just as a form, but out of a sincere love for the Lord and because they genuinely felt that it helped to impress on them the need for humility etc. It seems to me that, in the light of passages such as *Rom 14:1-6*, it would be difficult to criticize them. To insist for others that it is only the spirit of *John 13:14, 15* that counts, inevitably raises a question about our own observance of the particular external 'procedures' we do approve. My personal conviction is that in this whole area, wherever there is a doubt, the spirit is more important than the letter.

Mr. J. E. Todd replies:
If a present day Christian lives in a society where feet-washing is practised, then he should be prepared on the grounds of *John 13:14* to undertake that humble task, should the need arise. To

artificially create a situation in order to practise it smacks of spiritual ostentation. But no one would disagree, I am sure, that both the incident and the teaching apply to far more than feet-washing. It is to teach service to our fellows, however humble or even humiliating the task. It is reported that R. C. Chapman polished the shoes of his guests in the spirit of this passage. But there are innumerable ways in which we can serve our fellows, ways which pride would forbid, but a Christian should not be thus inhibited. Greeting one another with a holy kiss is another example of this (*1 Thess. 5:26*). Our form of greeting is a handshake.

But women speaking in the church is not in this category of changing social customs, as many would hasten to claim. For the women of Corinth were already speaking in the church (*1 Cor. 11:5*) and were then forbidden to do so (*14:33-40*) (*Mr. Todd's final point is well taken: but surely it still leaves open the question whether the forbidding was for local or temporary reasons or was a matter of basic principle — Ed.*)

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:
It is most unlikely that his current question presents any difficulties. Whenever I am asked to do or not to do something that is normally not done or done in the Christian circles I generally move in — I am not concerned with Brethren traditions here — I always ask myself Why? If it is a question of causing grief to a brother or causing him to stumble, the law of love will normally be an adequate guide for me, though I am not bound by my actions, when placed in different surroundings. If on the other hand it is urged on me that there is a clear Scriptural command as in the case of foot-washing or

restrictions placed on women, I must ask myself why the command was given, i.e. what it meant to those who first received it and the spiritual lessons they drew from it. For those who are not under law, there must be some obvious spiritual reason for any exceptional restriction. Otherwise we are in danger of falling into the cynical attitude of the Russian believer, who told me that greeting one another with a holy kiss enables one to check whether the other had been imbibing alcohol — of course one may well ask whether the banning of alcohol, so prevalent in certain Protestant circles is itself legitimate, though it lies within the freedom of the individual to avoid it. In the days of our Lord it was as natural for the one who

had travelled far to a gathering of the saints to have his feet washed as it is today for one with a long journey behind him to ask for the W.C. or the possibility of washing his hands. In addition, since the washing of another's feet was regarded as a menial task, the obligation was laid on all, including the leaders. When we look at the restrictions and rules in force among those that do still practise it, it is obvious that it is not meeting a need and that no spiritual benefit apart from obedience is claimed.

Such an approach would doubtless be an adequate answer to all attempts to bind us by claims to arcane practices which the ingenuity of man claims to have discovered in the Scriptures.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

One of the Scripture Union's daily readings towards the end of June was the passage concerning the 'ordeal of jealousy' (*Num. 5:11-31*). It raised a number of questions in one place where it was read (in the lucid rendering of the N.E.B.). Here are two. If this passage had come to our attention in a *secular* document from antiquity, how would we have reacted to it? Why did the law of Moses make no comparable provision for a situation in which a wife entertained similar suspicions regarding her husband? Any answers?

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



CORRESPONDENCE

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Expo-Bible

From Mr. Peter Wheeler
Dear Mr. Coad,

I was able to read with interest the article in *The Harvester* about Claude Broux's Bible Exhibition. Since my name is mentioned in the introductory remarks, I thought it would be good just to mention to you my connection with *Expositions sur la Bible* in France. Up to 1965 we had used Tent Missions in Northern France with a certain success. But in the 1960s numbers of 'outsiders' coming to the Tent were rapidly dwindling. In 1963 I saw a Bible Exhibition of the French Bible Society used in a municipal hall with a certain success. It gave us the idea of creating something similar.

The French Village Workers helping, we were able to get some photos, old Bibles, and charts about the Bible together, and a small exhibition was under way. During the next two or three years this developed into a sizeable exhibition (fifty metres of tables necessary for exposing it) dealing with the Origins, Texts, Veracity, Diffusion, Contents and Message of the Bible and a small museum of old Bibles (16th, 17th century).

In 1967 French evangelist Marcel Tabilloux heard of it and desired a copy, and since it would avoid my dashing from one side of France to the other, Miss

Gilbert of Ashford Gospel Hall, who had just retired, came across in 1968, lived in our house and reproduced the same 'Expo'. We then kept the reproduction while my first 'Expo' went to Grenoble.

Then Claude Broux became interested. Miss Gilbert went to Brittany and helped him reproduce our reproduction. I was able to give him a good number of photos, reproductions, photocopies, facsimiles, etc. Since then Claude has added other items. He had to find most of his old Bibles for his own museum.

Since Claude Broux's 'Expo', others for S.W. France and in Belgium have been produced. As far as I know Claude Broux's, Marcel Tabilloux's and mine are the most used. I 'do' about ten exhibitions a year — replying to invitations of evangelical churches north of Paris.

Inasmuch as Exhibitions go down well in France, one can say that it is a 'French Initiative'. We have held ours every year since 1965 (except twice) in Arras in the Municipal Exhibition Hall (lent freely). This year again during the nine days of exhibition we had about 600 visitors, and many contacts, chatting with people. We find regularly that a Bible Exhibition attracts as many men as women, as many adults as Y.P. and children, and probably as many atheists and agnostics and deists, as R.C.s.

Several times I have attempted to get British Christians and 'Brethren' evangelists to have their Exhibition. I feel the result could be tremendous — in

schools and colleges and local Gospel Halls. Until now, no success.

Three times my exhibition has been to the French Church at London during the 'Tell a Tourist' Campaign and has helped in deepening contacts though, of course, it is in French, and could only help French speakers. Last week I was with Colin Porteous of Le Havre putting up the 'Expo' at Houlgate again: for three months, this time. It seems a sort of 'try-out' for a permanent Exhibition in a touristic town.

Who knows, some of our brothers on your side of the Channel may capture the vision and create something similar. What seems to make it (at least in France), an *atout* or 'trump card' in evangelisation, is the fact that it lends itself so easily to the in-depth contact so necessary before a real decision for Christ can be made. Some of the Panels have already been translated into English by Dr. F. A. Hudson (of Chelston Bible College) in the hope they would prove useful in England. But since then no further opening has appeared across your side of the water.

Yours in our Lord Jesus,
Peter Wheeler
17 Rue Pierre Corneille
F. 62000 Arras
France

Can we accommodate change?

From Mr. R. V. Taylor

Dear Mr. Coad,
I am sure that Mr. Aitken's letter will draw quite a response.

It is a pity that our brother has been treated ungraciously, but others too

have also acted most ungraciously and unwisely. There is nothing more infuriating than the 'I've got something better than you have' syndrome, or 'what we have is the only answer' approach. It's often said with smiling faces and couched in words of love, and yet there is much hardness and unreasonableness.

The decline he refers to is not true in every place. Indeed, I suspect that those who attend the 'inquests' do not include the many who are in new and growing assemblies. There are quite a few in this area, and our own began in a house ten years ago and is now expanding its own building for the third time. We do nothing of the type referred to in Mr. Aitken's letter, but we do believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. As it happens we do believe in a God who can do mighty things and from time to time the elders lay hands on the sick for healing (this we believe being the right and proper way of exercising that ministry).

Another local assembly has recently built a new hall at over £100,000 and although they believe in all night prayer meetings (unusual these days) and look for specific evidences of the work of God, they would have little sympathy with our friend's views. In this area the pentecostals are not the fastest growing church and it has been our joy over the past few years to see many adults being saved including quite a few men.

A number of our friends are attracted to the charismatic/renewal/

pentecostal camp — even some in our meeting — but one would have to say that they are often the ones who are most unreliable, spiritually excitable and mentally unstable. They are folk we are always having to counsel and prop up — especially during their depressions after being to a renewal meeting, when the 'fix' has worn off. We certainly don't 'forbid' — we just hope they will grow up! Finally, let us not avoid the exhortation 'be filled with the Spirit' (Eph. 5) and the genuine response as there stated. Mr. Aitken is entitled to his opinion, but as he thinks some of us are wrong — so we feel he is: not so much in recognising the symptoms — but in his suggested cure.

Yours sincerely,
R. V. Taylor
Tall Tree Lodge
Station Road
Staplehurst
Kent
TN12 0PZ

From Mr. David G. Lillie
Dear Mr. Coad,
As one who was involved in the Pentecostal Debate conducted by the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship in the mid-sixties I could not fail to be interested in your Editorial (July 1981) on this theme. You suggest that the main thrust of 'Brethren' teaching and attitudes on this theme still remains virtually unaltered — after 16 years! My memory takes me back much further than that to the time when as a young man I was disciplined by my local elders for admitting that I could no longer subscribe to the view that some of the gifts of the Holy Spirit which had been given by the Lord to the Church at its beginning — in particular, prophecy, 'tongues', and

healing — had long since been withdrawn. For my dissent I was relieved of my work in the Sunday School and forbidden to take any audible part in the meetings. Since I was still allowed to attend meetings and even to break bread, this was considered very lenient treatment in those days. And seeing that tracts were circulating freely among the assemblies, with the full endorsement of many leaders, in which it was dogmatically asserted that all present day tongues speaking, or prophecy, must be attributed either directly to demonic influence or to delusion, I could hardly have hoped for better treatment; and in fact some of the brethren showed me personally much kindness. On the grapevine I learned that most confidently expected that given time I would see the error of my ways, and return to the faith 'once for all delivered to the saints'.

Since those days — almost half a century ago — I would say there has been a considerable change in 'Brethren' attitudes generally, if not particularly to 'the gifts' themselves, at least towards those claiming to believe in them, or practice some of them. For example, such an editorial as you have published would have been unthinkable for inclusion in an issue of *The Harvester* even a few years ago. In the days to which I have referred 'Pentecostals' (or 'tongues-people') were referred to in terms similar to those used by followers of the Reverend Ian Paisley in reference to the Roman Catholic Church — I doubt if this is common today. In fact it is not uncommon to hear in Brethren circles references to 'our

Pentecostal friends' reminiscent of the way in which Catholics sometimes refer to the Protestant Churches as 'our separated brethren'.

Such tempering of attitudes certainly makes life easier for some of us. But in terms of the cause of Christ's Kingdom does it really amount to progress? In reference to the problem of the divided view on this issue which still troubles some churches, you say: 'Of course, if the issue extends to the actual conduct of church members in its public activities, then it may be necessary that there should be agreement to meet separately' . . . and you add, 'such a parting of the ways need not be bitter' . . .

Is this expedient being seriously offered as a solution to the problem? Let it be realized that the essential issue is not what church members like or dislike about the way their services are conducted, but as to what the Word of God teaches about the gifts and ministries of the Holy Spirit 'for building up the body of Christ' (Eph. 4:12). If the gifts in question are objected to, or are believed to be misused, then surely it is the responsibility of elders to come before the Lord as did the apostles and elders in Acts 15 on a matter of contention, to open up the issue in honest, prayerful discussion until together they find the mind of the Lord on the matter. To divide on such an issue — however amicably — can only amount to an abrogation of pastoral responsibility on an issue which vitally concerns 'the whole Body'. Either the gifts in question are of the Holy Spirit or they are not. If they are genuine, then they are for the whole Body, not part

of it; and elders must see that they are recognized and exercised 'for edification' under proper guidance according to the teaching of Scripture. If they are not genuine, then those who practice them must be disciplined. If we seriously believe that the Body of Christ still has a functioning role under the Headship of Christ we must live and pray and work to the end that it is joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied (Eph. 4:16).

Yours, serving the One Lord,
David G. Lillie
Lark Rise
Mill Lane
Exton
Nr. Exeter
EX3 0PH

(The Editorial did not state that the main thrust of 'Brethren' teaching and attitudes had not changed, but that the main thrust of the CBRF Journal of sixteen years ago would probably not be greatly altered today; which is rather a different thing! I take our brother's point in his final paragraph; but a great deal of past unhappiness in the churches has been the result of just such a striving for perfection. Oddly enough, the Lord does often bless 'expedients' which honestly recognise that 'that which is perfect' has not yet come. — Ed.)

When Morning Breaks
Writer's name and address supplied
In Tony Newell's article in the July issue, 'When Morning Breaks' he says 'If I die very young, is my unfulfilled potential realized and supplied?', and '... this "new" eternal being must possess total continuity of identity . . .'. These thought provoking statements are deep and deserve careful

study. There are many believers who are afflicted with some kind of handicap in this life who look forward in faith to receiving 'perfect bodies' when they go to be with their Lord. In some cases 'continuity of identity' might be difficult because their 'glorified bodies' will bear little resemblance to their earthly body.

In *Zech. 8:5* we read that '... the streets shall be full of girls and boys ...' which is generally taken to refer to Heaven. Does this mean that our 'spiritual bodies' will be identifiable with the physical body we possessed at the time of our passing? Will the young always be 'young' and the old always 'old'?

When Jesus revealed Himself to His disciples after His resurrection they recognised Him because He appeared to them as they knew Him during His ministry. At the transfiguration Jesus again appeared to them as they knew Him, but both Moses and Elijah seemingly appeared as old men. Jesus Himself intimated on more than one occasion that family life as we know and experience it now, will not be the same in Heaven (see *Matt. 22:30*).

If we are to recognise each other in Heaven perhaps it will be by senses we do not possess in this life (see *1 John 3:2*). For example, how otherwise will a mother who died in childbirth recognise her son who lived out his 'three score years and ten', and the son the mother whom he never knew?

Perhaps the following should be sufficient comfort for us. 'In Thy presence is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore' (*Ps. 16:11*). 'I shall be satisfied when I

awake, with Thy likeness' (*Ps. 17:17*). 'His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads' (*Rev. 22:3-4*).

What is the Gospel?

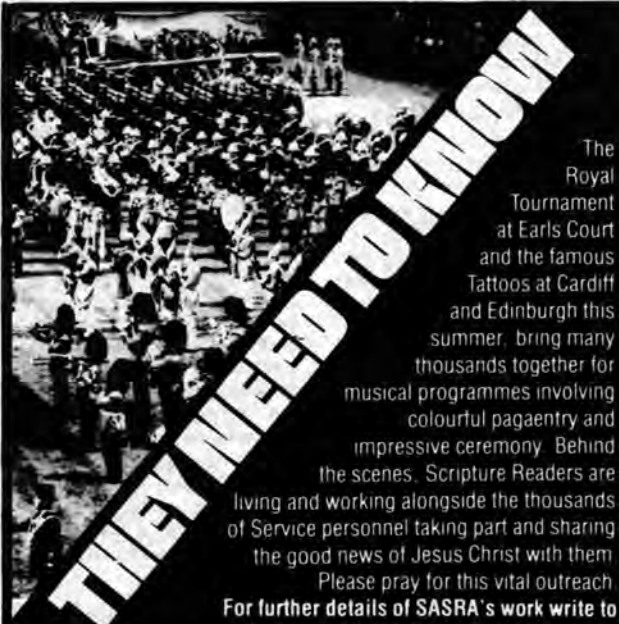
From Mr. Robert McGeachie
Dear Mr. Coad,
John 3:16 is, by any standards, a remarkable statement. There can be few verses in either Testament which treat of such big themes in the compass of a few words — the love of God, the gift of His Son, the role of faith, eternal loss, and relationship-with-God expressed in the words 'eternal life'. These themes are so big that sections of the Scriptures are given over to expounding them: such as the early chapters of *Romans* on the role of faith, and the later chapters of *Romans* on the ramifications of relationship with God. I believe that *John 3:16* has, in germ, all the elements of the Christian good news. At the same time, I believe that there is the very real possibility that the Gospel, as preached in our evangelistic services, is 'an attenuated version': this could be because we do not understand and properly apply the insights of this glorious verse. I draw attention to two dangers (among many):-

(a) The danger of isolating any one of the statements from the context. The one which I hear thus isolated most often is '... whoever believes in Him' where the emphasis is placed on the **whoever** rather than the **Him**, and where the setting of the great, all-embracing, total, self-sacrificing concern of God is underplayed. In this way, the glorious Gospel can become man-centred — a function of

what I do rather than of what God has done, is doing, and will do.

(b) The danger of allowing ourselves to reach unwarranted conclusions. 'If we believe, we have eternal life and everything in the garden is lovely.' This last step may look logical but it is a diabolical lie! I have heard, in very recent days, an eminent evangelist preaching in these very terms. It seems to me that a more accurate description of the reality is that when we commit ourselves to God in faith, we have His companionship and help, and total concern whether things go well or not (and

quite often they will not!). I would not pretend either to have fully understood or fully explained *John 3:16*. I do believe that there is a good deal more in it than we commonly get out of it. Part of the solution to our problem vis-a-vis the Gospel must surely be an openness to God and to His book — a humble renewal of seeking answers to the question 'What is it that God is really saying to us?' and an increased dedication to the spread of such truth.
Yours sincerely,
Robert McGeachie
81 Laburnum Grove
Stirling



THEY NEED TO KNOW

The Royal Tournament at Earls Court and the famous Tattoos at Cardiff and Edinburgh this summer, bring many thousands together for musical programmes involving colourful pageantry and impressive ceremony. Behind the scenes, Scripture Readers are living and working alongside the thousands of Service personnel taking part and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with them. Please pray for this vital outreach.

For further details of SASRA's work write to The General Secretary, The Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers Association, 75/79 High Street, Aldershot, Hants GU11 1BY.

SASRA

S.A.S.R.A. ID MATTHEW 24:44

NEWS PAGE



Book News

Christian Book Fairs are being organized throughout the country by hundreds of people of all ages and denominations. The Fairs will take place between November 1 and 15. The project is sponsored by the religious book trade and is intended to bring the full range of Christian literature to both Christians and the general public alike.

Booksellers and publishers will be working closely with many Church Bookstall managers and countless enthusiasts who will be arranging local events to display and sell Christian books. Events planned will include special market stalls, mobile bookstalls in hospitals, in schools and community centres, as well as coffee mornings, business lunches and extended church bookstall activities.

Enthusiasts to help organize Christian Book Fairs in their locality are still being recruited through the British Isles. No qualification is needed other than the desire to see good Christian literature more widely known and read. For information write to Miss Michelle Oberman, Christian Book Fortnight Committee, Book Marketing Council, 19 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3HJ.

The Christian Literature Crusade asks for prayer for completion of registration of their work with the government in Spain. It seems difficult to get the man in charge of religious organizations to understand a mission that sells books, so they are exploring other possibilities such as being registered as the literature

branch of the WEC Mission. A CLC family, the Lundquists, have had their residence permits held up by the same man for the same reason and prayer is requested for them also.

Choruses are increasingly popular for meetings of all kinds. Fellowships that are looking for suitable books will be interested to know that Kingsway have produced a new and enlarged edition of *Songs of Fellowship*. The music edition is available in spiral and hardback at £4.95 and the words at 45p.

France

British holiday-makers who have recently returned from a trip through France will need no reminder that evangelical Christians are few and far between, and that nine out of every ten French towns and villages still have no form of evangelical witness, despite years of faithful missionary endeavour. The Gloucestershire-based *France Mission Trust* believes that British evangelical Christians can make a real contribution to the spread of the Gospel in France, by prayer first of all, and then by active participation through team campaigns and holiday visits, or, in some cases, through longer periods of missionary service. France Mission workers are convinced that the New Testament vision of pioneer church-planting should figure largely in the thoughts and prayers of all who are concerned for France. With this in mind, France Mission Trust is organizing a series of four Saturday day-conferences in different parts of the United Kingdom. With

the title *The New French Revolution*, missionaries and deputation staff will seek to communicate the spiritual needs of France, share news from the field, answer questions from the audience, and explain how British individuals and churches can become involved. Modern language students, in particular, will learn how they can use their vacations and year of foreign residence to help in Gospel work. The meetings will be at 3.00 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. during October 1981 in the following places:

October 10: *Manchester*, Ivy Cottage Evangelical Church, Barlow Moor Road, Didsbury, M20 8GP.

October 17: *Glasgow*, Renfield St. Stephen's Church Centre, 260 Bath Street, G2 4JW.

October 24: *London*, Honor Oak Fellowship Centre, 39 Honor Oak Road, Forest Hill, SE23.

October 31: *Belfast*, Crescent Church, University Road, BT7 1NH.

Further details from France Mission Trust, The Old Chapel, Chapel Lane, Minchinhampton, Glos., GL6 9DL.

Immigrant Communities

In Contact Ministries ask for prayer about a work among

Arabs in central London which they hope to start in October. Also for the guaranteed support that is needed in order to bring a couple from India to extend the Tamil work. Their building programme (converting a disused church) will need a new supervisor at the end of August. The person should also be able to engage in various practical duties. In addition there is need of a plasterer.

Media Workshop

A day conference on 'Communication — media and message', designed for all Christians, is to be held in Manchester on Saturday, October 17. Guest speaker the Rev. Michael Baughen, of All Souls' Church, Langham Place, London, will introduce topics including music, drama, print, video, film and radio. 'Hands-on' workshop sessions are planned for the afternoon, and the emphasis will be on the local church situation. The venue is Harpurhey United Church, Manchester, and the conference starts at 10 a.m. It is not necessary to book in advance, but full details can be obtained from Release Publications, 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 4DN. Tel: 061-834 5317.

MEADOWCROFT

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Bible Readings 1981

Autumn: 10-17 October A. J. Last

Autumn Missionary Week 1981

19-26 September

Further details from W. J. Coates

Phone: Windermere 3532

Scripture Union

From Nottingham comes news of a new departure in the support of full-time workers. Local Christians and churches have promised sufficient money to support Sylvia Griffiths for four years of schools work in the Nottingham area. Sylvia, who grew up in the assembly at Buckhurst Hill was active in Girl Covenanters, trained at Gipsy Hill College of Education before teaching in a comprehensive school and studying at St. John's College, Nottingham before joining the staff of St. Margarets, Aspley, Nottingham in 1976.

Uganda

News of an outstanding mission to Kampala during the summer, in which thousands made public their faith in Jesus Christ, coincided with news of worsening conditions in the country. The withdrawal of Tanzanian troops seems likely to lead to an increase in anti-government guerilla activity. Communications are bad; there is a shortage of fuel for transportation and the drought has ruined the harvest. Bishop Festo Kivengere, and the African Evangelistic Enterprise team need prayer in these difficult circumstances. Meanwhile, Tear Fund has sent three teams to Uganda. Two have helped with building projects at two Church of Uganda hospitals in the south of the country. Another smaller team has concentrated on helping people at Narok to develop their resources of land, livestock, crops, homecrafts, health and nutrition.

Urban Riots

Although experiencing deep concern, Christians should be less surprised than some other people by the appalling violence that has been rampant in our cities. For they know that they share the same human flesh with the rioters and the policemen who have been making the headlines. Some Christians, indeed, gave advance warning of what was going to happen. The Frontier Youth Trust issued a statement in January 1980 reviewing the prospects of the decade and saying that alienation would 'increase amongst those at risk, i.e. areas of high social threat, ethnic and cultural minorities, the have-nots (economically, culturally, politically)... The stresses set up in the social and political fabric... could stretch society to breaking point.' The causes of the violence are many and complex. High and rapidly rising rates of unemployment is only one of them. Years of neglect is another. Not least important is the assumption, shared in practice by too many Christians and trumpeted by all the media,

that (contrary to what Jesus said) the quality of human life does depend on possessions. The FYT (130 City Road, London, EC1V 2NG) has produced a prayer tape which mentions these issues. There is a place for Christians to confess that they have contributed to the appalling situation that now faces the nation. But also there must be prayer for young people, that their cry will be heard, understood and acted upon: that their energy and idealism may develop creative alternatives to violent despair: that those who work with them may have courage, hope and wisdom to offer: and that those who wish to exploit them may be frustrated. In particular, there is need for prayer for Christian people: that we should seek to understand and not to blame: that many will offer themselves to Christ's ministry of reconciliation to bring healing and hope to broken lives and communities in our inner cities: and that we may rediscover in the Good News of Jesus the power of a revolutionary love to share with others.

Home Calls

Mrs. Lilly Fawell on April 7, 1981, aged 84. Saved 70 years ago, she was a member of a small fellowship at Otley from its origin in 1931. Married for 59 years, she and her husband made their home a centre of Christian fellowship especially during the war years — a ministry through which many were converted. Her husband, who survives her, expresses his grateful thanks for the many prayers and letters received.

Miss Janet McAllister on June 29, 1981, aged 90. She was a member of the fellowship now meeting in Bethany Hall, Paisley, for best part of 70 years. In earlier days, a faithful and caring Sunday School teacher, her great interest in missionaries, her practical fellowship with them and her frequent letters were a great source of encouragement to many in different parts of the globe. She spent her last four years in the care of the Macemore Castle Eventide Home.

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commencing at 3.00 p.m.

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Speaker: Ralph Raymond

Messages by E.M.U. Workers and Associates supported by the Freeway Group

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Guest Speaker/Soloist: David Helden

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your giving to the Lord's work.



PEOPLE AND PLACES

STEWARDSHIP

Missionaries' Children's Fund: 29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund during July amounted to £297.00.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund: 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 ONP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during July amounted to £3081.80, including a £5 anonymous donation.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Mr. J. H. Large is now living at Lorraine, Forde Park, Newton Abbot, Devon.

PRAYER LIST

Blackburn, A. G.: Cumbria 1-6; Coleford 11; Plympton 13; Torquay 15; Bristol (Homeworkers' Conference) 19-22; Hutton 20; Weymouth 27.

Gillham, S.: Exhibition Dorchester Show 5; Birmingham 5-6; Harlesden 13; Balham 13; Bromley, Reigate 19-20; Bromley 22; Reigate 23; Holland 28-October 2.

Grimsey, A. W.: Birmingham 5-6; Harlesden 13; Balham 13; Bromley, Reigate 19-20; Bromley 22; Reigate 23; Holland 28-October 6.

Iliffe, D. J.: Selsen 1-5; London 8; Filey 12-19; Swansea 26-30.

Lowther, G. K.: Grimsby, Humberside and Lincolnshire 1-24; Stockton Heath 29; Miles Platting, Manchester 30.

Pierce, D. H.: Gloucester 12-17; Sizewell 18-20; Bristol 21-22; Barnstaple 23-30.

Phillips, C.: Bush Hill Park, Enfield 2, 9, 16, 23; Parkhill Chapel, Hampstead 3, 24; South Park Chapel, Seven Kings 6, 13; Ingrebourne, Hornchurch 7, 14, 21; Woking 8, 15, 22, 29; Chingford 10, 17; Aylesbury 20, 27; Oakleigh Chapel, Whetstone 27.

Short, S. S.: Yatton 6; Weston-super-Mare 13; Exeter 20, 21; Cheddar 23, 30; Bath 27, 28.

Tatford, F. A.: St. Croix 4-7; Geneva 8, 9; Wiedlisbach 10-13; Berne 14-16; Basle 17-20; Zurich 21-24.

Tryon, G. C.: Tooting 2, 9; Hatcham 6; Penarth 12-20; Beckenham 22; Buckhurst Hill 23; Hull 27-30.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Basingstoke: Buckskin Chapel, Chilton Way. Tuesdays October 6 and 13 at 7.45 p.m. Ministry by G. K. Lowther.

Bognor Regis: Bible Convention, Methodist Church, Waterloo Square, at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday 15, 16 and 17 October. Speaker each night Peter Maiden (UK Director of Operation Mobilisation). Theme: 'To die is gain' (Epistle to Philippians). Arranged by Bognor Regis Evangelical Fellowship.

Boscombe: Drummond Hall, Drummond Road. Annual Conference of the Hants. & Dorset Bible Reading Fellowship on Saturday, 10 October at 7.00 p.m. Speakers: A. C. Gooding (Stowmarket) and D. J. Lawrence (South Wales).

Bristol: Homeworkers' Conference, Broadmead Baptist Chapel. September 19 at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m.; 21 at 3.45 p.m. and 7.00 p.m.; and 22 at 7.00 p.m. Ministry by W. B. McKee.

Coventry: All past members of Canley Evangelical Church are invited to the 25th Anniversary Weekend on October 31-November 1 for tea, fellowship, thanksgiving and ministry by Robert Scott-Cooke (Bristol). Further details from Dr. Eric Avery, 51 John O'Gaunt Road, Kenilworth, Warks. (Tel: 0926-54065).

Dundee: Hillbank Evangelical Church, Dundee Assemblies Missionary Fellowship Weekend, October 16-19. Theme: 'Communication'. Speakers and subjects: Malcolm Coombes, France, Correspondence Courses; Eric Grove, Zambia, Printing; Alfred Poland, Portugal, Radio Broadcasting.

Eastbourne: Edmond Chapel, Church Street, Old Town. Sisters Missionary Conference on September 2 at 3.15 and 6.00 p.m. Sisters only.

Hornsey, N.8: Alexandra Hall. Conference on Saturday, September 26, at 3.30 and 6.00 p.m. Speakers: Eric Hughes, Liverpool and T. Proffitt, Ashford.

Maidenhead: Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road, Annual Bible Conference on September 26 at 3.30-5.15 p.m. and 6.15-8.00 p.m. (Tea in the interval.) Speakers: Roy Hill, Thornbury; Robert Revie, Tarbolton.

New Milton, Hants: Gore Road Chapel. Annual Meeting October 8-11. Speaker: A. Fallaize (formerly of Morocco).

Port Seton, East Lothian: Viewford Gospel Hall. Annual Conference on September 26 at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: J. Gillespie; David Newal; G. Waugh.

Teesside, Tyneside & Wearside: North East England Missionary Weekend, September 18-21. Meetings will be held on Teesside, Tyneside and Wearside simultaneously. Speakers: J. Flynn, J. M. Hitchen, D. T. L. Howell, N. H. Lane, T. J. Pratten, M. Tancredi. (Full details from W. Archbold, 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 ONP. Tel: 0632-570507.)

West London: Dean Hall, Williams Road, West Ealing. Annual Conference on Saturday, October 3 at 6.00 p.m. Speakers: Clifford Phillips (Harrow) and Geoffrey Simmonds (P.T.L.).

Press Day, Thursday, September 3 for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.)

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Cover picture: WRMF

Antenna Farm and transmitter buildings at Pifo, high in the Andes mountains.

OUR GREAT GOD

How often in our churches do we hear a truly God-exalting sermon? Not a fierce exhortation to His people; not an urgent appeal to those who are oblivious of His mercies; not a diatribe against the sins and the corruptions of the world around us; but a whole-hearted paean of praise and of joy and of delight in One who is so utterly other from ourselves, so altogether above our conception and beyond our imagination, and yet Who seems to come near and touch us in the closest and the most unexpected aspects of life.

Perhaps our loss of this supreme joy — for if we hear such an address, we find ourselves caught up into something altogether beyond ourselves — is in part a result of our loss of our roots in His created order; of our urbanisation, with all its artificiality and substitute reality. It is surely no accident that so much of the Bible's rejoicing in God is linked directly with the experience of the countryside and the natural order in which its people were steeped. Yet it was not only in Nature that the people of the Bible read the power and glory of their God: for they had learned to discern His mighty acts in the events of their lives and of their nation's history — and in New Testament times they had seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Shall we try to regain something of this glory for ourselves? It only requires that we should rest from ourselves for a short time, and learn to rest in Him: to forgive ourselves as He has forgiven us in Christ, so that we find, like the Psalmist

*By day the Lord directs his love,
at night his song is with me —
a prayer to the God of my life*

(Ps. 42:8 NIV)

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BROADCASTING THE WORD — 1

Mary Batchelor

The first of two articles on missionary radio work.

Slowly the huge liner pulled away from the shores of England. On deck a small figure, hair drawn back in a bun, with dark coat, hat and gloves, waves a last farewell to the loyal band of Christian friends on shore. Another missionary is off to take the gospel to the natives! No one seriously imagines that our Lord's commission to 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel' is likely to be carried out in such a fashion in the 1980's. Yet a listen-in to some of our missionary prayer meetings might convey more than a whiff of that kind of atmosphere. Some Christians have only partially accepted that today's missionary strategy is a far cry from the missionary biographies of Sunday School prize days.

To begin with, Britain is no longer a safe Christian citadel from which missionaries can be despatched to other, heathen, parts of the globe. Britain is largely pagan too. Secondly, world population has increased at such a rate that to carry out our Lord's command by methods previously used would do no more than pathetically scratch the surface of need. A method is called for that will bring God's word to millions and cross whatever geographical or political boundaries exist. If the answer is to be found in one word, that word is surely 'radio'. In the providence of God, the unique problems of spreading God's word today can be met by today's engineering and technology.

The parable of the Sower is often taken as a classic picture of preaching the gospel, though it is, of course, far more than that. Down the ages, the seed has been sown in many lands from pulpit, mission compound and children's classes.

Sometimes hundreds at a time have heard — even thousands. But the sowing of the seed has been circumscribed by geographical or religious bars and by shortage of personnel. The original meaning of the word 'broadcast' was to scatter seed far and wide. It is significant that the twentieth century definition is to transmit through the medium of radio. Radio knows no boundaries of water or land. It passes through curtains of iron or bamboo. It cannot be restrained by religious fanatics or political regimes from bringing its message into the homes of men and women far and wide.

Thank God that many existing missionary societies as well as specially formed radio missions have realized the potential of radio for broadcasting the

Word. More of us need to do the same.

There are some radio missions which own their own powerful transmitters and can therefore transmit programmes from their own stations. It has been estimated that between them Christian radio stations can reach ninety per cent of the world's population — Christian radio encircles our whole globe. The only wholly British radio station is that of FEBA (Far East Broadcasting Association). But there are also many radio missions with recording studios only, who make programmes which can then be used by existing Christian stations or else broadcast on commercial stations by buying time for broadcasting.

If Christian radio is to work, some important questions have to be asked and answered carefully by radio missionaries. First of all — who are we trying to reach? Most would think of reaching the unconverted with the gospel of Christ. But since the seed is the word of God, it is needed by all, 'sinner and saint', and most Christian radio stations also aim to teach young converts and to support those who are cut off from church or fellow Christians for one reason or another. Let's concentrate on the task of evangelizing. How can radio preach the gospel?

Are You Receiving Me?

Nothing is more irritating than trying to listen to a radio programme when reception is faint or blurred. Only the listener who is dedicated to the interests of the programme will go on listening. The rest will retune to a clearer station. So Christian radio must be technically first class. This will involve selecting the most effective sites for transmitters and using top quality equipment. It will require properly constructed and soundproofed recording studios. It also calls for dedicated engineers and technicians to maintain and monitor equipment. These are not skills we have usually associated with missionaries.

Is it Interesting?

It would take a brave person to get up and walk out of church because the sermon was boring. In any case, only those with some degree of interest are likely to enter a church. But anyone switched on to radio is likely to switch off without another thought if his interest isn't captured at once by what he hears. So perfect reception is not enough if programme planners fail to make material relevant to those who hear.



Quiz panels during recording session Acknowledgement: Peter Beadle

Some missions have decided that more listeners will be attracted if they incorporate high quality secular programmes. Series on stamp collecting or natural history are some examples. Does someone piously exclaim that this is a wrong use of money donated for preaching the gospel? Before we jump to such a conclusion it is worth noting the results. One listener wrote: 'I'm a convinced atheist, but despite this I listen regularly to your DX Party Line (this is a programme for short wave radio fans) and in so doing I also hear your message'. Many listeners tune in to the secular programme and stay tuned for the Christian message.

But radio missions provide so-called secular programmes for other reasons than to bait the hook for the 'real' programme. For too long we have prayed for 'souls' as if God were interested in disembodied spirits instead of the whole person. Yet missionaries down the ages have followed their Master's example and ministered to the bodies and minds of those they serve through mission hospitals and schools. In the same way Christian broadcasters wish to bring Christ to the whole of man. By providing news bulletins that are uncensored and trustworthy, by giving health education over the air and by preparing programmes that show something of God's wonders in nature, they are showing God's care and interest as well as his sovereignty over the whole of man and his world.

Preaching the Gospel

Does radio call for any special way of presenting the gospel? Is it enough to get a well known preacher to

fill the slot? Should the time be used in a hymn-prayer-address routine? It would be a fatal mistake to take over the trappings of one medium and transfer it wholesale to another. David was right to reject Saul's cumbersome armour in his fight against Goliath and to select his own weapons. Christians who are not involved in broadcasting may criticize the sling and pebbles of radio methods as watching Israelites did in David's time. But the medium must find its own method. Radio is intimate, personal, one-to-one in its approach. Informality and chattiness are called for rather than oratory or pulpit style declaiming.

The kind of address we still often associate with preaching in church is also unsuited to the background and understanding of many listeners. The head of religious broadcasting in one of our own city's local radio stations commented: ' "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" is still what we are saying, but we can't start there any longer. What we have to say at first may seem a far cry from that. We have to go back and back explaining until we reach the place where listeners can understand and identify with what we are saying'. In worldwide radio work there will be far more factors to consider. As well as providing programmes in numerous languages, programmers must provide material that matches the religious and cultural background of listeners. Some radio missions see their task mainly in the field of pre-evangelism — preparing the soil to receive the good seed. Missionaries on the ground, local churches, Christian radio, and every single one of us must unite in the task of sowing that seed.

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TRANS WORLD RADIO (TWR)	175, Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2AS	*	Long, medium and short wave transmitters in Monte Carlo giving extensive coverage; broadcasting in 68 languages. Transmitters also in Bonaire, Cyprus, Swaziland, Guam and Sri Lanka, giving total coverage of the world.
WORLD RADIO MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP (Radio station HCJB)	63a, Main Street, Bingley, West Yorks. BD16 2HZ	*	Powerful transmitters strategically placed at Quito, Ecuador can reach every country in the world. Broadcasts mainly aimed at North and South American continents, the Caribbean, Europe, the Soviet Union, Japan and Australasia. Response from 134 countries in one year (88,556 letters)
RADIO WORLDWIDE (Section of Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade)	13, Harold Road, London, SE19 3PU	+	Programmes produced mainly in English for those with English as their mother tongue or as a second or third language. Programmes also produced in Hindi. Overseas radio stations used and some hospital networks in UK. Broadcasting costs vary considerably according to station used (government, missionary or commercial)
STRICT BAPTIST MISSION	12, Abbey Close, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 3JD	+	Purpose-built studios for recording programmes in English and Tamil. Mainly aimed at areas where their own missionaries are located, particularly in India and Sri Lanka. Use made of FEBA and TWR stations.
BACK TO THE BIBLE BROADCASTS	175 Wokingham Road, Reading, Berks, RG6 1LT	+	Over 1,000 stations used for nearly 6,000 programmes per week. High quality studios provide programmes for Christian and commercial stations in nine languages.

DESCRIPTION

* Independent, wholly owned and controlled radio stations

+ Programme preparation and use on Christian and commercial radio stations

(In addition to the Christian radio stations listed above, there are of course numerous Christian programmes on secular stations. One mission specialising in such programmes is John and Miriam Knight's **Radio Outreach** of 23 Lake Road, Chandlersford, Eastleigh, Hants, a work which arose from the preparation of programmes for Isle of Man local radio. It now has English language programmes in seven different countries of Europe, Asia and the Caribbean. *Ed.*)

WHAT IS GOD DOING TODAY?

Ray Anderson

Originally from the Midlands, Ray Anderson has served several churches in the Bristol area as a full-time Minister of the Word. He is currently serving at Sedbury, Gwent.

Quite recently, when being kept home from the Morning Service one Sunday through family illness, I began to ask this question of myself as I waited in the Presence of the Lord.

One of the reasons for asking the question might be the fact that as I have the privilege of visiting many assemblies I get a sense both of fear on the part of some, and frustration on the part of others, because of the diversity of thinking which is coming to the fore among us as assemblies.

Some want to be freed from the traditional past, whilst others seem threatened by what often seems to them to be a desire to change for change's sake.

There are, of course, some very sincere believers who doubt that God is doing very much in a new and changing way, and who feel that faithfulness lies in maintaining the testimony as they know it, simply holding fast to what they have, and safe-guarding the truth.

The polarisation among us is often spoken of in terms of the 'generation gap' — that is older believers wanting to stay as they are, secure in their tried and tested ways, while the younger people, eager and keen to try all things new want to leave the past behind and step into the unknown. If the polarisation were as definite as that it would be much easier for us all to understand and perhaps easier to cope with, though no difficulties of this nature are ever easy to take in our stride. The truth is that some older Christians, experiencing change in their spiritual lives are as keen as their younger counterparts for change, whilst some younger, maybe less adventurous folk,

would rather things stay as they are. Those who want to see change are quick to say that it is necessary because of what God is doing; while others, sincerely doubting that some of these things which are happening are of God, simply discard the other as a desire to comply with the spirit of the age and thus create changes.

If these problems were confined to those known as Brethren, whose traditions have sometimes bewildered the best of us, again they would be easier both to understand and contain. The truth, however, is that challenges to the traditional position are being felt in every major denomination and church in the United Kingdom. One rather amazing feature is that whilst Brethren, so called, are wanting to be freed from their traditions, some in other groups, also wanting to be free, are moving along lines which will inevitably, at least as far as structure is concerned, bring them very close to the accepted Brethren position. One very noticeable factor in the midst of all this is that among all those who desire change, both in our fellowships and outside, is the need to be more biblical than perhaps they have been in the past, and any desire to return to a more biblical position is surely a desire which all of us will rejoice in.

Among assemblies, one feature seems to be unique. Not one, to my knowledge, wants to alter the structure. What do I mean by that? Let me give an example or two. We have for long years rejoiced in the truth of the priesthood of all believers, and whilst even that truth is being investigated by many, no-one is saying it is not a biblical truth and thus refusing to practice it any longer. Our view of the ministry, which I believe to be the biblical one, is that the Scriptures teach against what is called the one-man ministry,

teaching rather that the purpose of God is to give a multiplicity of gifts to His church, each to be used in harmony with the other, for the benefit of the whole church. To my knowledge, no-one among us is teaching against that truth, but rather that we re-investigate what scripture actually says about ministry and thus seek to practice it in a new way; a way which is far more biblical than what has happened in the past.

It is a most interesting exercise to watch what is happening in other fellowships with regard to the ministry. The move away from the 'one man' concept is quite startling. The exercise is to discover what gifts God has given to His church and to give place to them for the benefit of the whole. For some the move is simply that the church call an 'assistant Pastor', but others are seeing things in a completely different light and are challenging each other to discover gift and use it.

Among assemblies there has developed in recent years the concept of the single church worker, that is a full-time man giving the majority of his time and attention to one assembly. Many, frightened that they may be in for a take-over bid, have spoken of this as being a non-brethren practice and have rejected it, even stating that assemblies who call a man to such a task have ceased to be assemblies. Is such a reaction biblical, or does it stem from a sense of fear that we may be denying the truth of scripture in allowing or following such practices? I cannot remember every name used but I clearly remember the late Mr. Stunt of Bath, who seemed to have so much Brethren history at his fingertips, quoting me the names of a number of early brethren who gave their time and attention to one assembly — among those named, were, of course, George Müller and Henry Craik. Are these

changes, all of which can be clearly seen in scripture, of God? I humbly suggest they are. This is what God is doing today.

I would like to offer a word of caution to those churches who are thinking of calling a 'full-time' worker, and to those brothers who feel it of the Lord to engage in such work. Do not plan, elders, to keep your man for ever and a day; and brothers, do not plan to settle down with your new assembly. When men in the New Testament stayed with an assembly, they stayed for a period of time only until that assembly was functioning as it should, gift etc., being discovered and in use. They then moved on!

Some people are behaving much differently in the assembly prayer meeting now than they used to. It is quite astonishing to find how many use the new songs and choruses which have been recently published, singing with real sincerity and meaning these songs of praise. There seems to be a burden in the lives of believers which was not there even five years ago. I find *2 Chronicles 7:14* an oft quoted verse — which seems to have produced a desire within many to put things right in their lives in order to meet with divine conditions for blessing. I recently paid a visit to America only to discover that the assemblies there were experiencing similar burdens for blessing. Some brothers had put out a nation-wide plea to their fellow believers to seek the Lord. This was called 'A call to Renewal'.

Surely a deeper prayer-life, a desire to praise the Lord, the discovering of a need to seek Him for blessing, is something which the Lord is creating among us. Added to which, the fact that these things are happening in other lands must surely indicate the hand of God as being upon us.

One thing causing a great deal of concern in assembly circles

is that of house meetings. These are springing up everywhere. It has been suggested that over 100,000 exist in this country, though not all of these are run or attended by Brethren people! Some elders and assembly leaders are troubled by these meetings because of what are said to be obvious dangers. Many feel that it is wrong to hold them without elders being present. That view I can to some degree appreciate. The question, however, remains — why don't the elders attend? Is it better to encourage Christians to worship and pray together with an elder present, rather than to refuse to allow such meetings for lack of elder attendance? The house meeting — or cell concept as some today call it — certainly encourages participation and growth, among those who in the regular church setting would never take any part in a meeting. In our own assembly we split into small groups (cells) for prayer, and have found a great deal of difference in the meeting as a result. Far more people now pray, and in the smaller group (cell) they

feel much happier to take part, not feeling so overshadowed by those more able and qualified to pray audibly. Countless men and women in the Brethren movement are speaking of how God is meeting them in what is called Renewal. Others are reacting to this and are opposing it as a non-biblical experience. Those who are experiencing renewal often speak of the 'Baptism in the Spirit' — stating that God met with them and gave them this blessing. Often the experience is a dramatic one, and is followed by the gift of tongues as the identifying sign of the Lord having met with them in this way. It can be a frightening experience to hear one pray in tongues and often we are disturbed by this happening. We turn to our Bibles and attempt to prove that the experience cannot be of God because the Baptism in the Spirit was experienced at conversion. There then develops argument as to who is right and who is wrong. The thing often gets very personal, people are hurt, they separate from their brethren and more problems and hurts

come.

The proof of my experience as being of God, does not lie in what I say about it or even how I describe it. The proof of it being of God lies in the change it brings in my life. The test of the work of God is this. Is the Lord Jesus now being revealed in my life style to a greater degree? If an experience, whatever it may be called, is bringing a greater degree of love and devotion to the Lord, then I must not touch it but praise God for it. God is doing the renewing. Much of it we may not understand and appreciate but then God doesn't normally ask our approval before He does something, neither does He refrain from doing it because we may misunderstand. The church is His, He is building it, and we must be so careful that we let Him have the right to do what pleases Him. When I see some of the changes brought about in the lives of those who have experienced renewal, though I may have doubts as to their theological understanding, I must conclude this is what God is doing.

The question is being asked by many in our movement 'What is God saying today?' 'What we ask God questions like that we will receive answers. Those who are listening for answers are telling us of the prophetic voice being heard. God speaking through His people to His people. Again this is difficult for some of us to accept and understand.

Theologically many could argue against it. However, don't we need a word from the Lord? Are we really making an impact by what is happening in our churches? God spoke through George Müller — come to Bristol and you will see the result of God's word. Five houses, built by faith on Ashley Down as an evidence of the **Loving God**.

Brethren, the Lord save us from over-reaction. Would that we stop and consider and ask 'What is God doing today?' We may discover a burden to seek His face that He may raise up many like George Müller who will realise as God deals with them some tangible evidence that God is alive and well and living among His people.

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FAMILY WORSHIP

Thea and Jim Harris

This is the first of a series of occasional articles on Family Life, under the contributing Editorship of Barbara Baigent. Jim and Thea Harris are full-time Christian workers in the Staines area and have three teenage boys.

Do you have family worship? If so, how? If not, why?

A straight question deserves a straight answer, but many of us would be embarrassed to face publicly the issue raised by this one. In our case the short answer is 'No': but that does not do full justice to the situation, because there are times when we definitely worship the Lord together as a family, and there have been periods when we have enjoyed family prayers as a part of daily life. The question, however, is about our present activities, and homes-in on that specific form of domestic devotion which used to be called 'The Family Altar'.

Thea grew up in a Christian family where family worship was an accepted, though not consistently followed, practice. Jim's home was non-Christian, in which prayer and the Bible were only last-resort expedients. As with many newly-married couples it was, for us, quite a struggle to find a formula which expressed properly and fully our privileges as 'joint-heirs of the grace of life'. Traditional inhibitions (which tended to stifle joint participation) and a lack of direct instruction on 'how to do it' (on the assumption that it comes naturally to healthy Christians) meant that any consistent success was hard won.

When the children were young we decided that we should read and pray together each day and this requirement upon us as Christian parents helped a lot. Even so, we realised before long that each of our three boys was an individual whose willingness to engage in, or respond to, our collective spiritual exercises was determined by what he was, not by what we wanted. Our devotions became the major occasion for family disruption, so we changed tack. We abandoned the attempt to worship as a family and spent time with each child before he went to bed, talking, reading, praying, sharing about the Lord, life and faith. It was harder — for a start it took more time — yet it was much better and helped our appreciation of God to grow. Some will interpret that decision as parental weakness, asserting that we should have insisted on doing things our way.

Others may see it as spiritual defeat, advocating that we should have resisted the disruption until the Enemy's attacks stopped. We were unwilling, however, to ascribe our children's individuality to Satan, and believed that effective communication was preferable to unsuccessful commitment to a cherished evangelical tradition, so we went for personal attention.

Even this method was somewhat stylised and after a time became difficult, then impossible, to sustain. On entering secondary education the inner life of a young man becomes a very private affair and for a while the sort of communication we have mentioned did not exist. Recovery lay in the fact that, alongside the personally-tailored evening sessions, we had also looked for special opportunities to relate our family life to the Lord.

It became customary to thank God together for specific blessings received — the kindness of friends, the new car, our happy holiday; to pray about matters needing guidance or protection — journeys, exams and anything else, with the flavour of experience rather than ritual. Grace at mealtimes had some intriguing variations! We even managed to have a meal out celebrating the 25th anniversary of Dad's conversion — family worship? The important factor is that these special features have been carried on into adolescence and have slowly opened up again a willingness to discuss what we believe and practice, and to relate it to the world in which we live, immediately around us and planet-wide. Interestingly, an attempt about two years ago to re-introduce a form of daily Bible reading and prayer revived much of the old antagonism, so once more we felt that it was better to look for alternatives which would achieve something positive than to insist on the traditional Family Altar and negate the good already done.

So much for autobiography — now let's look at the question in principle. Is the idea of each family meeting together daily in order to worship God a necessary feature of a truly Christian lifestyle? Are we failing the Lord and betraying our families if we don't do so? Worse still, can the absence of family worship be understood as disobedience to the will of God, so that we are morally culpable as well as spiritually irresponsible? Without question, it is a desirable activity and has a marvellously formative influence on family life when it operates properly; that is, when there is . . .

- ... a sense of sharing our lives with the Lord
- ... a wish to hear what God is saying to us
- ... openness and flexibility for questions to be raised and honest answers given
- ... encouragement for all to participate vocally
- ... delight in the whole experience because it is always fresh and relevant

It is disastrous however, when it is

- ... a religious routine substituting for real communication at other times
- ... a cause of aggravation to the extent that it is a daily battlefield
- ... an opportunity for Dad to lecture the rest on his beliefs or rules
- ... usual that parents' interests and concerns dominate the agenda
- ... boring, dull, unimaginative, repetitive or anything else that slanders the glorious originality and creativity of the God we profess to worship

Worship is intended to satisfy our deepest spiritual needs and to stimulate our lives, as the whole of our being is brought into a true regard for and relationship with the Lord. It creates patterns of thought and conduct which will honour him and be a benediction to others. Any worship structure, in home or church, which does not promote this cannot have God's seal of approval on it. If therefore, we are not succeeding with the conventional model, far better to seek a satisfactory alternative than to persevere destructively with what we have just because we feel that's how it should be done.

Family situations vary enormously in our society — more, we suspect, than in the fairly stable and uniform society depicted in the Bible, especially the Old Testament. The means used in each case to recognise the Lord and give him his proper place in family life will differ from one to another. The apostle Paul was aware of certain dangers which believing parents face; in the temptation to abdicate their responsibility for the spiritual development of their children, leaving it to the Bible Class or church services; and in the pull towards unwise, even extreme, insistence upon **their** way of doing things. To one group he wrote, 'Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord' (Eph. 6:4). To the other, 'Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged' (Col. 3:21). Finding the right way for **our** family life is what matters. It is lovely that so many families have used the old paths so happily and well. This article is not intended in any way as an attack on them or what they do. Its object rather, is to help relieve some of the tension — perhaps guilt feelings — experienced by those Christian parents who have failed to follow the prescribed route, and to encourage them to search out new and fitting ways of worship within the home life. It is written with the conviction that our Heavenly Father will accept a 'live unorthodoxy' much more readily than a 'dead orthodoxy'.

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

'Is eternal sonship scriptural?'

Question 200

I have seen it stated that there is no scriptural warrant for speaking of the Lord Jesus as being eternally the Son of God. How is it possible to maintain this in the light of such passages as Galatians 4:4?

Passages such as you mention are understood by those who deny the eternal sonship of Christ as involving the use of the title 'son' retrospectively. That is to say, what they really mean is that 'the Father sent (the one whom we refer to as) the Son . . .'

This is scarcely the most natural way of understanding the passages in question. However, its validity cannot be considered without reference to whatever view of the person of Christ may underlie this interpretation in any particular case. There are, in fact, at least three viewpoints to consider. The first, which is sometimes called Ebionism and which is found in various forms at various stages in the history of the church, regards Jesus as basically a human being who receives the dignity of Son of God as a recognition of his worth. Another view, which has sometimes been called Sabellianism, lays such emphasis upon the unity of the godhead that it regards the three persons of the Trinity as no more than modes in which God has revealed himself: that is to say, neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit would exist apart from God's self-revelation to man.

An attitude more familiar within the so-called 'assemblies' differs from both of these. It regards the Trinity as eternally subsisting in three persons but maintains that the title 'Son' cannot properly be applied to the second person of the Trinity before the Incarnation. From this viewpoint, it is not the eternal deity of the second person of the Trinity which is in question but the role of that person as Son. The underlying reason for this appears to be, not so much the biblical evidence, as a belief that the role of Son implies both derivation and subordination in such a sense that the 'Son' cannot be regarded as equal with the 'Father'. It is thus a biblically grounded concern for the equality of the persons of the Trinity that leads such exegetes to conclude that the second person of the Trinity was not eternally the Son of God. From this fundamental position follows the

exegesis of specific passages which we have referred to already.

'Are we in danger of "bibliolatry"?'

Question 201

Is there a danger that we may come to almost worship the Bible, even above the Lord Jesus Christ, in our attitude toward the printed page? Even perhaps with reference to specific translations?

We have biblical — or even dominical — authority for saying that this is only too possible. 'You search the Scriptures,' said Jesus ' . . . yet you refuse to come to me . . . If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me . . . ' (John 5:39-47). The trouble with the people to whom Jesus was speaking was that they were unwilling to allow him to show them fresh truth from the Scriptures which they professed to love. It is dangerously possible for us to value our own interpretation of Scripture above Scripture itself. They were also in danger of forgetting that the purpose of Scripture is to help us serve God and function as his children in the world where he has placed us. In other words, Scripture is a means to an end and not an end in itself.

Of course, having said this, we are in no way excused from studying the Scriptures closely and carefully. But our purpose in doing so must not be to reinforce our own prejudices nor to buttress the interpretations that we happen to have grown up with. The intention must always be to submit ourselves to God's word.

In doing this, it is often helpful to make use of a variety of translations. Not that all are of equal value, nor is each translation equally useful for a given purpose. But to people who suggest that one specific translation should be normative, we can only reply, 'We have no such custom, nor has the church of God.' The scurrility with which some people who ought to know better have attacked certain translations of which they disapprove brings more discredit upon themselves than upon the men whose work they impugn.

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

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LOOKING AT BOOKS



New Testament Theology

Donald Guthrie. IVP. 1064pp. £14.95.

To attempt to present a systematic study of the teaching of the whole of the NT is an ambitious undertaking. That Donald Guthrie, Vice-Principal of the London Bible College and author of the justly acclaimed *New Testament Introduction*, has largely succeeded is to be warmly applauded. Because he believes that there is a fundamental unity underlying the diversity of the NT writings, Dr. Guthrie has arranged his material

according to topics (e.g. God; man and his world; Christology; the Church; etc.). But within each section he deals with the main NT writers separately (e.g. the synoptic gospels; Acts; Paul; John) so as to bring out the distinctive contribution of each. It is good to see such a book including sections on NT ethics and the NT view of Scripture, as well as an introductory discussion on the nature of NT theology. As always, the author demonstrates his command of the whole field of contemporary NT scholarship

and handles the varying viewpoints of others with fairness but also with firmness. His own views are inevitably conservative, but he is not afraid to remain tentative where the evidence is insufficient to allow a firm conclusion. The book abounds with careful exegetical discussions and penetrating hermeneutical insights. Readers of *The Harvester* will be particularly interested in Dr. Guthrie's comments on the NT teaching on the role of women in the church. This is undoubtedly an indispensable book for the

serious Bible student: its footnotes contain a comprehensive guide to a wide range of literature and it is provided with a full bibliography and reference, author and subject indexes. Yet it is so clearly written and demands no previous knowledge of NT scholarship that all Christians involved in leadership, preaching and teaching will find this a profitable investment.

*Review by John W. Baigent,
West London Institute of
Higher Education.*

Open Heart, Open Home

Karen Mains. Pickering and Inglis Ltd. 199pp. £2.50p. (paperback).

A book written by a woman and reviewed by one might be thought to be a *woman's* book, but this is not the case. *Open Heart, Open Home* is a plea to take the words of Scripture on the subject seriously. (Have you ever read *Isaiah 58:7-9* in the Living Bible version?)

Karen Mains points out that Christian hospitality is more than inviting a few friends home for a well-planned meal. It involves an open mind and ready response to the Lord's promptings. There must be an open heart to care and open ears to listen. Above all there must be a dependence on God for strength, wisdom and sensitivity to the needs of all people God sends our way, whether outside or inside His Church.

This extremely well-written book is full of spiritual insights, scriptural wisdom and common-sense advice; there is a check-list at the end of each chapter. It would make an excellent wedding-anniversary present! Highly

recommended!

Review by Marion A. Timmins

You've Got to Start

Somewhere When you Think about Education Charles Martin. I.V.P. 127pp. £1.35. (paperback)

To help Christian education students think about their career in the context of their faith, Charles Martin has in his usual and racy style issued them an invitation to 'drop all battle and conflict metaphors . . . and 'prepare for a cool steady look' at rival attitudes. With a wealth of illustration and great concision (as with the author's earlier pocketbook on Humanism even the title is a vital sentence in the debate) the presuppositions of secular theorists are thought of as points of departure on the road to truth. 'Christians start further back', with God and revelation, even if somewhere down the line they join forces with colleagues of other views, so the author identifies stretches of the road where there is now overlap, now divergence. The remarkable middle chapter lists seven

different starting points, distilling with the minimum of technical language the thought of much current philosophy. This is followed by chapters on sociology and psychology (often the Christian student's *bêtes noires*) and a concluding look at some of the practical issues faced in schools (authority, rights, community, R.E., testing) where Christians have both distinctive views and much more thinking to do. The U.C.C.F. should publish more of such findings from its Study Groups.

Review by H. E. Pope

Comprehensive Education

Peter Warren. The Paternoster Press. 32pp. 60p. (paperback)

The sunny colour photograph forming the cover of this booklet, if it is a comprehensive school and not a holiday villa, gives the same optimistic picture of the subject as does the text. Written by a headmaster/'convert' with experience in private and grammar schools, the pamphlet enjoins parents to

reject private education as representing neither value for money nor responsible Christian stewardship. With the support of several sound arguments and some statistics of doubtful interpretation, comprehensives earn some fulsome praise; split sites are mentioned on the debit side, but not such problems as 16+ transfer, Modern Language failures, or teacher shortages.

Review by H. E. Pope

Teaching God Angela Tilby. Collins. 187pp. 95p (paperback).

'R.E. is in a mess' (p.99). Here is a study, with numbers of misprints, of how it happened, beginning from 1870 and surveying by decades the changes since the 1944 Act in classroom and Assembly Hall, with the help of ingenious 'fictional commentaries' to convey the diversity of present patterns. After a not unfavourable look at denominational schools the author deplores the weakness of the Church itself and calls for a Christian mind, more

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

In our July issue Dr. McIntosh asks, 'If Luther can be translated acceptably, why cannot Wesley?' May not an adequate answer be that Charles Wesley's hymns already exist in English, and better English than this century shows itself able to achieve? But my question to readers is this: can they think of any single rewording of Charles Wesley which does not underline the wisdom of John's plea to compilers not to attempt to mend the hymns of his brother or himself — 'for they really are not able'?

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

theology and prayer. She laments the decline in university theological studies, but does not seem to have noticed the revival in evangelical scholarship.

Review by H. E. Pope

Biblical Ethics: The Changing Continuity of Christian Ethics, Vol. 1 R. E. O. White. Paternoster Press. 256pp. £4.80 (paperback).

This well-produced volume comes from the pen of the Principal of the Baptist Theological College of Scotland. It provides (as the publisher's 'blurb' tells us) a systematic account of the moral teaching of the whole Bible, and is to be followed later by a second volume dealing with the development of Christian ethics through the centuries up to and including modern 'situation ethics'. We are also advised that it is based on lectures given for the London BD syllabus, and a study of the form and contents confirms this! To say

this, however, is not to detract from its value, but there is the feeling of 'and so we come next to . . .'. The bibliography also contains the 'old faithfuls' of the examination syllabus and is rather deficient on newer books.

The first two chapters cover legal codes, prophetic teaching, wisdom literature and other related aspects in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and later Judaism, which provide the background to the ethical teaching of Jesus and the New Testament writers. There seems to be an uncritical acceptance of many of the views of scholars with which Evangelicals are not usually happy (this is also found implicitly at least in a later chapter on 'Sub-Apostolic Discipline') and also a 'lumping together' of the Old Testament teaching with that of the later non-canonical writings.

The next four chapters deal with the teaching and example of Jesus, together with His radical call to discipleship. Some of the

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Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

THE ENIGMA

H. V. G. Morris

A retired Inland Revenue official, formerly in Enfield and Bromley but now resident in Ulverston, Cumbria, Mr. Morris meditates on the questions in Proverbs 30:4.

To Solomon was given all that the natural man might covet, and he remains the historical 'test-piece' by which God has demonstrated that contentment does not follow the gratification of every desire. The favourite son of a famous father, he was endowed with ability and wisdom, and a potential for knowledge, which surpassed all other men. Everything written about Solomon is in superlatives. Visiting potentates and ambassadors hung on his wise epigrams, often expressed with thrilling beauty, and faithful scribes recorded them. These were edited by the Holy Spirit of God, and the results have been preserved in the Scriptures through succeeding millennia.

We observe, however, a great difference between those of the most fruitful period of his life, and those of his latter days. The great gifts of God had been largely used for self-indulgence and pride, and across the pages of *Ecclesiastes* may be written the word 'disillusionment'. He fully acknowledges that shortcoming and failure are inherent in all the sons of men. His words of grave warning to young men (*chap. 12*) could profitably be learned by heart. The poetry of the similes about growing old are strikingly beautiful, but the concluding sentiments contain little to comfort the soul. How different from the last days of his father David: into these were crowded the final preparations of the Temple and its worship, and instructions for the orderly government of the realm.

Of the one-thousand and five songs written by Solomon, only those of the *Canticle* are preserved in Scripture. He probably had little appreciation of the spiritual value of the songs he composed, and indeed, they should not be taken lightly upon our lips, for it is by an intimate spiritual experience

that we are able to understand the love between the Lord and His own people.

The particular purpose of this short article is, however, to consider the confession by Agur to his two friends (*Prov. 30*). He confides to them, that when confronted with the accumulated wisdom contained within the preceding chapters, he felt himself to be an ignorant fool. (We understand his feelings perfectly.) With seven questions he propounds a riddle, oracular and prophetic in its significance. He says, in effect, that the world is looking for a man beyond all others in his relationship with God, and in his authority upon earth. To this, Solomon has no answer, but a well-taught child in these days would have no difficulty with it. The complete unfolding of this enigma must wait through the centuries until the Lord Jesus came, but a Spirit-instructed mind might have come to a limited understanding by a study of the Psalms and Prophets.

'Tell me of a man who has ascended and also descended: any "daysman" betwixt us, who might lay his hand upon us both.' The answer was given to Nicodemus by the Lord Jesus. 'No man has ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, the Son of Man, who belongs to heaven.' Then asks Agur, 'Shew me a man who has gathered the wind into his fists, and bound the waters in the garment of the clouds.' Some eighteen months after this talk with Nicodemus, the Lord Jesus was in the boat with His disciples when Galilee was lashed into fury by a storm of wind. This was Satan's work, and those in the boat were near to perishing. Then, as we know well, the Lord Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves, shewing His complete control over the elements. 'Who has established all the ends of the earth?' Sadly, Solomon could not identify to Agur the One about whom he had already written, not knowing that by His eternal wisdom the universe

continued on page seventy-six

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE

J. E. Todd

... of Love (Eph. 4:25-5:2)

'Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God' (Eph. 5:1-2, RSV). As Christians we are the objects of divine love, 'Beloved children'. This divine love is expressed to us in the person of God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, 'Christ loved us and gave himself for us'. Love is here described as the giving of one's self for the service and blessing of others irrespective of the cost. For the Lord gave himself to the cross to secure for us the blessing of salvation at the cost of his own life. This love and its work have complete divine approval, it is to God like a fragrant offering. It is like the incense rising to him from the altar of incense in the Tabernacle (Ex. 30:7-8). It is to God like an acceptable sacrifice as offered to him in the burnt offering (Lev. 1:9). Here this sacrificial love of the Lord Jesus Christ is set before Christians as an example to follow, 'Walk in love, as Christ loved us'.

Paul reminds us in this passage that love is a very practical thing, the 'Therefore' at the beginning of the verse quoted above directs our attention to the previous statements. Love consists of serving others by telling the truth, 'Putting away falsehood, let every one speak the truth' (4:25). By not maintaining a resentful attitude, 'Do not let the sun go down on your anger' (v26). By helping others with honest endeavour, 'Doing honest work . . . to give to those in need' (v28). By good and helpful conversation, 'Never let a bad word pass your lips, but as many good words as you please' (v29, 20th Century NT). By co-operating with all the Holy Spirit's teaching, 'Do not grieve the Holy Spirit' (v30). By putting away bad temper and irritability (v31). By a kindly sympathetic attitude under all circumstances, 'Tenderhearted' (v32). Think of the Lord as our example in all these things!

Paul gives another clear description of love in the 13th chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians. Read verses one to eight in as many modern trans-

lations as you possess, also, if possible, in the now not so modern translation by Dr. J. Moffatt. Then think again of our Lord as our example in all these things!

But a great problem faces us. How can we hope to emulate the love of Jesus to any degree in our own daily lives? Let us first be clear that as Christians it is necessary for us to do so. 'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another' (John 13:34-35). The love of Christ displayed in our lives is our badge of discipleship. Not a gold cross or fish in our lapel!

The Lord speaks of the solution to this problem in his prayer to his Father (John 17:20-26). The Lord's prayer is for nothing less than that the spiritual unity of divine life existing between the Father and the Son may embrace all believers (v20). 'That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us . . . that they may be one even as we are one' (v21-22). But how is this invisible spiritual unity to be displayed to the world, 'So that the world may believe that thou hast sent me' (v21)? The Father has loved the Son, 'Thou hast loved me' (v23); the Father loves the believer with the same love, 'Hast loved them even as thou hast loved me' (v23). But how is the world to be aware of this love, 'So that the world may know that thou hast sent me' (v23)? By seeing the same divine love with which the Father loves the Son displayed in the lives of believers, 'That the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them' (v26). But how can this become our personal experience? By the same one who displayed such love here on earth living in us by his Spirit, 'I in them' (v23), 'I in them' (v26). The Lord Jesus Christ is not only the example of love in his earthly walk, he is also the executor of love in our daily lives. 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me' (Gal. 2:20).

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (52)

F. F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 7:1-10:39)

iii. THE SHEPHERD AND THE FLOCK
(John 10:1-39)

(b) Encounter in the Temple (John 10:22-30)
continued

10:26-28 But you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me. Moreover I give them eternal life and they will never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.

In the prologue to the Gospel, when the eternal Word came to his own home, his own people (or those who might have been expected to be his own people) gave him no welcome. Some, however, did welcome him, and thus proved to be his own people in deed and not merely in word. By virtue of their faith in him they became members of the family of God, children of the new birth (John 1:11-13). Here they are described as the good Shepherd's own sheep, who instinctively recognize his voice and follow him. Those who neither believe nor follow him show by that very fact that they do not belong to his own sheep. Not only do his own sheep recognize his voice; he for his part knows them — knows them individually, calls them by name (verse 3).

Jesus has already said that, by contrast with the thieves and robbers who seek to destroy the sheep (*apollumi*, active), he has come to give them life in abundance; now this abundant life is called eternal life (*zōē aiōnios*), promised earlier in the Gospel to those who believe in the Son (3:15, 16, 36; 6:40, 47). To have eternal life is to live for ever (6:51, 58); negatively expressed, those who have it 'will never see death' (8:51), 'will never taste death' (8:52), 'will never die' (11:26) or, as here, 'will never perish' (*apollumi*, passive). Physical life may be destroyed, but those who are united by faith to the Son of God, those who belong to the flock of the true Shepherd, can never lose real life, for he keeps it secure. 'No one', he says, 'will snatch them out of my hand.'

10:29,30 What my Father has given me is greater than all, and no one can snatch (them) out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.

The translation of verse 29 follows the latest Nestle text. The reading familiar to us from the AV and RSV, 'My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all', follows the Byzantine text, and is now known to have the strong support of our oldest manuscript, Papyrus 66. It makes such excellent sense that the only argument in favour of the other reading is that no scribe would have perpetrated it if he had found 'My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all' in his master-copy. In what sense could it be said that what the Father has given to the Son is greater than all? 'It would mean either (a) that Christ's flock is greater than all forces that oppose it . . . — which I think John would never have said — or (b) that the authority God gave Christ is supreme (cf. 13:3), which is Johannine, but not obviously appropriate here.' So C. H. Dodd comments; he adds that the reading 'My Father, who has given them to me . . .', which is 'more widely if less weightily supported, is probably to be adopted' (*Interpretation*, p.433). (It is possible that the reading 'What my Father has given me . . .' reflects a misunderstanding of an Aramaic stage in the course of transmission.) Paul expresses the security of those who have died and been raised with Christ in the words: 'your life is hid with Christ in God' (Col. 3:3). The sense of our present passage is quite similar: God and Christ are together engaged to protect believers. Whom Christ protects, God protects; whom Christ keeps in his hand, God keeps in his, and even if it were (mistakenly) thought possible to snatch one of Christ's people from his hand, it is self-evident that no one is powerful enough to snatch any one or anything (no object is expressed) from the hand of God.

The statement 'I and the Father are one', taken in isolation, could bear a wider meaning than it has in its present context, and a meaning quite consistent with the general teaching of this Gospel. Here we have a particular application of the statements in John 5:19-23. So responsive is the Son to the

Father that he is one in mind, one in purpose, one in action with him. Where the eternal wellbeing of true believers is concerned, the Son's determination and pledge to guard them from harm is endorsed by the Father's word and confirmed by the Father's all-powerful act. 'This is the will of him who sent me,' Jesus has already said, 'that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day' (*John 6:39; cf. 17:12*). In guarding his people, he is obedient to the Father's will; what wonder, then, if they are simultaneously guarded by the Father himself?

(c) Renewed conflict (*John 10:31-39*)

10:31-32 The Jews again picked up stones to stone him. Jesus' reply to their action was: 'I have shown you many good works done on the Father's initiative. For which work of these are you stoning me?'

The previous occasion of his enemies' trying to stone him in the temple precincts was when he made the declaration, 'Before Abraham was born, I am' (*John 8:58,59*). The claim implicit in that declaration was similar to that made more expressly in the words, 'I and the Father are one.' It was a claim which, in their eyes, merited the penalty prescribed in the law for one who blasphemed the divine name. They found Jesus' words even more provocative than his works. It was bad enough that he should make a cripple carry his pallet or should smear clay on a blind man's eyes on the sabbath day, thus abetting a technical breach of the sabbath law, but the arguments by which he justified these actions were, they thought, much worse. The attempt to take his life after the incident at the pool of Bethesda (presumably then also by stoning, though this is not said in so many words) was prompted by the fact that 'he not only broke the sabbath, but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God' (*John 5:18*).

Jesus, however, asks them for which of his good

works they are stoning him. All his works were done by the Father's direction (*John 5:19*); they were 'good works' (*erga kala*, 'beautiful works') not only because they were acts of obedience to the Father but also because they were acts of blessing to men. His works bore witness to his divine mission (*John 5:36*); his words were in perfect harmony with his works.

10:33 The Jews replied, 'It is not for a good work that we are stoning you but for blasphemy, namely, because you, human being as you are, make yourself God.'

On his works, apart from his words, they might have been able to put a different interpretation, but his words were unambiguous. While he subordinated himself to God, as the Son to the Father, yet he claimed to be one with the Father, placing himself on the other side of the chasm that separated God from man, the Creator from the creature. The logic of their argument seemed incapable of refutation: this was blasphemy, an offence that involved the whole community in serious guilt, unless the perpetrator were put away from among his people, 'cut off from Israel'. Readers of this Gospel, however, know better: they can follow its record of the sayings and actions of Jesus in the light of the prologue, from which they have already learned that Jesus is the incarnate Word, that Word which in the beginning was with God and was God. They have learned, too, that Jesus is uniquely the Son who has his being in the Father's bosom and has come forth from God to make him known in the world. High as his claims are, then, they are grounded in the truth of his being and his mission: his works are the works of God; his words are the words of God. He is not 'making himself God'; he is not 'making himself' anything, but in word and work he is showing himself to be what he truly is — the Son sent by the Father to bring light and life to mankind.

The Enigma

continued from page seventy-three

had been established (*Prov. 8*). Neither did he know that the time would come when this same One would send His servants to the uttermost parts of the earth, and that His praise would resound from every land.

'What is his name?' Agur asks. Isaiah would answer not many years later, that His name is called 'Wonderful', but centuries would pass before Gabriel would give Him His earthly name. 'Thou shalt call His name Jesus.'

'What is his son's name?' This was the final question, and the comment added suggests that Agur expected an answer. Again we turn to *Isaiah* (*chap. 53*) and read these words, 'Who shall declare His generation, for He is cut off out of the land of the living?' There are none who can claim to be of His lineage, but by spiritual 'new birth' He has become the 'first-born of many brethren', and a multitude now called the sons of God are being brought to glory through faith in His Name.

PREACHER'S WORKSHOP

Pastoral Preaching

J. Wood

The Scriptures define the shepherd's role as: strengthening the weak, healing the sick, binding up the crippled, restoring those who have strayed, and seeking the lost (*Ezek. 34:4*). In a word it is 'the cure of souls'. And such is the pastoral Elder's task. He follows the example of 'the Good Shepherd' in seeing the people as sheep without a shepherd, and being moved with compassion towards them (*Matt. 9:36*).

He will express this concern through his *prayers*, of course. In imagination he will follow his people out into the world of work, along the highways and low ways of human experience, and through the great moments of birth, marriage, and death. He will remember them all by name, and bear them all up before God. As A. W. Burnet put it in his *Pleading with Men*, he will pray for great things: Christ in his peoples' hearts, heaven in their homes, Pentecost in the Church, peace among the nations, and the Kingdom of God in the world.

Such pastoral concern will inevitably find expression in his *visitation*. Most people have heard of the preacher who suffered from foot and mouth disease: he couldn't preach and wouldn't visit! But pure religion and undefiled before God the Father is to VISIT . . . as James, the brother of Jesus wrote (*1:27*). For the late George Dempster it meant scouring the London docks for the drop-outs of society, and being guided by God to effect some most remarkable reconciliations and restorations. His books are still worth reading. But for most of us it will mean the more prosaic tasks of calling on absentees, making contact with the parents of children and young people in the fellowship, writing to couples on their wedding anniversary, and taking a

bunch of flowers to the shut-ins. It will also mean standing on the doorstep as soon as the ambulance arrives, if possible; taking the ex-offender for an interview with some prospective employer; and writing at once to the College or University where the young believer hopes to go. It will take involvement, compassion, imagination, and persistence. They say it was never possible to see James Hood Wilson, the much loved Scottish minister, crossing the street without being reminded of a shepherd in search of a sheep.

Then too, if the New Testament is our guide in the matter, the shepherd's concern will also motivate his *pulpit ministry*. 'Our preaching must be from pastoral care to pastoral need' as Frederic Greeves once wrote. It goes without saying that no one worth his salt will ever preach at a situation in the fellowship. That would make the pulpit or platform a coward's castle from which to hurl verbal thunderbolts at people powerless to defend themselves. It would also guarantee some empty seats the following week! But it certainly means that the pastoral elder will preach *to* and *in* a situation by expounding the Scripture to meet a need.

Of course, we must 'do the work of an evangelist' by regularly preaching the gospel with heart-felt simplicity. In fact there is a dearth of good gospel preaching at the present time even in churches normally regarded as 'evangelical'. But we are required to preach the *whole* counsel of God and to present every man perfect in Christ. We cannot be content with shallow discipleship. We want to grow along with our people towards maturity. So we need to preach about the conquest of suffering, the doctrine of sanctification, the means

of grace and hope of heaven, the value of the Christian home and the biblical pattern of marriage, the mending of relationships, the need for restitution, and the call for moral courage. Behind the smiling faces of the people in our pews are broken hearts, shattered hopes, and crumbling homes. The times are out of joint; men's minds are in disarray; and people need 'the balm of Gilead'. How sad if people should sit uncomfited and leave unblest either because we do not wrestle with the Scriptures on their behalf, or because we are too intent on making them hear our own pet emphases.

*Some are dead, you must rouse them;
some are troubled, you must comfort them;
others are burdened, you must point them to the burden bearer;
still more are puzzled, you must enlighten and guide them;
many are hungry, you must feed them;
still others are careless and indifferent, you must warn and woo them.*

(C. H. Spurgeon)

What of the results? In evangelism, 'results' are often obvious. But for the most part pastoral preaching is less spectacular. It calls for durability: for the ability to endure in the absence of 'results'. Or as Patience Strong once put it in a poem about making the most of the world we are in:

*It isn't discussing, or staring, or fussing,
That'll coax us a crop from the clay;
It's draining, manuring, persisting, enduring:
It's prayerfully pegging away.
continued on page eighty*

'HE WHO NOW LETTETH'

Dr. R. E. D. Clark offers an interpretation of 2 Thess. 2:7

Dr. R. E. D. Clark, M.A., Ph.D., is editor of *Faith and Thought*, the *Journal of the Victoria Institute*, and author of several books on science and religion.

Few statements by the apostle Paul have puzzled generations of readers more than his remark in *2 Thessalonians* 2:7, translated in the AV 'He who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed . . .'. To what was he referring? Why does he not explain himself more clearly?

If we look at the passage again, taking care to note the words Paul uses, I think we shall see that Paul does explain himself and that our difficulty arises because he does not explain himself twice instead of once.

The disciples at Thessalonica were deeply concerned lest the day of the Lord had already come (*2 Thess.* 2:2). Paul writes to comfort and reassure them: 'We beg you, brethren, not to be quickly shaken in mind or excited, either by spirit, or by letter purporting to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.'

Why, we ask, should such a possibility upset the disciples? If the day of the Lord had come, they knew that their Lord would soon return, destroying the powers of evil. They would surely have rejoiced. If suffering faced them, they knew that it could not last for long. Why did Paul have to beg of them not to be shaken in mind?

The opening words of the chapter give us the clue. Paul is writing 'concerning the coming (presence) of our Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling to meet him.' The

point is that, the day might have come but they had not been gathered to Him. Jesus had warned disciples that such a thing might happen. He had pictured the minister of a church ('master of the house' *Luke* 12:39) who had failed to watch and had become worldly. While he was lording it over others, his Master came like a thief in the night. Many of his flock, the members of his church, had been (as it were) stolen, but he had been left behind. They had been gathered to meet the Lord, but now he, their faithless pastor, would have to await judgment.

Again, Jesus had urged disciples living in the last days to pray that they might prevail to escape the things coming on the earth and to stand before the Son of Man (*Luke* 21:36: *ekpheugo* = escape is sometimes translated pass through, but there seems to be no justification for this). Could the Thessalonian Christians have been left behind because they were not faithful? Had they been left to face the horrors of the day of the Lord? No wonder the thought troubled them.

Paul assures them that their fears are groundless. The rebellion (apostasy) would come first and the Man of Sin (lawlessness) would be revealed before the great and terrible day of the Lord could come. This monster would oppose and exalt himself against every so-called god or object of worship, would proclaim himself to be God and 'would take his seat in the temple of God'. Here Paul uses *naos* (not to *hieron*) for temple, a word he commonly uses for the church, not the Jewish temple at Jerusalem. He is saying, apparently, that the Man of Sin will pronounce

himself head of the Christian church.

The forces which make ready the way for the appearance of this Antichrist are already at work, says Paul. But at present they are held in check and the Thessalonians know quite well what it is that holds them back — for Paul had discussed the matter with them before. 'The mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he (*he* is not in Gk.) who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way (Gk. *mesos* = midst). And then the lawless one will be revealed' (*2 Thess.* 2:7,8).

THE MYSTERY OF LAWLESSNESS

What does this mean? We ask first, What is the 'mystery of lawlessness'? In modern English a mystery is something mysterious, something unexplained. In olden days, it meant a secret doctrine known only to the initiated: people spoke, for example, of the mysteries of freemasonry. This is not the NT meaning of mystery (*μυστήριον*): in fact the word in the NT is usually found in connection with verbs speaking of revelation or proclamation. Paul says, 'We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery' (*1 Cor.* 2:7); he 'makes known the mystery of the gospel' (*Eph.* 6:19), etc. Mystery is some truth known to God but now made known to his people, or to all the world. Sometimes it is pointedly said that the mystery in question was quite unknown to previous generations. Our Lord's parables of the kingdom fulfilled the prophecy 'I will utter what has been hidden from the foundation of the world' (*Matt.* 13:35) and in doing so He proclaimed a mystery — 'To you it has been given to

know the secrets (mysteries) of the kingdom of heaven. Likewise Paul speaks of 'the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to the saints' (*Col.* 1:26).

Then what is the 'mystery of iniquity'? Was there anything secret about iniquity? The OT contains many references to the success of the powers of evil at the time of the end. No one reading the Book of Daniel, for instance, would gain the impression that the world would get better before the coming of the Son of Man.

The meaning can hardly be in doubt. The fact that it puzzles us arises from a misinterpretation of our Lord's parables of the kingdom. We are taught from an early age that Christianity is like leaven, or yeast, which acts slowly but invisibly until all the dough is leavened. Or it is like the small mustard seed which grows into a tree in which the birds of heaven make their nests — symbol of Christianity's growth till all the nations are converted. But such interpretations cannot be correct. They reveal no mystery, no secret. That the kingdom of the Son of Man would extend over the whole world, so that the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, is part and parcel of OT prophetic teaching. Matthew makes it absolutely plain that what Jesus was teaching was something quite new: it is 'what has been hidden from the foundation of the world' (*Matt.* 13:35), it is not a restatement in parable form of what the prophets had prophesied.

Then what was Jesus teaching? He was saying that although he was planting his

teaching, which would produce his church, in the world, his church would gradually become corrupted. Even the symbols he chooses show this. Used as a symbol, leaven normally stands for what is evil (compare *Matt. 16:6; 1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9* etc.). The same is true of the birds: in fact in the parable of the sower it was birds which took away the good seed planted by the sower. Here, then, is teaching which was wholly new. The OT had nothing to say about the silent growth of tares in the field of wheat, about the church which the Messiah would plant in the world becoming tainted with evil. This was a mystery or secret which had never been revealed before the coming of Jesus.

That the early church saw the history of Christianity in this light can hardly be doubted. John writes saying that antichrist will come but already in his day, he says, 'many antichrists have come' (*1 John 2:18*). They were nurtured in the church but soon denied Christian truth. Similarly, Paul says that after his death the church will become steadily more corrupted by false teaching. By the time of the end 'people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths' (*2 Tim. 4:3,4*). As for the character of the people in that day, it will be evil: men will be 'lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.' These are they who have rebelled against all Christian morals. Yet they are not basically anti-religious. 'Holding the

form of religion, but denying the power of it' is how Paul describes them.

ROME?

It is difficult to doubt that this is what Paul means in *2 Thessalonians* also. 'The mystery of lawlessness is already at work' (*2:7*). But what holds it in check? Certainly not the Roman State. What concern had the Imperial government with maintaining the purity of a little-known sect of Christians? But how easily this misunderstanding — repeated by several of the early Fathers (Tertullian, Jerome, and mentioned by Augustine) arose. Faced by the everlasting need for compromise with worldly powers, the leaders of the early churches forgot that the mystery of lawlessness was at work and growing in their very midst. They ceased to think of it as a mystery. Rome put down the lawless. So the power that restrains the Lawless One was Rome. Paul had said that when the power was taken out of the way, the Antichrist would be revealed. It followed that Rome's power would come to an end and die. After that the Man of Lawlessness would be revealed.

What happened? Rome was a long time dying, nor was its death followed by the appearance of Antichrist. However, Rome lost much of its power before its final destruction and this was gradually transferred to the Roman Catholic church. And so, in the Middle Ages Christians who held to the Rome theory argued that the Roman Catholic church, and in particular the Pope of Rome — a succession of men rather than a single individual — was the Antichrist. This view was adopted by the Protestants at the time of the Reformation. It served to embitter relations between Protestants and Catholics — a bitterness

which lasts to this day. Whatever sins the Catholics committed, and they are many, Popes do not fulfil what Paul says is true of the Antichrist: 'the man of lawlessness... the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.' Popes do not claim to be divine. They claim to be vicars of Christ. It is Christ they worship, and Mary too, but only because she was the mother of our Lord. Without a doubt some of them have been pious men, deluded from birth by the false teachings of the church, but doing what they thought to be right and sometimes suffering for their beliefs. Many, though by no means all, were fellow believers with all Christians. The Protestant who insults them may well find himself under the judgment of God (*Matt. 5:22*).

THE RESTRAINER

It is manifest that the interpretation which equates imperial Rome with the power which prevents the revelation of the Antichrist is false. Then what is the interpretation? And why does Paul use the strange expression, 'until he (not in Gk.) is out of the midst (*mesos*)'?

We remember that the passage starts 'concerning... our assembling to meet him' and that it deals with the 'mystery of lawlessness' working within the nominal church. 'Out of the midst' may then, mean, 'out of the midst of the church' and refer to the taking away of God's faithful servants to meet their Lord. This makes excellent sense. There are devoted and faithful believers in every part of the church today. Should an upstart seek to become head of the church and demand worship, proclaiming

that he is God, he would at once be denounced. But what if all the faithful and true Christians were removed leaving only those who keep up an outward form of godliness — what then? There would be no hindrance. 'The mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only (he) who now restrains it will do so until (he) is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed' (*2:7-8*).

But why is Paul so seemingly guarded? Why does he not say openly what it is that prevents the revealing of the Man of Lawlessness? It has been conjectured that he deems it wise not to do so, for if he said Rome would fall, he might have been suspected of insurrection. The conjecture seems unnecessary. No secrecy is involved. Paul has already said what he is talking about — the presence of Christ and the gathering together of the saints to meet their Lord. Those he writes to are the people who are to be taken out of the midst of the church. They (or many of them) are the salt which has not lost its savour. When they are gone the way will be open for the mystery of evil to triumph. Paul had explained himself on a previous occasion (*2:5*); he has done so again here (*2:1*). Need he do so yet again?

That this interpretation is correct is suggested by the fact that though Paul set out to write about the 'presence... and our assembling to meet him' he never again in the whole chapter even alludes to 'our assembling to meet him' — that is, according to the usual views found in commentaries. Is this a lapse of memory on Paul's part? This is hard to believe. But if 'our assembling to meet him' is directly connected with the appearance of the Antichrist, all becomes plain. Paul has kept to the point.

Yet from time to time we are given glimpses of the grace of God at work in the clay of human nature. We watch a youngster struggling into manhood or womanhood, like a butterfly emerging from the chrysalis. We rejoice to see the sufferer finding grace sufficient to meet his need. Our hearts are glad when the flame of faith begins to flicker once more in hearts where previously ashes smouldered fitfully. And we are delighted when weakly Christians

start to show signs of maturity.

No doubt the Preacher's aphorism about casting one's bread upon the waters and seeing it after many days, refers to the benefits derived from trade, the profits accruing from an import-export business, or even the feed-back from overseas aid (*Eccles. 11:1*)! But it has a relevance to the seed we sow through the word we preach (*Isa. 55:10,11*), for 'God would not be so unjust as to forget all that you did for love of his

name' (*Heb. 6:10 NEB*). It sometimes happens that long after we have preached a particular message, we discover that it spoke to one particular person with special power, and provided just the comfort, guidance, or rebuke that was needed. At such time our words prove to be fitly spoken like beautiful oranges on a silver dish: sweet, fragrant, tasteful and wholesome (*Prov. 25:11*).

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chapter headings are instructive and inviting:- 'The Family of God and the Life of Sonship', 'The Kingdom of God and the Life of Obedience', 'The Son of God and the Life of Imitation'. Chapters on the Oral period and primitive catechesis, Paul, Peter and John follow, and the final chapter 'Looking Backwards — and Forwards' seeks to make some broad conclusions without 'imposing on the biblical material a unity that it does not possess', and to suggest, rather tentatively it seems, something of the permanent validity of the Biblical teaching. It is this rather vague connection between the Bible and Christian ethics today which leaves one a little unsatisfied. Undoubtedly there is the implication in much of the book that the teaching is relevant, and perhaps even authoritative, for us today, and maybe the deficiency will be rectified in Volume 2. On the other hand, if the second volume is primarily historical, the lack may still remain.

*Review by Dr. R. E. Davies,
 All Nations Christian College*

Renaissance Drama and the English Church Year R Chris Hassel, Jr. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln & London. 215pp. £10.50.
 The Renaissance English court celebrated certain holy days in the church year by both attending a Christian service and forming the audience at a command performance of a play or masque. It is Professor Hassel's contention in this important book that the liturgy and sermon heard in the morning must have affected expectations of the drama viewed on the same day.

First he analyses the records of the plays and masques which were staged for the entertainment of the royal court between 1510 and 1640. During this period a tradition existed which called for dramatic performance at court on the feasts of St. Stephen (26 December), St. John (27 December), Holy Innocents (28 December), Circumcision (1 January), Epiphany (6 January), Candlemas (2 February), Shrovetide (the Sunday,

Monday and Tuesday before Ash Wednesday), Easter Monday and Tuesday, Michaelmas (29 September) and Hallowmas (1 November). Then Hassel convincingly demonstrates that almost 40% of the surviving dramas produced for court performance on these Christian festivals from 1585 to 1642 display remarkable parallels with the religious themes prescribed for the day. The chosen plays of Shakespeare, with Jonson's and Beaumont and Fletcher's, are especially relevant to the liturgical currents of the church year. This is true of both commissioned masques and some selected secular plays: *Twelfth Night* even has a festival title. Hassel provides the liturgical details and shows close acquaintance with the sermons of major preachers (Latimer, Donne). He poses a number of questions requiring further research and is careful not to claim too much for his pioneering study. He denies that 'any of these works were instructional vehicles for the Anglican church,' and continues, 'The plays are far more complex than the festival motifs they could have suggested' (p.51). He also emphasizes the number of plays which have been lost and so cannot have their text tested for liturgical relevance. Its occasional grating Americanisms (e.g., 'proudful' for 'proud') and restricted index do not detract from the book's exposition of its concrete evidence in support of a Christian approach to (among others) Shakespeare's plays. It helps to validate the work of critics such as R. G. Hunter who have perceived Christian patterns in them, since we now know that contemporary cultivated audiences will have readily discerned such themes and allusions. Hassel's book is intended for literary students and scholars, but it would give any intelligent Christian fresh impetus to read or watch Shakespeare, and, perhaps, to reconsider the old problem of Christianity's attitude to the arts.

*Review by Dr A. G. Newell,
 Liverpool University.*

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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.

This month's Readers' Forum is contributed by Mr. P. Derek Warren. Readers' comments are invited on a topic of practical importance to church life.

A Plea for a structured leadership in Assemblies

One of the more satisfactory features of our Church structures is our shared leadership, a concept towards which other Christians (particularly Anglicans) are fast moving.

And we sometimes pride ourselves that on our oversights there is no *primus inter pares* but we are all 'brethren'. Sometimes the oversight is referred to as 'the brethren'. The effect has been weak leadership, unless there is a strong brother who asserts himself and becomes 'the leading brother'. He may be a good man and this is often for the good of the fellowship. We think of Robert Chapman of Barnstaple, George Muller and Rendle Short of Bristol, Dr. Chave Cox of Highgate and there are similar men today. Their

assemblies prosper under this benevolent leadership tacitly accepted by their brethren. But of course there are other 'leading brethren' whose influence is baneful, but no-one has the courage to engineer their removal. Tyranny is not unknown in assemblies, and minorities and even majorities opt for a quiet life.

The early Church took its pattern of government from the synagogue and from contemporary secular forms and we could well do the same. There were 'leading men among the brethren' at Jerusalem, but we are not told how they came to be appointed or recognised as such. The Churches need a visible pivot, one to whom the congregation and particularly fringe folk can relate. People do not relate in the same way to a group (who are anyway rarely seen together as such and whose names are sometimes not even known by the believers).

My plea is that the elders appoint a chairman who will hold office for a limited period of say three years (not for life as do many 'leading brothers'), be accountable to his brethren (who can remove him sooner if they think fit), and who while holding office will not only act as regular chairman of the elders, but also be the visible pivot or *primus inter pares* among the elders to whom the congregation can relate. All our Christian societies adopt such a pattern and have a chairman and a secretary or chief executive, and this is not found in practice to inhibit collective leadership or to lead to domination.

One of the reasons for this proposal is that suitably gifted men do not

edge their way to the top, and if there are less gifted men around who seek power there is a risk that in the absence of a constitutional structure the wrong man will become 'the leading brother'. Furthermore, the right man, who will probably be of non-assertive disposition, may well find it more congenial to exercise his gift of leadership outside the church where his position is recognised. Secondly, the congregation needs a 'visible pivot'. The availability of a recognised chairman of the elders who would take initiatives and be available for trouble shooting (the job of most chairmen) would go some way to allay dissatisfaction. There would also be someone to whom other Christian congregations (and their leaders) can relate. The congregation would undoubtedly get better service this way, for during his term of office (a limit of three years is suggested) the brother concerned would no doubt give special priority to his service to the assembly and seek ways of fulfilling his individual ministry more adequately. If the congregation called a full time worker, a chairman of the elders would be all the more necessary. Structured leadership of the kind I have outlined is not inconsistent with the New Testament pattern and in this I join issue with a recent CBRF article which suggested that the concept of *primus inter pares* was not contemplated by the New Testament. It is perfectly clear that leadership by individuals was recognised. While elders are always found in the plural in a local church, when the church grew (as did the church in Jerusalem) the leaders emerged and were acknowledged.

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The August Question

As the end of the twentieth century approaches, I have become aware of an increasing number of confident forecasts that the Second Advent must take place around A.D. 2000 (some forecasters, bearing in mind the error of Dionysius Exiguus*, fix on the year 1996). Have others become aware of this trend? Also, while readers of *The Harvester* are not likely to be taken in by this sort of thing, how can help best be given to those people who are liable to be impressed by such forecasts?

(*The gentleman who miscalculated the first year A.D. — Ed.)

Dr. Tony Newell replies:

Within minutes of reading Professor Bruce's question I noticed an announcement by Souvenir Press for a new book by Charles Berlitz to be published in October. Called *Doomsday 1999 A.D.*, the work is alleged to demonstrate that "we are reaching the culmination of a long chain of prediction pointing to the end of this century. From the prophecies of ancient Israel (sic) and Hindu tradition to Islamic beliefs and Aztec age cycles, the closing years of the second millennium were foreseen as a time of holocaust. The sixteenth-century prophet Nostradamus dated the final cataclysm quite precisely, in the seventh month of 1999." The blurb writer goes on to suggest that "the present climatic upheavals" point to "some imminent major change in the balance of the Earth" and routinely mentions nuclear weapons. No mention, of course, of the Second Advent.

(It's strange that at the other extreme of popular science, Carl Sagan can confidently

declare, in his fortunately inimitable purple prose, that the Earth will be destroyed a million years hence by the death of the sun!) Can it be that Christian or pseudo-Christian forecasts reflect secular anxieties or even simply sacralize them? Professor Bruce asks how people likely to be impressed by end-of-the-world or Second Advent prophecies may be helped. If they don't need to be converted to Christ, reference to historical precedents and our Lord's statement that only the Father knows when "that day" is to be, could give comfort. Since the death sentence wonderfully concentrates the mind, however, disquiet induced by partial acceptance of such forecasts ought to result in greater practical holiness.

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

I was a boy when I first heard that the Lord would probably return around A.D. 2000; and that theory was based on the two pence which the inn keeper received from the Samaritan to care for the robbed and beaten-up man as in *Luke 10:30-37*. That was in the early 'twenties', and may have impressed some keen, but inexperienced, believers. And in the light of the Lord's exhortation in *Matthew 24:33* to detect his near return by certain events it is natural to think more that the second advent cannot be long delayed. But in the light of the Lord's instruction to the apostles in *Acts 1:7* the date in question cannot generally, let alone accurately be foreseen because 'the Father' and he alone, 'has fixed by his own authority'. We must certainly 'watch and pray', but not over-react to current events.

Dr. David Brady replies:

In reply to Professor Bruce's question in the August issue,

one could, I suppose, review in dismay the whole history of date-fixing since the time of our Lord's ascension. Despite our Lord's detraction from 'the times and seasons' and direction to the great commission to proclaim the good news, many good minds have been deflected and distracted by a desire to manipulate the numbers of Scripture into some kind of celestial horoscope. We may think of the unrest abroad as Christians first approached the year 1,000 (the end of the millennium?), the obsession with years of peculiar date such as 1666 (the year of the beast?), and now the year 2000 (the conclusion of six earthly millennia?), but we forget that God has given us no justification to make such calculations and that no good comes of them (except perhaps some feelings of personal superiority which are akin to first-century gnosticism).

It is not merely 'the ignorant and unstable' who twist the Scriptures in this way, but great minds have also been employed at this game, including John Bale, William Fulke, and William Whiston of Josephus fame. This latter confidently predicted the termination of the '1260 days' (cf. *Rev. 11.3; 12.6*) in A.D. 1716, but he unfortunately outlived the date and so recalculated to A.D. 1731. Still unsuccessful with the passing years, he made later calculations to coincide with the years 1749 and 1754, evidence enough that zeal for date-fixing is not quickly extinguished by the plain facts of history. We probably all know how Seventh-Day Adventism manages to re-interpret a prediction of our Lord's return in 1844 and go on the belief that this is still a year of celestial significance. I would not be surprised if a certain little work published by Robert

Fleming in 1701 makes its re-appearance in print once again as the year 2000 approaches. Fleming was one date-fixer who managed to achieve some success (there must be a lucky one among so many!) in predicting the downfall of Rome in three successive stages in the years 1794, 1848, and 2000 (which is also predicted to be the time of Christ's return). 1794, of course, saw the devastatingly anti-papal effects of the French Revolution, whilst in 1848, 'the year of revolutions', the Pope fled from Rome when an Italian Republic was proclaimed. The book seems to have been republished whenever there was serious unrest in the world and I confidently expect to see it reappear during the next few years — should the Lord not have returned before! But what can be done to counteract such obsessions with reading between the lines of Scripture what was never intended to be there? It is hard to see an easy solution. Plain common sense and sound reasoning may well fail. I remember once trying to show a friend the stupidity of the British Israel notion that the word 'British' is derived from the two Hebrew words *berith* ('covenant') and *ish* ('man') and means 'covenant man'. I tried to make my proof to the contrary as plain and coherent as possible, but this did not stop my friend joining the followers of Herbert Armstrong. I have long felt that we are all of us too ready to come to Scripture to prove a point of our own devising. We must all seek to come to it afresh with open hearts and minds and to remember that 'these are they which testify of me'. Let us find Christ there. The more that we see and know of our blessed Lord, the less likely we are to be content with half-truths and distorted images. As Paul put it, 'We

compel every human thought to surrender in obedience to Christ' (2 Cor. 10.5 NEB). Christianity is Christ, not esotericism, nor legalism, nor any other ism that substitutes for or comes between our Lord and us. Let us turn one another to him and the other concoctions will grow strangely dim.

Lt. Cmdr. H. F. Norman, R.N. replies:

Whilst readers of **The Harvester** may not 'be taken in' as Prof. Bruce puts it by those who attempt to fix dates they surely must believe that the signs of the times indicate the imminence of the Great Spectacular of the Ages, the second advent to the planet Earth of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not only Christians who have an increasing sense that we are on the threshold of the great

events, but secular and profane prophets are using such terms as 'Countdown to Armageddon' and speculating that this decade 'could well be our last'.

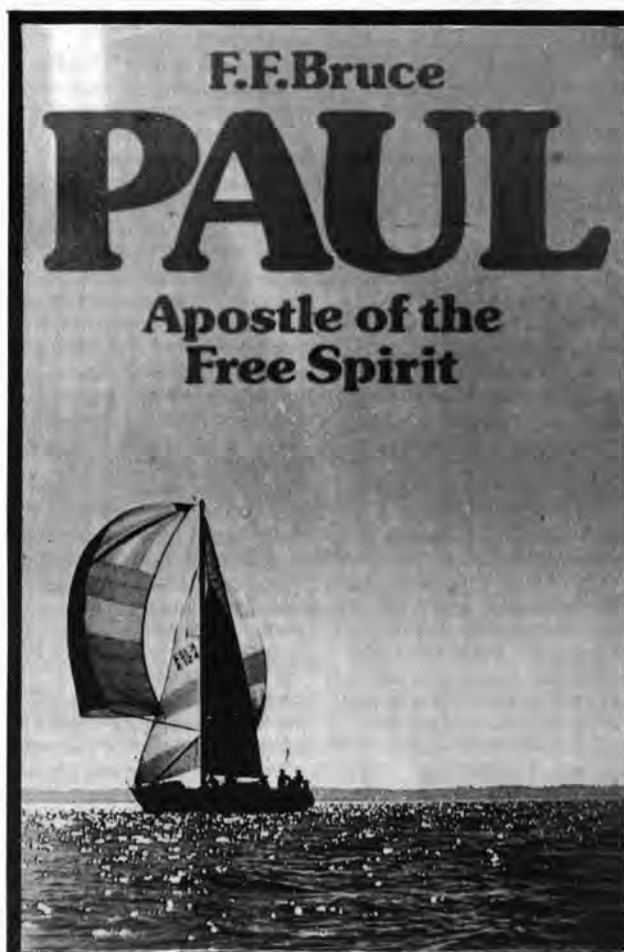
It is common knowledge that earth's resources are fast diminishing; and science and technology can find no satisfactory alternative to the fossil fuels. The rain forests are being reduced at 100 acres a minute, world population is increasing faster than food can be produced to feed it, and we are told that by the year 2000 the world will be overpopulated. In *Matthew 25* the Lord foretold that 'As it was in the days of Noah so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man'. In the days of Noah violence filled the earth and it was altogether corrupt. Where in the last decade has there not been violence, war,

rebellion, revolution, or a coup? Every continent has seen riot, unrest and lawlessness and we live on a polluted planet, both morally and environmentally, with humanly speaking no possible prospect of improvement. In Noah's day there was much spirit activity upon earth (*Gen. 6:1-4*), and today we are made increasingly aware of the occult, witches covens, demonic activity and Satan worship. Significantly, Noah was a preacher of righteousness who was treated with indifference and total disregard for his message of coming judgement. The preaching of the Good News of Jesus Christ, in this country certainly, finds little response or interest from the population at large. In addition to the Lord's own teaching we have the Apostle Paul's catalogues

of Last Day characteristics in *1 Tim 4* and *2 Tim 3*, all very relevant to 1981.

The Editor replies:

There is nothing new under the sun, and I am quite sure that Professor Bruce could have taken us back to a fascinating range of early Christian writers (if not Jewish writers before them) who thought that the six days of creation typified six thousand years of this world's history, up to the final dénouement. Perhaps one day he will write an article for us on this theme! But this makes me wonder whether the 1996 variant owes more to Archbishop Ussher's theory that the world was created in 4004 BC than to the littler Dionysius? Can readers produce any other examples of the amazing persistence of this type of folklore in prophetic 'interpretation'?



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Literal Interpretation

From Dr. David J. Clark

Dear Mr. Coad,

The Harvester, I fear, arrives here too late for us to meet your deadlines!

It may indeed be 'safer' to take Jesus' words literally, especially if one wishes to avoid the responsibility for thinking about their meaning. But this is hardly the wiser course of action.

In matters of this kind, there cannot be one answer which is of worldwide and permanent validity. If a command of the Lord is framed in terms of the specific features of first-century Palestinian culture, then we must ask whether it would make any sense to transfer it literally into another time or culture.

In Papua New Guinea where I live, many people go barefoot or with light sandals, and it could well make sense for Christians to wash the feet of visitors, though I am not aware of any groups who do this. In Britain, to inflict footwashing on one's guests would be a meaningless inconvenience. However, if Christians wish to obey the spirit of this command, it should not be difficult to find culturally relevant ways of showing their obedience. Cleaning the visitors' shoes, perhaps?

Yours sincerely,

David J. Clark

Box 18

Port Moresby

Papua New Guinea

Is God a poet?

From Dr. David Brady

Dear Mr. Coad,

I have just read Mr. H. L. Ellison's article on 'Preaching from the Old Testament (2)' in August's **Harvester**.

In this article, Mr. Ellison recommends that we should shun allegory and grants to typology a begrudging place in our interpretation of Scripture. In his argument he suggests, for example, that God did not fix some of the details that typologists love to dwell on and that they are really mere matters of chance, such as Mephibosheth's dwelling in Lo-debar. Now, one does get a little tired of repeatedly hearing the traditional application of this fact, but I feel personally sure that it was indeed divinely determined that Mephibosheth should live in Lo-debar ('no pasture'), just as much as it was divinely determined that our Lord should come from Bethlehem ('house of bread'). There is, after all, nothing outside God's ordaining, although the significance we may find in some Biblical statements may not always be classed as 'the encouragement of the Scriptures' (*Rom. 15:4*). As for the significance which is generally attached to Lo-debar, no doubt it is all to the good. Let us not too readily despise the 'gems' that fellow-believers find in the most unlikely places.

I am sure we would all agree that the preaching of the good news to the outsider by means of typology is, as Mr. Ellison says, 'quite unnecessarily complicated'. But the believer in Christ and the inspired volume ought surely to look upon things in a different light. Would the scripturally well educated youth, to whom Mr. Ellison refers, also say of the figures in the Revelation that they too are 'quite unnecessarily complicated'? No doubt these things might have

been said more simply (and perhaps most of us wish at times that they had been!), but the 'message of wisdom among the mature' (*1 Cor. 2:6*) will not be expressed in quite the same way as 'the elementary truths of God's word' (*Heb. 5:12*). For those with a real appetite, God's revealed banquet is extremely rich, and includes vintage wine as well as boiled potatoes.

Could it perhaps be that we are all too content with the baby's spoonfuls? If the writer to the Hebrews restrained himself from elaborating some of these riches (*Heb. 9:5*, referred to by Mr. Ellison), it was not, I suggest, because he did not find typology so very attractive. The writer's apparent meaning in that verse is that it is not fitting to discuss the symbolism of these things in detail at the present time. The word 'now' suggests not a restraint of profitability, but a temporal restraint: 'it is not now the time to speak in detail'. Cf. his *estin nun legein* with *ouk estin kalon labein* ('it is not good to take the children's bread . . .') in *Mt. 15:26*. *Nun* ('now') gives quite a different meaning than *kalon* ('good') in the latter verse. Prof. Bruce observes in his commentary that the writer to the Hebrews 'leaves us with the impression that he could have enlarged at some length on their symbolism had he chosen so to do'. What prevents him from spending time discussing these things is not a fear of too much typology, but a realisation that such a discussion might lead him too far afield from his present purpose, which is a discussion of the high priest's service. The writer's restraint may also be conditioned by his readers' own backwardness. They were slow to learn, were content with 'milk', and were not able to digest 'solid food', a 'solid food' which the writer

does not, however, manage to restrain himself from providing as he returns to elaborate the priesthood of Melchizedek in *chapter 7*. Dare I suggest that if that chapter had been delivered in the average pulpit today and had never previously found its way into Scripture, it would be written off by the average congregation as being much too fanciful by far? It might even be laughed at. Could it be that we have actually sunk back to the poor spiritual state deplored in those Hebrew believers?

The same diagnosis may perhaps be suggested for 'the widespread falling off of interest in "Assembly Principles"' which Mr. Ellison also notes. I am no advocate of 'Assembly Principles' in the sense of a legalistically selected group of doctrines relating to the church which are denominationally espoused and professed (perhaps that is what Mr. Ellison intends by the use of capital letters), but I do believe that the Bible contains teaching about the church and its practices which should excite our whole-hearted interest and concern. While we speak the language of the modern age, let us not tailor our message to suit the fashions of any age. We may be put to shame when the fashion of the next age evidences a rediscovery of such neglected beauties as the typology of Scripture.

Yours in our Lord Jesus Christ,
David Brady
467 Kings Road
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'Angels Unawares?'

From Miss Bessie Clark

Dear Sir,

I have just read Professor Coralie Rendle-Short's contribution to this month's *Readers' Forum* concerning *Hebrews 13:2*. She ends her most interesting narrative 'Why, I wonder do these two (incidents) stand out in my memory? Am I being fanciful? What do others think?'

I should like to share something out of my own experience. I am a very ordinary person, quite down-to-earth and not given to flights of fancy. Shortly after my mother's death five years years ago there came a knock at my door and on the step were two nuns. They asked for a contribution 'for those in need, particularly the old people.' Now, on occasions such as these, it would be my custom to leave the caller on the doorstep and rummage in my handbag for a small donation. However, for some odd reason, I felt such a sense of the Lord's presence and a feeling of joy in my own heart, that I said 'Oh do come in and I will make you a cup of coffee.' They came in and we had a wonderful talk about the Lord Jesus. My lips seemed to be opened (and this is unusual for me; indeed, to this day, my prayer is 'Lord, give me opened lips').

Two years later, they appeared again, and when I opened the door I felt the same rush of love in my heart and joy at seeing them. We had our coffee and again my lips were opened and the presence of the Lord was so real.

Now last week I was returning home in the car when I saw them on the

road, and, without thinking, I stopped the car and went after them. Why? I don't know. I only know that I was impelled to go and speak to them. I said 'Oh, I'm sorry you did not find me at home, but here is a donation towards your work.' I opened my purse and was somewhat horror-struck to find that it contained only three five-pound notes — no single notes and no change. For a second I felt an awful tug within, then I handed them a five-pound note. A woman was passing by at the time, but stopped and said, in their presence, 'Oh, they called on me but I gave them nothing. I'm not a Catholic anyway.' 'Neither am I', I said, 'but I love and worship the God above, whom they are seeking to serve.'

Well, it was all over in a few moments and I returned to my car and went my way home, five pounds short in my housekeeping money for the week. But wait! At the end of that week I was seven pounds in hand, and I don't know where it came from, or how it happened. Or do I?

Were they angels? Who can tell. But we need to be expectant. What did the poet say?

*'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
That miss the many-splendoured thing.*

We have a most wonderful God, and one day much that mystifies us will be explained.

Yours sincerely,
Bessie Clark
136 Rugby Avenue
Sudbury, Wembley,
Middx HA0 3DP

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NEWS PAGE



Bible Exhibition

More than 8,000 people have been through the doors of the London Bible Gallery since it opened in 1979. They range from family parties to school groups and visitors to London from all over the world, and they find in the exhibition a fascinating view of the history and impact of the Bible. Entry is free, and a guided tour of the gallery, which is housed in the Bible House headquarters of the Bible Society, can take from an hour to an hour-and-a-half. The gallery is open Mondays to Fridays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., but a few special Saturday openings are planned through the year. These are to help those who cannot visit during the working week, and they provide an excellent opportunity for a local church to make up a party. The exhibition is designed with adults in mind, although children from the age of about eight will enjoy the visit. Parties should book in advance with the Exhibitions Assistant at Bible Society, 146 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BX. Tel: 01-248 4751.

India

It seems that the truth may never be discovered about the stabbing of Bert Overton in July. His body was found by police in a bush on the 22nd, his vehicle having been discovered abandoned elsewhere. There seems to have been no other motive but robbery. Commended from Launceston in Australia, he and his wife had served the Lord in the Boys' Home at Malvalli and in the Montauban Missionary Home during the

31 years of his service in India.

Religion in Schools

Religious education
Whether as parents or as Sunday school teachers and youth leaders, Christians still tend to misunderstand religious education. Sometimes they make unrealistic assumptions about the extent to which maintained schools should be expected to 'teach the Bible'. Sometimes they assume that nothing of value can be expected from modern religious education. Readers who want to know the current state of thinking on this important subject might do worse than send 50p to the schools section of the Humberside County Council Education Department, County Hall, Beverley, N. Humberside, HU17 9BA. This will procure them a copy of the new Humberside agreed syllabus of religious education. It is not a long document — less than 40 pages. But it sets out quite clearly some basic points which would be accepted by most RE teachers. For example, 'religious education helps children to understand religion'. Religion is further defined as 'a system of beliefs and practices which has a reference point beyond man'. While such an objective obviously involves the study of other religions besides Christianity, it is clearly stated that 'for cultural and historical reasons as well as its present importance the study of Christianity is basic to religious education... the Bible is important as the foundation book of the faith

but the study of Christianity entails more than Bible study.' It is important to be clear about what the maintained schools can be expected to provide. This syllabus offers precisely such information.

Religions: A Book of Beliefs by Myrtle Langley (Lion, £3.95) shows how non-Christian religions can be presented descriptively and in an attractive format. Copiously illustrated, the book does not confine itself to the history and creeds of the religions concerned but illustrates contemporary practice. It is the sort of book that should be available for young people in our multi-cultural society.

Lion Publishing As they celebrate their tenth year in business, Lion Publishing have announced the formation of a sales team of ten to promote their education list in schools throughout the country. Teachers who want to contact a representative should phone John Laister at Tring 5151.

Renewal and Training

There is certainly no dearth of meetings and conferences for Christians in general and young Christians in particular. The Fishers Fellowship announces another twelve 'Winning Another' five-week schools to be started in various parts of the country during the autumn. Details of these and requests for the organizing of local schools should be made to the Fishers Fellowship, 96 Plaistow Lane, Bromley, Kent.

Earth Invaders is a discipleship

course to help Christian young people develop a full Christian lifestyle. It will be run in 20 towns and cities in England and Wales from January to April 1982 and is sponsored by British Youth for Christ, Crusaders, CYFA and Scripture Union. Each of the 20 centres will stage four major events at which the speakers will be Clive Calver, Lance Pierson, Ian Leitch and George Verwer supported by Christian musicians and drama teams. But there will be an emphasis on learning in small groups. Local youth group leaders will be given training and provided with materials for group use. For details and dates, contact Brian Osborne, 75 St. Mary's Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 2LA. Tel: 0732-365313.

Let God Speak is a series of evening presentations featuring David Pawson, Clive Calver, Graham Kendrick and Geoffrey Stevenson, Ishmael and Steve Turner. Intended as a prophetic demonstration of what God is saying to his people today and intended to clarify God's call upon the lives of those present, it will visit major towns in England, Scotland and Wales during November and December. For details, contact Jill Garner, British Youth for Christ, 52-54 Lichfield Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1DG. Tel: 0902-28086/29353.

Ruanda Mission

The speaker at the Mission's Day of Thanksgiving for sixty years on October 3 at All Soul's Langham Place at 2 p.m. will be Festo Kivengere, who will be present in the United Kingdom to lead the

visit: 'From Uganda with love'.

The Salvation Army

The Advertising Standards Authority is following up complaints about the Salvation Army's fund-raising publicity. Questions have been raised about the proportion of the gifts ultimately devoted to the charitable purposes for which they are solicited. Interest has also been aroused by the Army's withdrawal in August from membership of the World Council of Churches. Dissatisfaction has focused upon World Council political emphases. The Army's unified structure means that its constituents in 86 countries are united in one WCC representation so that a decision taken for one applies to all.

Scientists Accept Creation

Two Professors of Astronomy, Fred Hoyle of Cambridge and Chandra Wickramasinghe of Cardiff, have written a book showing how their researches into the origin of life have led them to believe in the existence of a Creator. Independently, they found that the odds against life appearing on earth was so high that it cannot have begun spontaneously. Frequent and massive gaps in the fossil records show that major new changes can only have arisen as a result of intelligent and purposeful activity. They believe that evolution on earth was in fact a series of leaps brought about by the arrival from space of new spores — and

the whole process was no accident. As for human intelligence, this must reflect higher intelligence — and if we do not fully comprehend the universe it is because of our restriction of intellect. Some knowledge is beyond us.

Scripture Union

95 was the final total of missions and holiday clubs in SU's summer programme in England and Wales. 28 of these were at the seaside and apart from twelve full-time SU evangelists, all the teams were staffed by volunteers. 'There is tremendous potential for future Christian leadership in many of our enthusiastic young team members', commented Henry Warde at the end of his final summer tour before he hands over responsibility for SU's Missions Department after twenty-five years. Many children said that group Bible studies were their favourite mission activities, Henry Warde reports. They liked them more than the games or the large scale meetings. A large number of this year's children came from one-parent families and responded to team members who showed them a loving care they may have lacked at home. SU evangelist, Colin Stephenson led a holiday club in Telford on an estate where two thirds of the children are from one parent families or are living with only one of their original parents. A team from Reigate Parish Church in suburban Surrey ran a mission on an estate in Caerphilly at the invitation of local churches there. In Herne Bay a Baptist minister told

Henry Warde that he had baptized eight teenagers who had come to faith in Christ at last summer's SU mission. Increasingly missions cater for the whole family, with parents sharing fully in sports and barbecues and having their own Bible studies and increasingly, drama and street theatre were used to communicate the Gospel.

Siberian Seven

The campaign continues to secure the release of the seven Siberian Christians who have been trapped in the basement of the American Embassy in Moscow for the past three years. It is now widely felt that an invitation from a third country, possibly Britain, could end the stalemate between the USA and the USSR. Peter Meadows, chairman of the committee to free the Siberian seven, has appealed for at least 100 churches to participate in inviting the Seven to the United Kingdom. The Committee has produced a leaflet explaining how the church may participate in this invitation. The leaflet also points out that these churches will agree to share the responsibility to pray for the Seven; share in the financial needs 'as they are able'; and to provide administrative help where appropriate. Peter Meadows added, 'We do not believe that a church will be over burdened by committing themselves to this invitation. The responsibility will be widely shared and there are indications that a number of charities will be able to help "in principle"'. In addition, we are receiving a continuous stream of support from the

Christian public — showing a widespread concern for the Seven.'

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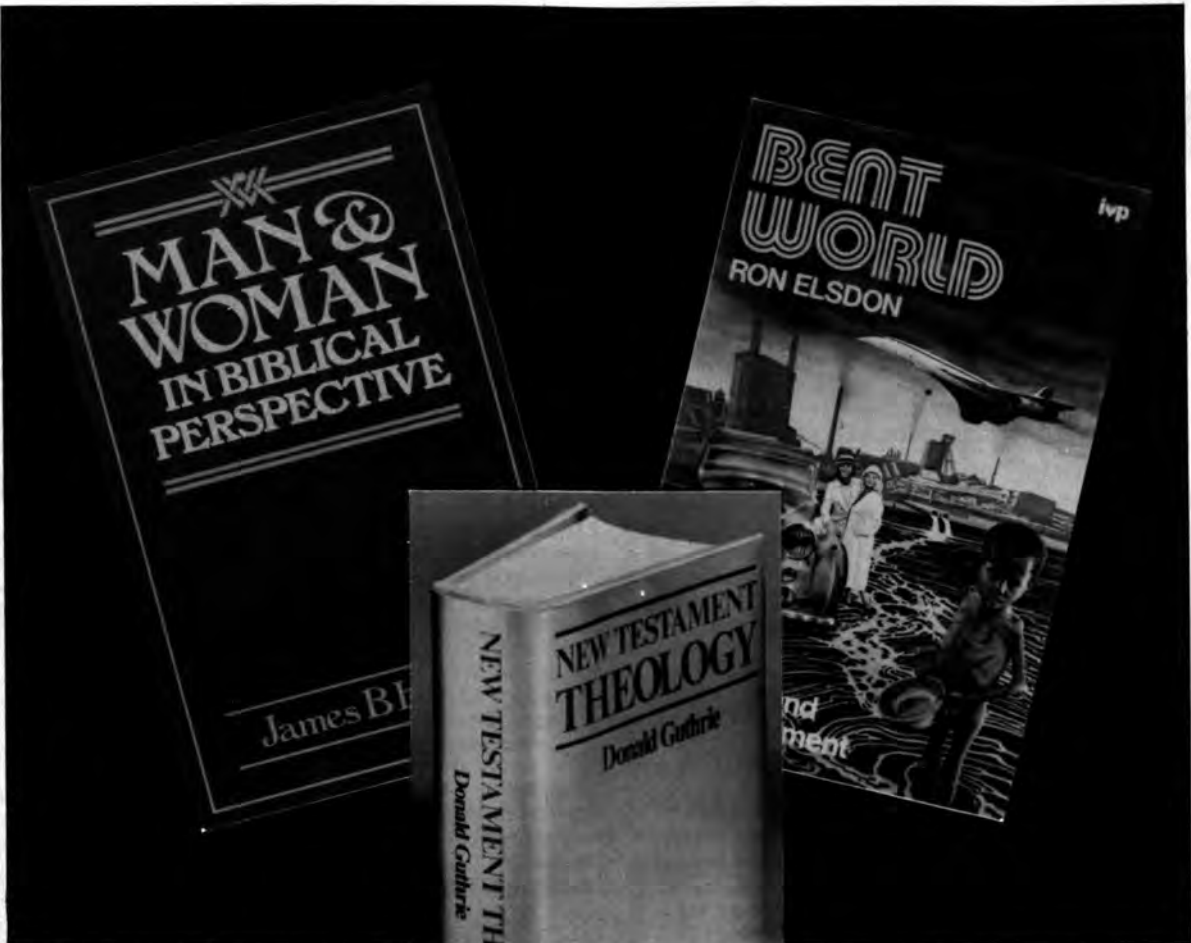
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PEOPLE AND PLACES

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund

Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during the month of July amounted to £354.56.

Retired Missionaries Aid Fund

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during August amounted to £2,586.45.

CHANGE OF TIME

Duncan Road Church, Swanwick, Southampton

Please note the revised time for the Breaking of Bread which now takes place at 10.30 a.m. each Sunday. Other meetings: Sunday, 6.30 p.m. Gospel Meeting: Tuesday, 2.30 p.m. Women's Hour: Thursday, 7.45 p.m. Prayer and Ministry Meeting.

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.

Blackburn, A. G.:

Swanwick 4; Silvertown 8; Counties Meetings, London 10; London 11; Exmouth 13; Bristol (Crusade) 18-23; Yeoford & Westdown 25; Exmouth 29.

Campbell, A.:

Penryn 2; Plymouth 3; Falmouth 4-10; Carbis Bay 11; Redruth 18, Glasgow 23-31.

Clifford, D.:

St. Clair, Pittsburg, Pa. 1-9; Chicago 10-16; Grand Rapids, Mich. 17-23; Harrisburg, Pa. 24-31.

Gillham, S.:

Winton Children's Mission 1 & 2; West Moors 3; Bethany Hall, Weymouth, children's mission 4-11; CEW Annual Meetings, London 10; Lyme Regis 14-16; Horwich Lances Mission 17-25; Wimborne Children's Mission 27-November 8.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Holland 2-13; Stradbroke 18; Teddington 24; Guildford 25; Norwich 27 & 28.

Iliffe, D. J.:

Swansea 1-4; London & Petworth 7; CEW London 10; Littlehampton 11; Worcester 17-28.

Loader, G.:

Bedminster City Mission Campaign 5-9; Yeovil 10, 11; Leamington Spa 15, 16; Lapford, Devon 20-25; Trinity College 28; Cardiff Rally 31.

Lowther, G. K.:

Rainham 4, 7; Harrow 5; Manor Park, E12 5, 12, 19, 26, 27; Pinner 6; Basingstoke 6, 13; Sidcup 7; Hainault 8; Sydenham, SE26 8, 15, 19; Staplehurst 11; Leytonstone 12; Chelmsford 14; Ilford 14, 15, 21; Downham, Kent 18; Southborough, Kent 20, 27; Enfield 20; Edmonton, N9 25; Streatham, SW16 26; Beckenham 28; Rochester 29.

Phillips, C.:

Dean Hall, Ealing 3; Elmfield, North Harrow 4, 11; South Ruislip 5, 12; Wadham, Walthamstow 7, 14; Chesham 8; Ashstead 10; Greenford 11; Culver Grove, Stanmore 15; Redcar 17-23; Stockton-on-Tees 24-30; Houghton-le-Spring 31.

Pierce, D. H.:

Ashford 4; London 10; Bishopswood 11; Puddington 18; Bristol 24; Lovacott 25; Umberleigh 26-31. The rest of the month at Barnstaple.

Short, S. S.:

East Kilbride 3-11; Glasgow 7; Leeds 17-23; Lancaster 24-25; Chester 26.

Stringer, D.:

Rugby 1-15; North Pickenham 16-18; Rugby 19-29; Houghton-le-Spring 30-31.

Tatford, F. A.:

Bournemouth 17-22; Banbridge 24-31; Belfast 29.

Thurston, A.:

Nailsea 2-7; Unity Chapel, Lockleaze 9-18; Bristol ALHA 10; Strete 19, 26; Kingsbridge 20, 27; Chillington 21, 28; Totnes 22; Greatparks, Paignton 25.

Tryon, G. C.:

Hull 1-4; Driffild 5-11; N. Kensington 13; Torch Trust, Dulwich 16; Cambridge 18-25; Woking 27.

REPORTS

Mr. Arthur Thurston,

Kingsbridge, reports that a mission during August at Balsall Common, Coventry, 25 children professed to have trusted the Saviour and 5 teenagers made confessions of faith. As a result prayer and Bible study meetings for the teenagers have been started.

He also reports on encouraging work with prisoners in Dartmoor and Exeter prisons where interest in the Emmaus studies increases each month.

Fifty years in the Lord's service. The West Moors assembly celebrated on September 12 with a service of thanksgiving and a fellowship meal with leading brethren, past students and friends.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Brierfield, Lancs.

32nd Annual Conference, Brierfield Baptist Church, on Saturday 10 October, at 2.45 and 6.15 p.m. Speakers: Cliff Goldfinch (Rochester) and Hedley G. Murphy (Belfast). Mr. Murphy will continue for two weeks at Hebron Hall, Walter Street, Brierfield, Monday to Thursday at 7.45 p.m. Saturdays at 7 p.m. and Sundays at 6.30 p.m. He will give a series of addresses on Prophetic and other topical subjects.

Carshalton

Missionary Outreach Conference, Saturday 17 October, West Street Chapel. Ladies Session, 3 p.m. Speakers: Miss Ivy Barnard (India) and Mrs. Elizabeth Hodges (Italy). General meeting 6.30 p.m. Speakers: Brian Hodges (Italy) and A. J. Horne (Back to the Bible Broadcast).

Chesham

Ministry Meeting, The Gospel Hall, Station Road. October 24, 7 p.m. Speaker: M. Jones (Luton). Matt. 5:1-12. Theme: The Sermon on the Mount.

Colyton, Devon

The Gospel Hall, The Butts, Colyton. Bible Study. October 24 at 7 p.m. Speaker: E. Parmenter (Wimborne). Portion: 1 Timothy chapter 1.

Devon

United Missionary Meetings: October 2, 7.30 p.m. in the Wolsley Hall, Plymouth; October 3 in Belmont Chapel, Exeter at 3.15 and 6.30 p.m.; October 5 in Grosvenor Street Chapel, Barnstaple at 7.30 p.m.

Dumbarton

Annual Conference, Lennox Evangelical Church, Dumbarton. November 7,

3.30 p.m. Speakers: Allan Jessiman, Stanley Hunter, Hugh Scott.

Dundee

Hillbank Evangelical Church, October 16-19, Dundee Assemblies Missionary Fellowship. Theme: Communication. Speakers and Subjects: Malcolm Coombes, France, Correspondence Courses; Eric Grove, Zambia, Printing; and Alfred Poland, Portugal, Radio Broadcasting.

Ealing, W5

Grove Hall, The Grove. Bible Reading, Saturday, November 7 at 7 p.m. Speaker: M. Jones.

Grimsby

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. Ministry, October 24 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: J. J. Grice.

Lancaster

Moorlands Evangelical Church, Balmoral Road. Conference, October 24-25. Speaker: Dr. S. S. Short. Theme: Holy Spirit. Saturday 3 p.m.: Sanctification. 6 p.m.: Guidance. Sunday 8 p.m.:

Evangelism. On Saturday at 4.30 p.m. Further details from John S. Andrews, 270 Bowerham Road, Lancaster, LA1 4LP. Tel: (0524) 66856.

Maidenhead

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road. Monthly Conference, November 7. Speaker: A. Forster, Datchet. Subject: Moses in his faith. Theme: The Man of God.

Oldham

Werneth Gospel Hall, Railway Road. Annual Conference, Saturday October 3, 3.15 and 6 p.m. Speakers: R. Parnaby (Fleetwood) and J. Dixon (Troon).

Port Glasgow

Annual Conference, Hebron Hall Assembly, 41 Princes Street. October 17 at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: George Waugh (Prestwick), Jim Flanigan (Belfast) and Alex Allan. Press Day, Friday October 2, for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW)

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- 21 October 4 p.m. Eurocrest, The Ringway, PRESTON, Lancs.
- 22 October 10 a.m. Post House Hotel, Ryehill, Allesley, COVENTRY
- 23 October 10 a.m. Post House Hotel, Thornbury Road, ALVESTON, AVON.

The British "envoys" who discussed these plans with Dr. Graham in July (Revs. Clive Calver, Eddie Gibbs and Gavin Reid) will speak, together with Dr. Walter Smyth of the Billy Graham team.

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PERSONAL

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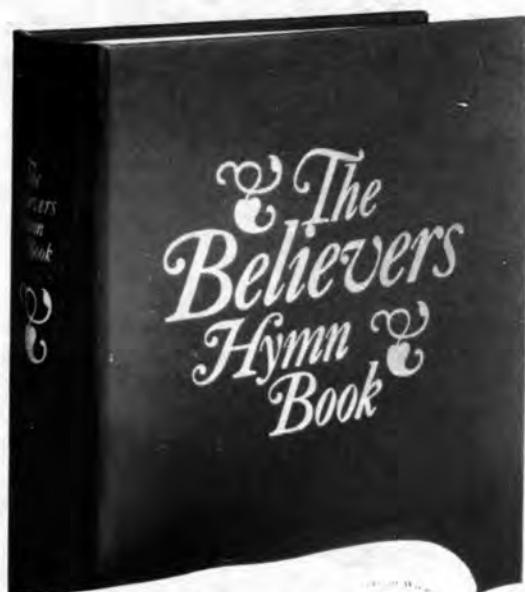
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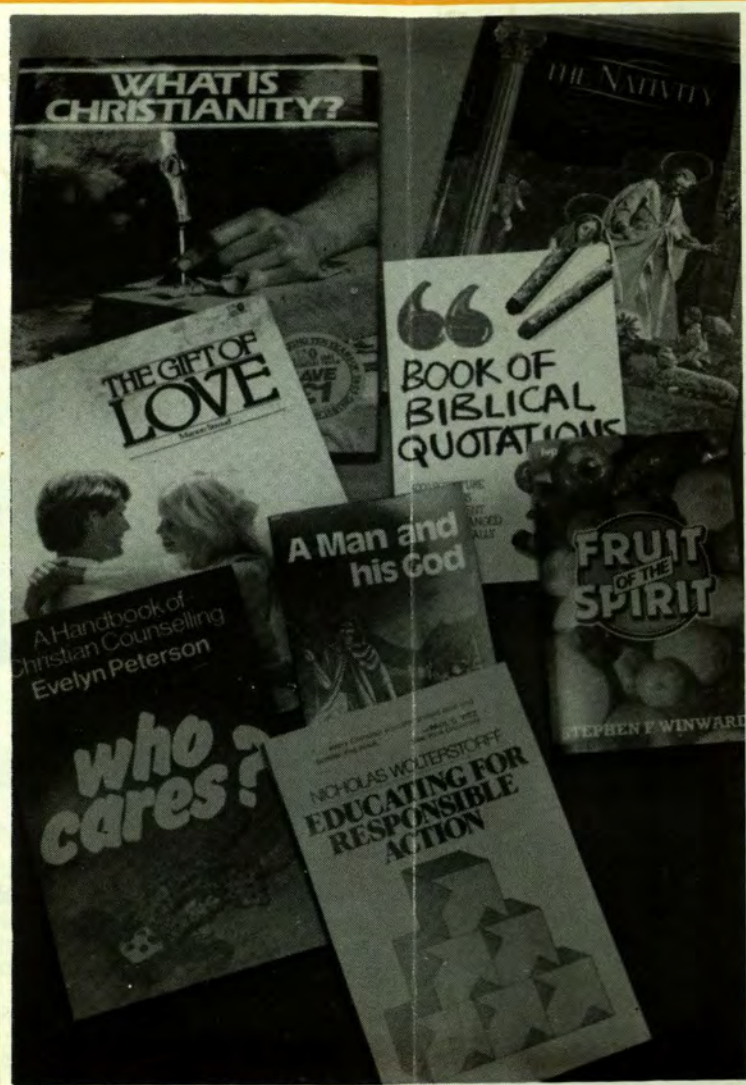


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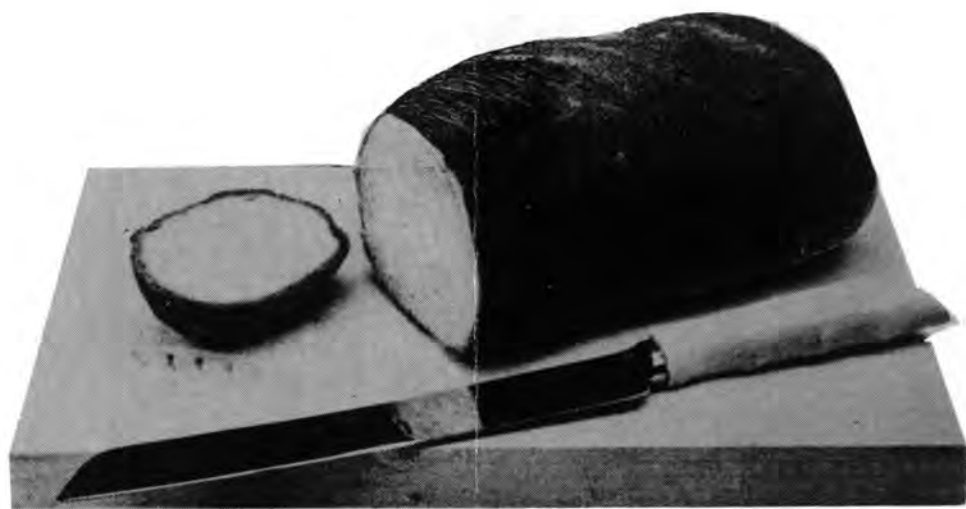


SPECIAL BOOKS ISSUE

INSIDE:
ART AND WORSHIP

November 1981 Volume LX No. 11 Price 40p
Editor: Roy Coad

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Cover picture: Alex Tymków

THE BIG BATTALIONS

'How many battalions has the Pope?' the late Joseph Stalin is said to have sneered on one occasion: though events in Poland have been making that cynical comment just a little less amusing to his successors. But the communist dictator was only expressing what men the world over have believed and acted upon for millennia. Too often, that cynicism seems justified as we look at the world around us —

Truth forever on the scaffold

Wrong forever on the throne

and even in our free and (in intention) equal society, too often it is the big corporation, the state agency, the man who can command money, who, if they cannot buy justice, yet can use their economic clout to play the rules so that the smaller and weaker suffer.

Perhaps it is just this feeling of being weak and vulnerable before the might of the big forces of the world, from whatever economic or political stratum they may derive, that fuels the hopelessness and aimlessness of so many men and women today.

Have we ever considered that sense of emptiness as a fore-runner, and an opportunity, for the Gospel?

At the centre of the Gospel is One Who, in his direst moment, could say 'Put your sword back into its place . . . Do you think I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?' It is the All-powerful, Who renounces power, that we offer to men: Who renounces power, that He might save those who are powerless.

But this message will itself be an empty voice, unless men see it working in the life of His people and His Church. We cannot offer men secular triumph, for the Church itself is (or should be) immune from such temptation. But we can offer them the fellowship of our God and His Christ; if we know that fellowship and strength in ourselves, and our communities — and if it is apparent for all to see in our relationships to ourselves and our attitudes to all men and women.

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ART, WORSHIP AND THE CHRIST OF GOD

A. G. Newell

A further article in Dr. Newell's meditative series

Among the visitors in Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery you will frequently find a sprinkling of youngsters who would clearly rather be elsewhere. A few years ago the Church of England commissioned a survey which discovered that most teenage boys were interested mainly in football and motorbikes, and there is little reason to believe that this hardly surprising conclusion needs revising. In a mass civilisation, culture will remain the interest of a minority. Yet culture (in the sense of the arts) is nowadays available to all who wish to become cultured (in the sense of generally knowing, understanding, and loving the arts). Evangelicals have always been reluctant to spend time on art, music or literature. Since trends in the wider society naturally affect the church, however, there are signs that with the general advance in educational provision they are now beginning to take culture more seriously. Hence, alongside the real concern being shown in evangelical circles about Christianity's social and political responsibility, we find some interest in Christian attitudes to the arts. As more young Christians take advantage of modern opportunities of enjoying the best cultural achievements, they are compelled to work out a biblical approach for themselves. The alternative is to suspend our beliefs whenever we look at a picture, listen to a piece of music or read a work of literature. When we do this, we are dividing sacred activities from secular, and admitting a distinction between them as two separate realms of experience. On a more homely level, George Herbert was criticizing this attitude when he argued over 300 years ago,

*Nothing can be so mean,
Which with this tincture: For thy sake,
Will not grow bright and clean.*

*A servant with this clause
Makes drudgerie divine:
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and th' action fine.*

It is a sound instinct that holds the Authorized Version of *Rom. 12:1* in conjunction with modern trans-

lations' 'spiritual worship'. Worship is not confined to attendance at church services or participation in special meetings, but consists in essence of a disposition of mind and heart that embraces the whole of life — 'reasonable service'. Life is a whole, not a collection of separate categories of existence, and we are Christians in all of it. Our response to art which gives us pleasure, therefore, will include acknowledging the God who has gifted artists to create beauty and significance in such varied ways.

Some readers of this magazine may have inherited or imbibed a special prejudice against religious art. I remember, when I was quite small, listening to **Children's Hour** on the radio when a dramatized life of Christ was about to be broadcast, and recall how the set was peremptorily switched off the moment an actor playing the part of Jesus began to speak. As an undergraduate I watched part of a film shown in St. Aldate's Church, Oxford, on the same subject, but my conscience literally drove me out well before the end. I recognized in my reaction a Protestant antipathy to any representation of Christ.

Of course, there exists a respectable historical basis for this prejudice. The destruction of saints' images at Wittenberg in 1521-22 which was carried out during Luther's absence was justified by the Reformer Karlstadt. For Calvin, the only beauty was the splendour of the divine glory, which the artist must always strive to re-create; insofar as he succeeded, he was fulfilling the spiritual aim of all art, which was to glorify God. So Calvin's aesthetic ruthlessly eliminated the merely ornamental and advocated sobriety, balance and clarity. The Swiss Reformer, Zwingli, was a musical virtuoso, but his strict adherence to Scripture as his sole guide in all things led him to prohibit choral singing in congregational worship in Zurich, while his short-sightedness probably contributed to his lack of interest in the visual arts. Zwingli's preaching ultimately persuaded the council in 1524 to enact and implement a law against statues, paintings, crucifixes, votive lamps, reliquaries, shrines, images and decorations in the Zurich churches; even the carved choir stalls were

dismantled and the walls whitewashed. Music and the visual arts continued to be practised, but they were forced into the secular sphere. The medieval unity of art and religion had been broken, and it has never been repaired. Cromwell's Ironsides saw nothing irreligious in treating a cathedral as a convenient building in which to stable their horses.

Karlstadt was reacting against abuses — people were inclined to venerate images, to donate statues to obtain status and to believe that in this way they were earning their salvation. Calvin constructed a world view which primarily sought God's glory in everything. Zwingli followed the logic he had newly discovered in the Bible. In England the classic difference between Anglican and Puritan consisted in the former's believing that what Scripture did not prohibit was permissible, while the latter declared that what Scripture did not command was illegal. Historical circumstances helped to shape the thinking of these Protestant giants. But was theirs a valid response to culture?

Today we live with secular art. Do we just take it or leave it according to personal preference and ignore our faith? In *Art in Action: toward a Christian Aesthetic* (Eerdmans, 1980), Nicholas Wolterstorff says that the realm of beauty is independent of moral or religious value: 'Truth and goodness do not determine beauty' (p.173). This is not the main thrust of his argument and I am no philosopher, but I am not happy with his statement. Hugh Price Hughes once declared 'What is morally wrong can never be politically right', and on the same lines I would urge that immoral or evil art can't be beautiful, and that deliberately ugly art can't be true or good. Keats's unconvincing dictum at the end of his 'Ode on a Grecian Urn', 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty', contains a grain of truth at least. The dehumanization which characterizes much modern art of every kind falsifies and devalues it. Art which apparently glories in disharmony, randomness, cruelty, obscenity, violence and ugliness reflects and represents an age which has lost sight of the Creator and the rich variety of His beauty. Art which lacks a positive moral dimension cannot, I believe, be truly great.

A recent book *The Art of God Incarnate* by Aidan Nichols, O.P. (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1980), prompted me to these remarks on the relationship between Christianity and art. Having examined Paul's meditations on Christ as the Image of God (*Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 3:18 and 4:4-6*), he asks, 'If God has elected to show himself definitively in the form of a human life, then may not the artist shape and fashion visual images which will add up to an exegesis of revelation?' (p.48). Nichols proposes art as a key for a modern theology of revelation. God the Father is the artist, the incarnate Son of God the artwork or image: 'He who has seen me has seen the Father' (*Jn. 14:9*). Quoting *1 Jn. 1:1-4*, Nichols describes Jesus as 'the living icon'.

This emphasis on Jesus the Man as, so to speak,

God's artistic masterpiece I find fresh and stimulating. But equally vital with what Jesus was and did is what He said and what the Evangelists recorded and the apostles taught about Him. For full and precise significance we require words. That is why as media of communication, paintings, music, sculpture, dance and architecture are inferior to literature and drama. Colour, texture, light, shape, sound, movement, organization of space — these can convey pattern, geometry, mood and feeling, but without words we are left to our own devices for interpretation. The impact of the wordless arts is basically subjective, and a reliable appreciation depends heavily on the knowledge of the artist, his intentions, his techniques and his tradition that we bring to his work from outside sources.

God hasn't left us with only pictures or portraits of His incarnate Son. If they had been His chosen means of revelation, how many conflicting interpretations would we have had by now of the person of Christ and scenes of His life, death and resurrection? A divine revelation which did not use human language for its medium but relied upon our subjective responses to other forms would be doomed to failure. Praise God we have His **Word**. Yes — that needs interpretation, too, but of a qualitatively different kind. As Jim Packer insists, 'The value of such phraseology is that it indicates, first, that what Scripture says, God says (the **Word of God**); second, that the Scriptures together make up a total presentation of God's message to man (the **Word of God**); third, that the Scriptures constitute a message addressed directly by God to everyone who reads or hears them (the **Word of God**)' (*God Has Spoken* (1979), p.96). Jesus the Lord is the Image, the Likeness of God, and His actions make visible the Father's love for us; He is also the living Word, the Declarer of God's will.

Religious art has its place. Luther favoured illustrated Bibles. Giotto, Fra Angelico, El Greco and the other great painters can give us helpful insights into the meaning of Scripture by their imaginative rendering of an event. So can lesser artists. There is a little church in North Wales which displays a primitive crucifix depicting the dying Saviour as a negro. It distorts reality — our Lord was a Jew. Yet it is a legitimate vision of His universal Saviourhood, because He died for all mankind, and identified Himself ultimately with every race. Epstein's statue of Lazarus in New College Chapel, Oxford, shocks us out of our familiarity with the sacred record in *Jn. 11:44* and makes us realize something of the event's utterly outrageous quality: we see the resurrected man, mummified by his bandages, contorted with the effort to move, gasping with renewed life. Our Lord's sovereign power over death itself must have paralyzed the spectators with fear and amazement. Even unconventional art can shed fresh light as we share the artist's vision.

But in terms of precise communication the visual arts

written Word of God, paradoxically, that we see the Image of our Saviour God, Jesus Christ, the perfect Man. We cannot contemplate Him there and remain unmoved. We cannot listen to Him there and remain unchanged, for through the grace of God we are to be transformed into the same image.

BROADCASTING THE WORD (2)

Mary Batchelor

A prisoner in jail in El Salvador; a disabled person in Dorset, England; a young man of eighteen in Bulgaria; a Norwegian dairy farmer; a new converted former Hindu in Madras — these and millions more are members of the worldwide band of listeners to Christian radio. Included too are isolated missionaries in Northern Columbia and the Falkland Islands, deprived of any other Christian fellowship for years. All these we know something about because they have written to one or other of the radio stations telling what the broadcasts have meant to them. How many more who do not write also hear?

The Australian Broadcasting Commission estimated that no more than one half per cent of the total number of listeners ever write to a station. This may hold good in Australia, but many of the main target areas of Christian radio are countries such as India where only thirty per cent of the population are literate. Yet FEBA alone gets an average of eleven thousand letters per month from India. It is natural to want to assess the success of any form of Christian mission and on this count also the parable of The Sower has a lesson to teach. Understood as a parable rather than an allegory the story contains one main lesson. 'Broadcasting' seed involves scattering large quantities of seed indiscriminately with a fair amount of wastage. But the picture of the good ground assures us that there will be a harvest. Our Lord's teaching implies that this pattern of results holds good for every form of preaching and teaching. Radio broadcasts the Word with a liberality that no pre-

vious medium has even envisaged. Much of that seed is bound to fall on poor soil or be choked. But some will — and does — find receptive ground and grows and bears fruit. Letters are, of course, the main means of learning results. Although radio often specializes in pre-evangelism, preparing the soil for the seed, conversions frequently follow broadcasts. A listener in the USSR wrote: 'On June 24th I experienced New Birth but not only I, my mother also . . . and in this you had a part.' From Argentina came a letter saying: 'We listen to your programmes every day but a few weeks ago one programme in particular touched my heart very deeply. I am now pleading to the Lord to save my soul. I know he heard my cry. I am asking you to pray for me.' One of the most exciting stories comes from FEBA. A Chinese boy became a Christian after listening to FEBC broadcasts lying on his bottom bunk bed. Unknown to him, his brother, lying on the top bunk, was secretly listening to the same broadcasts and became a Christian too. This in a country that has virtually been closed to the gospel. People who would not or could not attend a church or mission because of strongly held religious beliefs can also hear the gospel on radio in their own homes. SBM received a letter asking for literature following the broadcast of some of their programmes to India. Later one of their missionaries followed up the written contact by a visit and found that a high caste Hindu family who would never have dreamed of attending a Christian mission or even having a Bible in their beautiful home had all been converted as

the result of the broadcasts. Many radio missions see their function as providing help for believers too. Again, letters are the main clue to results; but there must be many lonely and untaught believers who benefit from broadcasts without registering the fact. (Think how often you mean to write to the BBC but never actually put pen to paper!) From Kenya: 'I cannot be thankful enough for your spiritual programmes. I live in a remote dry area where there is not even one established church.' From Poland: 'Here in our village lives an elderly couple. The lady sat long hours during the night spinning cotton to make extra money which enabled her to buy a radio. Now they have one and listen with tears. This couple thank you for each broadcast.' WRMF teach young Christians through a Bible Institute of the Air. Though the main purpose is to teach converts and also to train young Christians to become pastors, conversions follow these too. One listener wrote to say that through studying the course on the Life of Christ, his eleven brothers and sisters as well as his parents became Christians. Being a Christian always means getting involved. Rarely should we listen to facts out of mere interest. So we need to consider what our personal response should be to this contemporary and powerful medium of Christian radio. Our first task is to understand and gain insight into this medium. Human beings are often resistant to change and the church has too often lagged behind the leading of its pioneers. The message is unchanged — the Good News about Jesus Christ — but the means of conveying

the message must be adapted to suit the medium of radio and the situations of those who hear. Don't let's hold back Christ's Kingdom by insisting that missionaries use stone age flints instead of twentieth century tools. Let's wake up to the facilities for being a missionary today. Christians are sometimes grudging and critical in the support they give. Some who give money to radio work feel that they have the right to question or dictate the content of the programmes broadcast. One well-known Christian broadcaster said: 'The moment you produce a programme that's suitable for sinners the saints all desert you.' Radio missionaries have the doubtful privilege of being exposed for all to hear. We must trust their call from God, their expertise and their greater understanding both of the medium and of those they are trying to reach. Part of the trouble may lie in the fact that many of us have not faced up realistically to the task of putting across the gospel effectively ourselves. Are friends and neighbours being converted through our personal witness or through the outreach of our assemblies? As we ourselves wrestle with the problems of bringing Christ's claims to men and women with no Bible background and no knowledge of church routine we may come to understand a little better what missionary radio is doing. Greater understanding and appreciation will in turn lead to practical backing by prayer and giving. Radio work is not expensive in relation to the vast numbers contacted, but it is still a costly business to buy, install and maintain equipment, to make programmes and to

buy air time when necessary. Much prayer is needed for the complex technical operations, for script-writers, presenters and for those who carry out the sensitive work of follow up, which so often leads to conversions. Missionaries have their own needs arising from living in areas which may be ideal for transmitting radio signals far and wide but less than healthy or comfortable for human families.

All the radio organizations listed last month will be delighted to furnish more information in the form of literature, cassettes, film, and by sending someone to describe the work of the mission more thoroughly to the whole church.

Radio mission utilizes a great variety of gift. Not only engineers, technicians, script-writers, producers and presenters are needed but also musicians, anthropologists, clerical staff and counsellors to deal with correspondence and follow up. There is scope to give practical help in many ways. As well as the call to full-time workers (and that can include older or retired men and women as well as young ones)

there are openings for short term workers too. Perhaps there is no other form of missionary work that embraces so many skills and age-groups: those with technical, professional or clerical skills, all have something to offer 'from making tea onwards', as one mission puts it. On a part-time basis there is a need for those with specialist knowledge, for example of natural history or stamp collecting, to provide material for specialist programmes. Radio Worldwide even requires compilers of quizzes! God wonderfully uses every scrap of experience we have accumulated, in his service — if we will let him. Radio mission could provide the outlet. Those involved must have this in common. They must be fully committed to spreading God's word, and mature enough to work in a team with others, combining endurance of purpose with flexibility of method.

'Do your sowing in the morning and in the evening too' commanded the Preacher (*Eccles. 11:6*). In obedience, the voice of Christian radio mission is heard each moment of day and night throughout our world.



Graham Atkins at the studio mixer controls.

Radio Worldwide

24 x 21 = 2

New maths? No. Our accountant gone mad? ... Let's not go into that here. Keep thinking and while you do, read this story ...

FEBA RADIO

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 raising support ...	 the sending ...	 the rejoicing ...	21 languages 24 countries the result ...	TO BE CONTINUED (with your help)

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I have sent a donation of £20 to keep FEBA on the air for 10 minutes. Please send me my cassette of the Lord's Prayer.

Name

Address

.....

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JOHN ROBB ROLLO — A TRIBUTE J. Hislop

A tribute to a notable Scottish servant of God.



Reaction to the homecall of John R. Rollo on 20th August in his 77th year will be twofold — thankfulness to God for his sixty years of dedicated Christian service, and renewed personal commitment as many readers recall the challenge of his ministry. Somewhere on the way of life he met us; and his influence stimulated faith, strengthened conviction, inspired confidence and deepened integrity. Brought up among the coal miners of Methil, Fife, of whom his father was one, John was never slow to acknowledge the debt he owed to those men and to visiting fishermen from the north-east of Scotland in the moulding of his character during the formative years of his life. These humble beginnings produced a basically shy and reserved personality who moved quietly for God, never seeking the limelight. Early in his secondary school days he was taking his stand as a Christian, for 'from a child he had known the holy scriptures which had made him wise

unto salvation'. This faith was tested subsequently in a distinguished career at St. Andrews University when, with others, he was a founder member of the Christian Union. A good honours degree involving English and History had opened the door to research, but instead he chose to enter the teaching profession. Those who sat under him pay tribute to his lively, inspirational methods in Beath High School, Cowdenbeath and in Viewforth Secondary School, Kirkcaldy, where in succession he served as Principal Teacher of English, Deputy Headmaster and Headmaster. And many who never heard of 'Arnold of Rugby' recall with respect, gratitude and pride 'Robb of Viewforth', appreciating that this man by his able administration, personal interest, wise counsel and Christian example provided for them an adequate preparation for life intellectually, morally, socially and spiritually. Constantly following the green light of the purpose and will of God, he preached the Gospel and expounded the scriptures in a manner that provided guidance, provoked thought and brought comfort and hope. Always anticipating the needs of the future, a company of young people never ceased to inspire him, invoking the phrase, oft-repeated even in his sixties, 'We young men'! And how close he came to us when in the full flow of a challenging message encouragement came in the words, 'Not a bit of it!', or counsel for patience in the phrase, 'So be it!' For over half a century in Scotland his name was associated with Young Peoples' Conventions at St. Andrews, Largs (Netherhall) and elsewhere, nor did he ever lose his affection for and interest in the more local Fife Bible Class Camp whereat he was a means of blessing to many. But wherever he went there was always a rare sensitivity to the spiritual needs of his audience — widows, elderly sisters, forgotten ones, those who were finding the road rough, the sad, the lonely — who, betimes as 'hungry sheep looked up and were not

fed'. In his own inimitable and homely way he would bring a devotional message in heart-warming words of comfort and calm and confidence touching the person of the Lord; and folks, strangely moved and uplifted, went home made glad again. Without effort, making no attempt to impress, he was an artist with words, enjoying a fluency in speech begotten of Spirit-breathed scholarship that was great in its clarity and simplicity. Some will recall his contributions at the Westminster Hall and Bloomsbury Chapel meetings. Others will speak of his ministry in Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow, Newcastle, Belfast etc. The folks in the Faroe Isles talk of his visit to them after his retiral from school. And in two trips to South and Central Africa where, with his wife, he enjoyed warm Christian fellowship, he left behind him a pathway of deep gratitude and devoted affection wherever he went: for, as always, 'where'er he met a stranger there he left a friend'. Yet for him the sweetest moments were spent among his 'ain folk' in Fife, and particularly in Hebron Evangelical Church, Kirkcaldy. Here he was appreciated as a friendly individual, a wise elder, an understanding guide and an effective spiritual leader. Above all, to be with him at the Breaking of Bread meeting was to have an awareness of one deeply conscious of and sensitive to the Divine Presence. He was a trustee of **The Harvester**, and his written ministry, alas too meagre, revealed a depth of knowledge, a breadth of wisdom and a height of spiritual appreciation that marked him as a true man of God. Magazine articles, chapters in the symposia on **The Church** and **The Faith** etc were the contributions of one who never failed to 'warm the cockles of the heart'. John R. Rollo — the man, his message and his manner — what has he meant to us? 'He has given help to many including myself'; 'He has been a real comfort to me'; 'He oft refreshed me' (*Rom. 16:2; Col. 4:11; 2 Tim. 1:16*).



REFLECTIONS ON RECENT READING

O. S. Papps

Mr. Papps makes his regular contribution to our Books Issue.

'Old men ought to be explorers' wrote T. S. Eliot in his poem 'The Dry Salvages'. I was reminded of these words when I read the editorial in the August number of *The Harvester*. For some of us, writes Mr. Coad, to grow older is to become ever more conservative, 'to sink ever more beyond retrieval into that-which-we-have-always-been' — a hardening of our views as well as of our arteries. For others who by inclination or temperament are 'explorers', 'Our God', to quote the editor again, 'somehow begins to seem larger and stranger and more alarming — and some of our youthful certainties take on the colouring of intellectual provincialities. Sometimes the more glib preachers begin to seem less like proclaimers of the Word of God, and more like manipulators of their hearers, or even outright hucksters.' Both categories are in need, 'the first, lest their faith becomes mere habit; and the second, lest they lose it altogether'. I fall into the second category, fulfilling T. S. Eliot's dictum that old men ought to be explorers. With the passing of the years I have come to hold less tenaciously some doctrines which, as a young Christian, I contended for with passion. At the same time the wonder and the mystery of the Word made flesh dwelling among us has deepened. Many glimpses of this mystery cannot be conceptualized, even less put into words. Hilary, the 4th century Bishop of Poitiers said, 'Alas we are driven by the faults of our heretical opponents to do things unlawful, to scale heights inaccessible, to strain our weak human language in the utterance of things beyond its scope. Hence what should be matter for silent meditation must now needs be imperilled

by exposure in words.' There are, for me, a few great convictions hammered out and wrought on the anvil of life, and all centring on Christ, His incarnation, life, death and resurrection. These hold my heart and mind.

*If e'er when faith had fall'n
asleep,
I heard a voice 'believe no
more'
And heard an ever-breaking
shore
That tumbled in the Godless
deep;
A warmth within the breast
would melt,
The freezing reason's colder
part,
And like a man in wrath the
heart,
Stood up and answered, 'I
have felt.'*

So wrote Tennyson in 'In Memoriam'. Like Peter, amidst the complexities of life, I turn to Christ and say, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.' So, I don't fear a loss of faith, but I do see the danger of 'explorers' losing their way. Where I am in particular danger of losing my way is in my concern with the social implications of the Christian faith. That we must be deeply concerned with the poor, and the oppressed, and with not setting our hearts on material possessions is abundantly clear to anyone reading the Gospels without too many presuppositions. Add to these the terrible danger of nuclear catastrophe, the inordinate amount of wealth and skill devoted to amassing armaments, man's pollution of the world; and one can appreciate how much easier it is for one's peace of mind to accept the teaching that we as Christians are not called to do anything about these things. We have no part nor lot in this world that

is heading for judgement. But for those of us who cannot accept this interpretation of the Gospel, who feel that the example and teaching of our Lord includes healing the sick, feeding the hungry, protecting the weak, protesting against injustice, there is a tension at the heart of our faith. My concern about these things leads me to read books and meet people who are similarly concerned, devoting their lives to remove or ameliorate these conditions; I find that they, too, like me are highly sceptical about civilisation and have lost confidence in the secular order. They care passionately for others. We have a great deal in common, but they reject the Faith by which I live. They do not accept the Christian teaching of man and his need for redemption. They believe that man can create a just society if he gets the programme right, if he alters the structure. Unconsciously they believe in a doctrine of original righteousness, not as I do in the incurable sinfulness of man's nature. There comes to the Christian the almost unconscious temptation to tone down his views, to wander down wrong paths, to lose his way. For all such 'explorers' Harry Blamires's latest book, *Where do we stand?* (S.P.C.K. £3.95) is required reading. The author was for 28 years Head of the English Dept. and later Dean of Arts and Sciences at King Alfred College, Winchester. He is cast very much in the mould of his former teacher and friend, C. S. Lewis; and, like him, is both theologian and literary critic. He belongs to that small but distinguished company who have brought the depth and width of their knowledge of literature to the task of Christian apologetics, so supplying a dimension to theology which the pure theologian often lacks.

Harry Blamires's book does not lend itself to a summary, for

the argument is closely packed and not always easy to follow. He writes, 'Because there are areas of action where Christian endeavour joins forces with important currents of secular endeavour the need for the kind of disentanglement that this book attempts is important, perhaps urgent.' Christianity, he points out, has no monopoly of helping, healing and caring. 'There are many personal virtues and private good deeds', he writes, 'which we call practical Christianity, which someone else may cultivate and call practical humanism, and those ventures in social amelioration which we recommend as applied Christianity someone else may undertake and call them applied socialism.' In the first chapter entitled, 'At this Point in History' Mr. Blamires analyses contemporary society and finds it diseased. 'When Christian spokesman and secularist spokesmen meet over fundamental human issues there should be more than dented mudguards and cracked windshield. For the meeting is between one who thinks that life is a matter of progress from vaccination to superannuation in a welfare society . . . and one who believes that we are pilgrims of eternity, moulding souls on their way to everlasting life, and that our task is to bring fellow men and women into the company and keeping of the God who made them, visited them, and died for them. If the Christian view is as serious as that, it can never be peripheral to our lives; it must be central. There is nothing else that weighs by comparison with it.' Mr. Blamires castigates contemporary trends in education, depriving young people 'of the freedom which consists in being brought up in a world with signposts. Without signposts there is only the compulsion of untutored whim and compulsion is slavery.' The author states certain cri-

teria which save the involved Christian from losing his way. 'They enable him to come fully into the world without becoming of the world; they allow him to act fruitfully among secularists without degenerating into a temporizer. These criteria are: first, wholehearted belief in the interpretation of the human situation contained in the fundamentals of Christian dogma; secondly, commitment to God's purposes for us as revealed through Christ and the Scriptures; thirdly, belief in the eternal order by reference to which, "the World" and its ways stand under judgement.' This book hits hard. It is Christian polemics stated in a trenchant style. It is no criticism of it to say that its appeal is to the intellect rather than the heart. There are passages to which one will probably take exception. I did and scribbled my dissent in the margin. But it is a cogent statement of the Christian position in the modern world. I found it immensely helpful.

It was a happy coincidence that Harry Blamires's book was followed by Professor Blaiklock's *Still a Christian* (Hodder and Stoughton, £1.40). Here is no fierce Christian polemic, no mighty wielding of the sword of truth but reflections on the beliefs and experiences that have come to form the centre of the author's life as a Christian, and these reflections are conveyed in a style that is poetical and elegant which add to the pleasure of the book. Professor Blaiklock is a classical scholar who has spent most of his life in his beloved New Zealand. He is the author of a number of books including *Kathleen*, the diary he kept after the death of his wife.

The author begins by likening his spiritual journey to one sitting on a coastal hilltop near Auckland's great southern harbour and looking down the winding road which climbs doggedly up the side of the ravine. 'I can look down the winding road to the place where I began to climb with some thankfulness.' He closes his book with a return to this figure. 'Now I rise, pick up the pack and prepare to tramp alone along whatever remains of the journey . . . I expect no rose-petalled path. It is evening but evening can have its beauties.'

Professor Blaiklock found Christ as a freshman at the University, not from frustration, failure or despondency, but the culmination of an intensely exciting year of discovery, a time of vivid awareness. 'Christ was drawing nearer, no pursuing "hound of heaven" on the heels of a fugitive, but an emerging reality.' He discusses his early conviction that there is a mind behind phenomena. These arguments, 'were never proofs, only demonstrations of vast probability on which faith could make intelligent choice and take its stand'. But believing in God is not necessarily to believe in Christ and he goes on to tell in moving words how on the road of life he became deeply conscious of the reality of a risen, accompanying Lord, and then how later, in the more academic processes of thought, he discovered Christ, as another friend wrote about Him — 'for John's Gospel has been one of the adventures of my life'.

The author says that he has no wonder tales of extraordinary deliverance, or supernatural afterglow. 'I have found life always a stern battle. Were it not that I gravely doubt the reality of his experience, I should sadly envy the man who wrote the hymn about his "still singing as I upward bound — Lord plant my feet on higher ground"'. His chapter on John's Gospel is revealing. He has lectured through it some 50 times, each time discovering something new, and he can write out the Greek text from memory. 'That one small book', he writes, 'has influenced my whole life, set stamina and purpose to my faith, proved itself in my academic study and authenticated itself in the web of life.'

He begins a chapter entitled, 'No more death' with the words, 'I loathe death. I have followed friends, and one supremely loved, to their cold resting place, or to where the casket sinks and blazing flame consumes the face one knew, and I am filled with helpless frustration before this awful experience, this final and irremediable event. It is not a denial of Christian faith so to recoil.' Then in this chapter and the next, on the resurrection, he writes in memorable language of the Christian victory over 'the last enemy'.

His view of the book of *Revelation* I found convincing, partly I suppose because it reinforces my previous ideas. His comment on the letters to the seven churches, 'The most elementary acquaintance with Roman history reveals the absurdity, for example, of forcing the seven letters into a lopsided conspectus of Church history', took me back to my mid-twenties when I first encountered and questioned this prophetic interpretation of the letters. I was a young missionary journeying by footpath through the forest from village to village. In the evenings after the final preaching and the last conversations on the mud verandah of the thatched rest house I had my supper, and in the warmth of the marvellous African night, serenaded by frogs and innumerable insects and the distant sounds of the village, I settled down by the light of my Tilley lamp to read the three volumes of Miller's church history. The story I found enthralling, but the author saw each period of church history as fulfilling the situation in each of the seven churches. I found this wholly unconvincing.

This is a book to warm the heart and strengthen one's faith. 'I am a Christian still', concludes Professor Blaiklock, 'because in the midst of death I affirm life. Earth cannot be "darkness to the core"'. There is too much indestructible wonder around us to accept that.

Nor is this mere emotionalism . . . because there is a risen Christ, and with every thought of death that enormous fact of history must be considered.' Of its author one can say as Frederic Myers says of Paul in his great poem:

*Yea thro' life, death, thro' sorrow and thro' sinning
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed;
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.*

It is fitting after discussing the above two books to turn to Philip Toynbee's, *Part of a Journey* (Collins, £9.95). The author is best known as a weekly reviewer in *The Observer*, the son of a famous father and mother, and the author of a number of books. A highly intelligent man, sophisticated, he was profoundly agnostic. In this diary, which he keeps between August 1977 and October 1979, he recorded with astonishing honesty and humility his inward struggle to know and master himself, to commune with God and to love his fellow men. He records his struggles against a propensity to drink too much, to lose his temper, to quarrel with his wife, and always hanging over him like a black cloud the threat of a recurrence of the deep depression from which he had not long emerged. His comments range over a wide

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

Another question about the revision of hymns and hymnbooks. If our traditional repertoire of missionary hymns were to be revised, which old-time favourite would you throw out first, and why?

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

variety of topics, sometimes as Malcolm Muggeridge wrote, 'wisely foolish and foolishly wise'. It is not without its amusing anecdotes. One I particularly enjoyed was a story told by Jessica Mitford following a discussion on re-incarnation. I don't think the editor would pass it if I repeated it here!

Toynbee is repelled by the secularism of the Western world and disillusioned with so much of its politics. He cannot accept the High Church Anglicanism of his wife nor the Roman Catholicism of his mother. At Evensong in Peterborough Cathedral he feels the service is remote and the clergy and choir seem to be professional actors with a tiny audience. It is with the nuns at a nearby Anglican community that he finds peace of mind and is able to pray and meditate, in spite of difficulties occasionally over some of the imprecatory psalms that are sung. At this stage he was not a Christian, but certainly a believer in God, and the nuns accepted him and their acceptance brought him nearer to God. I remember a Hindu student at Birmingham university who was accepted on similar terms by the Christian family at the Parish Church in Birmingham when Bryan Green was the Rector. Later he became a Christian and told how the congregation had welcomed him. He was invited to all their social activities and regularly attended the services but never once did

anyone 'tackle' him, asking him whether he was a Christian. I heard someone say the other day that she was loved into the church. Is there not something here for us to ponder?

Philip Toynbee's experience is not unlike Malcolm Muggeridge's. Both typify modern man — cultivated, urbane, sceptical, self-sufficient but eventually finding the modern world dry and barren, its values unable to quench their souls' thirst and turning as they grew older towards the God they had rejected. Unlike Malcolm Muggeridge, Toynbee, at any rate at the conclusion of his journal, had not found Christ. This I found the saddest part of the diary. He cannot pray to Jesus and at one point writes that he has never felt the faintest flicker of His presence. He makes comments about Christ which for one of his intelligence and spiritual understanding I found incomprehensible.

I found the book compulsive reading and was profoundly moved by it. I was on the point of writing to him about his views on Christ when I heard of his sudden death. I felt a sense of personal loss for I had come to know and love this man as he laid bare his soul in this journal. Whether during the interval between the end of the diary in October, 1977, and his death this year he came to find in Christ, 'the way, the truth, and the life' I do not know. One can only leave him to the Everlasting Mercy.

The Clowns of God by Morris West (Hodder and Stoughton, £6.95) is what **The Book Programme** on radio would describe as 'a good read'. The author is 65, an Australian. As a young man he joined the Irish Christian Brothers, an R.C. teaching order, taught for 8 years and shortly before he was due to take his vows left the Order and joined the army and later became a journalist. He tells a story superbly, but he is more than a writer of good yarns, for he is a Christian and in a number of his books, notably **The Devil's Advocate** and **The Shoes of the Fisherman**, and especially in this his latest book, there is a strong Christian element. Some of his books, not all, reflect his spiritual quest. There are periods of disillusionment alternating with Christian hope. Half-way through writing this book he suffered a severe illness, an experience which affected the direction of the novel.

The story is set in the last decade of this century. The world seems to be moving inexorably towards a nuclear war. The reigning Pope, Gregory XVII, is given a vision from God warning of the closeness of Christ's return. As he attempts to tell the world of this in an encyclical letter to the Church the Vatican takes fright and silences him. With the dubious assistance of some doctors and much scheming they compel him to abdicate on grounds of mental instability. West handles the theme with

great skill. There is a rich variety of characters set in a background of unprecedented world crisis. He shows considerable understanding of European politics and terrorism. Observing the world in this penultimate decade of the century I found the story credible. One reviewer described the book as 'a spiritual thriller'. It is not only an exciting story; for the Christian, West is saying so much of what we believe. Admittedly there is a certain amount which some of us will find unacceptable. The **Parousia** for him, is the coming of Christ in judgement, not what many Christians believe, the coming of Christ for the Church. Nevertheless the book has a message for modern man involved in what many believe are indeed the last days. West is not an orthodox Christian, let alone an orthodox Catholic, but he is undoubtedly a believer, and we can thank God that he is using his unquestioned talents to declare the word of God as he understands it. Many will be reached by this book who otherwise might not have heard.

Finally, let me share with you a few lines from my recent reading which have imprinted themselves on my mind; a quotation from C. S. Lewis in Harry Blamires's book. 'Our whole destiny as Christians seems to lie in acquiring a fragrance that is not our own but borrowed, in becoming clean mirrors filled with the image of a face that is not ours.'

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

'Eternal Sonship — Does it matter?'

Question 202

In your answer to Question 200 you referred to people who hold a biblical doctrine of the Trinity but refuse to apply the title of 'Son' to the pre-incarnate Christ. Is such a doctrinal variation of any real importance?

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the views and writings of the people concerned to form a judgement about the overall effect on their theology of this doctrine. But it does have quite significant implications for our view of the godhead as well as presenting certain conceptual difficulties. The 'orthodox' doctrine of the Trinity entails that at the heart of reality we find a three-fold relationship which some have even gone so far as to call a 'family'. On this view, the love that exists between the members of the blessed Trinity is associated with a difference of function between the persons. Such a doctrine, involving, as it does, variety as well as sameness within the godhead, yields a rather different picture from that of three apparently undifferentiated entities, each the mirror image of the other and linked by a relationship which — even if it be love — is love of a different sort from that obtaining where there is variety. I hesitate to be specific about the implications of this for our view of relationships between human beings whether in creation or in salvation, but I think it is more significant than may at first sight appear.



Prophecy: A Question of Authority

Question 203

If we accept that prophecy was not a gift withdrawn at the end of the first century, so that it may be experienced today, are we not confronted by a problem, in that absolute divine authority (for the words are spoken in the first person, as if by the Lord himself), comparable to that of Scripture,

is being claimed for the words of a member of the congregation?

In my experience of prophecy — which is admittedly limited — the 'word' has usually been concerned with a specific course of action which is to be taken by a person or persons present, or it has been a word of encouragement or of warning about current circumstances or future developments. In addition, the form has not always been the 'first person' one that you refer to. There thus seems little danger, as you suggest in your letter, of a body of tradition growing up similar to that accepted by the Church of Rome, nor of modifications in doctrine.

Even in Old Testament times, it was not easy to know when a speaker was passing on the 'word of the Lord'. *Deuteronomy 13:1-5* and *18:20-22* show the tests that were applied. Under the new covenant the Holy Spirit affords more direct guidance and the authority and teaching of Christ are central. But the basic principles have not changed. 'Prophecy' that is falsified by events is spurious. It is equally false if, in spite of being confirmed by circumstances, it in any way delegates from the authority of Christ or of God's self-revelation in Scripture. Important New Testament passages are *1 Corinthians 14:29,32*; *1 Thessalonians 5:21*; *Romans 12:7*. A German charismatic writer, in the course of a very helpful treatment of the gifts of prophecy and of revelation, warns quite explicitly against formulae such as, 'I, the Lord, say to you . . .' This 'contains a hidden temptation to the speaker to use such an opening just at the time when he is not quite sure of himself . . . must therefore be . . . a rare exception . . . In the normal situation it is not the responsibility of the one who utters the prophecy to recognise whether it is genuine and so he must not manipulate such recognition by the way he phrases his message' (*Stewards of God's Grace* by Siegfried Grossmann, Exeter, 1981).



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

LOOKING AT BOOKS



The Expositor's Bible Commentary Volume 9

General Editor: Frank E. Gaebelein
Pickering & Inglis. 537pp. £12.50

We welcome with acclamation this further installment of what is clearly going to be an excellent Bible commentary in twelve volumes. Three have already appeared, and this, the fourth, amply maintains the high standard of the former ones. The text on which the commentary is based is the New International Version, and the treatment throughout is evangelical and scholarly, and yet easy and pleasant to read and assimilate.

Two most important New Testament books are expounded in the volume now before us, the *Gospel of John*, and the *Acts of the Apostles*. For the exposition of *John's Gospel*, we are indebted to Merrill C. Tenney, emeritus Professor of Theology at Wheaton College, U.S.A., who produced an earlier work on this Gospel thirty-three years ago. This latter treatment, however, is fuller and more mature than the former one, and it takes into account the wealth of research on the Gospel

which has been undertaken during the past generation. He advances cogent arguments for believing that John the son of Zebedee was the Gospel's author, and that it was written towards the end of the first century A.D., though he notes the opinion recently advanced by Professor John Robinson that the work might well have been in circulation prior to A.D. 70.

The commentator on the *Book of Acts* is Richard N. Longenecker, Professor of New Testament at Wycliffe College, Toronto. He has no doubts as to Luke being the author of the biblical treatise, and he gives reasons for favouring an early date for the writing, A.D. 64, or thereabouts. He regards the records of the speeches made by Peter and by Paul as being accurate summaries of what these apostles actually said on the occasions in question.

For what we have already received in respect of this commentary we are truly grateful; and our appetites are whetted for more before long.

Reviewed by Stephen S. Short

BOOKS ABOUT THE BIBLE: A SURVEY

A review of recent publications by Peter Cousins

Pride of place in this survey must go to Volume IV (Z^eēbh-ḥmš) of the **Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament** edited by Botterweck and Ringgren (SCM Press, £15.00). Intimidating at first sight to non-specialists and written by scholars whose presuppositions do not square with those of most **Harvester** readers, these pages contain fascinating discussions of Old Testament usage and thought concerning subjects as diverse as dance, old age, sowing and seed. Access to this series (and a knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet) would be of great help to many preachers. Almost as bulky as the Dictionary are some commentaries. Among reprints from previous generations, we note David Dickson on **Matthew** (Banner

of Truth, £5.95), David Thomas on **John** and on the **Acts of the Apostles** (Kregel) and **Exposition of Proverbs** by George Lawson (Kregel, \$18.95). Also from Kregel comes **Studies in Revelation** by W. Leon Tucker. This expositional commentary is pre-millennial in tone and is a good deal more closely linked with the Bible than Hal Lindsey's **The 1980s: Countdown to Armageddon** (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, £1.95) which crosses the Scofield Bible with the belief that the USA are a chosen race, to produce a formidable pro-Reagan manifesto (see p.157). Commentaries of a completely different kind are E. G. Selwyn on the **First Epistle of Peter** and J. N. D. Kelly on the **Pastoral Epistles** (both reprinted by Baker Book House at \$10.95 and \$6.95 respectively). Selwyn first appeared in 1945 in the Macmillan Greek Testament Commentary series and has achieved the status of a

classic. J. N. D. Kelly's volume was published in 1963 in A. & C. Black's New Testament Commentary Series. It is upon the English text and makes a persuasive case for Pauline authorship. We are grateful to the publishers who have re-issued these two important works. There should be a warm welcome for the **Lion Photoguide to the Bible** (Lion, £6.95). This is not simply a reprint of the two volumes which were first published in 1972 and 1973. The beautiful colour photographs remain unchanged but the notes have been considerably extended and now offer a good deal of information systematically arranged. The New Testament section in particular provides a helpful brief account of the life and teaching of Jesus. Among the many 'little books', several deal with Old Testament topics. **A Man and His God** by Denis Lane (Evangelical Press, £1.95),

like R. S. Wallace's **Abraham: Genesis 12-23** (Triangle/SPCK, £1.85), both deal with the father of the faithful. Wallace offers more of a commentary on the biblical material and Lane provides something more overtly 'devotional'. Physically, Wallace's book is a great deal easier to read. In **Man Overboard** (Pickering & Inglis, £2.25), Sinclair Ferguson offer 11 studies in the Book of Jonah (together with the text of the book). In spite of its brevity, it is well worth reading. In William Barclay's **A New People's Life of Jesus** (SCM, £2.50) we have six talks given in 1965 by a communicator of genius. Another reprint by a popular author is William Purcell's **No Other Gods** (Mowbray, £1.50). This meditation on the Ten Commandments has been revised and updated since its original (1966) publication. Another straightforward treatment of a

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well-known passage is **Well I'm Blessed** by Harry Hutchison (Eyre & Spottiswoode, £1.95) — devotional studies in the Beatitudes. On a rather larger scale is Stephen Winward's **Fruit of the Spirit** (Inter-Varsity Press, £2.15). This is a book about Christian character. It examines the character of Christ, then looks at the fruit of the Spirit and considers how to produce it today. This may be a small book but in no way is it a slight one. Finally, two books of sermons. I don't think this is an unfair description of Marcus Loane's **Grace and the Gentiles** (Banner of Truth, £2.50). Here the Archbishop of Sydney expounds key verses or passages from six Pauline letters in an attempt to give an insight into Paul's thinking. As for Calvin's **Sermons on the Saving Work of Christ** (Evangelical Press, £3.25), these provide study, teaching and preaching resources for Christmas, Lent, Easter, Ascension and Whitsun. This reprint, at any rate, is a service both to teachers and learners. We can all benefit from Calvin's gift for expounding and applying the Scriptures.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

From Christian Focus Publications comes a new series of illustrated stories retold from the Bible for younger children. Already published are: **Gideon, Soldier of God, Mary, Mother of Jesus, Ruth the Harvest Girl, Peter the Fisherman**. The language is straightforward, the spiritual application appropriate and not overdone. The artwork is pleasing although some may judge it insufficiently exciting. From Lion come two stories for older children. **Killer Dog** by Peggy Burns (95p) is an adventure story for readers of 9 and over telling how a boy tries to save his dog from being put down. **The Southern Hill and the Land Beyond** by Pauline Davies, first published in 1973 (£1.25), is an allegorical story about the kingdom of King Gerald where creatures such as fleetings and cotties and westels take part in the warfare between good and evil. It will appeal to

older children who like a good read and enjoy allegory. In **They Shall be Mine** (Banner of Truth, £1.95), John Tallach tells the story of 21 Christians from all over the world. Some are still alive. Although some chapters are too short to be of much use, the range of the book is commendable. Preachers looking for children's sermons will welcome **52 More Stories for Children** by R. E. O. White (Pickering & Inglis, price not stated).

THE LAST THINGS

Christian Hope and the Future of Man

Stephen H. Travis.
 Inter-Varsity Press. 143pp.
 £2.85 (paperback)
 Eschatology — the study of the last things — is a highly controversial topic both inside and outside conservative evangelical circles. Most books on the subject, popular and scholarly, take one particular point of view and seem unaware of (or at least do not admit) the problems it raises and how tentative it really is. Stephen Travis, who has lectured in New Testament at St. John's College, Nottingham, since 1969, has already put us in his debt with his well-balanced and popularly written paperback on the return of Christ — **The Jesus Hope** (Word Books) — which does not go beyond the clear statements of the NT. Now we are further in his debt because he has produced a first-class, scholarly survey and assessment of current writing and thinking on such subjects as the meaning of apocalyptic, the parousia of Jesus Christ, the judgement of God and the future life. Dr. Travis shows a deep acquaintance with a wide range of modern publications, is scrupulously fair in his exposition of the views of others, and yet is not afraid to judge them by the standard of NT teaching. In addition, he offers his own interpretations and insights without dogmatism. It is particularly good to see a book on this subject coming to grips with the philosophical problems involved. The book, like the

continued on Page 15

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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The September Question

One of the Scripture Union's daily readings towards the end of June was the passage concerning the 'ordeal of jealousy' (Num. 5:11-31). It raised a number of questions in one place where it was read (in the lucid rendering of the N.E.B.). Here are two. If this passage had come to our attention in a secular document from antiquity, how would we have reacted to it? Why did the law of Moses make no comparable provision for a situation in which a wife entertained similar suspicions regarding her husband? Any answers?

Mr. R. C. Bull replies: Numbers 5:11-31 raises a number of problems of interpretation. I am attracted by the following: a man's wife is found to be pregnant and her husband suspects that he is not the father. A test is carried out by the priests, who require her to take an oath and drink a 'potion' containing the ashes of a cereal offering in water taken from the laver. If she is guilty of adultery this produces a miscarriage. The potion was, of itself, harmless; and I think we would find the ordeal both lenient and heavily weighted towards a 'not guilty' verdict in comparison with other primitive ordeals, all of which involve the principle that something 'spiritually pure', such as fire, water or a brew of magic herbs, will accept the pure and reject the impure, since a guilty person would lack the pure heart where-with to stand up to the test. With many such ordeals

it was a physical impossibility for even an innocent person to withstand the test.

However, here we have a safe means for an innocent wife to defend herself, giving proof of the paternity of the child and assurance that the child would have a place in the community of God's chosen people.

We must also bear in mind that a person undergoing this ordeal was accused of breaking the seventh commandment; and where there was proof of guilt, the punishment was death for both the man and woman (Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22).

Marriage was seen as a binding commitment of faithfulness between two persons, paralleling the covenant relationship between God and Israel; and the crime of adultery was the social equivalent of the religious crime of having 'other gods'. This looks forward to Paul's declaration in Ephesians 5:25.

Mr. T. H. Friston replies: Professor Bruce asks, concerning the 'ordeal of jealousy' (Num. 5:11-31) 'If the passage had come to our attention in a secular document from antiquity, how would we have reacted to it?' I would have regarded it as a superstitious piece of barbaric ritual, and it does not become less so because it happens to be found in the Law of Moses.

Every statement in the Bible must be judged by its own high standards revealed in other parts of it. God does not contradict Himself. The apostle Paul describes the law

as 'holy, and just, and good' (Rom. 7:12). The 'ordeal of jealousy' is none of these things. God does not come down to man's level if that would involve embracing and condoning their superstition and ignorance. When God, in the truest sense, came down to man's level, it was to be 'without sin' (Heb. 4:15).

The inspiration which gave us the Word of God is like a noble river. When nearest its source it is pure and clean, but later down its course it becomes clouded by its passage through the abodes of men. The ten commandments, part of the Law of Moses, show the river of inspiration in all its purity. The law of 'ordeal of jealousy' shows that same river muddied by the 'cultural' outlook of the time and of the contemporaries of the human instrument who penned it. This also answers the second question 'Why is there no comparable provision for a woman?' When the Law was enacted, it was very much a man's world! Compare the law of divorce (Deut. 24) which acknowledges the right of the man only (not the woman) to dispose of the spouse on any pretext he might choose. The disapproval of that procedure, by the Lord Jesus Christ, is clearly stated (Matt. 19:4-8).

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies: I find it impossible to imagine this passage as coming to us in the way described, but I could think of it as a possible extract from some apocryphal book. And if that were so I should have doubted its authenticity, and that because

it is so unlike other passages on the subject of adultery. It is obvious that the full import of Deuteronomy was for 'when they had come into the land'; and the law exacted death and other penalties for adultery and fornication on the man or both parties (22:13-29). But Israel was in camp. Life was, in consequence, possibly more free and so subject, perhaps, to more temptation. Possibly the strange ordeal of the penalty was intended to be exemplary and so deter all other possible offenders. As for the offending men: the reason seems to be that there was no way of physically testing a suspected man. This view, I admit, makes the dusty water test scientific rather than miraculous. Why this test should do what it did either as in the NEB or as in the other versions from the AV to the NIV is a mystery. But there is little doubt that when a woman was pronounced guilty she would probably name a man as the other party, who might be, in consequence, under suspicion for a long time. And so in this indirect way men too had to be careful of their reputations it seems. Even so, the test may have been miraculous. Even as one who, about ten years ago, actually read some carefully selected verses from the passage in question at the breaking of bread I cannot offer a better explanation than the foregoing.

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies: For a long time it has seemed to me that the clue to the difficult passage Num. 5:11-31 lies in the term 'spirit

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (4)

J. E. Todd

... of Humility (*Phil. 2:1-13*)

As Paul addresses the Christians at Philippi, his statements in the opening verses of the second chapter are often taken up as a statement of the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is true, for here we have an unequivocal statement of his Godhead, 'Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped' (*v.6*). But this is only the necessary background to the main point of Paul's statements. The fact of our Lord's deity is cited to give the greatest possible force to his example of humility.

So he exhorts the Christians at Philippi to be of one mind. Is he asking them to have the same opinion on every subject? Some Christians think that this would be a highly desirable state of affairs. But finding that it is not so, in exasperation, they conclude that they are right and that all who differ from them in opinion are therefore wrong! But unity of opinion on every secondary matter is a phantom which we should waste no time in pursuing. 'Let every one be fully convinced in his own mind' (*Rom. 14:5, RSV*). The context in Philippians shows that Paul is speaking of a state of mind, the exact opposite of the self-opinionated 'I'm-always-right' attitude. He exhorts all Christians to be of one mind in being humble-minded. 'Complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves'

(*v.2-3, RSV*). This is also stated to be the end for which God is working in our lives (*v.13*).

Humility is here said to be the crowning glory of the spiritual life, the completion (*v.1-2, RSV*) of Christ's encouragement, of love's incentive, of the presence of the Holy Spirit, of affection and of sympathy. Therefore if we lay claim to these things, we must go on to possess a humble mind.

This humble state of mind is a wonderful virtue, as seen by its results, which present us with a wonderful catalogue. It brings joy to our fellow Christians, 'Complete my joy' (*v.2*). It expresses itself in love, 'Having the same love' (*v.2*). It abolishes selfishness and conceit, 'Do nothing from selfishness or conceit' (*v.3*). It counts others more worthy than ourselves, 'Count others better than yourselves' (*v.3*). It unselfishly considers the interests of others in order to be of help (*v.4*). But what exactly is humility?

Once again our Lord's example is set before us. 'Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus' (*v.5*). By his example humility is shown to be the unconscious abandonment of self-interest in pursuit of the goal of service to others. His self-interest was infinite, as God the Son he shared the total universal authority of deity. Nevertheless he relinquished that authority (but not that deity) at his incarnation, completely reversing his role and becoming a servant. This was not done as an end in itself, how proud he could have been of his humility! It was as a

means to an end — the end of further humbling himself to being executed as a condemned criminal in order to serve and to save us. 'Even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (*Matt. 20:28*). He sacrificed everything that was rightfully his, his authority as God, his life as a man, to gain nothing for himself, except shame. This is humility. This example we are called to follow as Christians. To sacrifice all our rights, our right to be heard, respected, rewarded, appreciated or to have our own way accepted, in order to gain nothing for ourselves, except to be ignored, despised, rejected and taken for granted, in order that we may be of service to others. No task is too menial, unrewarding, undignified, insignificant or misunderstood that humility cannot do it. Humility is the power to serve in any capacity!

*When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the prince of glory
died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my
pride
(Isaac Watts)*

If this article were longer, it would take a few more moments to read. Use those few moments instead to consider the humility of our Creator (*Heb. 1:10*). Then to consider how we are called to follow his example, 'What sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness?' (*2 Pet. 3:11*).

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (53)

F. F. Bruce

Ministry in Jerusalem (John 10:1-39)

iii. THE SHEPHERD AND THE FLOCK (John 10:1-39)

(c) Renewed conflict (John 10:31-39), continued

10:34-36 Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, "I have said, 'You are gods.' " If those to whom the word of God came were called gods by him (and scripture cannot be annulled), do you say, "You are a blasphemer" to the one whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, because I said, "I am God's Son"?''

Jesus rebuts their charge of blasphemy by means of an argument from scripture, of a kind with which they themselves were quite familiar. In *Psalms* 82 the supreme God rises in the divine council to pronounce judgment on beings called 'gods' (elohim). His charge against them is that they administer justice unjustly, showing favour to the wicked instead of upholding the right of the helpless and oppressed; the sentence which he passes on them is death:

I have said, 'You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, you shall die like men, and fall like any prince.'

Jewish interpreters were divided (as other interpreters have been divided since then) on the question whether those addressed in these terms by God are celestial beings or human judges. For our present purpose this question is not of the first relevance: what is relevant is that they are manifestly inferior beings to the supreme God, and yet he calls them 'gods' (verse 6) — *theoi* in Greek. If God himself calls them 'gods' (and 'sons of the Most High' at that), why should it be counted a capital offence in the Sent One of the Father if he calls himself the Son of God? The argument is conducted thus far on the level of Jesus' oppo-

nents: his question would have made an interesting issue for rabbinical debate. The fact that the beings addressed in the psalm were called 'gods' did not prove that he was right in speaking of himself as the Son of God.

But more than that must be said: the beings addressed in the psalm were unjust judges, whether of human or angelic rank, divinely sentenced to death. But Jesus was 'the one whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world'. Before he was sent he was sanctified, i.e. set apart for his special mission in the world. We may compare the inaugural word of the Lord to Jeremiah: 'Before you were born I sanctified you (the verb in LXX is *hagiazō*, as here); I appointed you a prophet to the nations' (*Jer.* 1:5). 'He whom God has sent utters the words of God' (*John* 3:34); if he says 'I am the Son of God', his words must be treated seriously. He had not in the immediately preceding context used these precise words, but they were logically involved in what he said about his Father (verses 29, 30), just as they were involved in what he said about the Father and the Son in the sequel to the incident at Bethesda (*John* 5:17-27).

'Your law' (verse 34) is here a comprehensive term for the Hebrew Bible. They acknowledged its authority, and should therefore accept the implications of what it said. 'Scripture cannot be annulled' or 'made void' (*Mark* 7:13); it cannot be set aside when its teaching is inconvenient. What is written remains written.

10:37-39 'If the works which I do are not my Father's, do not believe me; but if they are, then, even if you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may recognize and know that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.' They endeavoured to seize him again, and he escaped their hands.

Jesus appeals again to the evidence of his works, as he has done in *John* 5:36 (and as he will do later in the upper room in 14:10f.). The works which the Father gave him to do testify that he is

the Son who does nothing on his own initiative, but only what he sees the Father doing (5:19), and they testify more than that. In the discourse on the good shepherd he has spoken of the mutual knowledge of the Father and himself, and has extended that knowledge to embrace the mutual knowledge of the shepherd and his own sheep (verses 14, 15). This mutual knowledge is now said to be based in a mutual indwelling, a 'coinherence'. The claim is repeated in *John 14:10*; Jesus then goes on to make it plain that this coinherence is a coinherence of love, which is extended to embrace his love for his people and theirs for him (14:20-24). Indeed, as the upper room discourse shows, such is Jesus' oneness with the Father that those who love him are brought into the sphere of the life of God, which is the life of perfect love.

Such teaching was meat and drink to those who listened to it in the upper room, but it was anathema to those who heard it on the present occasion. Their conviction that Jesus was a blasphemer was strengthened, and again they tried to arrest him, as they had done at the feast of Tabernacles (7:30), but again they failed. That 'his hour had not yet come' is not given as the explicit reason for their failure here, as it is there, but it is no doubt implied.

The final phase of the ministry 'to the world' (*John 10:40-12:50*)

i. BEYOND JORDAN (10:40-42)

10:40-42 Then he went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there he stayed. Many came to him, and they said, 'John performed no sign, but all the things that John said about this man were true.' And many believed in him there.

Jesus now left Jerusalem, which he was not to visit again until Palm Sunday, between three and four months later. He went to Bethany beyond Jordan, where John had borne witness to him in the early days, before the beginning of Jesus'

public ministry. The phrase 'at first' may refer to the first part of the evangelist's narrative, where John's testimony is related (*John 1:19-36*); or it may mean that this is where John's baptismal ministry was first carried out, before he went to Aenon near Salim (*John 3:23*).

The people who lived there remembered him, and they came to hear him. As they listened to his words and watched the things he did, they recalled John's testimony to him and were compelled to acknowledge its truth. 'John (unlike Jesus) performed no sign', they said repeatedly, 'but all the things that John said about this man were true.' This is one respect in which John did not manifest the power of Elijah: in none of our sources of information about him are any mighty works credited to him. None, indeed, were needed. In this Gospel John is presented from first to last as the ideal witness, and it is as such that he is presented here. John had long since been imprisoned and put to death, but his words lived on. No one called to be a witness could ask for any better encomium than that all the things he said were true. If John's disciples, on burying him (*Mark 6:29*), had tried to think of a suitable epitaph for him, no more suitable wording could have been devised than the testimonial of these former hearers of his at Bethany beyond Jordan. To be sure, some of the things John said about Jesus had not yet come true: he had not yet taken away the sin of the world or begun to baptize with the Holy Spirit, because he was 'not yet glorified' (*John 7:39*). But John's witness was so amply confirmed by the evidence of their eyes and ears during this short time that Jesus spent among them that many believed in Jesus. So John's witness remained effective after John himself was removed.

It has been pointed out that the successive references to John in this Gospel are progressively shorter, from the first chapter to this — a curious illustration of John's own words regarding Jesus: 'He must increase, but I must decrease' (*John 3:30*).

MAN IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

H. P. Wotton

There are certain God-like features in man that prove him to be as far above the animal creation as the heavens are above the earth. God is spirit, without body or parts, and when He made man in His own image it was in the likeness of His personal attributes of thought, reason, wisdom, love, truth, holiness, justice and goodness. And just as God has dominion over everything He has made, so He gave to Adam dominion over the inferior creatures.

God does not make sudden decisions, for His infinite knowledge is such that He has known from eternity all He would do in time. What wonderful thoughts of love God must have to man to make him in His own image. Knowing something of ourselves and of the world in which we live, it is difficult to imagine a perfectly innocent man. But such was Adam when God created him.

Some people aim for perfection in everything they do. But however good the works of men may be, there is always a flaw somewhere, though it be slight and imperceptible. But God is not like this. Because of His infinitely perfect character, it is not possible for Him to do or make anything imperfect, and He made Adam in the likeness of His own moral perfections.

Thomas Boston says of Adam in his innocence that 'the King's son was all glorious within, and his clothing of wrought gold. He was the favourite of heaven. He shone brightly in the image of God, who cannot but love His own image, wherever it appears.' Though his body

was naked, his inner being was clothed with perfect righteousness; and so there was nothing in him that could destroy the happy fellowship he had with his Maker.

Genuine happiness stems from love to God and submission to His will. We associate holidays with happiness, failing perhaps to remember that the word **holiday** stems from **holy day**, a day set apart for the worship and service of God. True joy is not to be found in changing our place or in physical rest, for we are exhorted in the Scriptures to be joyful in the Lord. This is excellent advice, for He is the reservoir of true joy. When God breathed into Adam the breath of life he had the greatest, most exalted life any created being can have — the life of God in the soul of man.

Writing of man in his state of innocence, Thomas Boston says, 'Man had a life of pure delight and unalloyed pleasure, in this state. Rivers of pleasure ran through it. The earth, with the product thereof, was now in its glory; nothing had yet come in to mar the beauty of creatures.'

The Divine Surgeon

Though an angel may have communion with God, he would still be on his own if he were the only one of his kind. This is also true of man. God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him' (*Gen. 2:18*). Then, using His own method of anaesthesia, He took from him a rib, and from it made the woman. And when God presented Adam with his perfect counterpart, Adam said,

'This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.' The woman being taken from the man is a similitude of Christ and His bride the Church, for just as the woman in the form of a rib was taken from Adam's wounded side, so the Bride, the Lamb's wife, received her life from the God-Man when His blood flowed from His side for her on the Cross.

The Garden and the Fall

Eden must have been a wonderful place. A variety of trees brought forth their fruits in due season to provide the physical needs of the favoured pair. But Adam and Eve were on probation. Not because they had done wrong, but to see if they would stand up to the moral test that would be applied to them, for God had said, 'Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die' (*Gen. 2:16,17*). And all would have been well had not Satan, in the form of a serpent, entered the garden, and said to the woman, 'Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?' (*Gen. 3:1*). But his words were not so much a question as an insinuation that God was withholding something from Adam and Eve that would have been for their good.

Up to this present period of time our first parents were satisfied with the abundance God had provided for them. But the evil one realized that the way to destroy their happiness was to cast a slur

on the character of God. This would sow the seed of discontent, and weaken their desire to be obedient to their divine benefactor. So when Eve told him that God had said that they would die if they ate of the forbidden fruit, Satan said, 'Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil' (*Gen. 3:4,5*). Whether Eve was influenced by a Satanic enchantment that gave the tree a new look we do not know, but when she looked at the forbidden fruit, she fell for the temptation, and following her fall she brought into a state of sin not only her husband, but her posterity also.

Paradise Regained

Just as the fall came about by a look in the wrong direction, so salvation comes to us by a look in the right, for as Satan prevailed on Eve to look at the forbidden fruit, which look ended in death, so we are now bidden to 'behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' and live. Those who look and live in this vital way may know for certain that they are among that great number of people who are predestined to be conformed to the image of God's Son, 'that He might be the firstborn among many brethren' (*Rom. 8:29*), for He humbled Himself to become God in the image of man that in His infinite mercy we who were fallen may again become man in the image of God, in a union with Him that cannot be severed in time or in eternity.

THIS IS MY BODY – BROKEN?

J. W. Forrest

Mr. Forrest, a retired technical officer in H.M. Stationery Office, now lives at Southmoor near Oxford, where he supports the local assembly. He has frequently written in the past for The Witness and often appears in our correspondence columns.

The popular understanding of Paul's words: 'Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you' (1 Cor. 11:24), as recorded in the so-called King James or Authorized Version, has for long been a matter of serious doubt among scholars. The relatively unimportant words: 'Take eat' and the relatively important word: 'broken' are not found in the best manuscripts. And this reading suggests that the three words in question are an interpolation by some early copyist endeavouring to make the sentence appear to conform with the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, plus the assumption that the Lord's body was to be broken. Old Testament prophecy speaks of wounds, bruises and stripes, but never of a broken body in connection with the Messiah (Isa. 53:5). And when we hear of broken bodies concerning some disaster we understand it to mean that broken limbs are a common characteristic.

Bread and wine were not features of the original passover meal as recorded in Exodus 12; and there appears to be no reference to them in this connection anywhere in the Old Testament. Perhaps these and other items were introduced when the Old Testament canon closed. And this is where a booklet entitled *The Passover in the time of Christ*¹ is so helpful as it describes the whole procedure.

The Lord seems to have always followed custom except when it con-

flicted with the Scriptures, as in the case of 'Corban' (Mark 7:11-13). According to the aforementioned booklet, when a Jewish head-of-house broke the loaf at a Passover, it had a traditional significance. He broke it into two unequal pieces; the smaller spoke of slavery and poverty, the larger of freedom and plenty. The Lord probably did similarly; there is a parallel: 'If we suffer, we shall also reign with him' (2 Tim. 2:12). But whatever He did, He gave the broken bread a new significance. It spoke of His body, and was to be eaten as such. It would seem therefore that as His people partake of the elements they are, besides proclaiming 'the Lord's death till he come', giving a physical illustration of what they should be doing spiritually and constantly as the Lord taught in His discourse recorded in John 6:22-65. The Lord desired each one to do as He had done plus the eating (and the drinking of the cup). And this proves that the Lord broke the bread once, and not into a number of pieces. Each celebrant today should involve himself (or herself) by breaking off a piece of the loaf, Paul describes this as a fellowship of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16); and participating believers are the body of Christ. As regards the function of the brother giving audible thanks at the table, W. E. Vine has written: 'He is not representing the Lord or taking His place. In dividing the loaf he is simply acting as the servant of the company. Our loaves have usually a hard crust, and all that he is doing is to enable the believers to break it decently and without difficulty. He breaks it afterwards for himself when he partakes. If there were no hard crust, there would be no need for him to divide the loaf at all.'² C. F. Hogg wrote

similarly.³ And Andrew Borland said: 'The phrase in 1 Cor. 10:16, "the bread which we break," cannot have any reference to a representative act at the table symbolizing the breaking of the Lord's Body. The breaking is intimately related to the partaking in verse 17, and is the preliminary individual act in a communal meal in which all participate. Nor does it suggest that each is breaking the body of our Lord; and he concludes by observing the parallel with "feeding by faith on the living Bread".'⁴

Concerning the insertion of the word 'broken': W. E. Vine wrote that this 'was no doubt the outcome of the idea that the act of breaking the loaf represented the marring of His body, but that is not borne out by the Scriptures elsewhere. For while Scripture declares that no bone of Him was broken, it likewise gives no suggestion that the wounds in His hands, feet and side were the breaking of His body.'⁵ The references are Psalm 34:20 and John 19:36; and it is difficult to think of a broken body without a broken bone. But what was broken concerning the person of Christ, the Son of God, was His fellowship with the Father during those three hours of darkness. Perhaps we can think of that too as we break the bread each one for himself.⁶

And concerning the word: 'given' (Luke 22:19); those versions, such as the well-known RSV, that cast a doubt on the veracity of the latter part of this verse and all of verse 20, also tend to exclude 'the cup after
Continued on Page Eighty-Seven

1. Khodadad E. Keith, M.A., Church Missions to the Jews, London.

2. *First Corinthians*, pp.156-7, Echoes of Service.

3. *Answers to Questions*, pp.159-60, Pickering and Inglis.

4. *The Church: A Symposium*, edited by J. B. Watson.

5. *Op. cit.*, p.156.

6. It is admitted that there is no Scriptural support for this suggestion, and it does preserve the thought of 'broken', but 'it is as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup' that matters.

TENDING THE FLOCK OF GOD

John Wood

Far be it from me to pontificate about other fellowships. Least of all do I want to offend those members of my own faith and order who value the mode of ministry their churches have enjoyed for generations. But changing circumstances prompt the need to look once more at what the Scriptures say about the Christian ministry.

From time to time I visit churches which cast a longing look at the pastoral oversight other churches have. Like the Israelites searching for a monarchy, they want to be like others (1 Sam. 8:5). They appreciate the help received from godly lay preachers Sunday by Sunday. But having a pastor of their own will get the visitation done and give them a consecutive ministry. They will also be able to off-load some of their arduous responsibilities on to some unsuspecting minister! They rarely contemplate the drawbacks of such a system. Nor do they look once more at what the Scriptures say.

Yet when we do look yet again at what the New Testament has to say on the subject, we find little definite guidance, for nowhere does it give a precise pattern of ministry which every church must implement. It does not even use identical nomenclature for those who held office in the early Church. Sometimes the leaders are known as 'Elders', and at other times they are called 'Bishops' or 'Overseers'. We know that Paul, or his special envoys, appointed elders in various churches here and there (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5). But we have no idea how those churches not founded by the original apostles appointed or received their ministers. At Acts 15:2 it is clear that the whole congregation exercised considerable responsibility in determining issues of moment within the Church. While at 1 Tim. 1:18 it is indicated that Timothy was led into the Christian ministry as a result of

inspired prophetic utterances which pointed in his direction.¹

But if we have no particular pattern of ministry in the New Testament lest we slavishly imitate traditional forms without spiritual power, we are given a number of basic principles, and chief among them is the concept of 'team' ministry. We no longer have apostles among us, at least in the New Testament sense, and to that extent it is never going to be possible for us to reproduce the New Testament order of ministry in every particular, even if we knew more precisely what that order was. It is true that we have the apostolic writings. But we have to admit that we do not always agree as to how they should be interpreted and applied in our own day, for all our lofty claim to spiritual insight. In some traditions there is the concept of 'apostolic succession', though such churches are often far removed from the primitive power and simplicity of the early Church. What is possible for our churches, however, is an experience of the grace of God among us raising up those who are anointed with His Spirit for the work of the ministry. And it is our responsibility to recognise those spiritual gifts and to encourage their exercise (Acts 13:2,3).

There is nothing in the New Testament to justify the practice of one man monopolizing the pulpit for forty Sundays in the year, with mid-week meetings too. Such a system inhibits others who are called to preach and teach. It limits the range of ministry the congregation needs to receive. It discourages those members unable to tune in on to the wave-length of

that particular person. It makes for a cult of personality. And it places undue burdens on the man himself. It is ludicrous to suppose that one particular pastor can manifest the sheer variety of ministry assumed within the pages of the New Testament, however well trained and talented he may be. The earliest writings of our Christian faith clearly presuppose that each congregation was fed by men endowed by God with many complementary gifts. To expect an evangelist to act as a pastor is to fit a square peg into a round hole. And to complain that while one particular minister may be an excellent pastor, he lacks the gifts of prophecy, healing, or evangelism, is to expect more of him than God does. The local church should be led by men who bring their several gifts to the ongoing work of a richly varied team. And if a fellowship or assembly is to be led into full spiritual maturity it will require all the many-sided facets of the Christian ministry, and all the gracious gifts which the Ascended Lord bestows (Eph. 4:8-16).

Yet we are forced to face the question of leadership. In those passages of Scripture which deal with the office of 'bishop' or 'elder', it is assumed that all the elders have a responsibility for pastoral care. They must 'tend the flock of God' (1 Pet. 5:2) and 'care for God's Church' (1 Tim. 3:5). Moreover, in biblical times the pastoral imagery implied authority: the elders must rule, though never dominate (1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Pet. 5:2,3). But a team of strong and dedicated leaders let loose on a particular fellowship can wreak havoc, especially if they gather coterie of personal followers around them.² Clearly someone will need to exercise wise leadership. And because it is leadership and not command, that

1. Though prophets were not expected to be infallible (1 Cor. 14:29). They were right to divine that Paul faced trouble at Jerusalem (Acts 21:10,11), but wrong to think he shouldn't go there (vv. 12-14).

2. Note the rivalries described at 1 Cor. 1:11,12.

he exercises, it will always be with the trust and assent of the eldership and congregation. Hence we find a number of leading figures featuring in the New Testament as 'ministers': people like Epaphras at Colossae (Col. 4:12), Timothy in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3), Titus in Crete (Tit. 1:5), and Epaphroditus from Philippi (Phil. 2:25-30; 4:18). The extent of their leadership is not always known. Though clearly Timothy and Titus had a measure of over-all authority, including that of training others to teach the word (2 Tim. 2:2). And as pastoral elders they were also meant to exercise a teaching ministry within the congregation themselves

(Eph. 4:11b; Tit. 1:9; 1 Tim. 3:2). But the implication of such passages in the New Testament is that one particular elder should act as leader of the rest. It goes without saying that he was to be supported financially in his work,³ and to be respected by the congregation for which he had responsibility.

From reading the New Testament I envisage a vibrant fellowship of Christians led by a wise and gifted 'Leading Elder' who utilizes all the different gifts within the eldership, and beyond, whether of evangelism,

3. With occasional increases (1 Tim. 5:17,18)

prophecy, teaching, or healing, and who joins with them in the work of administration, visitation, and corporate caring expected of the eldership,⁴ with deacons bearing responsibility for fabric, funds, and social service.

4. James 1:27; 5:14 — note the plural 'elders'. Not that 'ministry' in its widest sense was restricted to elders — or to males. Phoebe was a *diakonos* (Rom. 16:1) — a word used at Est. 6:3,5 LXX; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:12; 1 Cor. 3:5; Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7 etc., where it is often translated 'minister'; and Philip's daughters prophesied (Acts 21:9; cf. 1 Cor. 11:5).

This Is My Body — Broken? *Continued from Page Eighty-Five*

supper' (also in 1 Cor. 11:25), 'the cup of blessing' (1 Cor. 10:16) which is to be distinguished from the two before supper. Luke is the only narrator to notice one of these (22:17).

About ten years ago the writer made an examination of fifty available versions and four Greek editions ranging from the Latin *Vulgate* to *Today's English Version* (the then *Good News NT*);⁷ and this revealed a ratio of well over two to one (38 to 16) in favour of either omitting 'broken' (plainly or by paraphrase) or, in some instances, of substituting 'given' or its foreign equivalent. The tendency increasing all the time in favour of complete omission as in nearly all modern versions. Thus, like the *RV* (English and American), the *Living Bible*, the *New American Standard Version*, and the *RSV* omit, but allow its inclusion in a footnote; while the *NEB*, *Jerusalem*, and the *New International Version* completely omit 'broken'.

This investigation showing a substantial majority for the exclusion of 'broken' is not made as though these

textual matters could be decided by popular vote. But when there is such a difficulty it is, at least, interesting to know the decision of many translators. Some of the versions mentioned may not be considered of much consequence by some readers; but it is well to remember that Jerome eventually acquired a reputation for comparative accuracy after the traditional hostility to something new (his *Vulgate*), had subsided. And he read, when translated, 'given over' or 'delivered' instead of 'broken'. (Eventually, the Vatican went to the other extreme in its valuation of Jerome's great work.) In the case of the *Jerusalem Bible*: the main edition gives a substantial reason for its inclusion of verse 19 complete with verse 20 of *Luke* 22 aforementioned.

The writer has been giving audible thanks at the table for nearly forty-five years (he began in his late 'twenties'), but never has he quoted the word 'broken' when doing so. This is because he was already aware of a serious doubt concerning its authenticity; and also because the idea did not commend itself to him. Certainly, the Lord never said: 'This is my broken body' which He probably would have done if it were

a significant word.

We are exhorted to 'test all teachings' (a version of 1 *Thess.* 5:21a); and that should include even those widely held for a long while. 'Catastrophism' is, at last, on its way out; so those who agree with the main point of this article should not give up hope. It is therefore suggested that publishers of hymnbooks, when reprinting, should consider placing beneath each relevant hymn a line stating that 'given' be substituted for 'broken' when preferred.

It is appreciated that some individuals and groups would still put up a vigorous defence for the retention of 'broken'; and their view must be graciously respected if not accepted. But enough of this theological approach; let us close with its practical application in the words of Albert Orsborn, which have been drawn to the writer's attention, from the book *The Salvationists*:

*My life must be Christ's broken bread,
My love His outpoured wine,
A cup o'erfilled, a table spread,
Beneath His name and sign,
That other souls, refreshed and fed,
May share His life through mine.*

7. The writer was indebted to the late H. Dennett who considerably augmented the number of versions consulted.

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Royal Court

H. L. Ellison

Among Evangelicals *1 Sam. 8:10-18* is one of the most neglected sections of the Old Testament. This is almost certainly due to their unwillingness to accept that the institution of the monarchy was an unmitigated disaster for Israel, although the fact is written large on the pages of Israel's history. The reason for this is not far to seek. They are so impressed by the importance of Jesus as Messiah, and indeed of the Messianic concept generally, that they offer few suggestions, if any, as to what would have happened, if Israel had awaited God's time, but they are convinced that the time would have come sooner or later. It may be of value, therefore, to ask ourselves why the monarchy broke down in practice.

When God created a people for His own possession He did not create a unitary one. At an earlier stage Israel looked on itself less as descendants of Abraham, and more as sons of Jacob or Israel. Once we leave the Pentateuch, we find him mentioned in Joshua's farewell speech in Shechem (*Josh. 24:2,3*) and then not again until the time of Ahab (*1 Ki. 18:36*). At the time of the Conquest Israel consisted of twelve independent tribes bound together by a common faith in Yahweh. This is exactly the same type of picture as we are given of the local churches in the apostolic age; independent but bound together by a common faith. Their territorial boundaries, given us in *Joshua*, allotted by divine decree, did not suit Solomon's despotism. In *1 Ki. 4:7-19* we see how he divided the land into twelve districts to suit his convenience. To avoid creating too much resentment, and because the original tribal divisions had coincided with the natural divisions of the country, Solomon made no great changes, but the change in principle was all important.

Today, virtually universally, in both secular and religious life, it is believed that viability is linked with size. Yet, almost as widely, there is a nostalgia for the small, in administrative areas, in businesses, in churches. So we can understand how Israel lost something of real value by the creation

of a unitary, later two unitary states.

This shift of authority from town elders to court officials was aggravated by court positions becoming largely hereditary. The clearest biblical evidence for this is in *Isa. 22:15-25*, especially in vv.23-25. A study of the genealogical detail in the closing chapters of *Kings* and *Jeremiah* will create the same impression. The payment of these officials will have been very largely by the bestowing of land from the royal domain, cf. *1 Sam. 8:14*. The story of Naboth and his vineyard, which is not likely to have been unique, shows how property could come into the king's hands. A special levy, cf. *2 Ki. 15:20*, will probably have been paid in part in land. Such confiscated land will quite certainly not have been returnable under the legislation for the Jubilee.

In spite of the magnificence of Solomon's court and the extent of his kingdom only eleven 'high officials' are mentioned in *1 Ki. 4:2-6*. But as the territories of his successors decreased, officialdom increased as demanded by Parkinson's Law. In the last days of Judah, as they are depicted in the historical chapters of *Jeremiah*, we find an undefined group of people called the *sarim*. In most translations they are called the princes, which is completely misleading. When they were of the blood royal, the title 'the king's son' is used. They are clearly the ministers of state, who can impose their will on a weak king, cf. *Jer. 38:4,5,24-26*. Though Judah was a mere rump state, their number had so increased that they are not normally identified by name.

In his sweeping condemnation of the past, Ezekiel in *ch. 34* does not only single out the shepherds, i.e. the kings, but also the rams and he-goats (v.17), i.e. those in authority under them, the great men. However much David may have served as an ideal for future generations, Solomon set a development in motion that was bound to lead to the exile of Israel, for seen in the light of God's will its society became unreformable. No reformation is praised by contemporary prophets.

of jealousy'. In the Old Testament as a whole, as indeed in the New, 'spirit' is used for the dominating element in a person. It is not being suggested that this will cover every use of spirit, but reference to a concordance will show how often it brings out the inner meaning. What is envisaged in this section is a man seized by an irrational feeling of jealousy, which cannot be justified or

banished. If it had been rational, the man would doubtless have had recourse to the Urim and Thummim, or at a later date to a prophet. Since the jealousy, though possibly well-founded, was irrational, God chose the irrational to deal with it, for nothing less would have sufficed.

If I met a similar passage in an ancient secular document, I should say that every appeal

to an ordeal is in essence irrational, and therefore I am not surprised at an essentially irrational ritual. There is nothing surprising in the Biblical ritual's being confined to the woman. In a society in which the wife was virtually her husband's property, and where he had the right to marry as many women as he wished, a wife might legitimately be jealous of the new wife, but had no

reason for being jealous of her husband. Much of the Law was given for the circumstances of the time. It should be noted that the priest began with an assumption of the woman's innocence (v. 19). The whole ritual was abolished by Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai, shortly after the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70.



LOOKING AT BOOKS

continued from Page 13

others in the series 'Issues in Contemporary Theology', is intended in the first instance for theological students, but any serious reader who is prepared to make an effort to understand the ideas of modern scholarship cannot fail to derive much enlightenment and stimulus to thought in this lucidly written monograph.

The Bible and the Future

A. A. Hoekema. Paternoster Press. 343pp. £8.00

No, this is not another of those sensationalist books which claims that current events are predicted in Scripture or which treats the Bible like **Old Moore's Almanac**. It is a sober and scholarly evangelical treatment of all aspects of biblical eschatology.

After a brief survey of the eschatological outlook of the OT, the opening chapters present the 'inaugurated eschatology' of the NT. Following writers like G. E. Ladd and H. N. Ridderbos, the author argues that the kingdom of God is both present and future: that although it is 'not yet' here in its completeness, in Jesus the Messianic age has 'already' come and Christians even now enjoy a foretaste of the blessings of the age to come through the Spirit.

The major part of the book deals with 'future eschatology': both the aspect of 'individual eschatology' which covers topics like death, immortality and the intermediate state, and

'cosmic eschatology' which comprises topics such as the second coming, resurrection, final judgment, eternal punishment and the new earth. The author, who is Professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, and already well known for his definitive study **The Four Major Cults**, treats these subjects in a reasoned, balanced approach, carefully discussing the various possible interpretations of different verses relevant to the topic and refusing to go further than the biblical evidence allows. He is particularly good in 'the signs of the times'. He writes from and argues for an amillennial position, but he is scrupulously fair to the other views which he expounds and then declares wanting. He carries out a thorough demolition job on dispensationalism, dismisses postmillennialism, but expresses some appreciation for historic premillennialism. Unlike some amillennialists, Hoekema sees the final state of believers as life on a renewed physical earth in resurrection bodies. Throughout there are many references to the work of other writers and extensive quotations from some (particularly Dutch theologians like Berkouwer). A substantial appendix discusses the eschatological views of modern scholars such as Barth, Bultmann, Cullmann and Moltmann. Obviously those who take a

different standpoint from that of the author will not agree with everything he says but it would do them good to consider another point of view on these controversial subjects and they would find much to appreciate. Many will be sorry, however, that he does not discuss the meaning of **Luke 21:24** in the light of the present Jewish control of Jerusalem. This reviewer would have liked to see a treatment of the nature of apocalyptic language and some recognition that taking literally descriptions of the second coming, the last judgment, hell, and the new earth, creates philosophical and scientific problems (e.g. the relationships between time and eternity, and between the physical and the spiritual) that at least deserve attempted answers. Given that this is an American book, it is still a pity that the bibliography was not modified to show British editions where appropriate.

In sum, not a book for those looking for an easily read paperback (they are strongly recommended to try **The Jesus Hope** by S. Travis), but a solid, comprehensive treatment which should be on the shelf of the Bible student and teacher.

Above two reviews by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

The Book of Revelation

Robert H. Mounce. Eerdmans. 426pp. \$10.95. Cased. As we have come to expect from the **New International**

Commentary on the New

Testament here is a substantial and careful study of the last book of the Bible on the basis of the ASV text. Footnotes deal with technicalities and there are ample bibliographies and indices. Dr. Mounce has a clarity of thought and expression rare among commentators. He leaves the reader in no uncertainty as to his view, even on the most problematical of passages, after — let it be added — weighing up the alternatives. He opts for a date of writing about A.D. 96 and judges the author to be John the Apostle (unless the question be left open). All four common systems of interpretation have some truth, and use is made of them all in explaining the text. The judgments of the seals, trumpets and bowls are neither chronologically successive nor a systematic recapitulation, but literary developments, progressive but with increasing detail. The Woman of chapter 12 is the messianic community (subsequently the church). 666 is now indecipherable. The millennium is a thousand year earthly reign with Christ of the martyrs, and 'the rest of the dead' are the other believers plus unbelievers. So at the great white throne there will be a number of believers, hence the book of life. Space forbids any further samples. This is a volume of incalculable worth to the serious student, to whom it is strongly recommended.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne



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.

An Appeal from the Heart!

From Mr. K. F. Mates

Dear Sir,
May I offer the following appeal to your readers? I have been in fellowship in this assembly for fifty years and (like most of the fellowship) am getting on in years. We have 10,000 people without a preacher!

Not just for a day, not just for a week, not just for a month, but every day that the sun shines. Even on a cold day many are to be seen about. Since the Moreton Embankment has been rebuilt the crowds have come back, and the sand. Moreton is the centre of about ten miles of beach, Hoylelake and West Kirby are to one side and for two weeks in the year we have fellowship with the Hoylelake meeting in the Beach Meetings. To the other side of Moreton we have New Brighton, which has also lost its sand, and the Open Air Meetings on the prom have closed down after 50-70 years because no one would take it on. Lack of workers, not people!

Moreton Chapel is on the A551, half a mile from the M53. Moreton shore is also on the A551, half a mile past the chapel, or one mile from the M53.

Our assembly is small in numbers, with few young people, but we do have a good site with a plot of good grass where assembly commended folk could camp or caravan, with the use of the chapel kitchen, toilets, cooker and lighting. Some 30 London Covenanters camped

here a few weeks ago while on their way to the lakes, and still there was room. Moreton not only has lots of sand, but also a large common where people can pitch a tent until sunset.

I believe the Lord could and would use one or two full time workers of a group willing to give part of their holidays. On wet days tracts to the flats, meetings in the chapel in the evenings if requested. People come from all over Merseyside and Cheshire.

One day a year the L.D.O.S. have a display stall in this site, and we invite the passers-by in to the chapel. Yours in His Service

K. F. Mates
Elder and Trustee
Moreton Chapel
33 Rosslyn Drive
Moreton, Wirral
Merseyside
L46 0SU
Phone: 051-678-8876

Magazines in Italy

From Mr. & Mrs. B. I. Hodges

Dear Mr. Coad,
It was with interest we read the article by Samuele Negri on the Italian assemblies in your August edition of **The Harvester**.

Although the magazine **Il Cristiano** is the oldest of magazines in circulation among Italian assemblies, it is not the sole one. In fact, in an attempt to provide wider opportunity for expression of thought and opinion among the assemblies, a new magazine was started some four years ago and now enjoys circulation of well in excess of 1,000 copies a month.

For those able to read Italian and with an interest in Brethren History and how the more 'open' of Italian Brethren

are thinking, we would strongly recommend taking a subscription to **Credere e Comprendere**. The format is fundamentally one for discussion and research into subjects of interest to the Brethren movement, and provides a space within the movement for debate.

Copies can be obtained from: **Credere e Comprendere** via Marvera 8 15047 Spinetta M (AL) Italy.

Subscriptions are 5,000 lire or £2.50 per annum.

Yours sincerely,
Elizabeth and Brian I. Hodges
22, Clive Street
Hereford
HR1 2SB

Music in the Churches

From Dr. John Boyes

Dear Mr. Coad,
Your readers have been well served by Dr. McIntosh's series of articles on our musical practices in the assemblies; these have struck, as it were, a number of chords of sympathy and recognition. This is an aspect of our praise and worship to which we have paid inadequate attention for many years and elders have eschewed their responsibilities — often for the best of reasons! — in guiding the congregational praise into worthy pathways of expression and acceptability. Yet there are many competent vocal and instrumental performers in our midst whose contributions are largely confined to individual efforts with little effect on the joint praise of the congregations. Perhaps what we lack are good musicologists, rather than musicians, who could bring an acceptable ministry to the gifts in the churches and raise the standards to

levels comparable to those found in many other evangelical bodies. I take it that we do not yet have aspirations to match the great classical contributions made by our cathedral choirs, but better **quality** is of the essence of our musical praise if we are to bring greater glory to the Lord in His temple and to interest a new generation of people who are educated to expect good music in worship.

By way of encouraging us to take our music and praise more seriously, I am considering the commissioning of a guidebook **Music amongst the Brethren**, or some such title, which will bring together both the history and practice of our praise and offer advice on how we might improve our skills in offering such worship to the Lord. There are many in our assemblies who have, over the years and currently, offered and can offer useful and informed advice on this subject. It may be that some have already tried to do so; let us join hands again in this ministry. I should welcome any communications from interested brethren and sisters.

Yours in the Lord's service,
John Boyes
13 The Meads
Northchurch
Berkhamsted
Herts. HP4 3QX

What is the Gospel?

From Mr. David G. Lillie

Dear Mr. Coad,
Your correspondent, Robert McGechie, deplores the preaching in some quarters of 'an attenuated version' of the Gospel. After reading his letter however, I do wonder whether his own concept of 'the Gospel' is as

comprehensive as it should be?
 Mr. McGechie says: 'I believe *John 3:16* has, in germ, all the elements of the Christian Good News'. All the elements of what Jesus taught and commanded his disciples to teach? Surely that went far beyond what can reasonably be claimed to be implied in that wonderful verse?
 The focal point in the preaching of Jesus was the Kingdom of God. He taught his disciples to pray: 'Your kingdom come; your will be done, on earth as in heaven'. He commanded them to take this same Gospel to the nations. Long after Pentecost, Luke tells us Paul was 'preaching the Kingdom of God' in Rome, to Jew and Gentile alike (*Acts 28:30*). That Gospel did indeed include a message of hope and forgiveness for the repentant sinner, and a call to a new God-centred life. But its scope was much wider than that. Behind much 'Gospel' preaching lies the untested assumption that the Gospel of the Kingdom, which is the only Gospel Jesus preached, was intended only for Jews in the pre-Pentecostal age, and, after Pentecost it was superseded by 'the Gospel of the grace of God'. Yet strangely, those who believe this teaching make much of *John 3:16* in spite of the fact that these words are taken from one of the earliest recorded incidents in the life of Jesus, and almost certainly pre-date the Sermon on the Mount. Moreover, the man to whom they were spoken was very much a Jew.
 There is only one Gospel. When Jesus sent his disciples forth to the nations he told them to 'teach all that I have commanded you'. Any diminution of that teaching can only produce an attenuated Gospel. I am prompted to draw attention to these facts because on other pages of this same issue of **The Harvester** concern is expressed about the declining interest in and response to Gospel services in some quarters.
 Could this be due in part to the diminished content of what is widely being preached as 'the Gospel'?

Yours serving the One Lord,
 David G. Lillie
 Lark Rise
 Mill Lane
 Exton, Near Exeter EX3 0PH

Arriving in time?

From Mr. E. J. Rowson
 Dear Mr. Coad,
*O wa'd some pow'r the giftie gie us
 To see oursels as others see us.*

The sight can be mildly traumatic. I was at a press conference the other week. The gentlemen of the press (myself as an occasional freelance excepted) were tardy in their arrival. With less than a minute to the appointed hour, the Managing Director who was chairing the event observed to a fellow M.D. 'It's just like a brethren prayer meeting'. The occasion being relatively informal, I chipped in, remarking: 'I resemble that remark'. After which we were treated to a piquantly humorous account of brethren prayer meetings in the West Country, where the M.D. had spent his youth. Enlightened management has only discovered Flexitime in the past decade and a half. For the three-and-a-half decades I have known the brethren, we have practised the one-way variety of the concept. I remember one meeting where the start of the prayer meeting was shifted from 7-30 to 7-45 p.m., since half the saints arrived after the appointed time. And within a matter of months, the same was happening with the new. It is, of course, possible to have a legalistic fetish about time-keeping. Honesty compels the admission that there was a time when I could be relied on to arrive at the close of the first hymn. Only irritation with those unspiritual souls who came even later, prompted an overdue stocktaking. With almost monotonous frequency, Gospel preachers contrast the likely response of the unconverted hearer to an unlikely invitation to Buckingham Palace with his disinterest in the divine invitation. It may be, of course, that as members of the family believers are entitled to take liberties.

Reflecting on the problem, I suggest that systematic unpunctuality indicates how low a priority I attach to a meeting, whether it be the Lord's Day or mid-week. My brethren in the North-east, where I lived at the time, were too gracious to upbraid me for my Tuesday tardiness. I suspect that, instead they prayed for me, recognising it as a symptom of spiritual malaise.
 Yours sincerely,
 E. J. Rowson
 24 St. George's Crescent
 Worsley, M/cr. M28 5AN

Meaningful Words

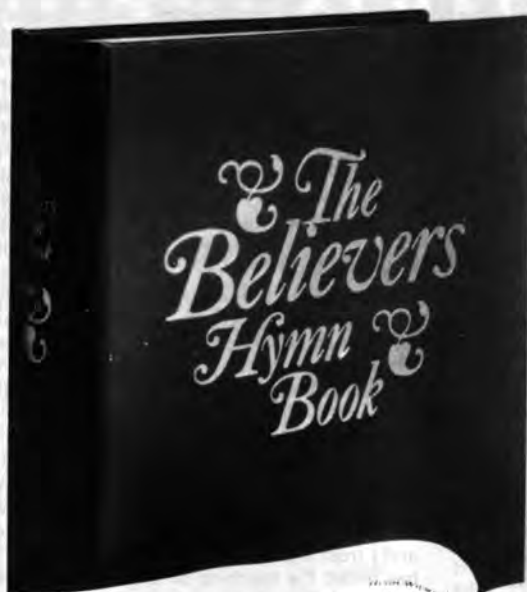
From Mr. A. Overt Locke
 Dear Editor,
 I have enjoyed the wit of your correspondent Mr. Jim Rowson as he has suitably astonished himself by the news that erstwhile Brethren are now using terms like 'Holy Communion' and ecclesiastically flavoured words like 'pulpit'. Our church uses these words, as well as 'Sacrament' and 'Eucharist' and I trust that each member has noted the teaching on the meaning of these words. Holy Communion was the term chosen many years ago for our notice board. After discussion the elders decided that this expression would be most likely to convey to the passing reader the kind of service that would be taking place. To the man on the Clapham Omnibus it probably meant more than 'Breaking of Bread'. The notice board is part of our face to the world. Similarly most people know what to expect from a pulpit, politicians and pressure groups tend to speak from platforms, and nearly anything can happen in a Hall, so we also long ago adopted the description of the building the Church meets in as a Chapel. We want there to be no doubt in the mind of the stranger what we are engaged in, maybe before long with other religions now putting up their buildings in our land we shall have to go back to displaying the cross as well!
 Yours sincerely,
 A. Overt Locke
 The Old Hall
 Somerton
 Somerset TA11 7NG
(So that is where the Clapham Omnibus strayed! — Ed)

Should we bother?

From Mr. L. L. Fox
 Dear Mr. Coad,
 In his 'Readers' Forum' contribution for September, Mr. Down asks 'If it ('the Brethren') is truly the decadent fellowship your contributors allege, why waste so much of your valuable time and space? May a fellow 'senior citizen' comment? In the words of another, 'men do not strive about things for which they do not care; they agonize for the things that are dear'. A comprehensive reply could hardly be made in a short letter. And it might be counter-productive to spell out examples of 'misconceptions'; of which, incidentally, I recently 'met' a glaring example. It may be asked whether or not the 'we' of Mr. Down's last sentence — whoever they may be — recognize the need for eyes to be anointed with eyesalve? Must not all of us acknowledge a measure of blindness, to say nothing of poverty and nakedness (*Rev. 3:7*)? The Lord told the Pharisees 'But now you say, "We see": your sin remains' (*John 9 NASB*). Has that no voice for us among 'the Brethren'? for the 'we'? Any acquainted with the background will know that 'Brethren' have sometimes been dubbed the modern Pharisees; and too often it doesn't take much in the way of sensitivity to realize why. Mr. Down apportions credit for 'giving more than a brief acknowledgement of the "Lord's supper"'. Some of us have been earnestly considering that very matter for years. Suffice it to say that spirituality is not to be equated with the observance of particular 'forms' or patterns of meeting together; not even with 'rectitude' as to that gathering when — according to our present lights — we partake of physical bread and wine. Perhaps some words of the wisest man that ever lived (*1 Kings 4:29-31*) may be applicable: 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend' (*Prov. 27:6*)
 Yours in His service,
 L. L. Fox
 9 Warden Close
 Maidstone
 Kent ME16 0JL

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Just a year ago **The Witness** and **The Harvester** came within a hair's breadth of extinction. The publishers of **The Witness** had made plans to cease publication at the end of 1980, and it was only a chance remark dropped in the course of a telephone conversation that enabled us to make arrangements to combine the two periodicals and thus save them both. (We ourselves had already made contingency plans to cease publication of **The Harvester** either at the end of 1981 or 1982 at the latest.)

Combining the two periodicals has, of course, made a great deal of difference to their circulation. Much more important, there has been a steady improvement in editorial content during the past twelve months, with resultant expressions of appreciation from near and far.

The Immediate Future

We have therefore decided to continue to publish during 1982, but we have to point out that this decision assumes help from our readers (see right hand column)! **The Harvester** is, in a very real sense, your magazine. To secure its future beyond December 1982, we need to raise the circulation sharply to more than 5,000 copies. If all our subscribers renewed for 1982 (and a heartening number of you already have!) and if we can find, in the course of 1982, a minimum of 1,500 new subscribers, then we shall be able to avoid having to make the decision to continue (or not!) an annual one.

But is it worth it?

You must be the judges of that! We are prepared to continue to produce **The Harvester**, worthily and at the lowest possible price, so long as our subscribers wish us to do so. Your casting vote in the matter is your Subscription Renewal Form!

We would make only the two following comments:

1. **The Harvester** has for many years been run at a net loss, and, even with a substantial increase in circulation, will never be run at a net profit. At present it makes a modest contribution to its overheads, but by no means covers them.
2. **The Harvester** is extremely good value. If you live as far away as the Antipodes, you may still receive your monthly copy of **The Harvester** for only 40p (45p as from January 1982). We have made generous allowances for first-time subscribers, for students and for Third World citizens and institutions, and if you make a comparison, editorial page for editorial page, you will find that **The Harvester** compares very favourably with what might loosely, and somewhat inaccurately, be termed its "competitors".

Let us be specific. Assume that you are a single copy subscriber, by post, to **The Harvester** and to monthly "X". Both are almost exactly the same size, but the other periodical has many more pages.

Check the following table:

Name of Periodical	Cover Price	Postage	Total Cost	Edit. Pages	Cost per Edit. pg	No. pp. Advert.
The Harvester	40p	Nil ^a	40p	26½	1.51p ^b	9½
Monthly "X"	50p	30p	80p	34½	2.32p	31

(a) Note that our distribution costs are included in the cover price of **The Harvester**. They average just on 10p per copy. We believe it is fairer to ask subscribers to share this cost equally amongst themselves rather than to penalise unduly those who have to receive single copies through the post since they have no alternative means of supply. However, we have re-introduced savings for those who order more than one copy — and, of course, joint and long term subscriptions (see table opposite).

(b) We do not for one minute pretend that **The Harvester** can compete with monthly "X" for fancy layout or use of colour, but we do contend that, in the last analysis, what matters is clarity, legibility and, above all, content.

How can you help?

1. By renewing your subscription — now! Our regular Renewal Invitation was circulated with the October issue. Please use it immediately, without waiting for further reminders.
2. Are you reading somebody else's copy? If so, consider carefully whether you should not start supporting the magazine. Without more subscribers, nobody will be able to borrow it!
3. Open gift subscriptions for your friends. If one subscriber in two did this, the challenge posed by the headline above would be met!
4. **Magazine Secretaries.** Free specimen copies and supplies of the order form are available. Please ask us for whatever you can use. Be sure to point out the generous offer to first-time subscribers.
5. If you wish us to send specimen copies to friends, entirely free of charge, send us their names and addresses.
6. If you have ideas which you think could serve to make the ministry of **The Harvester** more widely known, then please contact us.

In Closing . . .

We would offer our sincere thanks to all those who completed the questionnaire enclosed with the July issue. The results are taking a little time to evaluate, since replies are still coming in from overseas — and it will take slightly longer, we suspect, to act upon them! Most of the responses have been highly constructive — thank you very much indeed.

Secondly, we would like, publicly, to thank the late publishers of **The Witness**, Pickering & Inglis, for their helpfulness over the past year in making the merging of **The Witness** with **The Harvester** so smooth. We think it right to mention that they made their subscription list available entirely free of charge: their generous and helpful attitude is much appreciated.

Displayed below are our subscription rates, not only for **The Harvester**, but for our other periodicals, as from January 1982. Should you require further details, please contact us.

ALL SUBSCRIPTION RATES ARE INCLUSIVE OF POSTAGE

	Harvester	Evangelical Quarterly	Chrn. Breth. Res. Fell.	Evang. Rev. of Theol.
Single Copy	£ 0.45	£ 1.50	—	£ 2.20
Single	£ 5.40	£ 6.00	£ 5.00	£ 4.40
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Single	£15.00	£16.70	£13.90	£12.20
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Multiple	£14.60	£16.20	£13.50	£11.90

(Rates for subscribers living in the US or Canada on application to the publishers.)



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Exeter, UK EX2 4JW



NEWS PAGE

Afghan Refugee Camp

Guildford Baptist Church thought it would be a good idea to feature the needs of Afghan refugees when they devised a "Third World Week in support of Tear Fund". Among other things, eighteen "refugees" agreed to spend forty hours in refugee-type shelters with appropriate clothing and food. Not surprisingly, there was a good deal of local interest. But among the visitors was an interviewer from the BBC Radio Four programme, "Sunday". The project was also featured on Thames TV. The story was beamed to Afghanistan and Pakistan in Urdu and Pushtu by the External Services of the BBC. Indeed, it formed 25% of a Press Release on 9.9.81 from the Pakistan Embassy. The Tear Fund Afghan Refugee Fund is still open, of course. But the project stands also of a reminder of what can be achieved when Christians make an effort.

The Bible

The Emmaus Bible School reports from Merseyside that enrolment is expanding each month. Indeed, this autumn they expect to enrol student number 500,000. This represents an ever-widening ministry through the use of their courses in encouraging a disciplined approach to the study of God's Word.

Conferences

The Monkton Combe Conference, 1981, saw over 200 people coming from all over the country to hear John Lennox and Robert Parsons. John Lennox's talks were based on the first three chapters of *Genesis*, while

Robert Parsons spoke about the fight — our fight against Satan, our fighting (sadly) with each other and Christ's victory over Satan. Missionaries Olive Rogers, Rosemary Aldis and Ron and Pattie McCullough dispelled the conventional image that missionaries have somehow acquired. Tennis, table-tennis, squash, draughts and the swimming pool provided recreation and each day ended — officially at least — with the Piano Stool involving singing and drama and many other events. Early booking is recommended for 1982!

Swanwick Conference of Brethren

This year's Conference was an important occasion. The subject of 'Spiritual Revival' attracted a record attendance (some 300) from all parts of the country. If this interest implied recognition of our need individually, as assemblies, and nationally, then that need was confirmed as God spoke in convincing power — evident from the deep hush which followed the opening session.

The biblical foundation for revival and an historical perspective were provided by Saturday's sessions. The time of worship on Sunday morning prepared hearts and minds for the unmistakable voice of God sensed by all as he spoke through his servant in the pre-lunch session. We were confronted by the possibility of experiencing revival in our own lives. Suddenly it was clear that revival is all of a piece with our daily spiritual experience and that the Holy Spirit simply does in a greatly magnified way in revival what he is, or

should be, doing in us now. The essential elements of this experience include an awareness of God's presence, sensitivity to his voice and the changes of character wrought in us from day to day. A bridge does exist across the credibility gap between present experience and revival hopes.

The words 'Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on me' sounded unusually melodious as the old chorus was sung with prayerful longing. It is to be hoped that publication of the Conference papers will not be long delayed. May this Conference prove to be 'the cloud no bigger than a man's hand' that presages the end of long spiritual drought in our churches.

The Women's Conference at Swanwick was held from September 11-13. Over 360 members heard Dr. Betty Holt speak on passages from Isaiah. Mrs. Joan Gosden spoke about the battle experience of the Christian. There was singing from Miss Gay Hyde and an account of the work at the Children's Village, Humble, Scotland from Miss Jean Macrae and her friend Miss Betty Waugh. "Ready for Take-off" was the heading under which Miss A. Mills described her early experience as an air hostess, comparing it to her Christian experience. Talks by Mrs. Ginnings were also greatly appreciated.

Evangelism

The London City Mission held its annual rally on September 19. During the evening seven recruits were introduced by the Mission's Candidates

Secretary, all of whom are now taking their place in the ranks of the 100 fulltime men who go daily to London's millions.

The Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism has produced nine questions which may help church meetings considering evangelism. They are intended to "provide a sort of map to keep the discussion on course". The questions can be obtained from the NIE at 146 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4V 4BX.

**WHO
was
SAVED
by the
DEATH
of her
SON
?**

The Scottish Counties Evangelistic Movement once again provided an opportunity this summer for many young people to assist smaller assemblies throughout rural parts of Scotland, in outreach and visitation. Approximately 100 young people were involved in this year's five centres of outreach namely Blairgowrie, Newton Stewart, Douglas, Moffat and Kelty, working in conjunction with evangelists: Graham Loader (Bristol), David Smith (Hong Kong), Patrick Sookhdeo (London), Alastair Young (Scotland) and Peter Brandon (Bedford) respectively.

The outreaches themselves took the form of children's meetings, door to door visitation, roadside bookstalls, open-air services and gospel rallies with each centre varying their programmes appropriately. Subsequently these summer outreaches

proved effective and fruitful with many people of all age groups saved, some baptised, churches strengthened and encouraged and for the young SCMErs themselves, experience and the knowledge that God can and does work when Christians are prepared to sacrifice time and energies for his purpose.

The Way to Life Ministry welcomed over 2,000 to a rally in Central Hall, Westminster in early September. This rounded off a summer of activity in London NW10, Hastings and Edinburgh. It also marked 25 years spent by Dick and Betty Saunders in evangelism. There were massed choirs from all three crusades and testimonies from nine different people who have been led to the Lord through the WTL ministry. Fifty people responded to the messages preached by Dick Saunders.

Family CARE (Christian Action, Research and Education) For the Family was launched on September 26. This Christian organisation will campaign for a change in laws which weaken or assault family life. It is intended to inform and alert the Christian public, Members of Parliament and others about the real issues at stake and will aim to stimulate local action towards the changes which the country needs if it is to move towards establishing again and strengthening the things which make for good, healthy family life. Details from 21a Down Street, London W1Y 7DN. Tel. 01 409 0111.

Foreign Students

During the summer months, many towns and cities are invaded by thousands of foreign students taking English language courses. This is not only a growth industry for the UK — it also represents an evangelistic challenge.

During summer 1981, two Christians at Paignton were able to contact 1,500 students involved with 35 language courses covering eight different languages. Their experience may be helpful to others considering a similar form of outreach. The point of contact was with the (temporary) administrative office set up in Paignton in connection with the EFL courses. He was offered a programme which would be available to any language course requiring it. He contacted the leaders of the different groups and arranged convenient times — usually in the morning. The ten-minute programme comprised a young person playing the guitar and singing Gospel songs followed by a short talk and witness to Jesus Christ. The whole programme was kept as informal as possible and at its close each student accepted a leaflet with Scripture portions in the appropriate languages. No committee was set up to administer the operation but local churches supported the activity. The principal expense involved was the cost of the Christian literature. As for results, the students showed

interest and some asked questions through the course leaders who interpreted when this was necessary. For any further information about what has proved to be the most encouraging method of witnessing, contact Ron Brown, 46 Laura Grove, Paignton, Devon. TQ3 2LP.

Fortune Telling — A Christmas Game?

Invicta Plastics, Harborough Road, Oadby, Leicester, are the makers of Mastermind. Now they are introducing a game called Osiris, described in their advertising as "not a game, but a new concept in fortune telling, developed . . . by . . . a well known Australian clairvoyant". News that there is an Osiris board, Osiris cards, Osiris numbers and an Osiris wheel will concern Christians who are aware of the harmful effects of the Ouija Board. Readers of **The Harvester** may well wish to join other Christians in protesting both to the manufacturers and to retailers about this development.

Handicapped

The Christian Family Home for the Handicapped in Derby reports good progress on the house conversion, and times of blessing at their Friday evening fellowships.

Peacehaven (the Dublin centre for the mentally handicapped) is preparing to bring more residents into the home both for short-term holidays and as permanent members. They will very soon need an assistant house parent to live within commuting distance of the home and to work there on a daily basis. They would welcome enquiries from committed Christians. They also need local helpers to offer a regular afternoon or evening to provide time off for the workers in the home.

Romania: Pastor Josif Ton Josif Ton's apostolic role among biblical Christians in Romania has attracted worldwide attention and prayer. Recently it has been clear that the authorities wish to put pressure on Romanian Baptists: the number of students for the pastorate is being reduced and legal action

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has begun to prevent the Baptists from spending their own money as they wish. During August, as he prepared for a trip to the West, he was told that he must not return to Romania. Ton has accepted this exile as an opportunity to establish a society for Christian literature for Romania and to give time to a radio ministry.

Schools

The Christian Council for the Schools of Wales has been formed recently to promote Christian witness in the schools of Wales. Although a newly formed body, it consists of representatives from existing organisations: the Inter-School Christian Fellowship (Wales), the Association of Christian Teachers of Wales and the Evangelical Movement of Wales. It seeks to co-ordinate and further Christian work in Welsh schools. The Council aims to appoint a full time worker who will visit the schools helping Christian Unions and encouraging Christian students and teachers. The Council will greatly value prayer and financial assistance. (Secretary: Mr. C. J. Hess, 23 St. Edwen Gardens, Heath, Cardiff, CF4 4JZ.)

Student Conference

If one can judge a conference in advance from the planning committee responsible, then **A Church for Tomorrow**, which is a student conference to be held at Bristol on December 11-13, should offer value for money (cost £10). Details can be obtained from Jonathan Lamb at 18 Kirlow Avenue, Leicester Forest East, Leicester. Others on the committee are Nigel Lee, and Peter Lowman, Brian Mills and Malcolm Steer. It is for all students, student workers and recent graduates.

Tyndale House

A member of the Assembly in Auckland, New Zealand, Dr. Murray J. Harris has recently been appointed as the new warden of Tyndale House, Cambridge. He succeeds the Rev. Dr. Dick France, who moves to the staff of the London Bible College. Tyndale House was founded in 1944 as a residential library for

biblical research. At a time when few evangelicals were entering the field of academic theology its founders, convinced that the Christian faith can stand up to the closest historical scrutiny, aimed to provide facilities for young evangelical scholars to qualify themselves for posts in the academic world. The late John W. Laing was closely associated with the work, as are Professors Bruce and Wiseman. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of Dr. Harris' task. He will oversee the operations of Tyndale House and will advise and encourage young scholars who work there. He does not see this as a mere academic exercise. "We must demonstrate the relevance of the academic study of Scripture to the business of living." He hopes to take up his duties in November 1981.

Home Calls

Mrs. Mabel Gray on September 17. Converted in early life, she was received into fellowship in Union Hall, Glasgow at the age of 18. Here she engaged in Sunday School and youth work, moving to Bethany Hall, Gourock from 1948 and to Ardgowan Square, Grrenock in 1977. The homecall of her husband in 1971 affected her greatly and in the last two years her condition deteriorated but her faith remained strong to the end.

George Gray on July 6. Converted when quite young, he was associated with the Wellington and Central Halls in Kilmarnock. Moving south some 40 years ago on taking up an appointment with Pickering & Inglis in their London bookshop he became well known to many visiting friends including some from overseas. In fellowship at Woodcroft Hall, Burnt Oak, he was an esteemed and active brother and with his wife Daphne was much given to hospitality. A large number attended the funeral service and among the tributes was one from Sir David McNee who had known Mr. Gray well in earlier life. He leaves a widow, two sons and two daughters.

Mrs. Doreen Greenaway on August 5, aged 66. Saved in 1937 at the same time as her husband, she was in fellowship in Budleigh Salterton for three years. After 13 years in the Bristol area, they moved in 1955 to East Anglia where she was living at Mickfield near Stowmarket when she fell asleep in Jesus after a short illness. Faithful wife, loving mother and grandmother, she was a real support to her husband in the work of evangelism for over 30 years. Her husband and four children wish to express their grateful thanks for many prayers and letters.

David W. Reid on February 25, aged 65, unexpectedly. His early years were spent with the fellowship at Laurieston. He continued at Olivet Hall, Falkirk, where he was an elder and for 25 years Sunday School superintendent being associated throughout these years with the mid-Scotland assemblies work.

Heini Svarthamar on March 24, aged 58. Converted early

in 1944 in Klakksvik (Faroe Islands) he was baptised the same year in Ebenezer Hall Torshavn where he received his navigator's ticket. He was well known in Britain especially in the north and in the Shetlands, also in Newfoundland and in Canada: when he was fishing on these grounds he always found out assemblies of brethren. In 1956 he married Maria I. Gong who survives him and for whom prayer is requested.

Press Day, Monday, November 2 for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.)

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund
Equity House, 450 Hackney
Road, London, E2 6QL. Gifts
received by the Fund for
general purposes during the
month of September
amounted to £607.75.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund
12 Cleveland Crescent, North
Shields, NE29 ONP. Gifts and
legacies received during
September amounted to
£9,910.72, including an
anonymous donation of £5.

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.

Campbell, A.:
Glasgow 1, 7; Falmouth
8-10; Edgecombe 11; Bodmin
12; Camborne 15; Falmouth
16-20; Southampton 21-24;
St. Ives 29.

Galyer, W. S.:
Enfield Highway 1; Bush Hill
Park 4, 11, 18, 22, 25;
Enfield 5, 12, 19; Croxley
Green 8; Norbiton 9; Hook
10; Fetcham 15; Dorking 16;
South Bank Poly C.U. 18;
Teddington 25; Tolworth &
Reigate 26; Tolworth 29.

Gillham, S. A.:
Wimborne Children's Mission
1-8; Yeovil 8; Charminster
Chapel, Bournemouth 10;
West Moors 12, 19, 26;
Dorset Youth Houseparty
13-15; Wallisdown 17; Camp
Reunion 21; Ebenezer,
Weymouth 22; West
Moors/Wallisdown 24; Wyke
Regis 27; Thorncombe 29.

Greenaway, G. H.:
Newmarket, Woolpit,
Stowmarket, Ipswich, Bacton.
Also personal work.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Norwich 7; Briston 3;
Waldensian Committee 6;
Hurstpierpoint 8; Crawley
15-16; Sunbury 17-19;
Fittleworth 22; Costessey 25;
Cromer 29; Dereham 30.

Iliffe, D. J.:
Haven School of Evangelism
1-28, lectures in children's
evangelism.

Lambert, P. A.:
Kingsdown 1-8; Bratton 11;
School work 12; Lockeridge
13; Salisbury 15; Colne 18;
Youth weekend 20-22;
Trowbridge 23-27; Salisbury
29.

Loader, G.:
Henbury, Bristol 2-6;
Glasgow: Campaign at
Allender Assembly 15-29.

Lowther, G. K.:
London Colney 1; Fleet,
Hants. 2; Ilford 2, 3; Kendal
7-12; Bowness 8; Chester
29, 30; Grimsby, Humberside
and Lincolnshire.

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Woking 8; St. Albans
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Greenford 11, 18, 25;
Oakleigh Chapel, Whetstone
12, 19; Salway Woodford
15, 29; Bush Hill Park, Enfield
15; Kingston 17, 24, 29;
Dorking 28.

Pierce, D. H.:

Dinas Powis 1-8;
Okehampton 10, 17, 24;
Bishops Tawton 11, 18, 26;
Cullompton 27-29.

Short, S. S.:

Wokingham 1; Sidcup 2, 9,
16, 23, 29; Sutton, Surrey 3,
10, 17, 24; Highgate 4, 11,
18, 25; Hornchurch 5, 12,
19, 26; Berkhamsted 8;
Cheddar 15; Brentwood 20;
Nottingham 21, 22; St. Paul's
Cray 28; Upminster 30.

Stringer, D.:

Warwickshire 1-5; Derby 6-7;
Warwickshire 8-19; Saffron
Walden 20-22; Warwickshire
23-27; Sudbury 28; Rugby
29-30.

Tatford, F. A.:

Banbridge 1, 2; Lancaster 7,
8; Blackburn 10, 12; Preston
11; Capernwray 13; Barrow-
in-Furness 13, 14; Kendal 15;
Bolton 17; Manchester 18;
Spring Lake (USA) 21;
Barkley Heights 22;
Rutherford 24; Farwood 25;
Washington 26; Bridgwater
27; New York 28.

Thurston, A.:

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Strete 2, 8, 9, 16, 23, 30;
Marlborough/Kingsbridge 3;
Chillington/Brixham 4, 11,
18; Plymouth Wolesley 5, 12,
19; Dartmoor Prison 6, 13,
20, 27; Chillington 15; Stoke
Fleming 17; Torr Hall,
Torquay 10; Kingsbridge 24,
29; Dawlish 22; Chillington
25.

Tryon, G. C.:

Dorking 1; Carshalton 2;
Woking 3; East Sheen 4, 11,
18, 26, 29; Lee Green 5;
Loughborough Junction 8, 9;
Peckham 10; Hampstead 16;
Eltham Park 17; Staines 22.

Whittem, R.:

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Fellowship, St. Albans 2;
Croxley Green 5 & 12; St.
Albans 7; Kenton 8; Harrow

9; Potters Bar & Kensington
10; Kings Langley School 11;
Chickereil 13-15; Somerset
16-19; Family Camp Reunion
21; Harrow & Enfield 22;
Welwyn Garden City &
Rainham 24; Redhill 25;
Kingston 26; Youth Camp
Reunion 28; Reading 29;
Poole 30.

CHANGE OF NAME

Please note that the
Christian Fellowship Centre,
The Old Coach House, 12a
West Street, Bourne, Lincs.,
have changed their name to
Bourne Evangelical Church.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS**Boscombe**

Drummond Hall, Drummond
Road. Conversational Bible
Readings, Saturday, 6
December, at 7 p.m.
Subject: Upper Room
Ministry, John 13. Speaker:
R. G. R. Carnal, Colyton.

Brierfield, Lancs.

Hebron Hall, Walter Street,
Brierfield. Saturday Evening
Rallies at 7 p.m., 7 and 21
November. Speakers: David
Dixon (Dereham) and
R. Parnaby (Fleetwood).

Carlisle

Morton Park Hall. Annual
Conference, Saturday, 7
November at 3 & 6 p.m.
Speakers: J. Huskisson and
J. B. Warne.

Chesham, Bucks.

The Gospel Hall, Station
Road. Ministry Meeting,
Saturday, November 28 at 7
p.m. Speaker: A. J. How
(Buckingham). Matthew
5:13-26.

Chester

Kingsway Chapel, Grasmere
Road. Ministry. December 1
at 8 p.m. Speaker: G. K.
Lowther (Grimsby).

Colyton, Devon

The Gospel Hall, The Butts.
Bible Study on November 28
at 7 p.m. Speaker: J. Glenville
(Colyton). 1 Timothy 2.

Croxley Green

Fuller Hall, Fuller Way.
Meeting. November 28 at 7
p.m. Speaker: R. Hill.

Grimsby

Wellowgate Chapel, 67
Wellowgate. Ministry.
November 28 at 7.30 p.m.
Speaker: James Marshall
(Barnsley).

Helensburgh:

Bethesda Hall, 30 Colquhoun
Street. Ministry/Discussion
Meeting. November 28 at
6.30 p.m. Subject:
Stewardship. Speakers:
J. Buchanan (Musselburgh);
A. Jessiman (Edinburgh).

Kendal

Parr Street Church. Ministry.
November 7, 9-12 at 7.30
p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther
(Grimsby).

London, E.C.2

Federation of London
Christian Unions meeting to
be held at the Hall of the
Merchant Tailors' Company,
30 Threadneedle Street at
6.15 p.m. (tea and biscuits
served from 5.15 p.m.) on
Tuesday, 24 November.
Speaker: Professor Verna
Wright (University of Leeds);
Soloist: Gordon Berry, at the
organ; Geof Brough.

Luton

Onslow Road Gospel Hall.
November 21. Studies in the
Life and Times of Joseph.
Ministry 4-5 p.m.
Conversational Bible Reading
6.30-8 p.m.
Speaker: T. Garrett
(Northampton). Subject: Sold
into Egypt (Gen. 37:12-36).

Maidenhead:

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's
Road. Monthly Conference,
December 5 at 6.30 p.m.
Subject: Samuel, in his prayer.
Speaker: M. Hall (Pamber
Heath).



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SEASON OF GIFTS

Watch the face of the small child as it takes the parcel bearing its name — expectation, the awe of becoming the owner of something mysterious and yet to be discovered, excitement, pleasure, and above all the unconscious realisation, in this act of receiving a gift, that I am loved and valued enough to be the recipient of this bounty. That face, and what follows as the packet is unwrapped and its contents disclosed, are part of the adult's treasury; the emotions are something that the child will carry somewhere inside itself through the rest of life.

We, too, are the recipients of such gifts. As each day begins, its hours lie before us to be broached one by one as we draw out of them experiences that (however familiar some of them may be) are never quite the same as what we have experienced before. Those experiences, individually and collectively, are the gifts of God to us. Gifts? When the world contains not only joy and pleasure, but pain and sorrow too; kindness, but cruelty also; needs supplied, but also hunger; peace, and also strife?

Somehow, the answer must be 'yes': those too are the gifts of God. Easy to say, when life is smooth: less easy when we know sickness, deprivation, bereavement, or suffer spite or malice; when summer gives place to winter and warmth to bitter cold. Yet the whole chorus of men and women of faith from the past assures us that such they are (read, if you doubt it, *Heb. 11:32-12:24*).

These gifts are given to us, among other reasons, that we may grow into maturity in our knowledge of God. And one of the most difficult lessons to learn is that there are times when the very structures which we have built to protect us and strengthen us become a hindrance: when the very 'sub-culture' of meetings and fellowship and church-going that forms so strong an undergirding to our lives proves to be inadequate in the face of some overwhelming experience, whether that experience is good or bad: when God, through life, contradicts the comfortable statements of last Sunday's preacher.

It is then that God may be presenting us with one of His most important gifts: the possibility of showing that we have reached that maturity in which, in the totally unfamiliar, we learn to rest on Him alone.

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THE GREATEST GIFT

G. D. James

A Christmas meditation by the well-known evangelist from Singapore, now resident in Australia. Dr. James is Founder-Director of the Asia Evangelistic Fellowship.

It was towards evening, and the setting sun bathed the whole scene in crimson light. No matter where you looked, all you could see were people, people, people. Every available room in town had been taken, and still the people came. The streets were so congested that it was difficult to take one step without fear of bumping into somebody. It was heyday for the inn keepers, the shop owners, the vendors. It was also disappointment for the many weary travellers who were being turned away because of lack of accommodation.

To the stranger, all this was very confusing. What was all the commotion about? Why had so many people converged on Bethlehem, which was, after all, a quiet and somewhat unknown town? Caesar Augustus, the ruler of Palestine, had ordered every man, woman and child in his kingdom to return to his or her place of origin because he wanted to take a nation-wide census.

Among the travel-stained pilgrims who trudged into Bethlehem was a young couple — Mary and Joseph. Joseph looked worried, and he had every reason to be, for his wife was expecting her first child any moment, and it was vital to find some sort of accommodation for her. But every effort failed. Every room was full. Every inn keeper had the same answer, 'Sorry, no room!'

Finally, a kind hearted man was moved to compassion when he saw Mary's predicament and gave them permission to use a small section of his stable as their shelter for the night. With cattle for company and only her husband to minister to her needs, Mary's first Son was born.

What was so important about this? What made the birth of a peasant woman's Son of such earthshaking significance? A group of shepherds in a nearby field were the first to receive an answer to that question. They were watching over their sleeping sheep in the dead of night when a dazzling light from heaven shattered the darkness and made them cringe in fear. Then they heard a voice:

'Don't be afraid,' the voice said, 'for I bring you the

most joyful news ever announced, and it is for everyone! The Saviour — yes, the Messiah, the Lord — has been born tonight in Bethlehem. How will you recognise Him? You will find a baby wrapped in a blanket, lying in a manger.'

The shepherds were not the only ones who knew that Jesus the Saviour had been born that night. Learned astrologers from the East, who had been studying the heavens for years, saw a completely new star in the sky and knew that the promised Deliverer had come at last. But why did the world need a Saviour? What made Christmas necessary? People the world over celebrate Christmas by exchanging gifts, decorating their homes, buying new clothes and throwing lavish parties without ever stopping to wonder about the real meaning of Christmas. What is the real significance of Christmas? First, Christmas speaks to us of love. The Bible says 'God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever or anybody who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.' God proved His love for us by creating us, giving us a beautiful world to live in, fresh air to breathe, and the capacity to enjoy the good things of life. Even our bodies, whose perfection and symmetry no artist or scientist can imitate, are an indication that God loves us.

But the greatest proof of God's love for us is the fact that nearly 2000 years ago, He sent His only Son to the world as the greatest gift to mankind. Why? Because that was the only way we could be saved from sin. The Bible says 'All have sinned and come short of God's standards', and none of us can dispute that fact. Our wicked actions point an accusing finger at us. Our evil thoughts condemn us. Our consciences (if they are sensitive) tell us that we are sinful. The people who know us intimately realise that we are not all that we should be. And God, who looks into the innermost secrets of our hearts knows that we are lost — totally and completely lost. So He sent His Son Jesus Christ to save us from sin by dying on the cross and to provide us with a means of escape from our endlessly sinful and defeated lives.

Yes, Christmas speaks to us of love — the amazing, unchanging love of God — but it also speaks to us of life. The Bible says 'The wages of sin is death'. God declares

'The soul that sinneth, it shall die'. This means that every man and woman, every boy and girl, is under sentence of death — not just death of the body, but of the soul as well. And it is an eternal death. But God is love, and He does not want to see us die in our sins, and that is why He sent His only Son Jesus Christ into the world. Christ took upon Himself the sins of the whole world, including your sins and mine, and died on the cross, thus paying the awful penalty of sin once and for all. In *Isaiah chapter 53* we read *'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.'* By dying, Jesus rescued us from the jaws of death. He conquered death by rising from the dead, and His victory can be ours if we come to Him by faith and receive the life that He offers.

This life that He offers is not mere existence without aim or goal, but a rich, meaningful life with no strings attached. He said *'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.'*

Yes, Christmas offers us the priceless gifts of love and life, but that is not all. It also offers us *liberation*. We live in an age in which everyone is clamouring for freedom. Today, man's eternal cry is 'I want to be free'. That is why we have movements like 'liberation fronts' of all kinds, and independence movements in many countries. Man wants to be free of war, of depression, of

suffering, of discrimination, of betrayal, of injustice, and of the pressures of modern life. Above all, he wants to be free of himself, of the destructive habits to which he is a slave, of the hold that sin has on his life. But no matter what he does to achieve that 'freedom' — whether it is a protest march, or a bomb explosion, or a gun battle with the police, or defiance of social and moral codes — he is never successful. *True liberty is found only in Jesus Christ.* It is not a freedom from responsibility but a freedom from slavery to sin, to worry, to inadequacy. The Bible says *'If the Son (Jesus Christ) shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.'* Yes, Christ offers us the glorious liberation that will set us free from the endless cycle of sin, and will help us to develop into the kind of individuals that He wants us to be, and lead the kind of lives — useful, meaningful and full — that we were meant to live.

In the midst of your gaiety and festivity and feasting, will you pause for a moment and think of the Gift of all gifts — Jesus Christ — which God gave to the world nearly two thousand years ago and which He offers even today? And in Christ He offers the priceless gifts of eternal, satisfying life, unchanging love and total freedom. It cost God all He had in order to give you and me this great Gift — the Gift of all gifts, the Lord Jesus Christ, and all He asks in return is your heart. Is it too much to offer your life to Him as *your* greatest gift?

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MUSICAL INTERLUDE — 5

Accompanied Praise

A. F. McIntosh

The number, variety and scope of musical instruments is quite remarkable. Nevertheless, just as all the colours of the rainbow may be traced to three primary colours, so the wide spectrum of musical sound may be traced to three basic procedures which could be described as twanging, blowing and banging. That is to say, musical sound is usually produced by plucking some kind of taut string, by blowing air down some kind of tube, or by thumping or striking one object against another. If we omit the rather specialized case of electronic sound, this threefold categorization of musical noise holds as good for our day as for Bible days and is represented in a modern orchestra by sections on strings, wind and percussion.

BIBLE INSTRUMENTS

Musical instruments make their debut early in the Scriptures with the description of Jubal (*Gen. 4:21*) as father of all who handle harp and organ (KJV). The anachronistic mention of organ is omitted from other versions and is replaced by ancestors of the organ such as pipe or flute. Although the paternity of members of the strings and wind sections is identified, that of members of the percussion section is not. Tubal-cain may be a candidate. He is mentioned in the next verse and some of his bronze and iron tools could have served as percussion instruments.

Stringed instruments are often mentioned in the Old Testament. The word usually translated 'harp' in the King James version is *kinnor*, the word that gives the name 'Sea of Chinnereth' to the Sea of Galilee, because it is shaped like a harp. The psaltery was another stringed instrument. Possibly it had a sound box, making it in this respect like a lute or a modern guitar. Many wind instruments are mentioned: pipe, flute, trumpet, cornet, horn. There were also percussion instruments like Miriam's tambourine (*Exod. 15:20*). Bells, cymbals

and jangling metal plates served a similar purpose, all being eminently portable and therefore well suited to processions and open-air events. Our list is not exhaustive and we shall not say more about these various instruments. Good short descriptive articles on musical instruments of the Bible are to be found in **The New Bible Dictionary** (IVP) and in **The Lion Encyclopedia of the Bible**, and IVP's splendid new **Illustrated Bible Dictionary**.

A man like David was not only a skilful warrior. He was a fine musician able to play 'all manner of instruments'. While keeping the sheep he had developed the expertise necessary to play the very crude musical instruments of the day. Such expertise was highly prized because the crudity of the instruments placed a premium upon skill. Music was in demand then, as now, in the varied circumstances of life: in victory (*Exod. 15:20*, *2 Chr. 20:28*), in rejoicing (*2 Chr. 7:6*) and in sorrow (*Matt. 9:23*).

Music was used on a variety of different occasions. Men were set aside 'for the ministry of prophesying, accompanied by harps, lyres and cymbals' (*1 Chr. 25:1*), and were designated, instrument in hand, 'for the ministry at the house of God' (*1 Chr. 25:6*). When the ark was brought into the temple in Solomon's time, it was to the sound of 'cymbals, harps and lyres . . . trumpets . . . and other instruments' (*2 Chr. 5:12,13, NIV*). Some of the psalms have notes for instrumentalists added.

We should note here, however, that instruments were used to accompany singing. 'Praise the LORD with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre. Sing to him a new song' (*Ps. 33:2, 3*). 'I will sing praise to you with the lyre' (*Ps. 71:22*). 'Burst into jubilant song with music; make music to the LORD with the harp, with the harp and the sound of singing, with trumpets and the blast of the ram's horn' (*Ps. 98:4-6*). 'We will sing with stringed instruments' (*Ilsa. 38:20*).

CHURCH INSTRUMENTS

Instruments which are used to assist congregational worship in our day look very different from the harp of the past or, for that matter, of the future (*Rev. 5:8; 14:2*). The procedure of keyboarding lies at the heart of this difference. The keyboard has been little changed since the mid-15th century. The basic genius of this idea which so greatly extends the scope of an instrument and facilitates dexterous handling by the musician is shared by a number of instruments. In general, the price paid for keyboarding is lack of portability, although this is not always so, as a piano-accordion makes plain. When public worship is held in a specialized building, lack of portability of a musical instrument is no longer a disadvantage. The main instruments in use today are then, not surprisingly, keyboarded and non-portable.

The organ, or 'pipe organ' or, less reverently, 'kist o' whistles' has behind it more than a millennium of history as a church instrument. It was used for church music throughout much of the medieval period. It is basically a keyboarded wind instrument. The size, complexity and cost of the pipe organ has meant it has not been a favourite for the smaller meeting-places of Christians. There is a vast literature about it and it has been widely used for classical and church music.

The keyboarded stringed instrument which corresponds to the organ is probably the harpsichord in which taut strings are plucked by quills or leather points activated by the keys of the keyboard. The piano is somewhat different and has an element of percussion, since hammers strike the strings or wires. The piano may look very different from a psaltery of Old Testament times. Yet the piano has been described as 'a keyed dulcimer' and the dulcimer in turn as 'a psaltery hammered instead of plucked'. The piano made its appearance as a modified harpsichord. It is, of course, a post-Reformation instrument, being not much more than a couple of centuries old. It became exceedingly popular as a home instrument in Victorian times and in the early part of this century, but house pianos are, sadly, disappearing through 9 inch holes at a record rate. The piano is still considered to be somewhat brash and innovative as compared with the organ for use in public worship, but both have Old Testament pedigrees, and we can affirm that both pianist and organist were in Jubal's loins.

We must mention, in passing, that ubiquitous instrument of a few years ago, the foot-pedal-operated member of the reed-organ family, the harmonium. How much claim to success in helping the singing of an audience can be put down to the harmonium in the meeting-room? Very little. It was not easy to play with dignity. Lillian Beckwith in *The Hill is Lonely* describes how the lady in the blue straw hat heavily overlaid with cherries 'suddenly began to writhe like a hooked mackerel'. She was simply playing the harmonium. The departure of the harmonium from the musical scene is not to be regretted. It was always an unsatisfactory instrument for leading the praise. The harmonium has been almost universally displaced by the electronic

organ, the sound from which is created by electrical oscillations which are converted into audible form and amplified. Strings, wind and percussion capabilities and sophisticated chording arrangements can be incorporated within the one instrument. A very creditable musical performance can be given by someone with only an elementary knowledge of keyboarding.

ACCOMPANIED AUDIENCE SINGING

Instrumental accompaniment at services was for long unacceptable to many Reformed groups, instruments being regarded as popish extras. For instance, it was not until 1873 in Scotland that opposition was finally withdrawn by the General Assemblies of the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church. Other customs change. In the early 1800s it was usual to play interludes between the verses. This practice persisted in the accompaniment of soloists until not so very long ago. The organ in its various forms is undoubtedly the favourite instrument. The whole heritage of pipe organ music is waiting to be explored by the organist who has had harmonium replaced by electronic organ.

The piano tends to be used more for semi-formal gatherings, conferences and large public meetings. In some respects it is better than the organ. I think the reason is this. The human voice is basically, like the organ, a wind instrument. The audience can be tempted, almost encouraged, to let the organ do all the work. Too dominant an organ can thus be counter-productive and can inhibit audience participation. Test this by having an unaccompanied verse in the middle of a hymn. Organ and piano together make a fine combination as long as their players remain friendly. It is often helpful to site the instruments together instead of at opposite ends of a platform. The lead instrument should be clearly designated and it alone should provide the introduction, indicating speed, time and rhythm.

Guitars and other portable instruments deserve to be more widely used. Fiddlers' rallies — in which members of the audience bring their instruments along — could be copied for youth rallies. Folks could be encouraged to bring along their instruments and join in for at least part of the proceedings. The pendulum has perhaps swung a little too strongly towards the portable instrument. I know that Ogden Nash played the harp because it was only one syllable. But it will be a pity if the rising generation neglects the keyboarded instruments, especially when one is at an exciting stage of development.

We have tried to show that our non-biblical church instruments are firmly rooted in biblical tradition. It is to be hoped that your congregation is blessed with instrumentalists in the same tradition, that you make good use of them, and that you encourage others who are following on.

Thought: Is the instrument we use in public worship the best one for our congregation? Does it replace, inhibit or complement the contribution of the audience?

PROBLEMS IN BIBLE TRANSLATION — 3

David J. Clark

Dr. Clark, from the United Bible Societies in Papua New Guinea, concludes his series on translation work.

Making Information Explicit

In any communication between people, some information is stated explicitly and some is not. If information is not stated explicitly, it is usually because the speaker or writer knows perfectly well that his hearer or reader already shares that particular piece of information. An hour or two ago I was looking at a book containing a story in Hiri Motu, one of the trade languages of Papua New Guinea. The editor had put in an introductory note that the story-teller had 'taken for granted that the listener knows that one needs a canoe to go from the village to the hunting grounds'. This information did not need to be stated in the original story, because all the original hearers knew it. However, when the story was printed for a wider audience, this knowledge could no longer be assumed, and had to be stated.

Many times, the same type of problem faces Bible translators. The original writers of scripture often did not state certain facts because they could take it for granted that all their readers already knew them. But with the passage of time, and the spread of the Christian faith to many parts of the world where people are not familiar with Jewish culture and history, or with Mediterranean geography and climate, the readers no longer share this information. The translator must be aware of this problem, and must be prepared to meet the essential needs of his audience in this respect. If he fails to do so, he may be responsible for serious misunderstandings on the part of his readers.

Perhaps the classic example is that of Peter going up on the roof to pray (*Acts 10:9*). For many people around the world, house roofs are made of palm thatch and are quite steeply sloping to allow rain to run off. Only a madman would think of trying to climb on the roof to find a place to pray. For people with this kind of background, the translator must make it clear that the roof of the house Peter was staying in was a flat roof. Luke did not need to state this because all his original readers knew it. To make this information explicit for modern readers is not to add anything to the original message; on the contrary, to fail to do so is to omit something

necessary for the correct understanding of the text. The translator faces many such instances. In the Kui language in *Mark 1:6* it is necessary to state that a garment made of camel's hair was a rough garment, to make clear the austerity of John the Baptist's wardrobe. A number of languages make a basic distinction between travel by land and travel by sea. Correct use of the appropriate term is essential for an understanding of Paul's travels, but in the book of Acts, Luke does not always state how the travelling was done, because his readers were familiar with the Mediterranean area. But in Kahua, for instance, in *Acts 13*, after the missionary party had sailed to Cyprus in *verse 4*, it is necessary to make it clear that, within the island, they travelled overland.

Some of the most baffling implicit information in scripture comes in Paul's correspondence with the Corinthians. Various attempts to piece together the story of his visits and letters have been made by studying the existing documents to see what information is or might be implicit in them. A relatively simple example concerns Titus's unnamed companions in *2 Cor. 8*. Is 'our brother' of *verse 22* the same person as 'the brother who is highly respected in all the churches' of *verse 18*? Apparently not, but in a language like Bawm this has to be stated by saying 'another brother' in *verse 22*.

Sometimes the evangelists leave implicit details which we, like the original readers, take for granted, but which must be made clear in many other languages. For instance in *Matt. 8:14* Jesus enters Peter's house, and crowds come to him, so (*verse 18*) he gives orders 'to go over the other side' (RSV). Matthew does not say the other side of what, and many readers would take this to be the other side of the house. The next mention of location is in *verse 22*, where Jesus gets into a boat. The question that would come to mind then would be 'why was the boat in the house?' It is essential to say in *verse 18* the other side of the lake, and it may be necessary in *verse 23* to say 'Jesus went down to the shore and got into a boat'. A parallel problem occurs in *Matt. 14:13*, where unless Jesus' movement to the lakeside is actually stated, it may appear that the boat is in the synagogue of *13:54*.

Similar problems arose in Babatana in *1 Ki. 3:20* where

the details of the story of the two prostitutes are very condensed. The full account of the exchange of the two babies would be something like this: 'She **woke up** in the middle of the night, **and found her son was dead**. Then she got up and **crept over to my bed** and took my son while I was asleep, and put him in her bed. **Then she came back** with her dead son, and put him in my bed.' The implicit information is underlined, and some or even all of it may have to be made explicit in various languages if the story is not to be puzzling or even unintelligible.

Leaving Information Implicit

There are times when the situation is opposite to that described above, and the receptor language does not need to state something which is explicit in the Greek or Hebrew. In *Acts 10:41*, Peter speaks of eating and drinking with Jesus after his resurrection. In several languages such as Fuyuge and Kahua the word for 'eat' includes the idea of drinking, and there is no need to specify the drinking as well. To do so would sound like talking down to the readers, because in their societies everyone knows that when you eat, you also drink. In Falam Chin there is no need to say that Rebecca kept the best clothes 'in the house' (*Gen. 27:15*). Where else could there possibly be to keep them?

Wrong Implications

Not infrequently wording that sounds perfectly innocent in Greek or English may carry wrong implications in some other language, and the translator must be constantly on the lookout for this danger. *Acts 7:21* says that Pharaoh's daughter brought Moses up 'as her own son'. Similar wording in lai would imply that she actually had a son, and brought Moses up in the same way as this other boy. In *Acts 9:9*, in the same language, Saul's fast has to be described very carefully. To say he ate no food and drank no water could imply that he drank only beer, so one must state that he ate and drank nothing at all.

In Fuyuge in *Mark 2:4*, the actions of the paralysed man's friends must be stated precisely. If it is said that they carried the bed up on to the roof of the house, that would imply that they left the man behind! Again in Fuyuge, at *Lk. 18:11* if the Pharisee says 'I do not take other men's wives' it could imply that he had affairs only with unmarried girls. One must exclude this by stating comprehensively 'I don't go after other women'.

Cultural Adjustments

In cases where historical facts or events are referred to in scripture, the translator is not at liberty to make cultural adjustments. Whatever the difficulties, he must try to explain what actually happened, and give any extra information necessary in footnotes or in a glossary. However, where figurative language is involved, there is some latitude for cultural adaptation, so long as nothing is introduced into the text which is historically or cultur-

ally impossible in a biblical setting. A simple example concerns the name of Dorcas in *Acts 9:36*, whose meaning is given as 'deer' in TEV. In some parts of the world these animals are quite unknown and the languages have no word for them. In Fuyuge or Kahua the nearest one can get is to say that Dorcas means a nannygoat. Not very flattering to our way of thinking, yet no stigma attaches to such a name in the languages concerned.

The question in *Matt. 7:10*, 'Would you give him a snake when he asks for a fish?' would sound very strange in cultures where snakes are normally eaten. In the Pa language of Papua New Guinea, the problem can be overcome by saying 'Would you give him a yellow snake?' Yellow snakes are tabu, and are never eaten, so the real meaning of the verse is thus preserved.

In Kui the word 'go up' means to go to the south or east, whereas 'go down' means to go north or west. Thus in *Luke 10:30*, one must say that the traveller went up from Jerusalem to Jericho despite the loss of altitude involved.

There are occasions in scripture where the unit of meaning is not a single term, but a series of terms taken together. An example is found in *Acts 10:12*, 'all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air' (RSV). In lai the way to express this comprehensive collection of creatures is to say 'land animals, sea animals and bush birds'. In the same language in *Acts 17:28* 'in him we live and move and have our being' becomes 'in him we stand up and sit down and lie down'.

In the Bawm language, the analogy of stone buildings in *Eph. 2:20* could not be translated literally, as the Bawm people construct only wooden buildings with thatched roofs. However, it was possible to keep Paul's meaning within the framework of a local architectural metaphor by saying that the apostles and prophets were the roof ridge pole, and Christ himself was the central upright poles (which support the entire structure).

In a few cases, the presuppositions of the receptor culture must be allowed for in making exegetical decisions, though clearly this should be done only where the evidence is evenly balanced between two possible interpretations. For instance, the words at the end of *John 4:9* may mean either 'Jews have no dealings with Samaritans' (RSV) or 'Jews will not use the same vessels that Samaritans use' (cf NEB, TEV). Among the Telugu people, even members of the same family do not use each other's eating utensils, and in such a situation, the first of the above alternatives is preferable, as it would sound very odd to Telugu readers to state that Jews did not use the same vessels as foreigners.

In *Josh. 15:18* and *Judges 1:14*, it is uncertain whether the request for land was made by Othniel (cf RSV) or by his bride Achsah (NEB, TEV). Among the Falam Chin people it would be very rude for the bridegroom to make such a request, but quite acceptable for the bride to do so, and for this reason the second of the above alternatives was preferred.

Unexpected Questions

In *Acts 23*, Paul is being sent from Jerusalem to Caesarea under armed escort. In *verse 24* the instruction is given 'provide mounts for Paul to ride'. If this is translated literally, the question that comes to the mind of lai readers is 'how did Paul ride more than one animal?' They would envisage him laying on a circus-like display of equestrian acrobatics that was quite out of keeping with the situation. How is the translator to exclude this possible misunderstanding?

Again for the lai people, the statement in *Acts 2:19* that Philip had four unmarried daughters carries implications not carried by the Greek. In a society like the lai where virtually everyone marries, if a person is unmarried, there must be a reason. In the case of these girls, the reader would assume that they were either too young, too ugly, too stupid or too lazy, and therefore nobody wanted to marry them. The context gives no cause to suppose any of these things to be true, so how should the translator forestall any false deductions?

Conclusion

In these articles we have looked at some of the actual problems which translators have encountered in bringing the Word of God to new audiences. Hopefully these examples are not without interest to Christian readers, but the series will not have achieved its purpose unless it has served to stimulate greater understanding, support, and especially prayer for the many people involved today in the worldwide task of Bible translation.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

I appreciated the various answers which appeared in the September issue to the July question on foot-washing. No doubt, as Mr. Ellison remarked, this particular question does not present any difficulties — not, at least, among readers of *The Harvester*. That was why I asked it — in order that the principles on which we deal with a question which presents no difficulties may be considered in relation to questions of the same order which do present difficulties. Let the question now be phrased in the most general terms: are there any of the 'externalities' of New Testament religious practice which should be preserved intact regardless of the degree to which they still convey the spiritual values which they conveyed in the first century?

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

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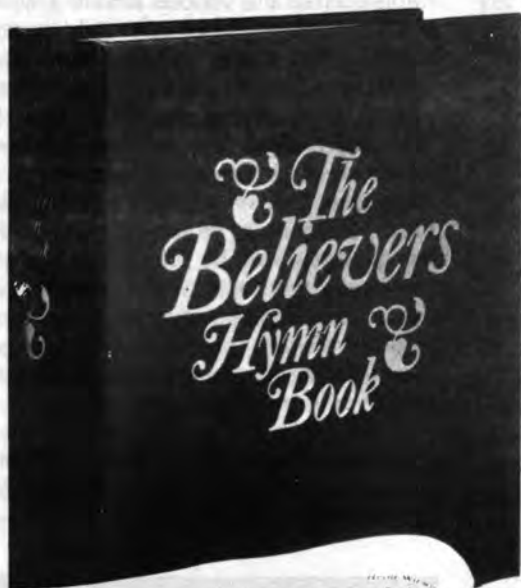
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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Once More — Eternal Sonship

Question 204

In your answer to Question 200 you outlined three viewpoints which might be associated with a denial of the Eternal Sonship of Christ. But you fail to indicate whether one of them is preferable to the others. What is your view?

I am sorry if my answer left readers doubtful about where I thought the truth to lie in this matter. The first two alternatives listed (Ebionism and Sabellianism) both fail to do justice to the eternal existence of the second person of the Trinity. The third recognises this and to that extent is consistent with the teaching of Scripture. However, it also involves some very doubtful exegesis of certain biblical passages (as I implied in the second paragraph of my answer). It also assumes that the title of 'Son' necessarily implies such a degree of subordination as to call in doubt the quality of the persons of the Trinity. I consider this view erroneous and the associated exegesis unsatisfactory. So while I have sympathy with the views of the people in the third category, I am satisfied that the Bible teaches the eternal Sonship of Christ.

Sacrifice of Praise

Question 205

In what sense may praise be compared to the sacrifices of the Old Testament?

There may be a danger of our assuming that the principal purpose of sacrifice in the Old Testament was to atone for sin. While the importance and indeed the necessity of this should not be overlooked, it is important to remember that there was also in the sacrificial system a strong element of simply giving to

God. The whole burnt offering was 'a pleasing odour to the Lord', so was the cereal offering and likewise the fellowship offering (*Leviticus 1:13, 3:2, 3:5*). We might also recall the daily offering of incense (*Exodus 30:7*). By analogy with these offerings, we can see that saying thank you to God and praising him for his goodness are ways in which we can give him something that pleases him. A further thought may be ventured. There are times when it is very difficult to praise God. Doing so may involve a deliberate action of the will and a refusal to indulge negative emotions. In this case, praising the Lord may indeed be 'sacrificial' in the sense that we are giving to him something that may cost us a good deal.

Haggai and the Temple

Question 206

On the whole the pre-Exilic prophets were rather hostile to the Temple in Jerusalem (as for example in Isaiah 1:12 and Jeremiah 7:4). Why, then, did Haggai place such emphasis on the importance of rebuilding the Temple, saying very little, compared with his predecessors, about righteousness and justice?

Accepting that what you say about the pre-Exilic prophets is broadly a fair statement, the situation was rather different after the return from the Exile. Some Jews will have had doubts about their relationship with the god who had allowed them to be defeated and taken into captivity. In these circumstances, the rebuilding of the Temple was a visible sign of their commitment to the Lord and of the continuance of his covenant with them. Nor was it any theological scruple that was delaying the rebuilding. The people were demoralised and in danger of losing commitment to their role as the people of God. Thus, Haggai's concentration on the rebuilding project is theologically understandable besides making very good sense in terms of the morals of community.

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

LOOKING AT BOOKS



A BOOK AT CHRISTMAS

Is a gift of a book a sort of last minute desperation, grabbed at when we have been unable to think of anything better? Sometimes, one fears, it is: which is silly, when one reflects that a book could be the most formative thing we have ever received — if it is the right book at the right time! Many of us scarcely open the pages of one from one year's end to another: and our lives are infinitely poorer because of it. The trouble is that there are just too many books — even Christian books. How to choose the right one? Well, there is only one really adequate answer — and that is to spend a very long and thoughtful time in your nearest good Christian bookshop (and by 'good' we mean carrying a wide and comprehensive choice). But just a few catch our eye from recent publications that have reached us: here goes.

If you have a lot of money to spend or there are several of you to join in a gift for someone you all esteem very much, then you might just think of one or better still all three of the volumes of the new IVP **The Illustrated Bible Dictionary**. It costs £13.95 a volume — but if it does not prove one of the most fascinating companions for the Bible-lover that he or she has known, something is wrong!

One hardly expects to find a contributor to **The Harvester** in Secret Service stories! But that is exactly what you will find if you can persuade someone to give you **The Secret War of Charles Fraser-Smith** (Michael Joseph £7.50). A really fascinating read — and CF-S pulls no punches. In fact he would have liked the **Christian** punches he throws in the book to have been a good deal stronger, but that is a story out

of his hands . . . To say more will give too much away.

A quiet evangelical statesman of the twentieth century, whose real contribution to Christian counsels will never be adequately assessed this side of eternity, comes modestly out of the shadows in his autobiography **No Mere Chance** (John Laird, Hodder & Stoughton £5.50). We hope to carry a full review later, but every friend of Dr. Laird and the Scripture Union will want this book.

Other books which will suit other tastes: **The Ten Commandments** by Stuart Blanch, Archbishop of York (Hodder £1.50); a paperback of Roger Steer's **George Müller — Delighted in God** (Hodder £1.95); **Together for God** the moving testimony of two badly disabled Christians and their marriage (Richard & Sandra Creed, SPCK £1.50); Charles Colson, author of **Born Again**, writes **Life Sentence** (Hodder £1.75); and a charmingly illustrated pictorial history based on John Wesley's **Journal** **John Wesley's England** (Richard Bewes, Hodder, £5.95 p/bk, £8.95 h/bk). And some others in the reviews that follow.

NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

The World of the First Christians (Parts 1,2,3,4) Edwin Yamauchi Lion Publishing. £1.25 each part (paperback). Yamauchi (University of Miami) and Lion have combined academic excellence and accurate visual presentation to provide an introduction to the surprisingly sophisticated life-style, superstition and religion of the first century A.D. Part One, 'The Jewish World', starts with the historical origins of the festival of Hanukkah, so popular in R.E. syllabuses these days. Then the reader is introduced to the Zealots,

Samaritans, Pharisees, Essenes and Sadducees.

Myths and Cults (Part Two) is a misleading title to a review of Greek religion, philosophy and sects, ending with a summary of Gnosticism, the heresy referred to in later N.T. writings.

Parts Three and Four, **The Roman Empire and Roman Life and Beliefs**, present very attractively a large amount of historical, social, military and religious information. Inevitably, there are some omissions. One looks in vain for Tacitus' account of the Neronian persecution and Suetonius' record of the Jews in Rome who were expelled 'because they were constantly making disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus'.

R.E. teachers and all concerned with N.T. background will find this fourfold presentation very informative and easy to handle.

Review by John Martin

Herod Antipas: A Contemporary of Jesus Christ

Harold W. Hoehner Zondervan, USA/Paternoster Press, UK. xvi + 437pp. £6.50 (paperback).

A doctoral thesis presented to Cambridge University in 1968 and updated for publication by the Society for New Testament Studies in 1972, this volume is a serious and scholarly study of its theme, with copious appendices, bibliographies and indices. As such it is something of an encyclopaedia of matters historical, geographical, economic and textual relating to its theme. Its wealth of information thus will make it invaluable for reference on a wide range of subjects — how many readers know, for instance, that of the thirty-three miracles performed by Jesus, only six were done in Judaea,

most of the remainder taking place in Galilee?

There are, of course, several persons called Herod in the New Testament. Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great (of the Nativity narratives), reigned over Galilee and Peraea from 3 B.C. to A.D. 39 and thus covered almost the entire period of the incarnation of Christ. It was he who killed John the Baptist and whose curiosity caused the withdrawal of the Lord to Decapolis (*Mark 6*). He is 'that fox' — a term carefully considered in the text — of *Luke 13:32* and the Herod whose 'men of war' mocked Jesus in *Luke 23:6-12*. No New Testament expositor can afford to be ignorant of him. Despite much that could be cited against Antipas, Dr. Hoehner's verdict is that he is both a good and an able ruler. There is little that this exhaustive and authoritative study leaves unsaid about him.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

The Archaeology of New Testament Cities in Western Asia Minor

Edwin Yamauchi Pickering & Inglis. 180pp, 11 figs, 54 illustrations. 1980. £3.95 (paperback).

As the title clearly implies this new book covers the seven cities whose churches are addressed in *Revelation 2-3* and those to whom Paul wrote (Ephesus, Colossae) or visited (Assos, Miletus), all situated in what is now Turkey. Professor Yamauchi gives a succinct summary of the history of the whole region and follows it by a chapter devoted to each city, its location, New Testament references, the historical background, excavations and principal monuments. The latter are predominantly those which resulted from the imperial

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

HAIL, REDEMPTION'S HAPPY DAWN!

By Graham K. Rand

Mr. Rand, a Liverpool graduate in Computational and Statistical Science, lectures at Lancaster University on Operational Research. Married with two boys, he worships at Moorlands Gospel Hall, Lancaster.

Edward Caswall, who from 1850 worked at the Oratory in Birmingham with Cardinal Newman, is noted for his translations of Latin hymns such as 'Jesus, The Very Thought Of Thee'. His original compositions are less well known, with the exception of 'See Amid The Winter's Snow', in which he exhorts us to 'Hail, redemption's happy dawn!' It is not the only Christian hymn to express this thought: the anonymous translation of Joseph Mohr's 'Stille Nacht' which is found in **Christian Worship** reminds us that the birth of the Lord Jesus is 'the dawn of saving grace'.

The hymn writers are probably using redemption as a synonym for salvation. With the birth of Jesus a new day in the history of God's dealing with men begins (see *Luke 16:16*). The eyewitnesses, to whom Luke introduces us, express this. Mary celebrates His mercy which extends to those who fear Him (*1:50*). Zechariah praises God because He has come and redeemed His people (*1:68*). Simeon, too, is thankful that, at last, his eyes have seen God's salvation (*2:30*). Anna gives thanks to God and speaks about Jesus to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem (*2:38*). They were all keenly aware that God, in His mercy, had caused the rising sun

to come from heaven (*1:78*).

Paul reminds us, though, that in a special sense the incarnation was the dawning of world redemption. 'When the time had fully come' he writes to the Galatians (*4:4-5*), 'God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law.' Freedom, which is obtained by redemption, is a key thought in Galatians. 'It is for freedom that Christ has set us free' (*5:1*). At the beginning of *Chapter 4*, Paul shows the stupidity of slavery, i.e. subjection (*vv. 1-3*), reminds his readers of salvation from sin, i.e. redemption (*vv. 4-5*) and shows that those thus redeemed have a status as sons, i.e. adoption (*vv. 5-7*). The father was the key figure in the family, and his heir was subject to his will. In this sense he was no different from a slave. If the father was alive his heir would normally look forward to freedom from this authority at his coming of age, but this might be brought forward if there was sufficient evidence of maturity. Alternatively, if the father was dead, the time of inheritance would be set in his will, but in the meantime the heir would be looked after by, and be subject to, guardians and trustees (see also *3:24, 25*). So it was with Paul's readers, who, in their immaturity had been slaves to 'the basic principles of the world' (*4:3*). This enigmatic phrase no doubt includes 'all kinds of passions and pleasures' (*Titus 3:3*) and is summed up bluntly by 'sin' (*Rom. 6:20*). But God the Father had also set an appointed time, and when it came God

the Son was sent on a mission of redemption. The fact of incarnation is simply stated; no amplification or proof is required. He was born of a woman: and thus identified Himself with us. He was born under the law: identifying Himself with the spiritual conditions in which we live. Those who rely on observing the law are under a curse but Christ came and redeemed us from that curse by His substitutionary death (*Gal. 3:10-14*).

*Lord Jesus Christ,
You have come to us,
Born as one of us,
Mary's Son,
Led out to die on Calvary
Risen from death to set us free,
Living Lord Jesus, help us see
You are Lord.*

(P. Appleford)

We are redeemed, says Paul, so that we might receive the full rights of God's sons. At Christmas, when we remember, and give thanks for God's gift of His Son we do this as those who are His sons. God has also sent His Spirit, into our hearts, enabling us to enter a special intimate relationship with Him.

So Christmas, the time when we think of restriction for the One who made Himself nothing, and took the nature of a servant (*Phil. 2:7*), is a time of freedom for us, who are no longer slaves but sons and heirs of God. 'Hail, redemption's happy dawn!'

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (54)

F. F. Bruce

The final phase of the ministry 'to the world'
(John 10:40-12:50)

ii. THE RAISING OF LAZARUS (John 11:1-46)

(a) Lazarus falls ill (11:1-5)

11:1-2 There was a man who was ill, Lazarus by name, of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with myrrh and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill.)

The signal for Jesus to leave his retreat in Transjordan and return to the main scene of action in Judaea was not long in coming. It took the form of a message from Bethany, letting him know that Lazarus, a friend of his, was ill.

This is the first time that the family of Bethany finds mention in this Gospel, but the evangelist knows that some of his readers have heard of at least one member of the family. Mary, one of the two sisters of Lazarus, on a memorable occasion poured myrrh over Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair. This was such an extraordinary thing to do that those who heard of it were never likely to forget it. The evangelist, who records the incident later (John 12:3), had presumably told the story already (no doubt with other stories to be written down eventually in his Gospel) in the companies of Christians among whom he moved. So, on mentioning Lazarus for the first time, he says, in effect, 'You will know whom I mean if I tell you that he was the brother of that Mary who anointed the Lord.'

Bethany near Jerusalem, on the other side of Olivet, less than two miles along the road to Jericho, has not been mentioned in John's record before this.

11:3-5 So Lazarus's sisters sent a message to Jesus: 'See, Lord, the one whom you love is ill.' When Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness is not mortal; it has come for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.' (Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.)

This family in Bethany, though unmentioned earlier in this Gospel, was evidently well known to Jesus and well loved by him. It was natural, then, that when Lazarus fell ill, his sisters should get in touch

with Jesus at once. Jesus' reaction to the news must strike the reader as strange, but the explanation of it can be read, if at all, only between the lines of John's record. This is the last of the signs preceding the passion of Jesus in which the divine glory was manifested through him, and it is this aspect of the incident that is uppermost in the evangelist's account throughout. To say that the illness was not mortal (literally, 'not unto death'), when in fact Lazarus must have died shortly after the message was despatched, and Jesus knew that he had died, makes the reader pause and think. The disciples at first could take the words only *au pied de la lettre*, but the reader is better informed. One might take the meaning to be: This illness is not so much one that will terminate in death as one which will demonstrate the glory of God: there is ample evidence for the biblical idiom in which 'not . . . but' means 'not only . . . but also'. But the words mean more than that: the glory of God was to be demonstrated in the raising of Lazarus from death, so that while the illness resulted in temporary death, it resulted more impressively in resurrection and life.

The parenthetic statement that Jesus loved all three members of the family is intended to show that it was not lack of love or concern for them that made him react to the news as he did. (The verb rendered 'love' in verse 5 is *agapaō*, whereas in verse 3 it is *phileō* — sufficient evidence that, as we have seen already, John makes no distinction between the two verbs.)

It is an interesting coincidence, though probably no more than a coincidence, that the three names (Mary, Martha, Lazarus) were found in 1873 in ossuary inscriptions in one tomb near Bethany.

(b) Going back to Judaea (11:6-16)

11:6-7 So when Jesus heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed for two days in the place where he was. Then, after that, he said to the disciples, 'Let us go back to Judaea.'

Jesus' remaining where he was for two days after receiving the news of Lazarus's illness presents another problem. The problem was felt by both the sisters, whose first words on meeting Jesus, one

after the other, were, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died.' It may be said that the record of this delay brought reassurance to Christians of a later generation, who were disappointed because they and their friends had to pass through death before experiencing the expected entrance into resurrection life; but this does not account for the delay in the historical situation. If the problem were put to the evangelist, he might well have replied (in words which he uses elsewhere), 'He himself knew what he was going to do' (John 6:6). When the two days were past, then Jesus proposed to the disciples' astonishment that they should go back to Judaea.

11:8 The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, it is but now that the Judaeans were trying to stone you. Are you going back there?'

The reference to the attempt to stone him is to the incident at the festival of Dedication, recorded in John 10:31, when Jesus' claim, 'I and the Father are one', provoked this hostile reaction. Why, the disciples asked, should he venture into the lions' den again? Could he not cure Lazarus from a distance?

11:9-10 Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours in the day? If one walks about in daytime, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. If one walks about by night, he stumbles, because he has no light.'

Jesus' answer is remarkably similar to his words in John 9:4, in relation to the blind man and his impending cure: 'We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; the night is coming, when no one can work.' The blindness then and the illness now were means for the display of God's glory. The present words have an obvious surface meaning: those who walk in the daytime do not stumble against obstacles because the light of the sun shows them where they are going; people who go out in the dark are liable to stumble because they cannot see obstacles in their path. But there is a deeper meaning, where the true light of the world and not the light of this world is involved: one who shuts his eyes to the true light not only 'has no light' but 'the light is not in him'. The light of the sun shines from the sky; the true light shines within (cf. 1 John 2:8). In the

present context, Jesus must follow the path of the Father's will while life lasts; it may be the eleventh hour of daylight, but that is no reason for staying in retirement.

11:11-13 These were his words, and then he said to them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going to wake him up.' The disciples said to him, 'If he has fallen asleep, Lord, he will recover.' (Jesus had spoken of his death, but they supposed that he was speaking about resting in sleep.)

The use of sleep as a metaphor for death became, and remains, a common Christian locution, so common, indeed, that we may think that the disciples were unusually obtuse not to grasp what Jesus meant. But perhaps the locution was not so familiar to them; we may recall the bystanders' incredulous scorn when Jesus said that Jairus's daughter was 'not dead, but asleep' (Mark 5:39; that a different word for 'asleep' is used there from that found here is immaterial). That the man who was ill should have fallen asleep seemed to the disciples to be a promising sign.

11:14-16 Then Jesus said to them plainly, 'Lazarus has died; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' Then Thomas (that is, the 'Twin') said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us go too, so that we may die with him.'

Jesus implies that, if he had been present in Bethany, Lazarus would not have died. As it is, however, the disciples will see such a manifestation of the glory of God as will kindle their faith, and for that he is glad. So, he said, 'let us go to him'.

Thomas's pessimism and loyalty are both expressed in his words to the others. (Thomas or *tōmā* is the Aramaic word for 'twin'; *didymos* is the Greek word; cf. 20:24; 21:2). Judaea is the place where the final manifestation of the divine glory in the incarnate Word is to be given; by the same token it is the place of Jesus' death. From the place of withdrawal from the world Jesus goes back to manifest himself to the world, and to do so more fully than when he went up to Jerusalem for the festival of Tabernacles (John 7:4). Thomas betrays some inkling of this truth, but if his Master is to die, he has no wish to survive him.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (5)

J. E. Todd

... of Non-retaliation (1 Pet. 2:18-25)

Many sins take the form of retaliation against those who have wronged us by word or deed. Whether the wrong is actual or only imaginary on our part, or whether the wrong (real or supposed) was intended or unintended seems to have little effect upon the vigour of the retaliation! These sins of retaliation can take the form of hatred, harsh words, acts of revenge, ill-temper and sulking. If we consider ourselves wronged, we can deal with the matter in a conciliatory manner, as laid down in *Matt. 18:15-20*, 'If he listens to you, you have gained your brother' (*v. 15b*, *RSV*). But we are never to retaliate, 'For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. He committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten' (1 Pet. 2:21-23).

In the New Testament the Christian is often taught by the following method. He is **exhorted** to behave in a certain manner, then he is reminded of the **example** of the Lord in this matter, then he is told how he may **experience** this behaviour in his own life (e.g. *Phil. 2:1-13*, *1 John 4:7-21*).

In *1 Peter* the Christian is exhorted to be devoid of a revengeful spirit, even under the most provocative circumstances (*v. 18-19*). Here is a Christian slave being submissive and respectful to his master, but his master is without appreciation of these qualities. On the contrary he is overbearing and inflicts painful beatings on the slave, but the Christian is 'mindful of God' (*v. 19*). This means that he realizes that he is serving the Lord NOT his earthly master (*Eph. 6:5-8*, *Col. 3:22-24*). Therefore he continues to serve with submission and respect, not retaliating with resentment and poor service. Thus all Christians are exhorted, when wronged, either in the church or in the world at large, not to retaliate with harsh words, acts of revenge or withdrawal of fellowship and service, but to continue to serve the Lord. This is what God requires, 'But if when you do right and suffer for it you take it patiently, you have God's approval' (*v. 20*).

Now the example of the Lord is set before us. Never was a person more in the right than he, for he was sinless. Never was a person more wronged than he,

by his shameful execution as a criminal, by his agonizing death by crucifixion. But not even a word of retaliation, 'He committed no sin; no guile was found on his lips. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten' (*v. 22-23*).

But let us notice four special features about his example. First, 'For to this you have been called' (*v. 21*). God emphatically requires this behaviour of us, he has called us to be his people, specifically to behave in this fashion. Second, 'Because Christ also suffered for you' (*v. 21*). This is not just an historical example, for Christ behaved in this fashion for US. If he had not behaved thus, either by the sin of retaliation or the refusal to submit to the cross, we would not be saved. The example was for our own salvation, therefore we cannot ignore it or in any way play it down. We must accept this example as being personally valid. Third, it is not a text book example, just to be studied and admired, 'Leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps' (*v. 21*). It is a practical example, 'Oh, let me see thy footmarks, And in them plant mine own' (John Bode). But fourth, we are not expected to deny justice, 'But he trusted to him who judges justly' (*v. 23*). In this respect the Scriptures teach, 'For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality' (*Col. 3:25*). Justice will be done.

But how can we translate such behaviour into our day to day experience, behaviour which is so contrary to human nature, so foreign to the flesh? 'He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness' (*v. 24*). We must first realize that we cannot reach such a standard of behaviour ourselves, 'For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it' (*Rom. 7:18*). Then to abandon all hope in our own efforts to achieve such a standard of behaviour. This we did at our baptism when we accepted that our old man (life controlled by me) died and was buried, 'That we might die to sin' (*v. 24*). We also accepted that we have been resurrected to live a new life, the new man (life controlled by Christ), 'And live to righteousness' (*v. 24*). Jesus said, 'Apart from me you can do nothing' (*John 15:5*).

Paul said, 'I can do all things in him (Christ) who strengthens me' (*Phil. 4:13*).

THE FAMILY AT NAZARETH

H. V. G. Morris

Our study begins with the assertion that there is no biblical foundation for the doctrine that the Lord Jesus was the only child borne by Mary. Indeed, an unprejudiced and intelligent reading of the few passages which give information about the family at Nazareth, lead us to recognize the essential value to the incarnation purpose, of a normal family life lived in the simplicity of a village community.

The status of the Lord Jesus as the legally adopted eldest son of Joseph, and the bringing together in Him of the two royal lines proceeding from David, that of Joseph in Matthew's Gospel, and of Mary in Luke's, gave to Him, and to no one else, the right of inheritance to the throne of David. But in our study, we must recognize that the Gospel narrative is centred in the personality of the Lord Jesus. All information about the members of the family of Joseph and Mary, is only significant where it gives insight into His character, and teaches how our family life should be conducted.

There were problems: Joseph is not mentioned after the Passover visit to Jerusalem, when Jesus, at twelve years of age, came into the first stage of manhood, according to Jewish tradition and practice. It may be assumed that Joseph died before his own children had reached maturity, and upon the Lord Jesus fell the responsibility of the maintenance of that family, four sons and at least two daughters. He became progressively aware of the purpose of His incarnation: may we also assume that the delay imposed upon Him by the family responsibilities was part of the essential restraint to which all mankind must submit, if to be ultimately of value in God's service?

It is to be expected that one or more of Joseph's older children had been born before the return to Nazareth from Egypt, and also that this growing family accompanied the party of friends and kinsmen who travelled to Jerusalem for that first Passover recorded by Luke, but no mention is made of them. The Gospel narrative is not intended as a biography of Joseph's family. It seems that Joseph and Mary had limited understanding of the glory of 'Immanuel, God manifest in flesh'. It is probable that the wonder of the angelic appearances to both of them, at the time of the Incarnation, had declined over the past twelve years. Their sad and worried rebuke to the

Boy Jesus, was answered by a reminder that His first obedience was to His Father in Heaven. He remained, however, 'subject to them' in the normal routine of family life.

FROM CANA ONWARDS

The next reference to the family is given on the occasion of the wedding in Cana of Galilee. Mary's apparent authority at the wedding celebrations, suggests that one of her daughters was the bride, and her confidence in Jesus, when the wine was exhausted, indicates that she had learned to rely on Him in all the family troubles of the home at Nazareth.

In the early days of His ministry, His mother and His brothers seem to have attached themselves to Him, in company with the disciples, but the time soon came when they, His brothers, would break away. They could not accept the witness to His Messianic claims, given by the guarded words from His lips, and the miracles performed. It is unlikely that Mary had told them of the miraculous conception.

It is probable that the happenings now referred to, took place about two years after the commencement of His ministry of preaching and healing. Jesus was in the Galilee region, at Capernaum. He had made formal ordination of His twelve disciples, and had sent them forth to preach and heal. It was at the time of His great popularity among the common people, but of enmity by the Scribes and Pharisees, who had come from Jerusalem to denounce Him as possessed by Beelzebub. His relatives also, in unbelief, considered that His work was evidence of madness, and they came to put Him under restraint. It was at this time that the break came with His family, and the declaration that those who did the will of His Father in Heaven, stood in a particular spiritual relationship with Him. This unbelief continued for the remainder of His life on Earth, and, at the Cross, only His mother, together with other women, many of whom appear to have been related to Him, were present, standing afar off. These women, all honour to them, were those who had 'followed Him and ministered unto Him'. It is significant that when they drew near, shortly before the end, it was to John the Apostle that the future care of His mother, Mary, was committed.

AFTER THE RESURRECTION

But what a change came after His resurrection! The reason is shown in one short phrase in the resurrection chapter (*1 Cor. 15*) 'After that, He was seen of James'. No record is given of that private interview, but to James it was a revelation of the true nature and glory of Him whom he had thought of, simply, as his brother, One who, because of the strange events of the past three-and-a-half years, had fallen foul of the religious establishment. After the Ascension, and in the waiting time before Pentecost, we read that Mary and the brethren of the Lord Jesus were associating with the disciples. Later, James appears to have had prominence in the Jerusalem church, and was known as its bishop. He was said to have been a man of holy character. When Peter was delivered from prison (*Acts 12*) he made this request: 'Go, show these things unto James, and to the brethren.' Paul also recognized his importance in the Jerusalem church, when, three years after his conversion, he sought the fellowship of that church (*Gal. 1:18*). This was repeated fourteen years later, when Paul returned to Jerusalem and reported on his evangelistic preaching to gentiles. It was a time of change and expansion: the Jewish Christians must be taught to recognize that the preaching of Christ Jesus as Saviour to all men, was not an extension of Judaism. This teaching was more fully explained in the Pauline epistles, but in this short study we are concerned with the family of Joseph and Mary. It is sufficient to say that in the disputations, James shewed himself to be a man of wisdom and authority.

We have looked at the few references to this obscure peasant family, brought up in the despised village of Nazareth, in circles tightly bound by religious traditions and scruples. The inherent progressive potential shown by members of that family, should encourage younger Christians, for at the time of the visit by tempestuous Paul, when Barnabas showed unreliability, Peter showed weakness and vacillation, and there was much controversy among Elders of the Church, then James demonstrated flexibility and moderation, and we may presume that he so influenced his younger brother, Jude.

A quality equally rare is shown by these two brothers, who, coming from the same womb as the Lord Jesus, and who had known normal familiarity

with Him in youthful association, claim no reflected glory on that account. Nevertheless, it was out of this background, and also out of the troubled experiences of the Jerusalem church, that the Epistles of James and Jude were written. They are in the true beauty of simple and direct language, free from the tortuous argument of the academic mind. Those of us who wield the pen, should so be guided. How delightful also to recognize that these two, half-brothers of the Lord Jesus, write of Him as 'our Lord Jesus Christ', and call themselves His servants.

OUTLOOK

G. J. Polkinghorne

As we complete our first year of *Exploring the Bible*, we trust that the menu has stimulated and satisfied our subscribers' appetites. And as we anticipate 1982, in the Lord's mercy, we believe we have a balanced diet prepared. Two excellent series are to continue: Professor Bruce's valuable studies in *John's Gospel* and, hopefully, Mr. Ellison's *Sidelights from the Old Testament* later in the year. Our occasional series, *Preacher's Workshop*, will also continue, while another, on *Problems of Church Life*, is under active preparation. In addition, we have from Dr. David J. Clark some *Studies in 1 Samuel* on the rise of the monarchy and from Dr. M. L. Burr papers on *Divine Attributes*. Besides these, articles on various biblical books and subjects will appear. We are confident that our readers will both enjoy and profit from this fare!

May we offer two suggestions? One is that editors of and contributors to magazines need prayer support no less than preachers. The other, that we are always glad to receive contributions from writers, especially younger ones, without, of course, commitment in advance to print them. But where we detect incipient gift, we shall try to propose ways of development. Finally, let us sincerely wish all our readers God's richest blessing for Christmas and the Coming Year.

G.J.P.

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Blood-feud H. L. Ellison

Mr. Ellison will be ministering the Word in Israel from mid-December to the end of February and will value our prayers.

One of the earliest stories in the Bible tells how Cain killed his younger brother Abel, apparently out of jealousy. When God called him to face what he had done, he was told that the soil would disown him, refusing to yield its strength to him, and that he would become a fugitive and a wanderer.

For the Old Testament it is axiomatic that the fertility of the soil is linked with the behaviour of those who live on it. Sometimes, as in *Gen. 4:12*, the ground seems to be regarded as an essentially living thing, which reacts with disgusted anger against the evil acts committed on it. At other times the response of the soil in blessing or curse is seen as the direct action of God, cf. *Ps. 107:33-38*.

Cain responded to God's sentence with a cry, 'You are not being fair! My punishment is too heavy to be borne. Anyone meeting me will kill me!' As is the way of these early stories, it makes no effort to answer the questions it is bound to raise. There is no suggestion as to who would want to kill him, and although the concept of the blood-feud clearly lies behind it, there is no explanation of how the concept began. We must use the term blood-feud with caution, for it implies that the vengeance would be carried out by the next-of-kin. Here, however, Cain looks on it as a general duty incumbent on all. Whatever the origin of the concept, its validity is denied by God (*4:15, 16*). It would be entirely illegitimate to see any contradiction between this and *Gen. 9:6*. The whole tenor of Scripture would lead us to infer that the blood-shedding should be done by due process of law.

As it was, that which fallen man took for granted, was carried on and extended. Lamech, the fourth from Cain, and the first bigamist mentioned in Scripture (*Gen. 4:18-24*) interpreted the blood-feud concept as justifying murder to avenge a wound or a blow. Lamech's action is doubtless mentioned to show how completely the fear of God had vanished in the generation of the Flood. But the blood-feud

had become so wide-spread and taken for granted at the time that Genesis was written, that it is not mentioned in the post-Noachic period.

In the Sinaitic law-giving the blood-feud was accepted as a fact. The death penalty was mandatory (*Exod. 21:12; 21:23*), but its infliction was a duty of the community rather than of the nearest relative. The impact of the blood-feud was further decreased by the institution of the cities of refuge (*Deut. 4:41-43, Josh. 20:7-9*).

Though many do not realize it, there is no evidence that the cities of refuge were ever in fact effective. In the time of David the blood-feud played an important part. In the fighting between David and Esh-baal Abner was unfortunate to run across Joab's youngest brother Asahel looking for fame on the battlefield. The outcome was death for the younger man (*2 Sam. 2:18-23*).

It is questionable, whether Asahel's death gave real grounds for a blood-feud, but Joab was not a man to trouble either about law or custom, but swayed by family pride he murdered Abner. Although he had broken David's pledge to Abner of safe-conduct and had violated the sacred right of hospitality, David did not feel able to deal with him as deserved (*2 Sam. 3:28-34*).

This was probably not due to Joab's personal position or influence, but rather to the fact that the people as a whole considered the blood-feud as a sacred custom. When David charged Solomon to deal with Joab (*1 Kgs. 2:5, 6*), one may be sorry that he had not done it himself, but for Joab there should be no scrap of sympathy.

In later Israelite history the blood-feud ceased to play any recorded part, though it was doubtless there. The change may have been brought about partly by Joab's death, even when he was clinging to the horns of the altar (*1 Kgs. 2:28-34*). The fake story told to David by the woman from Tekoa (*2 Sam. 14:4-11*) may have played a part as well. It nearly took the king in because it was so true to conditions as they were. It may be that David was so shocked by what could be that he began the process of bringing the murderer under the law of the land, and so making the blood-feud with all its evils unnecessary.

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Roman era of reconstruction and prosperity. Most are therefore ruins of great buildings, including synagogues (as at Sardis), which illustrate the life and conditions which surrounded the early churches. This real world included luxurious temples, forums, stadiums, gymnasiums, theatres and libraries. The whole is well and authoritatively presented with a mass of information and inscriptions which illustrates Scripture at numerous points. It takes full account of recent archaeological discoveries as well as the tried observations of earlier scholars such as Sir William Ramsay. Though there is no modern map and some of the plans are sketchy, it will serve well also as a guide book for any modern tourist or pilgrim. Highly commended.

Review by Professor Donald J. Wiseman



MISCELLANEOUS

Leprosy, Leeches and Love
Val Bock
(Kingsway Publications, 1981)
184pp. £1.35 (paperback).
Order! Order!

Ramon Hunston
(Marshalls, 1981) 145pp. £1.60
(paperback)

The Luis Palau Story
Jerry B. Jenkins
(Pickering & Inglis, 1980)
175pp. £4.50

For Me, with Love
Audrey Taylor
(Kingsway Publications and
Wycliffe Bible Translators,
1981) 94pp. £1.35 (paperback).

On to the Summit
Pat Wraight
(Kingsway Publications and
Christian Literature Crusade,
1981). 189pp. £1.75
(paperback).

These books have three common strands: they are biographical, they feature people who are perfectly ordinary and unpretentious, and thirdly their subjects are or were notable for their staunch Christian faith.

Three of them are essentially missionary stories. In alphabetical order, Val Bock, an Australian nurse, gives a refreshing insight into the work of the Leprosy Mission in Papua New Guinea and Thailand; Audrey Taylor records the

lessons she learned while working with her husband for Wycliffe Bible Translators in South-East Brazil; while Pat Wraight chronicles the career of Len Moules who at one time was both International Secretary and British leader of W.E.C.

Jerry Jenkins's volume is offered as the definitive biography of Luis Palau, the evangelist dubbed by the media 'the Billy Graham of Latin America'.

Then from the hurlyburly of the political arena comes Hunston's account of George Thomas, Speaker of the House of Commons, whose richly melodic Welsh voice is well-known to listeners of Radio 4's 'Today in Parliament': almost a national institution. In fact, his progress from the poverty of the Rhondda Valley in the nineteen twenties to the august post he now occupies is one of the most remarkable stories of the twentieth century; in British political folk-lore it is perhaps bettered only by that of Lloyd George whose tempestuous journey took him from obscurity to Number 10, where he remained for six years. Three factors in particular have moulded Thomas's life: his deep Christian faith; his involvement in the National Union of Teachers; and his life-long commitment to the Labour Party.

My dominant impression after reading these books is of their limited and, in some cases, unsatisfactory nature. The appeal of the first three is likely to be restricted to those with a special interest in the work of W.E.C. or Wycliffe or the Leprosy Mission. The other two seem to have been hastily written, even with a hint of superficiality. I should have liked, for example, a careful and reasoned treatment of the inter-relationship between Thomas's faith and political tenets, whereas certain sections of Jenkins's volume all too closely resemble the sort of publicity blurb that frequently emanates from the headquarters of international evangelists: what is more pertinent than the figures of how many responded positively in a series of meetings is the numbers who actually then go on with their new-found faith!

continued overleaf

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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The October question

In our July issue Dr. McIntosh asks, 'If Luther can be translated acceptably, why cannot Wesley?' May not an adequate answer be that Charles Wesley's hymns already exist in English, and better English than this century shows itself able to achieve? But my question to readers is this: can they think of any single rewording of Charles Wesley which does not underline the wisdom of John's plea to compilers not to attempt to mend the hymns of his brother or himself — 'for they really are not able'?

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

Since I am not a connoisseur of Charles Wesley I am hardly competent to answer the question in the form it was put. But I am reasonably convinced that the majority of Charles Wesley's are set to sufficiently singable tunes for the average Christian not to stop and ask what Charles meant. In any case, as a good orthodox Anglican minister, his sentiments have seldom attracted the attention of the heresy hunters, so his brother's plea that his hymns be allowed to stand as they were written has normally been observed

even by the Methodists who are as ready as most to make minor 'improvements' in hymns.

Dr. J. S. Andrews replies:

First, many thanks for publishing Dr. McIntosh's 'Musical Interlude' series. 'If Luther can be translated acceptably, why cannot Wesley?' demands an answer from an abler mind than mine. I simply suggest that people begin by comparing, say, 'Love Divine' in Frank Baker's

Representative Verse of Charles Wesley (1962), which gives the hymn-writer's own text, with the versions in **Christian Worship and The Believer's Hymn Book**. CW respects the original with a few significant doctrinal exceptions. BH must be seen to be believed. The fact is that all compilers either amend the text of hymns or accept amendments made by others. Some do it responsibly; many do not. In this connection, as in much else, Bernard Manning's **Hymns of Wesley and Watts** (1942) is essential reading. He castigates would-be improvers of the great hymns at some length; but he adds (p.117) that: 'A hymn's business is to strengthen the faith of to-day,

not to present an historical record of the day before yesterday.' 'We shall soon', Dr. McIntosh writes, 'be using hymn books full of "AV" hymns alongside Bibles in non-AV language.' That time has already come. Dr. Tony Newell makes a cogent case against the proliferation of modern Bible versions in the current **Evangelical Quarterly**; but we cannot stem the tide by acting like Canute (if Tony will forgive an apocryphal allusion in defence of the AV). Much good hymn-writing is being produced in contemporary idiom and faithful to Scripture. The work of Timothy Dudley-Smith and Christopher Idle in Scripture Union's **Songs of Worship** (1980) springs to mind. Note, however, especially Collins's **With One Voice** (1979), which began life as **The Australian Hymn Book** and was the product of co-operation between Anglicans, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Roman Catholics. (Those who dislike ecumenicalism in devotional matters should ponder the denominational allegiances of authors in their own hymn-books.) Almost a quarter of the contents are twentieth-century

hymns, although there is a generous supply — more than in many other collections — of the Watts/Wesley era. The editors' cautious and well-thought-out policy about modernisations is explained in their preface. The promised companion by Professor Wesley Milgate to the hymn-book will no doubt amplify this information. No two people will agree in detail about the success of their amendments; but they have tried to be responsible. My own interest concerns German hymns. Here in **WOV** Mrs. Honor M. Thwaites has done sterling work in skilfully adapting old translations or producing new ones. She has, for example, produced an excellent version of Luther's hymn with the first line, 'A mighty stronghold is our God'. There is some evidence that 1970 was a watershed in English hymnody. Significant changes in theological emphasis occur in a number of hymn-books published since then. This is another matter, however. Those interested should consult Bill Hopkinson's survey article, 'Changes in the Emphases of Evangelical Belief 1970-1980', **Churchman**, vol. 95, no. 2 (1981).

LOOKING AT BOOKS continued from Page 13

Low in literary felicity as these works are, they are reasonably priced and might make useful Christmas presents.

Review by John Peters

The Believer's Hymn Book Music Edition

Pickering & Inglis. Worship edition (cherry red helicon). £9.95. Gift Edition (black leather). £15.95. An unnamed editor has

undertaken the task of revising the music edition of a hymn book which is still used in many Brethren assemblies. To quote from the Preface: 'Some one hundred tunes of little merit and seldom sung have been replaced by others more likely to be used today in congregational worship.' Opinions will vary on the musical quality and suitability of the choice presented here. A few tunes have been specially composed for this edition, but

the only tune in the modern idiom is the well-loved **Camberwell**. Unfortunately, the metres of many of the 465 hymns in this collection make it impossible to find better tunes for them. The book is somewhat marred by disparate and at times indistinct musical type-faces, unfelicitous reharmonisations, and non-standard (Scottish?) names and forms of some well-known tunes. Thus, for example, E. W. Bullinger's fine

tune **Montreal** is described as **Within the Veil** by 'Anon' and varies in rhythm and notation from the original. Despite these criticisms that must in all honesty be made, those who use the **Believer's Hymn Book** will welcome this new, improved tune book. It is unlikely to appeal to many others.

Review by John W. Baigent,
West London Institute of
Higher Education



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.

Dr. Brian-Frédéric Tatford of L'Eau Vive, Aix-en-Provence, France, contributes this month's Readers' Forum on the subject of L'Entente Cordiale.

In France today everyone is speaking of a new society to be brought in by the new President. But old established friendships exist and one of these is based upon the Entente Cordiale.

Which is the greatest Entente Cordiale? That of Edward VII of England who joined hands with Marianne (the maiden figurehead of the French Republic) in 1904 before the threatened German menace?

... That of Winston Churchill who in a stroke of genius proposed dual citizenship to France at the time of the débâcle in 1940, but whose offer was refused as if by an oversensitive marriage partner? ... Or is it the 'we'll walk hand in hand and all the world will know ...' of men and women, who, believing in a common Saviour seek to use every means common to their two cultures (Anglo-Saxon and Latin) to bring the Gospel to those of both lands?

Let us not forget that French Protestantism has by its thought and vigour contributed much to the development of evangelical Christianity in the rest of the world. Jean Calvin, the Reformer, was born at Noyon, in Northern France.

After being pastor of the French church in Strasbourg, he was the moving force of the movement which continued the biblical testimony of Irenaeus, who was bishop of Lyons in the Second Century. Men were found who by their originality and their desire to examine their beliefs in the Berean manner (Acts 17:11) brought a seriousness to life and work not only in the hexagon*, but also far beyond her frontiers.

In the year that Jean Vallière, the first martyr, suffered in Paris (1523), the first French translation of the New Testament appeared, being the work of Lefevre of Etaples (a small town near the North coast of France).

At the end of that century (1598), the Edict of Nantes was promulgated giving liberty to Protestants, only to be revoked in 1685. This was followed by terrible strife and bloodshed in the Cevennes mountains where the believers met 'in the desert' as the open fields were called, constantly changing the location of their midnight clandestine meetings. The pastors came in disguise to hold services in the middle of the night, for believers were constantly in fear of the arrival of the King's Dragoons.

Liberty however came a century later through the Edict of Tolerance (1802) granted by the First Consul (Napoleon Bonaparte) who subsequently founded a Theological Faculty in Montauban (1808) and later that in Paris (1877).

In these early years the Revival in Geneva, Switzerland, gave rise to the foundation of the Free Church among theological students and others in **Bourg du Four** (the present Pélissier brethren assembly). Later it spread to France and even had a positive influence on evangelical testimony in Britain. Alexandre Vinet, an outstanding

*The frontiers of France resemble a six-sided figure.

Swiss theologian of French origin, played a similar role to that of Pascal among the Roman Catholics in modelling the thought and ethics of the French Protestant Church.

Under the Bourbon dynasty, the Roman Church had grown in strength in France and even presented a hostile front to Protestant believers in such areas as the Cevennes mountains, but the Swiss revival in its turn brought pioneers to found the 'Interior Mission' of France. The resurgence of evangelical testimony in Britain also had a considerable influence in the foundation of the Methodist and later the Baptist movement in France. Both of these churches, although very small by Anglo-Saxon standards, are thoroughly evangelical in France today.

French Protestant names became known in the world. De Staël was influential in abolishing the slave traffic, and Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi of Colmar designed the Statue of Liberty holding up the torch of freedom at the entry to New York harbour. On a more specifically Christian level, Pastor Ruben Saillen's ministry at Keswick and more recently Professor Jacques Ellul's writings on subjects of ethics and the social witness of the Church are evidences of the virility of the Christian faith in France. Even today, the continued strong opposition to the Government's laws to legalise abortion shows that there are many strong Christian thinkers both of Catholic and Protestant origin.

Today there is religious peace in the Republic and the recent series of attacks on evangelical churches in Lyons should not be interpreted as being an outbreak of religious violence, but rather of either vandalism or of vengeance by some discontented persons.

The biblical movement which has reached the Roman

Catholic church, being one of the minor causes of more than 1500 priests leaving her ranks since the mid-forties in France, has touched institutional Protestantism less, although one does see pastors leaving her ranks and others being disillusioned with the Church. The Charismatic movement in the Roman Catholic church has grown in leaps and bounds and as many as 1500 people annually gather for a retreat in one of the cathedrals in the South of France. Many of these people are hungry for the Scriptures. In the more formal circles, the Protestant Theological Faculty in Montauban has been closed. Those in Paris and Montpellier have had falling numbers and have had to combine their operations. But today there are two thriving Faculties in France, both evangelical and of recent birth. There is that at Vaux-sur-Seine (near Paris) where Professor Henri Blocher and Professor Jules-Marcel Nicole lecture. Others including the writer are among the honorary occasional teaching staff. The Reformed Protestant Faculty in Aix-en-Provence was re-opened under the leadership of Dean Pierre Courthial who has the help of younger men. There is a fair number of recent converts among its students and regularly some worship at the local assemblies in Aix-en-Provence.

Present day co-operation is very frequent in young people's work, as Operation Mobilisation, Gospel Literature Outreach, Youth with a Mission, Wiedenest Bible School and other organisations bring international teams to France, in order to co-operate with the local churches in evangelism.

Many have been those who crossed over from Dover's white cliffs to minister in France, including Robert McCall the founder of the Mission of the same name, and later the

'Beloved Commander' Salway of Paris who used to courageously bear texts on sandwich boards. But according to Marcel Tabailoux of the **Centre d'Information et de Formation pour l'Evangélisation et la Mission**, it is still true that 30,000 local council areas are without any regular evangelistic testimony. The prime need in France is of men who speak the language fluently and are willing to adopt her culture as their own. A foreign Anglo-Saxon culture has no place in the development of Christian testimony in the land of Molière and Racine. French people are willing to talk about the Gospel and to meet to study the Bible in their language and thought forms. Meetings in homes are springing up throughout the land, and Bibles are being opened for study in kitchens and apartment blocks. Each evening, if there were time, one could conduct neighbourhood Bible studies. There is, however, and rightly so, a resistance to sects, to forced conversions and all that smacks of unhealthy proselytisation. In Ventabren (a village near Aix-en-Provence), volunteer building teams have been working for several years. They are 'eating double mouthfuls' (as the French say) in an attempt to get the **Eau Vive Provence** finished for operation as a Bible Training Centre for

French young people and others wishing to more fully serve their Lord in this great land. Qualified volunteers are still required in bricklaying and carpentry. At present Eau Vive offers retreats and short courses in systematic Bible study, as well as more technical and practical preparation in communicating the message to this generation. Each summer, groups of young people come from France, Switzerland, Germany and Britain to participate in the numerous activities of the Centre. In France we think French, we eat French, and we sing French. There is an open door for those who are willing to learn every day. Expect France to be different — it is! Expect customs to vary from those of English church life. Wednesday rather than Sunday is the Bible Club day for children's meetings, and mid-week meetings begin at 8.30 p.m. — when they start on time! But something is happening in France as never before. It is not only the fact that many more major cities now have an evangelistic testimony. It is the fact that Christians are serving **together** in their witness. Regularly at l'Eau Vive, Christian leaders meet for various consultations. The evangelists from France, Belgium and Switzerland held their retreat there last year. This year Christian leaders are

meeting to plan their personal priorities in their service for God. Each month believers from local churches in the region come together for three hours intensive Bible study. Twice a year evangelistic week-end reunions are held for those in the South of France who have been to Eau Vive and similar youth camps. At Easter believers come together from many miles round about for a period of retreat and Bible study. In our estimation, the greatest spiritual need of the French church today is that of systematic and practical Bible teaching. Few men are able to give their time or have the calling to such a task. The assemblies have been deprived of several fine leaders whom they could ill afford to lose those last years. Some like Herbert Beattie and Marc Ernst have been called home to their rest. Others have had to leave the work entirely or partially in recent years due to family or personal reasons. Others have to divide their time between overwhelming local responsibility in the care of the church, and travelling great distances to minister in the French speaking lands of Europe. Few teachers are coming forward to replace those at present in the front-line such as André Adoul, Alfred Kuen, Gaston Racine, and it is of the

utmost importance that those able to teach be relieved of 'serving the tables' in order to give their time to writing and teaching. The Assembly testimony is expanding as evidenced by the thirteen local testimonies in Paris as against one 25 years ago, by the four in Lyons where there was only one. Comparison with Britain is hard to bear when one realises that in Bristol or Belfast, there are 25 or more assemblies whereas in a comparable city in Bordeaux there are two. France is today not only Britain's friend and neighbour, but is also a fellow state in the Common Market. Ideas and commercial enterprises are constantly flowing in both directions across the Channel. So should it be with spiritual investment and endeavour. What is undertaken in France **must** be French and not an outpost of some foreign activity. The French evangelical believers are full of zeal, they are devoted Christians. But being so relatively few in number, they need your help, your visits, your prayers. Do not please expect to find a replica of British evangelical life, but a deep desire to live out the New Testament Church and to share its message to those living in the last but one decade of the 20th Century.



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CORRESPONDENCE

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Bible Exhibitions

From Mr. A. G. Adams

Dear Mr. Coad,
May I be permitted to give a word of warning regarding the subject of Bible Exhibitions in this country.

There is a very good one circulating which gains access to schools, libraries and other municipal buildings. It is extremely professional in display and publicity and is well manned — by Christadelphians. Their success in getting a poster into a local Bible bookshop has prompted me to write, in case this approach is part of their policy.

Yours through His grace,
A. G. Adams

47 Edward Street
Grimsby

(Perhaps the more reason to take up Mr. Wheeler's September suggestion! — Ed)

A Structured Leadership

From Dr. John Boyes

Dear Mr. Editor,
I have read my fraternal colleague's essay in the October 'Readers' Forum' with much interest and, as the possible author of the CBRF paper cited therein, I should like to have an opportunity to respond in part to some of the issues raised. The plea is surely not for a 'structured' leadership — this is already available in a well organised oversight — but, rather, another call for focussed leading like other churches. As one who has passed his years within the Brethren movement and has remained therein because of their distinctive governance pattern, I am not at all happy about a regressive

move to appoint 'a king to govern us like the nations'. This solution is too easy and simplistic in today's social structures and I much doubt if the 'leading brethren' mentioned would provide suitable leadership style in the late twentieth century. The proposal might temporarily (?) solve the leader's problems but, in the long run, create many others for his followers, rendering his fellow-elders as 'second-class' in the church's perceptions and this will not do. Nor is it realistic to see such an appointee, even for three years, as the omniscient source with the answers to everything and everybody! Are the church members for ever to be herded as sheep into one man's fold or are they to be allowed to grow up into Christian maturity, capable of making their own decisions and choosing their own advisers from amongst alternative brethren and sisters available to them?

If some of our good folk still need a personally focussed leader, then let them choose one as did the Lord's recalcitrant earthly people. But do not expect others to do so in the same person; by temperament and inclination, we look to different people for different purposes, including 'leadership' as required. Again, the concept of a three-year cycle is surely naive and the removal of an 'appointed' leader is much more difficult than the writer seems to appreciate. A senescent leader in a local church is much more disabling to the body-life than a balanced group of elders sharing assigned tasks. Nor do we wish to be involved in manipulative engineering of changes as the world conducts its power struggles.

The historical patterns used by God's people down through the centuries are not necessarily to

be copied by the twentieth century fellowships in which we serve and grow together into Christ. The synagogue model calls for an obedient, accepting flock who had their sacrifices of praise done for them and who had little voice in congregational development. The pioneering apostolic scene is likewise a precarious example in other than church-planting phases; the record reports only on the tip of the iceberg in public with all its internecine struggles — what of the many congregations of Christians who get no mention but whose shared life was a manifest sign of the leading of the Holy Spirit in their midst? In our own much more recent experience as a group of churches in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has not this search for recognition and followers landed us in many sad and terrifying situations? Indeed, I wonder if it would be wise counsel to seekers after such recognition in the local church to take up work in other Christian settings and societies which can absorb their needs, and to accept a more limited role of prophet 'in their own house'.

My plea, Mr. Editor, would be to leave well alone and get ourselves better organised as we are — a good church secretary can work wonders without assuming a hierarchical role. But please do not let us hand back to history the only truly distinctive feature which we can now offer the Church as a whole, since we have been overtaken by so many recoveries of biblical principles elsewhere.

Yours sincerely,
John Boyes
13 The Meads
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Are we worthwhile?

From Mr. Keith Barnard

Dear Mr. Coad,

The question posed by Mr. Down in the 'Readers' Forum' in the September issue was really far too one-sided: for as much effort is surely expended by those who seek to maintain the 'old-fashioned way' as by those who seek change, and both could equally use their energies in other ways in the Lord's work. There is no 'new fellowship free of failures and misconceptions', nor will there ever be while churches consist of fallible men and women; but as is made clear in the same issue by Graham Brown's survey, there are large numbers of churches which have changed little in fifteen years and which are slowly declining. It might well be claimed that if those who veto change were away 'obeying the Lord's commandment to go and teach all nations' then those churches could move on in obedience to the Holy Spirit as they should. Ultimately any attempt to resist all change, as to impose unwelcome novelty, is bound to bring division, much though everyone proclaim their obedience to the Lord and their love for each other. The New Testament, however, seems to envisage another way: 'If one part (of the body) suffers, every part suffers with it' and 'If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died. Do not allow what you consider good to be spoken of as evil.' In our terms, that surely means being open enough to listen to others' views, being willing to try their ways instead of ours, and being humble enough to admit our error when we are proved wrong. May the Lord help us to be tolerant of each other, and willing to do what He wants —

the alternative is division in our churches, or, as another article had it — 'Divine Demolition'.

Your sincerely,
Keith Barnard
56 Culver Road
St. Albans
Herts

Is God a poet? — further comment

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,
Dr. Brady's letter, Oct '81, prompted a further look at Mr. Ellison's articles, July and Aug '81, on 'Preaching from the OT'. In them, Mr. Ellison gives us, in effect, the definition of 'allegory' that he accepts; and leaves us in no doubt of his adverse opinion of allegorical interpretation of the scriptures. But apart altogether from the validity or otherwise of that opinion, there is a need, I believe, for consideration — and, hopefully clarification — of what we mean by the term 'allegorical interpretation'. The following reflexions are offered by a seeker, with due humility, and it will be interesting to see what any master rhetoricians among your readers may yet contribute.

Those who have made a study of allegory tell us that the use in narratives of references to mythological events and figures (i.e. personages) in order intentionally to convey a further, deeper meaning than the surface one, and sometimes of a religious nature, goes back to pre-Christian times. In his tome *The typology of scripture* (New York 1900), Patrick Fairbairn mentions that Origen (second century AD) scouted the idea that God literally clothed our first parents with the skins of slain beasts. He held that the 'naked letter' exists only for the spiritual treasure which is concealed under it. That is, the event described did not take place but the account of it can convey spiritual truth to the reader — the account is 'allegorical', as would be said.

Mr. Ellison seems to treat this as a 'reversible reaction'. Citing the *Song*, he says quite openly that the allegorist i.e. anyone who perceives more in the *Song* than the so-called literal sense of the account, 'denied that the lover and the beloved had any real existence'. It seems quite strange to me — to put it no higher — that all those who see something more than the historical sense in the *Song*, and by extension in other parts of scripture, are thereby held to believe that the events/personages mentioned in the relevant accounts are fabulous, fictitious — 'dummies' is Mr. Ellison's word. Of course some may be.

But there is another side to all this. The only place in the NT where the term 'allegory' is found is in *Gal. 4:24*. In his monumental *Figures of speech used in the Bible*, Dr. E. W. Bullinger, referring to that scripture, says: 'The modern and common usage of the word *allegoria* is thus quite different from this Scriptural definition. According to the modern sense it is taken to mean a fictitious narrative which has another and deeper meaning than which is expressed. An allegory may sometimes be fictitious, but *Gal 4* shows us that a true history may be allegorized (i.e. be shown to have further teaching in that which actually took place) without detracting from the truth of the history' (EWB's own italics).

In *The time is fulfilled*, Prof. Bruce refers to *Exodus* and *Leviticus* and notes that 'There is one interpretative tradition which by allegorization seeks — and finds — analogies in the minutest details of the sacrificial regulations and tabernacle arrangements to the work of Christ on earth and now in heaven.' Now, I cannot think that the allegorical 'interpreters' to whom Prof. Bruce refers believe that Aaron was not a man subject to like passions as we are; that a physical tabernacle was not actually constructed; and that the

priests did not offer animals much of the kind to be seen on our farms today.

So, allegorical interpretation does not always, necessarily (nor usually as referred to in *The Harvester* I would think) connote the kind of thing to which Mr. Ellison alludes. I submit that in relation to the scriptures, the term 'allegorical interpretation' should be understood according to the pattern of *Gal. 4*; and that it concerns the perception, as illuminated by the Spirit, of spiritual realities represented or implied by multifarious features of the scriptures; which would certainly include place names (as Lo-debar and Bethlehem). It may be recalled that in his letter, July '78, Mr. Lowman wrote 'The term "allegory" should perhaps be replaced by an awareness of the ways in which accounts in scripture contain a latent and multiple meaning in terms of spiritual principles.'

I trust it will be kept in mind that in the above, the concern has not been with the admissibility or otherwise of allegorical interpretation of the scriptures; nor with whether or not we would suffer if the historicity of the events described in a passage of scripture from which sound doctrine is derived, came to be doubted.

Yours sincerely in His service,
L. L. Fox
9 Warden Close
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 0JL

Women's Ministry

From Mr. J. E. Hotchin

Dear Mr. Coad,
I allowed myself a wry smile at your editorial note on Mr. Todd's contribution to the July question (September issue). The fact is that Mr. Todd's final point is not well taken by many in the Assemblies today. It is not intellectually respectable in the social climate of the 1980s to share Mr. Todd's understanding. The idea of the

equality of the sexes (do we really mean 'identity'?), the importance attached to being seen and heard, the relative devaluing of ministries which are out of the public eye, all these factors in today's world make it increasingly difficult for us to come without prejudice to such passages of Scripture as *1 Corinthians 11* and *14*, and *1 Timothy 2*.

Would we not be more honest with ourselves if we admitted that the 'cultural conditioning' approach is a welcome way out of a very embarrassing situation?

The subject of women's role in the churches has been generating heat for far too long. Is it really impossible for our Bible teachers to settle the question by a careful exposition of the relevant Scriptures? Meanwhile may I close by saying that pp.111-120 of W. E. Vine's *The Church and the Churches* set a very high standard . . .

Your sincerely,
J. E. Hotchin
6 Oakwood Drive
Aspley
Nottingham
NG8 3LZ

(If any reader wishes to learn whether 'our Bible teachers' have recently pronounced on the subject, he might do worse than refer to the remarkable consensus in the following works:

H. L. Ellison *The Household Church Chapter on The Prayer Meeting*.

A Bible Commentary for Today (Pickering & Inglis) pp.1153-4 and 1453.

Papers given at CBRF Seminar of 9 June 1979 by Prof. F. F. Bruce and Mary Evans (available on tape from Mr. J. A. Stanesby, 61 Tunley Road, London, SW17 7QH: C60 and C90, cost £3.50).
Papers in Where Do We Go From Here? (report on the Swanwick Conference 1978 — and particularly that by Dr. Michael Griffiths). Ed.)



NEWS PAGE



Conferences

The 'Weston' Women's Bible Study Conference changed both place and date in 1981. It was held from September 25 to 27 at Trinity College, Bristol. In spite of the last-minute illness of one of the speakers, it was one of the happiest and most useful conferences for many years. The theme was 'Communicating our Care'. This was dealt with in two addresses by Mary Batchelor and in workshop sessions. Under the heading 'Words for Worship', Margaret Helps introduced members to some of the poetry of Amy Carmichael and of George Herbert. This enhanced the worship of the final session. (In 1982 the Conference will return to Weston-Super-Mare and will be held from November 12 to 14. Details will be available from Mrs. P. Nute, Doron, Hazel Avenue, Bristol. BS6 6UD.)

Dedridge

The March **Harvester** referred to the establishment of a new witness in Livingston New Town. The Dedridge Christian Fellowship still meets in the local primary school each Sunday for the Lord's Supper, Sunday School and Bible Class. Each Thursday evening there is a meeting for prayer and Bible teaching and on the second and fourth Sundays of each month the school is used for Gospel services. In addition the fellowship has a Family Gospel Time (with bookstall and refreshments) on the fourth Saturday of the winter months. Local attendance has been encouraging in all these efforts. The first baptismal service was held on Friday, April 3. Besides the young man who was received into fellowship on this

occasion, others have also joined. The letting arrangements for the school have been satisfactory but it seems possible that the need to reduce government expenditure may affect the position. However, ground has been secured from the Livingston Development Corporation in an ideal situation and it is hoped that building can commence when circumstances permit. The Church Secretary is Tom Stirrat, 115 Ambrose Rise, Livingston EH54 6JU.

Denominations

The tragic absurdity of the 'denominations disease' is highlighted in a news release from Reformed sources. For the Netherlands it lists almost 1 1/2 million members of Reformed churches, divided (I) as follows. Reformed Churches in the Netherlands — 866,000 Reformed Churches, 'Liberated' — 99,841 Netherlands Reformed Churches — 29,487 Christian Reformed Churches — 75,136 Reformed Congregations — 83,800 Reformed Congregations in the Netherlands — 16,137 Old-Reformed Congregations in the Netherlands — ca.17,000 Miscellaneous — ca.10,000 Absent from the list of more than eight denominations, all 'Reformed', are approximately 300,000 of the Reformed Alliance, a 'modality' within the Netherlands Reformed Church.

Evangelical Alliance

A programme for the Worldwide Week of Prayer 1982 has been prepared by the Netherlands Evangelical Alliance. It will be used by Christians throughout the

world, mainly in the first week of January but in some places on other convenient dates. Christians are encouraged to unite for prayer locally during the Week of Prayer. Copies (55p for 10) and posters (25p each) can be obtained from the Alliance at 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT.

Evangelism

Counties Evangelistic Work convened their annual Family Day at Central Hall, Westminster, on Saturday 10 October attended by approximately 2,000 people. The theme was 'Tell it as it is'. It was a happy and successful occasion bringing together a unique cross section (nowadays) of age groups for an assembly activity. In this respect Counties is probably the most unifying work of all 'brethren' activities: not only does it span age groups but ecclesiastical divides as well. A surprising and happy amalgamation of opinion was represented by the congregation. The afternoon sessions included a special event for children. Simultaneously interviews were featured in which sixteen evangelists talked about their work to four interviewers, viz. Dr. H. Rowdon, D. S. Pate, P. Jack and R. Chilvers. Concurrently, four seminars were convened in other rooms, dealing with music and youth, children's evangelism, pastoral and practical problems, and single church work. The evening rally featured a special children's address and a showing of a Counties slides sequence entitled 'More than Tents'. The new field secretary, Robert C. Kyle, was introduced and interviewed by the

Counties' Chairman, R. J. Bolton. Mr. Kyle said he intended to work for the uniting of assemblies in evangelistic effort and in support of the doctrine which we profess to maintain. He appealed for a concentration of assembly support in the work of Counties. The closing message — an authoritative, persuasive and moving appeal for involvement in evangelism based on 2 Cor. 5 — was brought by Dr. Alistair Noble.

Stephen Gillham reports blessing in the seventh year of summer camps. 156 campers came during the three weeks and over 60 helpers spent some time at camp in 1981. The senior camp was felt to be the best ever. As these notes are being read Stephen will be engaged on a Christmas schools tour from December 3 to 18.

Release Publications have earned a mention in these columns from time to time. Local churches interested in receiving sample packs of their excellent material for evangelistic purposes should write to Release at 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester M4 4DN.

Running a Christian Union is not so straightforward as it may seem. So there should be a warm welcome for a re-issue of the Post Office Christian Association's booklet, **My Witness at Work**. Retailing at 20p per copy and obtainable from Christian booksellers or from the Association (Drayton House, Gordon Street, London WC1H 0AN) the booklet contains down-to-earth advice about the motives and the method of Christian work.

Personal Workers sometimes find themselves at a loss to know which Scriptures to use in responding to questions people ask. The **Pocket Guide to Eternal Life** published by One Step Forward Ministries, High House, Walcote, Lutterworth, Leics, LE17 4JW, contains 84 pages of Scriptures organised under 77 headings. It could be very useful for Christians who want to equip themselves for this ministry.

Islam

In the near future, every fourth person in the world will be a Muslim, according to Eberhard Troeger, director of the Protestant Mission to Upper Egypt. He has pointed out that both reform and conservative wings of Islam view their religion as the great alternative to the materialistic West and the atheistic East. Citing Muslim expansion since the beginning of this century, he points out that in 1900 the Muslim population was estimated to be 100 million — compared to about 500 million Christians. Islam now claims about 700 million adherents — equalling the number of the world's nominal Christians. There are now over five million Muslims in western Europe and they are aggressively involved in evangelism. Troeger estimates that only two per cent of the world's 55,000 Protestant missionaries are involved in ministry among Muslims.

Literature

Bob Hicks who has been a publishing director of Ark Publishing (Scripture Union imprint) is leaving the SU staff after five years to concentrate on developing his own company, Creative Publishing. But he will continue to advise SU as a consultant. The new publishing director is John Tigwell who will take over all responsibility not only for the Bible reading and teaching materials and the sound and vision unit but also for SU's book publishing programme including co-editions and titles under the Ark Publishing imprint.

Africa Christian Press is little known as a publisher in the United Kingdom. But the writers' workshops that Joyce Chaplin pioneered with it in

Africa continue to bear fruit. The basic idea — like other remarkable discoveries — is very simple. It is a way of persuading people who are either illiterate or completely unskilled in writing to become authors. The need is obvious — Africans are the people who can communicate best with Africans but how many Christian Africans are skilled writers? The workshop principle involves bringing a number of interested people together to work either on practice assignments or on specific projects. A good example of the sort of thing that can result from this approach is **Five Years in the Desert**, a little booklet published by New Day Publishers of Juba telling the story of how a group of a hundred Africans lived as refugees in the forest during a civil war. There were a few Christians among them from the start but many more by the time the experience had ended. Simply told by Clement Bakindo and having Bible studies at the end, this little book, which might easily be overlooked by many people in the West, represents a new and important aspect of literature outreach in the Third World.

Radio

From FEBA Radio comes news that their third transmitter, TX 3, began its full working operations on September 6. The new transmitter makes it possible to beam a much more powerful signal into India which is strong enough to overcome interference. It is also making a whole new range of times available for broadcasts to East Africa. Its third advantage is that it gives greater options on wavebands so that alternative channels can be provided for the same programme — a great boon in areas where reception on one particular waveband is patchy. The snag is that the human resources to make the best possible use of the transmitter are not at present available. There is a dire shortage of personnel in many disciplines and locations. Programmers, journalists, production staff and trained staff are all needed if the maximum benefit is to be derived from the new transmitter.

The Far East Broadcasting Company announces that their Director for the Philippines, Fred Magbanum Jr., has received an award for outstanding service to the radio industry. It was presented by President Marcos.

Christian Broadcast Training Ltd reports that building work on the new residential wing at Severals House, Newmarket, has now begun. The Cambridge Radio course for 1982 is to be held in the new permanent training centre at Newmarket from April 19 to May 14. Course brochures and application forms can be obtained from Alan Foster at Severals House.

Relief

Tear Fund records a number of financial grants. £10,000 has gone to help rebuild houses in a flooded area of Rajasthan in India. £5,000 has been given for hospital work in Southern Angola where shortage of food and drought has been compounded by South African military activity. The Leprosy Mission hospital at Annadaban in Nepal has received £4,000 for relief work in connection with local flooding. Tear Fund workers around the world now total over 100. During 1980/81 funds allocated totalled almost £3 million.

Soldiers' and Airmen's Scripture Readers

After eight years in office as General Secretary of SASRA, Graham Stokes is leaving. He is being succeeded by Lt. Col. Kenneth Sear, late RAMC who was converted in a military environment and has spent 34 years in the Army.

Home Calls

Agnes Mason on 15 September 1981 at her home, aged 90 years. Saved in her teens in Alloa under the preaching of Edward Rankine of Belfast, she returned to Kilmarnock where she had been born, worshipping at Wellington Hall. Later she moved with her parents to Ayr and for the rest of her life was in fellowship at James Street Hall. Her husband predeceased her in May 1938. Although her health was not always good she attended the Breaking of Bread service faithfully until the end. Her family and the assembly shared in celebrating her 90th

birthday on August 12. She is survived by three daughters, prayer for whom would be appreciated.

Agnes C. Pope on October 2, aged 65. Her early Christian years were spent in the assembly at Carfin but after graduating at Glasgow and a short spell of medical practice in Motherwell, Nan Pope moved to the central region of Scotland. In Denny and subsequently for 32 years in Stirling she was deeply respected as a Christian doctor. An enthusiastic worker among girls and women, she was involved, with her elder sister, Dr. Jessie, for many years in Girl Crusader and Scripture Union activities. In Hermon Hall, Stirling, she was appreciated by all who shared fellowship with her not least by the members of the Women's Hour. In recent years her deep Christian faith and personal fortitude enabled her to tread the valley of the shadow courageously.

John Roan on September 10, 1981. In fellowship at Hebron Hall, Carlisle, for 50 years, his faithful attendance was an inspiration to all. He served as Sunday School teacher, precentor and treasurer. During the past two years he became visibly weaker and more frail but never complained. The Lord called him home after only a few hours of illness.

Press Day, Monday, November 30 for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW.)

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund

Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during October amounted to £1,564.000.

Missionaries' Children's Fund
29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund during September amounted to £436.85.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the month of October amounted to £6,116.23.

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.

Blackburn, A. G.:

Paignton 3; Brixham 6; Exmouth 7-10; Exmouth 13; London 14; Coleford 20.

Gillham, S. A.:

Dorchester 1-3; Stroudon Chapel, Bournemouth 2; Christmas Schools Tour 1-18; Dorchester 6; Wallisdown 9; Merriott 12; Chelsea Gospel Hall, Bristol 13; East Chaldon 14; Hamworthy/Winton 20; Twynham Chapel, Christchurch 27.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Poringland 6; Costessey 8; Shipham 13.

Lowther, G. K.:

Chester 1; Altringham 2; Grimsby, Humberside and Lincolnshire.

Phillips, C.:

Elmfield Chapel, North Harrow 3, 10, 17; Oakleigh Whetstone 6, 10; Hemel Hempstead 6; Luton Selbourne 13; Mayo Road, Sydenham 8, 15; Rosemore Marylebone 20; South Ruislip 27.

Short, S. S.:

Bristol 1, 4, 8, 15; Frome 2, 9, 16; Weston-Super-Mare 3, 10, 17; Querington 6; Bath 7, 14; Alresford 13; Burnham-on-Sea 20; Aberdeen 27.

Stringer, D.:

Warwickshire area 1-11; Battisford, Suffolk 12-13; Warwickshire Area 14-15; Coventry 16-17; Saffron Walden 18; Rugby 19-22; Brentwood 23; North London 24-26; Chase Cross & Enfield 27; Ruislip 28; Romford 29; Greenford 30; Enfield Town 31.

Tatford, F. A.:

Southport 5, 6; Warrington 8.

Thurston, A.:

Kingsbridge 1, 8, 20, 22, 29; Dartmouth 3; Chillington 2, 6, 9, 29; Strete 7, 13, 14, 21, 28; Dartmoor Prison 5, 12, 19, 26; Hebron (Torquay) 16, 23; Plymouth (R.S.R.) 15; Forde Park School 2, 16.

Tryon, G.C.:

Kingston 1, 8, 13, 15; Plumstead 8; Loughborough Junction 2, 9, 16; Guildford 20; Beckenham 27; Eltham Park 30.

FULL-TIME SERVICE

Graeme and Dorothy Storey

Tagdale, Lerwick, have been commended by Ebenezer Hall Assembly, Lerwick, Shetland, to full-time service with 'In Contact'. Their address from December 1 will be St. Andrew's Road, Plaistow, London.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Boscombe

The Hants. & Dorset Bible Reading Fellowship. Conversational Bible Readings to be held in Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, by kind permission, at 7 p.m. on Saturday, December 5. Subject: The Epistles to Timothy (1 Tim. ch. 1). Speaker: W. Farquhar (Kilburn).

Brierfield, Lancs.

Hebron Hall, Walter Street, Brierfield. Saturday Evening Rally at 7 p.m. on December 5. Speaker: S. Davie (Southport).

Carlisle

Hebron Hall, Botchergate. New Year Conference. January 1, at 2.30 and 5.30 p.m. Speakers: Dr. A. Noble, Falkirk, E. Hughes, Liverpool.

Colyton

The Gospel Hall, The Butts. Bible Study, 7 p.m. on Saturday, December 19. Speaker: T. Profitt (New Hav). Portion: 1 Timothy 3.

Cowdenbeath

Union Hall, Broad Street. Annual Conference in Community Centre, Crossgates on Saturday, January 2 at 3.00

p.m. Speakers: S. Emery, G. Waugh, J. Burnett.

London, S.W.

South West London Missionary Meeting: 'Following Christ in Latin America'. December 5, 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. at Worpole Road Evangelical Church, Worpole Road, Wimbledon. Speakers include Don Ford, John Hart, Peter Levett and Keith Ward.

Maidenhead

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road, Monthly Conference, December 5, at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: M. Hall (Pamber Heath). Subject: Samuel, in his prayer.

Motherwell

Roman Road Hall, New Year Conference on 1 January 1982 from 12 noon to 4 p.m. to be held in Hallelujah Hall, Leslie Street, Motherwell. Speakers: Malcolm Jones, Ray Hill, Jim Cadzow.

Renfrew

Albert Hall, Albert Road. Annual Conference on 9 January 1982 at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: John Lightbody, Uddington; Archie Naismith, Edinburgh. Written questions will be answered in the evening session.

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Just a year ago **The Witness** and **The Harvester** came within a hair's breadth of extinction. The publishers of **The Witness** had made plans to cease publication at the end of 1980, and it was only a chance remark dropped in the course of a telephone conversation that enabled us to make arrangements to combine the two periodicals and thus save them both. (We ourselves had already made contingency plans to cease publication of **The Harvester** either at the end of 1981 or 1982 at the latest.)

Combining the two periodicals has, of course, made a great deal of difference to their circulation. Much more important, there has been a steady improvement in editorial content during the past twelve months, with resultant expressions of appreciation from near and far.

The Immediate Future

We have therefore decided to continue to publish during 1982, but we have to point out that this decision assumes help from our readers (see right hand column)! **The Harvester** is, in a very real sense, your magazine. To secure its future beyond December 1982, we need to raise the circulation sharply to more than 5,000 copies. If all our subscribers renewed for 1982 (and a heartening number of you already have!) and if we can find, in the course of 1982, a minimum of 1,500 new subscribers, then we shall be able to avoid having to make the decision to continue (or not!) an annual one.

But is it worth it?

You must be the judges of that! We are prepared to continue to produce **The Harvester**, worthily and at the lowest possible price, so long as our subscribers wish us to do so. Your casting vote in the matter is your Subscription Renewal Form!

We would make only the two following comments:

- The Harvester** has for many years been run at a net loss, and, even with a substantial increase in circulation, will never be run at a net profit. At present it makes a modest contribution to its overheads, but by no means covers them.
- The Harvester** is extremely good value. If you live as far away as the Antipodes, you may still receive your monthly copy of **The Harvester** for only 40p (45p as from January 1982). We have made generous allowances for first-time subscribers, for students and for Third World citizens and institutions, and if you make a comparison, editorial page for editorial page, you will find that **The Harvester** compares very favourably with what might loosely, and somewhat inaccurately, be termed its "competitors".

Let us be specific. Assume that you are a single copy subscriber, by post, to **The Harvester** and to monthly "X". Both are almost exactly the same size, but the other periodical has many more pages.

Check the following table:

Name of Periodical	Cover Price	Postage	Total Cost	Edit. Pages	Cost per Edit. pg	No. pp. Advert.
The Harvester	40p	Nil ^a	40p	26½	1.51p ^b	9½
Monthly "X"	50p	30p	80p	34½	2.32p	31

(a) Note that our distribution costs are included in the cover price of **The Harvester**. They average just on 10p per copy. We believe it is fairer to ask subscribers to share this cost equally amongst themselves rather than to penalise unduly those who have to receive single copies through the post since they have no alternative means of supply. However, we have re-introduced savings for those who order more than one copy — and, of course, joint and long term subscriptions (see table opposite).

(b) We do not for one minute pretend that **The Harvester** can compete with monthly "X" for fancy layout or use of colour, but we do contend that, in the last analysis, what matters is clarity, legibility and, above all, content.

How can you help?

- By renewing your subscription — now! Our regular Renewal Invitation was circulated with the October issue. Please use it immediately, without waiting for further reminders.
- Are you reading somebody else's copy? If so, consider carefully whether you should not start supporting the magazine. Without more subscribers, nobody will be able to borrow it!
- Open gift subscriptions for your friends. If one subscriber in two did this, the challenge posed by the headline above would be met!
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- If you wish us to send specimen copies to friends, entirely free of charge, send us their names and addresses.
- If you have ideas which you think could serve to make the ministry of **The Harvester** more widely known, then please contact us.

In Closing . . .

We would offer our sincere thanks to all those who completed the questionnaire enclosed with the July issue. The results are taking a little time to evaluate, since replies are still coming in from overseas — and it will take slightly longer, we suspect, to act upon them! Most of the responses have been highly constructive — thank you very much indeed.

Secondly, we would like, publicly, to thank the late publishers of **The Witness**, Pickering & Inglis, for their helpfulness over the past year in making the merging of **The Witness** with **The Harvester** so smooth. We think it right to mention that they made their subscription list available entirely free of charge: their generous and helpful attitude is much appreciated.

Displayed below are our subscription rates, not only for **The Harvester**, but for our other periodicals, as from January 1982. Should you require further details, please contact us.

ALL SUBSCRIPTION RATES ARE INCLUSIVE OF POSTAGE

	Harvester	Evangelical Quarterly	Chrn. Brth. Res. Fell.	Evang. Rev. of Theol.
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PERSONAL

Cambridge

Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan Way, off Queen Edith's Way. Visitors warmly welcomed. Sundays: Lord's Supper, 11 a.m. (Crèche); Evening Service 6.30 p.m. Near the New Addenbrooke's Hospital. Tel: 0223-45584 (12)

Cleveleys

The Assembly formerly at The Crescent, Cleveleys, Lancashire, has joined the assembly at Cumberland Chapel, Cumberland Avenue, Cleveleys. Believers will be warmly welcomed.

Clifton Hall

White Horse 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.) (12)

Cook/Housekeeper

Atholl Centre, Pitlochry, require a full-time cook/housekeeper. Salary negotiable. Suitable post for committed Christian. For details apply: The Director,

Atholl Baptist Centre Limited, Atholl Road, Pitlochry. (0796) 3044. (12)

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Visitors warmly welcomed at Cranmer Hall, Sylverdale Road, Croydon. Sunday 11 a.m., 6.30 p.m. Wednesdays 8.00 p.m. (12)

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Applications are invited for the post of Head Cook in this lovely part of Scotland. The successful candidate will be responsible for the ordering of provisions, the preparation of meals for up to 150 persons and for the supervision of the kitchen staff (at present all female). Commencing date February. Further details may be obtained from the Manager, Netherhall Christian Guest House, Largs, Ayrshire, KA30 8RP. (1)

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Quebec Hall, Dereham, Norfolk

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help with the Lord's work. Details from: Treasurer, Ross Road Hall. (12)

John Weston

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FOR SALE

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Hear TWR, HCJB, WYFR daily. Selena £37; Spidola (+ batt.) £35, etc. Timberley Evangelical Trust, 183 Wythenshawe Road, Manchester M23 0AD (061-998 3821). (12)

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Further details from W. Coates

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