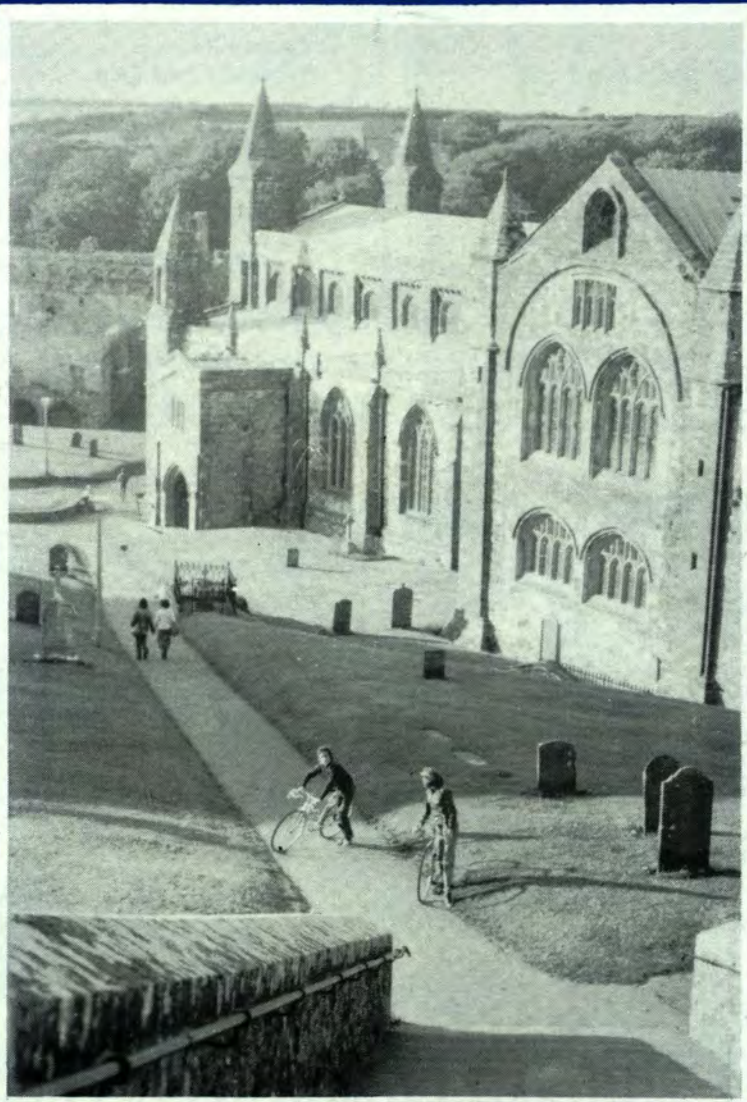




The HARVESTER

INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'



ST. DAVID'S CATHEDRAL, PEMBROKE

INSIDE:
OUR GOD IN AGES PAST – CREATION OF MAN

January 1982 Volume LXI No. 1 Price 45p
Editor: Roy Coad

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With the start of the second year of the combined **Harvester** and **Witness**, we send a warm welcome to those readers who have boldly decided to brave the storms with us for another year (because of, or in spite of, our Publisher's pleadings) — and a still warmer one to new readers who are joining us. To lose an old familiar journal is to experience withdrawal symptoms of a marked kind: the new journal is an acquired taste for a time. But when we **do** acquire it, then we wonder how we enjoyed anything else. Some of us experienced this in a secular context during those long months when **The Times** was off the market: but we are grateful to **Witness** readers who have stuck to the new diet, and hope that they are even now beginning to think that there **may** be something nutritious in it.

Many of you completed the questionnaire forms, and we are very grateful to you. In such an exercise, it is inevitable that a considerable number of comments and suggestions will cancel each other out — but there were many most helpful suggestions made. We shall be trying to put some of them into effect in coming months, in so far as our resources of money and (more importantly) of authors permit. Bear with us in patience: changes cannot take place overnight.

Several readers have expressed dislike of the small type that is used in much of the magazine. We should gladly dispense with this, but it is a matter of space. We are limited to a standard number of pages for production reasons, and if it is a matter of using smaller type or omitting more of your letters and comments, the Editor (being a soft-hearted man) usually prefers the former. A few think that we only write for 'the intellectual'. Perhaps too many of our contributors are 'doctors'? But the Editor is a little unsympathetic to that plea. None of our material is more difficult than much of what you read in the better class newspapers that (to judge by your replies) most of you read: surely you rate your own mental capacity a little more highly than **that** complaint puts it? The Editor's response is 'Come, come . . .' (*Hebrews* is a little more unkind — *Heb. 5:13,14*).

But chiefly, — 'Brethren, pray for us'. We **need** your prayers: for vision, for writers to come forward, and for the sheer ongoing routine — in our 'spare' time — and grind that the regular monthly appearance of the magazine demands of all our team. God bless you in 1982.

ENTERPRISE IN WALES

Douglas Burton

The remarkable story of the founding of The Haven Christian Centre in Pembroke, by the Principal.

A Christian Centre in an old Victorian brewery? Could such a place be changed from the brewing of beer and the bottling of spirits to a centre where men and women can be filled with God's Spirit and be used to proclaim the Gospel?

Some fourteen years ago, Pembrokeshire was, to some folk, a place where evangelists took their tents in the summer and then retreated during the winter. There were some, however, who were determined to move into the county and set up home and make a permanent stand for Christ.

So, in 1970, a few Christians who had moved into the area commenced having a breaking of bread service from house to house. Then came the challenge to evangelize. It started in the summer with a children's open-air meeting in the park; and as winter came this was transferred into a terraced house near to the park. So the work grew and, from hiring a small room for 50p. a week, a purchase was made of old building society premises. With the numbers growing to a hundred in the Sunday School and the fellowship expanding, the challenge to develop continued. The vision became clear on a Sunday just over three years ago, when 'Gideon's few' looked over the brewery. With approximately thirty members in the fellowship, God revealed to those few the possibilities of the old derelict premises. They 'saw' a coffee bar opposite the castle (which 180,000 people visit every year); a place for the Sunday School and the church; dining rooms and bedrooms, and an opportunity to train men and women in evangelism while using the same place as a bridge-head into the whole of the county; plus the bonus of having sheltered accommodation so that retired folk could live in their independent homes under the wing of the fellowship.

All this has been accomplished, and more is yet to be done. We accommodate school holiday parties in the summer, plus an outreach which is developing among locals and holiday makers who visit this ancient town. We have a Christian bookshop, full time staff (pastoral and tutorial), good relations with local authorities and

the townspeople, and a growing church.

The other week in our evening service, approximately 80 Christians were present — a good increase from the few who commenced the work. 50% of those who were present were first generation Christians; two converted drunkards, one aged 73 and the other 21 years; a drug addict who had been a disgrace to the town; a lady who had lived for 19 years with a man who was not her husband; a young wife, whose husband had beaten her up and moved out — she had been involved in Satanism and the occult; a girl whose husband was to be in Court for obtaining money by false pretences.

The Church of God which is His body, is being added to. The property that He has given us has been one which relates to the public and they have no embarrassment over coming in. A cup of coffee and a chat, the opportunity to go to the Bible Bookshop, all aid good communication. The work is continuing, and we think we shall be another five years before we reach the place when we will have accomplished the present vision.

What about money? How could thirty people meet such colossal bills? Well, our God is able. We have a building and equipment which is insured for well over £350,000: whereas three years ago we possessed property worth £9,000 and £230 in the bank. It is impossible for me to tell the many marvellous stories of God's abundant supply. At present, we are putting in 21 single bedrooms, specifically for those who are training in evangelism. This will cost us somewhere in the region of £20,000 and we know that He will supply all our needs. We still have two derelict cottages (for which finance is awaited) to develop into flats for students, and sheltered accommodation.

A Growing Church

To show that this has been of God's grace and provision, we share some testimonies of those who have found Him as Saviour, and just a few of the wonderful ways in which He has supplied all our needs.

For 19 years I lived with a man who was not my husband, and also I had a wayward son who caused me anxiety and depression. I went to The Haven one Sunday, just about the time when I felt that I should end things. The Doctor had been helpful but couldn't answer the problems within. That night,



at the Haven, I felt strangely warmed at the friendliness, and found, when talking to the pastor, that there was an answer. Today, I am happily married; I still have problems, but now I can face the future with joy, as I have found a Friend who helps me with all my problems.

My son caused me problems and the biggest of these was 'drink'. Many Saturdays I would have to go out late at night in the car and bring him home, incapable and with a nasty temper. One day I realized that weeks had passed and not once had he caused me this problem. His nature and habits were completely changed. I questioned him; he told me that time and money wasted on drinking was now given to a living faith. He said this had taken place at the Haven. Today, the whole family share in this new found peace and love.

I was left by my husband, with a baby, and felt all alone. My self-control gone, I faced the future with fear. I went into hospital voluntarily but knew that I would be there permanently if I could not get a grip on myself, and then I would lose my son. Then I went to the Haven, and found what a faith in a living Jesus Christ could do. He has given me new hope and new strength to face the future. No longer am I alone.

Drugs and the hippy Scene had been my life for over four years. What was I aiming for? This was starkly brought before me when I was involved in a crash. Seeing the car in which I had been travelling being towed away, I thought, 'My God, what am I doing'. In desperation, I called the Pastor of the Haven and he told me of the help which Jesus Christ can give. I trusted Him and now I am a man with a purpose.

At over 70 years of age I lost my wife. What was there left to live for? I took to drowning my sorrows in the only way I knew — I spent £1500 on drink! That took me down the road to the end; I was nearly there. Then a kindly friend took me home, cared for me, encouraged me and then took me to the Haven. Over 70, and then I found Jesus Christ. Do you know, I feel as if I have been born all over again and have a new vision in this life and certainly looking forward to the next.

A Developing Building

Have you ever dreamt that you were building a ship in the middle of the ocean and having the job of navigating it at the same time? Impossible? Well, that's exactly what it's like here at the Haven. Here we are in the middle of the school term with students in residence — and yet we are converting the larger dormitories into bedrooms, so that all students can have a room of their own. During all this, the Lord continues to reveal further plans to us. To enlighten and encourage you, let's give some reports from the Log Book.

There were two days to go before the nurses' seminar was due to take place. The housekeeper reported that there were lots of windows either broken or not having been glazed. The rough estimate of glazing required was approximately £250. What could we do? We had neither the money nor the time to make the necessary arrangements. The next day, a lady and gentleman who were complete strangers arrived. They were passing to visit the Castle, saw our Christian Coffee Bar, and came



in. They were Christians and asked if they could have a conducted tour. We are always happy to do this. They showed such interest, until we arrived at the area which needed glazing. When the man saw the need of glazing, he said 'Have you got any glass?' We said 'Yes'. At this he disappeared. His wife said, 'Don't take any notice of him — he can't bear to see broken windows'. A few minutes later, he returned with a pair of overalls on, and a brown bag in his hand. Here he was, spending a holiday in the area having been made redundant, after a lifetime of being a glazier. Now, with the professionalism of his trade, he went to work with glass and putty. The windows were completed the day before the nurses arrived. 'Your name please' he was asked. 'What's that got to do with it?' he replied. Well he went as he came. We only know him as Jack, the phantom glazier.

'I want a potato peeler', asked the Chef. 'How much?' came the reply. '£285 or thereabouts', was the rejoinder. 'Impossible', I retorted. We were then interrupted. A husband and wife had come in and asked me to take them around the project. Within 15 minutes, I was back in the kitchen, continuing the discussion. Amber, the chef, in her very shrewd way had worked out that a Kenwood Mixer (the senior model), would be the alternative. Approximately £200, and you can do mash, cakes, cream and other things. 'All right', I replied. 'Let's put it here when we get it'. 'Mr. Burton!' I turned, and there stood the two folks who had looked

around the property.' As we were going down the steps, the Lord said to us . . . "You have a Kenwood Mixer (senior model) which you have hardly used in the attic at home. Why not give it to the Haven?" "Yes, we were just deciding that this is the place to put it", and I pointed to the spot. The look of astonishment on their faces only equalled that which was on ours. 'Before you call, I will answer', says the Lord.

So limited was the accommodation that the students had to share bedrooms. This does not help in study and prayer times. A meeting was held with the Trustees — they agreed to building alterations. But where would the money come from? The Lord will provide, was the decision. I arrived home, and there had been a 'phone call. A fitter of luxury bedroom furniture and kitchen equipment had been on the line. I rang him. 'I'm coming down to your centre tomorrow'. He arrived and told me that he wanted to serve the Lord with his talents. My heart leaped with joy. The Lord had answered before we had called — again! This Christian worked from 7 a.m. until 10 p.m. each night. Not only was he doing the work, but he was giving the staff and lecturers a practical demonstration of commitment to Jesus Christ. These are three of many experiences of God's hand at work. God is sufficient for all our needs, when we heed His command and bidding. We look back over last year's school and praise Him for three of the men that were trained and are now serving Him full-time. This year, we have had up to 15 training for evangelism.

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OUR GOD IN AGES PAST

1 — The Creation of Man

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Maurice Packer

Dr. Maurice E. J. Packer, B.Sc., M.B., Ch.B., is a retired medical practitioner in Bournemouth. He has made anthropology and the question of human origins the study of a lifetime.

'The Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.' (Gen. 2:7 NIV). How simple it sounds, yet it was so exceedingly complicated that even in 1981 A.D. many of our cleverest brains are following an endless nature trail of highly rewarding discovery concerning the human body that an infinitely resourceful Creator prepared for our forefather, Adam.

Well might we start our meditation on the greatness of God in the creation of man with the consideration of a single microscopic cell that was in that body which was fashioned for our first progenitor. That cell, like all kindred cells today, had a nucleus which contained those threads of life which are called chromosomes. They are composed of a succession of genes which house hereditary material, namely nucleic acid. This is found in two similar forms of long molecules, one of them being DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). So let us squeeze ourselves into a minute Alice in Wonderland world, a cell. Now we find that we are looking at a ladder which is twisted round and round itself like a corkscrew, a so-called double helix of DNA. The sides of the ladder are made up of sections composed of sugar and phosphates alternately, and there are rungs that connect the sugar parts of the sides together. If we look carefully, we shall see that each rung is divided, though not quite in the middle; nonetheless, they are united by a firm connection, a hydrogen bond.

These parts of rungs are of almost incredibly great importance, in accordance with the Divine Plan. Chemically we call them bases, and they are of only four kinds — G (guanine), C (cytosine), A (adenine) and T (thymine). They are exceedingly choosy, for G will link up

only with C, and A will link up only with T to form rungs. When a cell is going to divide, the ladder acts as if there were a zip fastener in action, when one after another the rungs divide at the sites of the hydrogen bonds. Then a surprise happens, for bases with their attached sugar and phosphate sections conveniently appear on the scene and join up with the complementary parts of the ladder in such a way that there are now two complete ladders, always remembering that the GC and AT partnerships have to be maintained. We pause for a moment to ask: Who has arranged this ingenious scheme?

But it is essential that we should return to the split ladders left by the unzipping. The part rungs are represented by G, C, A and T, yet not in any haphazard way. God does not work like that. He has a grand design. So, working our way down the rungs we read something like GAACACTTATCA etc. This was a mystery until 1953 when two research workers discovered the exciting fact that the cryptic letters were nothing less than God's code for the various amino acids, which were indicated specifically by each successive triplet of letters called a codon. Further, each message conveyed by the codons, as above, spelt out a sequence of amino acids which would build up into a protein molecule. Our bewilderment is increased by the knowledge that the average protein is an agglomeration of about one hundred amino acids, and, astoundingly, that every cell in our bodies incorporates about ten thousand sorts of protein!

When a molecule of protein is required, how is it made? An enzyme, unique for this protein, searches on the chromosomal DNA for the appropriate one or more sequences of codons. Having succeeded, it transcribes a complementary messenger tape of RNA (which is very similar in substance to DNA) to carry the message in terms of codons. This messenger RNA then traverses the wall of the nucleus and passes through a number of bodies called ribosomes. Each of these bodies

contains a molecule of **transfer** RNA which identifies the appropriateness of the codons, and then contributes the prescribed amino acid for the protein. This process is continued through all the ribosomes required until finally the long list of amino acids is complete and they are joined together in the correct order as a protein molecule. It is estimated that the making of one such molecule as above, involves the participation of hundreds of different kinds of protein!

As we look back at the greatly abbreviated summary of what was involved when God formed even a single cell in Adam's body from the dust of the earth, we bow in reverence before the Supreme Intelligence concerned, and remove our shoes because we are standing on holy ground.

A perfect replication of chromosomes from Adam and Eve onwards would have meant a very substantial degree of sameness in appearance among people. But our God is a God of variety, and the differences which we see in families and races are due ultimately to varying sequences of amino acids. This can happen in many ways. Thus we can understand how such different people as Hottentots, Pigmies, Red Indians, Chinese, Negroes, Eurasians etc. have all descended from Adam and Eve within a reasonably short period of time. The same principles apply to fish, birds, animals etc., enabling them to thrive under adverse conditions and to survive in a changing ecology. The longer the time involved, the greater could be the modifications. An omniscient God Who knows the number of the hairs on our heads and Who is aware of every sparrow that falls to the ground, is fully cognisant of the individual modifications that take place in the cells of living creatures.

Our God in ages past is also our God today, and He can glory in the fascinating and tremendously varied world of nature that He has master-minded, and that we see and so thoroughly enjoy all around us.

(to be continued)

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TRANSLATING THE BIBLE INTO ENGLISH

1 — Introduction

Alan Duthie

Dr. Alan S. Duthie of the Dept. of Linguistics, University of Ghana, follows up last year's series from Dr. David Clark that spoke of the difficulties in translating the Bible into tribal languages, by a series discussing the translating of the Bible into English. During the course of this he will help us to understand some of the decisions which translators must make, and will attempt to evaluate different English versions.

Because traditional African religion depends heavily on communicating with the ancestors, the language of rituals is archaic and far removed from everyday usage; only priests and initiates can use the language properly. For Muslims, the Koran is read and prayers are said in classical Arabic, whatever the individual's mother tongue. It is said that most Jews do not understand the classical Hebrew prayers that they use. Some traditionally-minded Roman Catholics prefer their services in Latin. The Eastern Orthodox churches still use the original Greek, or Old Church Slavonic (in Russia), or Ethiopic, etc. in their church services.

If the Bible is kept merely as a talisman under one's pillow to ward off evil or to bring good luck, then obviously its language does not matter — it is never opened! Wycliffe Bible Translators have sometimes reported that, for example, some Amerindians of South America prefer the Bible in Spanish or Portu-

guese (which they do not understand) because they would not be impelled to change their ways! Some preachers prefer obscure Bible translations so that their sermons can be entirely devoted to explaining the obscurities; or they treat the Bible as a treasury of puzzles to interpret with their imaginations. Some church members may subconsciously feel that a daily reading of a difficult Bible version can be presented as a meritorious sacrifice to God.

So we see that some people accept a wide gulf between their everyday language and the language of their religion. They think that religious language should be dignified, beautiful, even 'divine', shrouded in mystery, impressive. However, such language can actually be like a veil covering their minds as they read the books of the Bible (cf. 2 Cor. 3:14); or like a bugle giving an indistinct sound so that no one prepares for battle (1 Cor. 14:8). Someone has described those using one obscure version as people at a deep well without a bucket!

God has appeared in earthquake, storm, and fire (*Exodus 19; Psalm 29*; etc.), impressing people with his mighty power and majesty, leading to trembling adoration. Is God likewise seeking to impress us with the great literature of the Bible?

If you really believe that the Bible is God's word to man, then you must believe that God is communicating with us in his word, or expressing himself. The Christian message is no longer a mystery concealed, but a mystery or

secret revealed (*Ephesians 3*) in the written and the living word of God.

'The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of man's heart' (*Hebrews 4:12 GNB*). It is perfect, trustworthy, lasting for ever; it is desirable and brings great reward. 'All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work' (2 Tim. 3:16-7 NASB). It can be known from childhood onwards and is expected to be obeyed as well as understood (*Josh. 1:8; Mat. 28:20*).

In Old Testament times, 'Ezra read plainly from the book of the law of God, interpreting it so that all could understand what was read' (*Neh. 8:8 NAB*): this shows that the old classical Hebrew was no longer understood, and from the exile right on to Jesus' time the Hebrew was normally translated into Aramaic during Bible readings. Moreover, the New Testament was never written in classical, literary Greek; but rather in the koine (= common) Greek used everyday in the eastern Mediterranean area.

Although the Latin Vulgate eventually became the only available Bible in Europe for about a thousand years, Wyclif in the fourteenth century and Tyndale in the sixteenth both risked their lives to reclaim the Bible for

ordinary people of their days. Certainly, if the Bible is God's word to man, man must be able to understand and respond to it. Since God's word was originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, how can we today receive it? We could learn these languages; but that would be very laborious and beyond many people's reach; it would also put a premium on intellectual achievement which is quite irrelevant to spiritual growth. So everyone nowadays is dependent on some translation of the Bible into English. Some may be unaware that there is more than one translation available — in fact, there are more than forty translations of the whole Bible into English, and at least sixty more translations of the New Testament. (Figures 1 and 2 list these translations in chronological order.)

Some translations are called explicitly 'translations' (e.g. NWT, Goodspeed, Moffatt, Young, Darby). Some, which have become or are expected to become generally recognised, are called 'versions' (e.g. NIV, TEV, NBV, RSV, RV, KJV); 'version' is just an archaic word for translation. Others are called 'Bibles' (e.g. GNB, BLE, LB, NASB, NAB, NEB, JB, Amplified); but it should be remembered that the Bible itself is not in English and that verbal inspiration of the Bible applies primarily to the original manuscripts in Hebrew and Greek; so these English translations are not really 'Bibles' in the full sense, though they certainly represent the Bible. In any case, whatever they

are called, all are equally **translations**, to use the most neutral and everyday term.

If a pupil is asked by his teacher to 'paraphrase' a passage, the pupil tries to re-express its meaning in his own words; originally, paraphrases are in the **same** language expressing the same meaning (e.g. LB is a paraphrase of ASV, both in English of course). But, more recently, 'paraphrase' has also been used to cover equivalent passages in **different** languages, especially if their equivalence is rather 'loose' (e.g. Phillips, though Phillips himself talks only of 'translation'). It seems to me to be quite impossible to draw any hard-and-fast line between translation and paraphrase (if one allows paraphrase in the extended sense), at least if the translator is actually translating meaning (and not merely substituting words of one language for those of another). In fact, I would not like to use the term 'paraphrase' at all in this connection.

How are we to choose among the forty-odd translations of the

Bible available to us? Are they all equally good? Or equally bad? Should we prefer the old and familiar? Or the latest published? Does it really matter if 'we like the way this verse is rendered' in a particular translation? Must each of the translators be a true believer? To all these questions, the answer is in fact **no**.

But what criteria are we to use? Since a Bible translation, like any other translation, is a linguistic product, the main criteria must be **linguistic**, although we may also ask who the translators are and for whom the translation is intended. We shall investigate the nature of the translation process itself; the translator's knowledge of the original languages and cultures; the manuscripts of the Bible used; understanding the meaning of the sentences, etc.; the translator's knowledge of English; the understandability of the translation; major and minor divisions of the text. Basically, we seek an **accurate** representation of the original meaning with **clear** and **natural** expression in the language of the readers.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

Further to the revival of expectation of the Second Advent at the end of the second millennium A.D., may I suggest that there is nothing specially significant about the figure of 1000 years? The writers of *Ps. 90:4* and *2 Pet. 3:8* were concerned to point out that what is a very long time by human reckoning is a very short time in the sight of God. That the figure of 1000 years should be chosen to denote a very long time (in our estimation) is a corollary of the decimal principle (1000 being 10^3) and the decimal principle is based on the fact that each of us (normally) has ten fingers to count on. Or am I missing something of profounder significance in the choice of the figure 1000, and if so, what is it that I am missing?

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

**Dick Saunders and team
thank Harvester readers
for their prayerful support
throughout the past year.**

**We extend our sincere best
wishes for 1982 to you all.**

THE WAY TO LIFE, 3A NORTH STREET, HAILSHAM, E. SUSSEX, ENGLAND. TELEPHONE 0323 842390

Figure 1

Chronological list of English translations of the whole Bible. (reference labels in **bold type**; first and last editions of Bible dated; NT date bracketed)

J. Wyclif 1:	1380/84	—	N. Scarlott:	1798:	—
J. Wyclif 2/J. Purvey:	1388/90	—	W. Williams:	1812:	A modern, correct, and close translation of . . .
W. Tyndale:	1526, 1534, 1551:	—	W. Thomson:	1816:	—
M. Coverdale:	1535	—	G. Campbell,		
Coverdale:	1539, 1541,	Great Bible	Doddridge . . .	1760? 1818:	—
Whytchurche:	1553		Belsham?	1819:	NT in an improved version . . . (from Newcome)
Whittingham:	(N1557) 1560:	Geneva Bible			Corrected version of the Christian scriptures . . .
—	1568, 1572:	Bishops' Bible	G. Penn:	1836:	The New Covenant
—	(N1582) 1609-10:	Douay-Rheims	(E. Taylor):	1840:	Revising of the AV with the aid of other trans. . . (from G. Campbell, Doddridge, Mac- Knight)
—	1611:	King James Version			—
A. Purver:	1764:	A New and Literal Translation . . .	A. Campbell	1826, 1848:	—
			H. Heinfetter:	1854-57:	A literal translation . . . and an English version . . .
R. Challoner:	1750, 1772:	—			. . . with chronological arrangement . . .
C. Thomson:	1808	—	L. A. Sawyer:	1858:	—
J. Macrae:	1799	A Revised Translation and Interpretation . . . after the Eastern manner . . .	H. Highton:	1862:	—
	1815	—	H. Alford:	1869:	— (from KJV)
			R. Ainslie:	1869:	—
B. Boothroyd:	1836, 1853:	Revised Version	G. R. Noyes:	1869:	—
S. Sharpe:	(N1840) 1865:	American Standard Version	J. Bowes	1870:2	. . . translated from the purest Greek . . .
—	1885:	—	S. Davidson:	1876:	—
—	1901:	—	W. B. Crickmer:	1881:	The Greek Testament Englished, Annotated.
J.N. Darby:	(N1871) 1890 (1920):	A New Translation from the original . . .			The New Covenant
R. Young:	1862, 1898:	Literal Translation of the Bible	J. W. Hanson:	1884-86:	—
J. B. Rotherham:	(N1872) 1901-3:	The Emphasized Bible	J. Joynson:	1892:	(from Syriac)
F. Fenton	(N1890) 1903, 1910 (1938, 1944)	Holy Bible in Modern English	J. Murdock:	1850, 1893:	The New Dispensation
American Bible Union:	(N1864) 1913:	—	R. D. Weekes:	1897:	The Historical NT: a new translation
J. Moffatt:	(N1913) 1928, 1935:	A New Translation of the Bible	J. Moffatt:	1901:	The Twentieth Century NT
E.J. Goodspeed & al.:	(N1923) 1931, 1935:	An American Translation			The AV of the NT in 'revised English'
S. H. Hooke	(N1941) 1949:	The Bible in Basic English	S. Lloyd	1904, 1905:	—
—	(N1946) 1952: 1971:	Revised Standard Version	(G. W. Moon):	1902? 06?	—
R. Knox:	(N1945) 1955:	—	W. B. Godbey:	1901, 1909:	Modern American Bible
G. M. Lamsa:	(N1940) 1957:	Bible from ancient eastern manuscripts . . .	F. S. Ballentine:	1903, 1909:	NT in Modern Speech
—			R. F. Weymouth:	1924:	Centenary Translation of the NT (from Weymouth)
—	(N1950) 1961, 1970:	New World Translation . .	H. Montgomery & al.:	1924, 1929:	(from KJV and RV)
F. E. Siewart:	(N1958) 1965:	The Amplified Bible	J. A. Robertson & al.:	1914, 1930:	Riverside NT
—	1966:	Jerusalem Bible	E. E. Cunningham:	1923, 1934:	The Documents of the NT . . .
G. Verkuyl	(N1945) 1959, 1969:	New Berkeley Version/ Modern Language Bible	W. G. Ballantine:	1934:	. . . as established by Bible numerics.
—	(N1961) 1970:	The New English Bible	G. W. Wade:	1914, 1935:	Westminster Version of the Sacred Scriptures
Confraternity of Christian Doctrine	(N1941) 1970:	The New American Bible	I. Panin:	1935:	(from Greek by Catholic)
—	(N1963) 1971:	New American Standard Bible	C. Lattey & al.:	1937:	The NT in the Language of the People
K. N. Taylor:	(N1967) 1971:	The Living Bible	A. Spencer:	1937:	The Book of Books . . .
S. T. Byington:	(1943) 1972:	The Bible in Living English	C. B. Williams:	1937, 1950:	(from Challoner)
Bible Societies:	(N1966) 1976:	Good News Bible/Today's English Version	R. M. Wilson:	1938:	Concordant Literal NT . . .
—	(N1973) 1978:	New International Version	Confraternity . . .	1941:	—
			A. E. Knoch:	1919, 1926, 1944,	—
				1966:	—
			T.F. & R.E. Ford:	1948:	Letchworth Version in Modern English
			C. K. Williams:	1952:	A New Testament in Plain English
			J. A. Kleist		
			& J. L. Lilly:	1956:	(from Greek by Catholics)
			H. J. Schonfield:	1956:	Authentic New Testament
			(F. C. Laubach):	(1956):	(Inspired Letters of the NT in Clearest English)
			O. M. Norlie:	1951, 1961:	Simplified NT in plain English for today's reader
			F. S. Noli:	1961:	(for Albanian Orthodox in USA)
			K. S. Wuest:	1959, 1961:	An Expanded Translation to clarify text of AV . . .
			W. F. Beck:	1963:	The NT in the Language of Today
			W. Barclay:	1968:	NT: a new translation
			G. H. Ledyard:	1969:	Children's/New Life NT
			A. Cressman:	1969, 1971:	NT in Worldwide English
			J. B. Phillips:	1958, 1972:	The NT in Modern English
			British & Foreign BS:	1973:	The Translator's New Testament
			Baker Book House:	1978:	The NT: A New Easy-to-Read Version
			Nelson (Nashville):	1979:	The New King James Bible: New Testament.

Figure 2

Chronological List of English translations of the New Testament. (reference labels in **bold print**; first and last editions dated)

(ed. Paues)	(1390?)	(A Fourteenth Century English Biblical Version)
W. Whiston:	1745:	Primitive New Testament
R. Wynne	1764:	. . . carefully collated with the Greek . . .
E. Harwood:	1768:	A Liberal Translation of the NT
J. Worsley:	1770:	. . . according to the present idiom . . .
J. Wesley:	1768, 1790:	—
G. Wakefield:	1791, 1795:	—
T. Haweis:	1795:	. . . with a view to assist the unlearned . . .
W. Newcome:	1796:	An attempt towards revising our English trans . . .

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?

Question 207

I have always been led to believe that the Last Supper was a Passover meal that Jesus celebrated with his disciples. But recently I have heard it suggested that this is not the case. What is the evidence?

The first three Gospels certainly imply that the Last Supper was a Passover meal. (See *Mark 14:12-16* and *Luke 22: 7-13*). In addition to this apparently clear statement, there are certain features of the meal which would be quite natural if it were a Passover celebration but would be surprising if it were not. (It should be said, however, that some people find it surprising that no mention is made of the paschal lamb.)

The chief difficulty with this straightforward view is found in *John 18:28* which shows that the Jews had not yet celebrated their Passover at the time when Jesus and his disciples had finished their meal, following which Jesus had been arrested and examined and taken to Pilate. *John 13:1* might also be taken to imply that the Last Supper occurred 'before the Feast of the Passover'.

Various theories have been put forward to account for this discrepancy. Some involve a rather forced interpretation of what John says (see, for example, the commentary on Luke by J. N. Geldenhuys). Others have suggested that Jesus and his disciples either held a private Passover meal a day early or that they took a meal which was deliberately based on the Passover pattern. A third suggestion is that there may have been a disagreement between different groups within Judaism concerning the day when the Passover should be observed. (With this we might compare the differences between Orthodox and Western Christians today about the date of Christmas.)

What is certain is that the New Testament relates the **significance** of the death of Jesus to the Passover deliverance. Although *1 Corinthians 5:7,8* does not entail the view that Jesus died at the moment when the Passover Lamb was being sacrificed, it does show that the Passover and the death of Christ were seen to be closely related.

Ephesians 4:15 — Speaking or Maintaining?

Question 208

In Ephesians 4:15, J. B. Phillips translates: 'hold firmly to the truth in love'. Is this a correct translation?

The verb used in this verse occurs only twice in the New Testament. The other occasion is in *Galatians 4:16*. Outside the New Testament it is quite often used with the simple meaning of 'to tell the truth'. But in *Galatians 4:16* something more than this seems to be implied. Paul is claiming, in effect, that he has 'been honest' with the Galatians — honest, that is, because he has presented them with the facts of the Gospel as they really are. In *Ephesians 4*, Paul first refers to the basic attitudes that should characterise Christians (1,2). He goes on (3-6) to describe the unity that exists between Christians. From here it is a natural transition to speak of the diversity of gifts with which they have been endowed by the risen Christ and which serve to build them up and to help them grow into the image of Christ (7:16). One mark of people who are spiritually immature, by contrast, is that they are easily influenced by deceitful religious propagandists (v. 14). It is in this context that Paul urges them in verse 15 to speak the truth in love and relates this to growing more like Christ. Paul may well be pointing up a contrast in this verse between the insincerity of the religious teachers referred to in verse 13 and the sincerity that should characterise believers. (It is true that Paul does repeat himself on occasions, but we find an unmistakable reference to truth-telling lower down in verse 25.)

Some scholars have tried to keep as close as possible to the original by referring in verse 15 to 'truthing in love' but the Revised Version margin is probably not far off when it suggests 'dealing truly'. The Translators New Testament has 'base our lives on truth and love' which gives the right idea. Phillips on the other hand limits the meaning unduly when he implies that Paul is chiefly concerned with doctrinal purity. The reference is to the honesty and straightforwardness that should characterise the whole life of the Christian.

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

RECENT BIBLE COMMENTARIES

Isaiah 1-39 New Century Bible Commentary

R. E. Clements
Marshall, Morgan & Scott. xvi + 301pp. £4.95 (paperback)
We welcome the fact that the New Century Bible Commentary is now being issued in paperback. It means that this series, which is based on the RSV and reflects contemporary biblical scholarship, will be more readily available to the student and minister for whom it is intended.

The OT editor of this series, Dr. Clements, who lectures at Cambridge University, has chosen to write on the first part of the book of Isaiah. He has tried to combine a fair survey of the work of other scholars with some researches and conclusions of his own. The result is a commentary which is right up to date and sufficiently different and distinctive to make it very attractive to the academic student. On the other hand, the minister, and particularly the evangelical Christian reader, may well feel that the approach is too historical (with its emphasis upon trying to trace the transmission history of the text) and too critical (with its view that not all the material in these chapters comes directly from Isaiah himself), and that more space could have been given to the theological implications of these prophecies. Nevertheless, as I have said before, this is the sort of commentary which ought to be consulted before anyone dares to preach on a text or passage from the prophetic writings. It is good for us to have our traditional

interpretations challenged, even if in the end we still remain convinced that they are correct.

*Review by John W. Baigent,
West London Institute of
Higher Education*

Acts: An Introduction and Commentary

I. Howard Marshall
Inter-Varsity Press. 427pp.
£5.95 (cased) £5.50 (paperback)
In the twenty-one years since Prof. E. M. Blaiklock's **Tyndale Commentary** on Acts appeared, Lukan studies have not stood still. The busy pen of I. Howard Marshall, which has recently produced **Luke, Historian and Theologian** (Paternoster, 1979) as well as a full-scale commentary on the Gospel, now furnishes us with this new study of Acts. It is a worthy companion of this useful series — comprehensive without being excessively lengthy and treating problems carefully without undue technicality. It can therefore be unhesitatingly recommended to the serious Bible student. Space will not permit more than a random selection of remarks on details. The visit by Paul to Jerusalem mentioned in *Gal. 2:1-10* is equated with *Acts 11:29f.*, as commonly by modern scholars. While we agree that the manner of baptism of the eunuch at 8:38 is obscure, we cannot accept the note on p.165 that 'the New Testament leaves the precise mode of baptism obscure' in view of the evidence, e.g., of *Rom. 6*. Page 246 has a superfluous 'not' — the argument surely enforces that Paul **could** have accepted *Acts. 15:20*. We are surprised not to find Bornkamm in the

bibliography.
Since the paperback review copy is already beginning to disintegrate, it would be wise to pay the odd 45p — an amazingly small differential — and get the hardback edition.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

Romans 1-8

William Hendriksen
Banner of Truth. x + 302pp.
£5.25 (hardback), £3.95 (paperback).
Do we need another commentary on *Romans*? The more academic student is well served by Dodd, Barrett, Cranfield and Kasemann; the evangelical Christian (whether preacher, teacher or general reader) has Hodge, Murray and Bruce, amongst others, available to him. But it was inevitable that Dr. Hendriksen would eventually write on *Romans* in the course of producing his NT Commentary, and many will be thankful that at last he is dealing with this book because they find his treatment of the biblical text so helpful.

As always, he combines the mind of the scholar with the heart of the pastor. Using his own translation as a basis, he lovingly and carefully expounds Paul's argument in such a way that the reader can almost hear Dr. Hendriksen talking to him. Clearly we are listening to an accomplished teacher who takes great care to ensure that his listeners not only understand the intricacies of this great epistle but also that they see its relevance to their own spiritual lives. He is not afraid to enter into controversy with other (mainly evangelical)

scholars and to explain why he differs from them; but he is always courteous and thorough in his treatment of the views of others. For the sake of the general reader, however, he puts the more technical discussions and the references to the Greek text into footnotes which can be ignored. Without going into details over specific points of exegesis, it may be said that Dr. Hendriksen takes no extreme positions and that his interpretation generally satisfies.

Review by John W. Baigent

Wrestling with Romans

John A. T. Robinson
SCM. 148pp. £1.95 (paperback).
No one, I suppose, would deny that Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* is a difficult book to understand. Even where there may be substantial agreement on the overall argument of the document, students of *Romans* differ widely over the interpretation of the details of its statements. And yet it is not a book that the Christian can ignore with impunity. It is 'the presentation of the gospel **par excellence**'; it offers 'the very heights of Christian experience and theology' (to use two phrases from John Robinson's Preface). The Christian (and the church) who does not come to grips with *Romans*, who refuses to grapple with its issues, will remain spiritually impoverished and evangelistically unequipped. Whilst there are many excellent commentaries on *Romans*, with which the teacher and preacher will need to engage himself, there is a need for a book which will help the ordinary

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

A PARABLE OF CONTRASTS

H. V. G. Morris

Solomon tells a delightful story to illustrate that wisdom is greater than the strength which seeks to conquer (*Eccles. 9: 14-16*). It contains all the ingredients of a historical thriller, but the reader is left wondering by what means the poor wise man delivered the little city from the great king. Was it by new weapons of war, or by a political strategy? We are not told, but we can appreciate the New Testament application of this brief story. In his writings, Solomon shows a breadth of vision far wider than the narrow Judaism to which Israel was declining. His words of counsel, which may be considered as a thesis of commonsense, are a pattern of behaviour for men and women of every station and nation and generation.

Our minds turn naturally to the times of the Lord Jesus; and the discourse by Paul to the Corinthian Church (*1 Cor. 1: 18-31*) is an obvious link with Solomon's narrative. At the time of the Incarnation, the inhabited earth was almost completely under the domination of satanic forces, what is now spoken of as the 'cosmic evil'. All tribes and peoples were steeped in a sinful idolatry. Some lived in the degradation of savagery, while others had attained to a Hellenistic culture, but all were marked by the lordship of Satan. 'The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin.' However, there was one small place on earth which resisted the prevailing idolatry. The terrible lesson which Israel had learned by the Chaldean invasion and the Babylonian captivity, remained as an effective deterrent.

This 'little city' must be subdued, and those who looked for salvation in Israel, must be obliterated, in which case, the prophetic Scriptures would lose their force and significance. The greater deliverance of which the N.T. speaks, was to be preached to all nations, and was to become available to all people who accepted the Lordship of Christ, and cast off the bonds of the great oppressor. But the word of the cross still remains as a stumbling-block to the Jew, and a folly to the unbelieving Gentile. 'The Lord Jesus is made unto us, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.'

Solomon concludes his short parable with the comment that no man remembered the poor wise man: his wisdom was despised, and his words disregarded. We also recognize that the gospel message has been rejected by the mass of mankind, and the claims of the Lord Jesus are esteemed of no consequence, but we rejoice that, to us, the called-ones, He is both the power and the wisdom of God.

And so, in our gatherings, we come together to remember the Saviour sent into the world, to express our loving thanks that faith is rooted and grounded in His wisdom, and to treasure His words in our hearts.

(Note: NEB and TEV of *Eccles. 9: 15* suggest that the wise man's advice was ignored and the town was not delivered, adding additional force to Mr. Morris's suggestions: *Editor*)

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (55)

F. F. Bruce

Prof. F. F. Bruce, M.A., D.D., F.B.A., Professor Emeritus of Manchester University, will, we are glad to be able to say, be continuing his valuable studies in John's Gospel through 1982.

The Final Phase of the Ministry 'to the world'
(John 10:40-12:50)

ii. THE RAISING OF LAZARUS (John 11:1-46)

(c) Arrival at Bethany (11:17-27)

11:17-19 So Jesus came and found that he had already been four days in the tomb. (Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs distant.) Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them over their brother.

Perhaps on this occasion too Jesus waited until his 'hour' had come (cf. John 2:4; 7:6) — in this case the 'hour' when one of those in the tombs would hear his voice and come forth (John 5:28f.). The belief is attributed to rabbis of a later date that the dead person's soul revisited the tomb during the first three days but left it permanently from the fourth day onwards; death was then irreversible. It is possible that such a belief is implied in the further reference to Lazarus's four days' entombment in verse 39.

A 'furlong' (Gk. **stadion**) was about 202 yards 9 inches in length; 15 'furlongs' would thus be equivalent to rather less than a mile and three quarters. This is the exact distance between Jerusalem and El-Azariyeh, the village whose Arabic designation preserves the name of Lazarus. If Jesus came up the Jericho road from his Transjordanian retreat, he would arrive at Bethany shortly before the road reached its terminus in Jerusalem.

The 'Jews' who had come to visit Lazarus's sisters and condole with them were their Judaeans friends and neighbours: the word is used here with no theological overtones.

11:20. So, when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat still at home.

The portrayal of the two sisters' character and tem-

perament in this Gospel agrees remarkably with that in Luke's record, where Mary sits at Jesus' feet while Martha is busily engaged with housework (Luke 10:38-42).

11:21-22. So Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that, whatever you ask from God, God will give it to you.'

Martha uses the language of faith. If Jesus had been there at the time, Lazarus would not have died: this is not a complaint; it is an expression of her faith in Jesus' power. It is the same faith that finds voice in her assurance that God will grant Jesus whatever request he makes. She does not say, 'If you ask God to restore my brother to life, he will grant your request'; but it is implied that she had this in her mind. Her assurance in this respect has been compared to the assurance underlying the order given to the servants at Cana by Jesus' mother: 'Do whatever he tells you.'

The vocative **kyrie** ('Lord') was so widely current as a courteous mode of address that it is doubtful if it should be translated here by any stronger term than 'sir'. If (as is probable) Martha spoke in Aramaic, then the natural mode of address would have been **Rabbi** (see note on verse 28).

11:23-26. Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' 'I know', said Martha to him, 'that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live even if he dies, and no one who lives and believes in me will ever die. Do you believe this?'

Martha takes Jesus' assurance, 'Your brother will rise again', to be a conventional word of comfort and hope such as was current among Jews who believed in the resurrection of the dead. Thanks to the influence of the Pharisees and those who followed their line, this was now the general belief among Jews, in spite of Sadducean resistance to it; and it has remained an article of Jewish orthodoxy to this day. Jesus, of course, fully shared and proclaimed the be-

lief in resurrection, as is shown by the synoptic account of his encounter with the Sadducees in the temple precincts (*Mark 12:18-27*). The resurrection hope was shared by Martha, as is seen from her answer; 'I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day.' The resurrection on the last day has been mentioned repeatedly by Jesus in earlier discourses in this Gospel, with this addition: he himself is the one who will raise the dead then, for the Father has authorized him to do so (*John 5:21, 25-29; 6:39f.*). Martha's answer was one of intelligence and faith, and it called forth from Jesus a further assurance, which went beyond the accepted belief in the resurrection of the dead.

The death of Lazarus, with its impending sequel of resurrection, is to be a paradigm of the grant of eternal life to all believers in Jesus. In the discourse following the healing of the cripple at the pool of Bethesda, Jesus claimed the authority, given to him by the Father, not only to recall to resurrection on a coming day those who lie in their tombs, but here and now to give life to the dead who 'hear the voice of the Son of man' (*John 5:25*). So here there is a further reference to the twofold aspect of the raising of the dead. But now Jesus is not only the one who effects the resurrection and bestows life; he is himself the resurrection and the life, just as in the Capernaum discourse following the feeding of the multitude he not only gives the bread from heaven; he is himself that living bread (*John 6:27, 35*).

It seems that the two statements made by Jesus after his claim to be the resurrection and the life, while parallel, are not synonymous. Moreover, C. H. Dodd (*Interpretation*, p.365) has made the attractive suggestion that the former of the two elucidates the claim 'I am the resurrection', while the latter elucidates the claim 'I am the life', thus: 'I am the resurrection: he who has faith in me, even if he dies, will live again. I am the life: he who is alive and has faith in me will never die.' The believer in Jesus who undergoes physical death will nevertheless live. This is more than an announcement of the general resurrection on the last day; this looks forward to Jesus' own rising from the dead and affirms that believers in him, being united to him by faith, will share his risen life even though they experience bodily death. More than that, so far as this sharing his risen life, this

possession of eternal life is concerned, it is a life which knows no death. As Jesus has already said, 'any one who keeps my word will never see death' (*John 8:51*). Mortal life must come to an end; the life that is life indeed endures for ever. Here is an anticipation of the promise to be given in the upper room: 'because I live, you will live also' (*John 14:19*).

11:27. 'Yes, Lord', she said to him, 'I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who was to come into the world.'

Did Martha believe what he told her? She could accept it by faith, but she could not understand it, any more than any other disciple of his could understand it before he rose from the dead. But, asked about her faith, she confessed her faith in the person who was speaking to her. Like Andrew, she confessed him as the Messiah (*John 1:41*); like Nathanael, she confessed him as the Son of God (*John 1:49*). He was the one whose coming Moses and the prophets foretold (*John 1:45*); now he had come. The perfect tense (*pepisteuka*) differs but little in force from the present (*pisteuō*): 'I have come to believe', she means, 'and now, as a settled attitude of soul, I believe.'

(d) On the way to the tomb (*John 11:28-37*)

11:28-31. With these words she went off and called her sister Mary secretly, saying, 'The Teacher has come; he is calling for you.' When Mary heard this, she rose up quickly and made her way to him. Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. So the Jews who were with Mary in the house, consoling her, seeing that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her; they supposed that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

Evidently Jesus' arrival was not yet generally known, and Martha did not want the crowd of sympathizing visitors to know that he had come. Hence the secrecy with which she told Mary that he had arrived and wanted to see her. ('The Teacher', i.e. 'the Rabbi', was the way in which they normally spoke of him and addressed him; see note on verse 21.) But Martha's attempt to keep his arrival secret was frustrated, for the visitors thought that Mary was setting out for the tomb and went after her, no doubt with the intention of continuing their consolation there.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (6)

J. E. Todd

... of Discipline (Heb. 12:1-11)

God has not promised that his gospel will bring any material advantage. (Indeed, for most of history and in most parts of the world it brings to the believer the added burden of persecution: 'In the world you have tribulation' (John 16:33, RSV) this is the promise!) Therefore the Christian suffers all the ills common to mankind. Christians suffer injury, bereavement, ill-health and premature death. Christians have mentally and physically defective children. Christians are made redundant and become unemployed. Christians are victims of floods, hurricanes and famines. But, and this is a very large 'but', God has promised that he will use these calamities in the life of a Christian to perform a good and great purpose. 'We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son' (Rom. 8:28-29, AV). All things, including these disasters work towards this great and final good of moulding us into the image of Christ. Therefore, because these hard circumstances have a definite purpose, they take on the nature of *paideia*, (literally 'child-training'), which is translated 'chastening' (AV) or 'discipline' (RSV), or to use more modern terms 'education' or 'training'. 'My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord' (Heb. 12:5 RSV).

It is NOT that the Almighty sits in yonder heaven planning catastrophes to fall upon his people. It is that a loving heavenly Father takes up the tangled skein of life with all its tears and uses these disciplines to the good end of promoting our spiritual education. For the ultimate triumph of Christian living is to be Christ-like, that is to be loving

in the midst of hatred, to be joyful in the midst of sorrow, to be at peace in the midst of turmoil, to be patient in the midst of frustration, to be kind in the midst of cruelty, to be good in the midst of lawlessness, to be faithful in the midst of disloyalty, to be gentle in the midst of callous indifference and to be self-controlled in the midst of temptation (see Gal. 5:22-23, RSV). Such cannot be achieved by merely reading our Bibles from the depths of a comfortable armchair! It is only in the midst of the hurly-burly of life that we can learn to use our spiritual resources in Christ to become real Christians. Only the practical training of day to day living can achieve this. Christianity is a life to be lived not a theory to be learned. Soldiers do not win battles by just reading military text books, but by hard and dangerous training to produce discipline, and discipline that will hold in the horrors of battle. For the Christian life is a battle not a barbecue (Eph. 6:10-18).

In the troubles of life the Christian is given the opportunity to exercise the ability to lay aside sins and hindering weights to develop the patience necessary for Christian living. 'Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses (who triumphed by faith in the midst of difficulties, see chapter 11), let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us' (Heb. 12:1 RSV).

The example of the Son of God is now set before us: he enjoyed no special privileges here on earth! 'Looking to Jesus . . . Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself' (v.2-3). As far as calamities go he endured the ultimate. The hostility he endured from sinners included rejection by his own people, Israel; condemnation by the custodians of the

law of Moses, the scribes and Pharisees; and sentencing by the lawful authorities, the Romans. He faced the mental shame of criminal execution and the physical agony of crucifixion. This he faced alone, forsaken by his friends, and then the ultimate sacrifice, forsaken by the eternal fellowship of the Father.

But the example is not of one just battling through by the skin of his teeth, but of one triumphantly victorious! The black calamities he despised, 'despising the shame' (v.2). His eyes were fixed on the joyful outcome of his experience, 'Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross' (v.2). The battle for us will never be as intense as his battle, 'In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood' (v.4).

But we are called upon to follow his triumphant example. This being so we must face up to the often harsh realities of the situation.

First, as the years pass, and as succeeding problems and disappointments come and go, we must not allow them to wear us down spiritually. We must constantly consider the Lord who endured to the end. 'Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted' (v.3).

Second, the problems of life are not evidences of the Lord's forgetfulness or indifference, but the tokens of his love. 'For the Lord disciplines him who he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives' (v.6).

Third, we must never lose sight of the fact, that these troubles in life have become the means whereby the Lord educates us as his children. 'It is for discipline that you have to endure.

continued at bottom of page five

PREACHERS' WORKSHOP

Some Texts About Scripture

1 — 2 Tim. 3:16f..

G. J. Polkinghorne

The tendency that preachers have to make a passage say what they want it to say is never more evident than in the treatment of texts about Scripture itself. So with 2 Tim. 3:16f., we usually latch on to 'inspired of God' and develop a theory of inspiration. In fact, the word so translated, while it postulates divine inbreathing and thus supports the principle of scriptural inspiration, gives little help in formulating a theory. It does not enable us to decide the questions about 'verbal' or 'plenary' inspiration, nor about 'infallibility' or 'inerrancy'. Nor does it occur in any other biblical passage where we might glean further information. Any answers you may advance from the passage, therefore, must be on your own authority rather than the Bible's. You will have to make up your mind on the RV translation (= RSV margin and NEB). Is Paul saying that 'every scripture inspired of God is also profitable . . .' or, as in most other versions, 'All scripture is inspired . . . and profitable . . .' In reflecting on this, you will have to consider whether Paul would be likely to envisage such a thing as un-inspired scripture.

What then is the text all about? Surely the emphasis is on the profitability of Scripture? You will notice that teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness are all pastoral functions. From his childhood, Timothy has known these sacred writings (3:15) and now that he is a 'man of God' he must read them publicly (1 Tim. 4:13) and preach them persistently (2 Tim. 4:2). Remember also that Paul can have meant the Old Testament only by 'scripture': if you want to extend the principle to the New Testament, you should give your reasons. (2 Pet. 3:16 and 1 Tim. 5:18 might help.)

Now focus on 'man of God'. We habitually interpret this phrase as 'any Christian' but is that correct? Could it have that meaning in 1 Tim. 6:11? There, for sure, it distinguishes Timothy from the ordinary rank and file of the church (cf. 1 Tim. 4:14) as a person under obligation to be especially holy. You might cry 'clerisy' — but what else is Paul trying to say? In any event, every Christian who takes the lead in any capacity incurs such an obligation. Look up some of the Old Testament uses of the phrase — 1 Sam. 9:6ff.; 1

Kgs. 13:1,6; 17:18; 2 Kgs. 1:9f.; Ezra 3:2; Ps. 90; title, and others — all of which point to a prophet or similar person in a special relation to the Lord. Bringing in now the total context of 1 Timothy, not to say the Pastorals as a group, we notice that its purpose is to provide a young, inexperienced and somewhat timid man (cf. 1:7,8; 2:1,22 and 1 Tim. 4:12) with guidance in his responsibilities as 'man of God' on leading a church. It is not of great significance whether you regard him as a missionary engaged in the foundation of a new work, or a pastor in charge of a church for the time being, or even some kind of 'diocesan bishop' responsible for the superintendence of a group of churches. He is saddled with the duties of leadership, including regular preaching, and Paul makes it clear to him in our text that he will find in the inspired Scriptures a full tool kit. With them, he can teach, reprove, correct and train the people. In them he has a full equipment for the whole of his good work for God. But for solutions to other problems — in science or history, for example — we shall have to look elsewhere.

Christ our Example *continued from page four*

God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?' (v.7).

Fourth, difficult as it is, we must submit to our heavenly Father in these things. We must not rebel: it is the cost of developing Christian life and character. 'We have had earthly fathers to discipline us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time at their pleasure, but he disci-

plines us for our good, that we may share his holiness' (v.9-10).

Fifth, education of this kind is never meant to be pleasant, but it has the pleasant outcome of righteousness. 'For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant: later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it' (v.11).

No skill can be developed without hard practice. It is said that concert pianists practise eight hours a day. In order to

develop the spiritual skills of Christian living we are to practise twenty-four hours a day by all the circumstances of life, both good and bad. Only thus will we develop that discipline which leads us on to measure up to the supreme example. For when our Lord faced the horrors of the cross, he could say, 'Father, if thou art willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done' (Luke 22:42). This is discipline, 'The fruit of the Spirit is . . . self-control' (Gal. 5:22f., RSV).

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

1 — The Holiness of God

M. L. Burr

Dr. Burr, M.D., Dip.Th., of Cardiff, will be contributing a series of articles on the Divine Attributes in the coming months.

There is perhaps a tendency for us to think of the holiness of God as something rather forbidding and in contrast to His love and grace. But in Scripture it is presented as supremely wonderful, the basic reason for all worship and praise to Him. 'Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy' (Ps. 99:9). Possibly it is the most important thing we know about God, for nothing else is attributed to Him in the threefold manner of Isa. 6:3 and Rev. 4:8.

The underlying idea of the word is probably that God is different from all created beings. God's utter superiority and transcendence are shown in Isaiah's vision, when he saw the Lord 'high and lifted up', and even the unfallen seraphim veiled their faces. Perhaps we so emphasize God's accessibility to Christians that we need to be reminded that there is still a sense in which He dwells in unapproachable light (1 Tim. 6:16).

THE OLD TESTAMENT

God's holiness implies that He is different from all His creatures specifically in His moral perfection. He is entirely and perfectly good in His motives, His objectives, and the means He takes to achieve them. In an evil world it is wonderful to know of such a person. He loves all that is good, of which He Himself is the source, and hates all that is evil. And it is the supreme human tragedy that this last aspect of His holiness is the one of which we are inevitably most aware, being sinful ourselves. Thus Isaiah, when granted the tremendous

privilege of seeing God's holiness, could only cry 'Woe is me!' The fact that we feel instinctively that holiness is an uncongenial subject is evidence of our fallen condition. Yet we must be aware of this aspect of God's holiness if we are to perceive our own condition and appreciate God's grace in dealing with it. Joshua warned the Israelites 'You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins' (Josh. 24:19). The Old Testament elsewhere makes it clear that God does forgive, as in Isaiah's vision. But it leaves unanswered the question of how God can display His holy abhorrence of sin without destroying those who are guilty of it, though Isa. 6:6f. may give us a hint.

A further way in which God reveals His holiness is in 'sanctifying' (or making holy) objects or people by setting them apart for Himself. His transcendence is reflected in the fact that even inanimate objects thus set apart are 'special' and are called 'holy', although their holiness is purely passive (Hag. 2:12,13). Similarly God separated Israel from other peoples to be holy to Himself (Lev. 20:26). But God expects more than a mere passive holiness in His people. Lev. 19:2 states that they shall be holy, for the LORD their God is holy; and the rest of the chapter spells out what this means in practical terms. In the various details of life the Israelites were reminded that they were set apart from other people. But this fact was to be shown especially in reflecting God's moral perfection. Their treatment of the poor (v.10), the hired servant (13), the deaf and the blind (14), the elderly (32) and the stranger (34), and their honesty in business (36), were to dis-

play the holy character of Him who reiterated His claim over them: 'I am the LORD your God.'

In fact, of course, Israel failed to display this character and instead became hopelessly corrupted. How then could they ever be accepted by a holy God as His own people? We might perhaps think that God could find a way of saving men despite His holiness, but Ezek. 36 gives a remarkably different answer. God's holy name was being profaned by Israel, in that the surrounding nations knew them to be God's people and judged Him by what they saw in them. So God says that He will act for the sake of His holy name, to vindicate His holiness through His people. He will cleanse them from all their uncleanness and give them a new heart and a new spirit. He will put His Spirit within them and cause them to walk in His statutes. Then they will remember their evil ways and loathe themselves for their iniquities. So God's holiness will be manifested in the renewed condition of His people and in their acknowledgement of the rightness of His judgement on their sins. All this He will do, not for their own sake, but to 'hallow' (NEB) or 'vindicate the holiness of' (RSV) His great name. Thus God will save them, not in spite of His holiness, but specifically because of it. And this is all the more striking in that in ch. 38:16-23 God vindicates His holiness through His people's enemies whom He punishes in His wrath. The use of the same expression in such close proximity (36:23; 38:16) shows that God's holiness can be revealed equally in salvation and in judgement.

This leaves, however, a second question unanswered in the Old Testament. God vindicated His holiness in saving Israel

because there was a prior connection between Israel and Himself, 'in that men said of them, "These are the people of the LORD."' (Ezek. 36:20). But how can God's holiness be a reason for Him to save Gentile sinners who had no previous link with Him at all?

NEW TESTAMENT ANSWERS

The New Testament answers the two questions posed by the Old Testament by showing how God acts in Christ. The first question, of how God's abhorrence of sin could be reconciled with His acceptance of sinful men as His people, was resolved by the death of Christ. 'So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood' (Heb. 13:12). God has fully expressed His holy wrath against the sins of those whom He sets apart for Himself, but that wrath was borne by Christ and not by them. The second question, as to how God's holiness could cause Him to save Gentiles who have no prior link with Himself, is met by showing that they may be truly His people 'in Christ'. 'He chose us in him before the foundation of the world' — a prior connection if ever there was one! — 'that we should be holy and blameless before him . . . to the praise of his glorious grace' (Eph. 1:4,6). Presumably God will gain a peculiar glory, and His holiness will be demonstrated in a unique manner, in that sinful beings will be transformed so as to display the divine holiness in their own characters. So it is that Christians are frequently termed 'saints' (i.e. holy ones) underlining the sanctifying effect of God's grace in Christ.

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THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY: Studies in 1 Samuel D. J. Clark

Dr. Clark has already discussed 'Problems in Bible Translation' in the columns of The Harvester. We now have an opportunity to appreciate his not inconsiderable gift as a biblical expositor.

Samuel Prepared and Established (1. Sam. 1-3)

Introduction

The aim of this series is to bring out the major themes of the book, and to show, where appropriate, how they apply to today's world. The presupposition is that the book is first of all a theological document, and its structure is dominated by theological interests. These are conveyed through historical events in the lives of three major characters, Samuel, Saul and David, and through the complex personal relationships between them. God's care and concern for these three men is a reflection in microcosm of his protection and guidance for his chosen people as a whole, upon whose destiny the leadership of these three was exceptionally influential.

This approach cannot claim to solve the historical, and particularly chronological problems which have occupied so much of the attention of modern Western scholars. However, it might serve to set these problems in perspective by focussing more on those aspects of the book's message which seem to have been uppermost in the mind of its compiler. All references are to the text of the RSV unless otherwise stated.

A Divided Family (1.1-18)

Elkanah, like Jacob before him, found that polygamy was a mixed blessing. On his annual pilgrimage to Shiloh, the resting place of the ark of God, he would take with him his two wives, Hannah and Peninnah.

When he made his sacrifice, and shared the food among his family, what should have been a time of happy fellowship became an occasion of spite, bickering and misery. Peninnah, not content with the blessing of a large family that she enjoyed, insisted on making mock of Hannah for her childlessness. Since Hannah is named first (1:2), she was probably the senior wife, and thus endured not only the affliction of sterility, but the humiliation of being tormented by one who was socially her subordinate. And salt was rubbed into the wound by Elkanah's fair distribution of the sacrificial meal according to need (1:5). Small wonder then that she was depressed and had no appetite. Though she might indeed as the first wife have a prior claim on her husband's affections (1:8), this could barely alleviate the symptoms, much less solve the problem.

No, Hannah could find peace in her situation only by resolving it between herself and the Lord. And after years of bitter frustration, this is what she did. If the only way she could have a son was by dedicating him wholly to God, and thus effectively losing him again, then this was what she would do (1:11). And this, unbeknown to her, was exactly what God had been preparing her for. Eli's hasty misinterpretation of her earnest prayer does not seem to have troubled her unduly. Indeed, his rather embarrassed retraction probably served as a confirmation to her that the Lord had indeed heard her plea. At any rate, she was able to face her world in a more placid and stable frame of mind. Communion with a living and caring Lord is still the resource open to us in our problems, domestic or otherwise. When we truly cast our

anxieties on him (cf 1 Pet. 5:7), we too are reconciled to our circumstances, and enabled to face them with renewed hope and confidence.

The Birth and Infancy of Samuel (1:19-2: 11)

Having come to terms with both God and herself, Hannah was more at peace that she had ever been in her married life. The natural and the spiritual reinforced each other, and it was hardly a surprise that within the year she had become pregnant and bore a son. Elkanah took the first opportunity to fulfill the vow Hannah had made so far as it concerned him (1:21). Hannah herself did not go to Shiloh again until Samuel was weaned. In keeping with practice in the ancient world (and many parts of the modern world) this would not have been until he was at least three (cf. 2 Mac. 7:27). Elkanah apparently had his suspicions that Hannah might try to avoid the self-imposed condition of her vow (1:23) but when the time came, she did indeed take her longed-for son to Shiloh to be permanently 'lent to the Lord.'

Her joy is celebrated in a psalm of praise which focusses on the Lord himself. Hannah extols his holiness and strength (2:2), his knowledge and justice (2:3), his power (2:6), his grace (2:7-8), his protection (2:9) and his invincibility (2:10). This psalm strikes many of the notes taken up later by Mary in the Magnificat (Luke 1. 46-55). It springs from Hannah's personal experience of God and his salvation (2:1), but despite this, she remains completely human, and cannot resist a side-swipe at Peninnah (2:3), the source of whose taunts was not removed for ever.

The record is silent as to Eli's reaction to the new situation. However, one cannot but won-

der whether the old man regarded the custody of an active three-year-old as quite the unalloyed privilege that it appeared in Hannah's eyes!

Life at Shiloh (2:12-36)

Conditions in Israel in the later part of the period of the Judges were not particularly settled or conducive to spiritual development. 'Every man did what was right in his own eyes' (Judg. 17:6, 21:25). This attitude extended even into the behaviour of the priests at Shiloh. Though Eli himself has nothing recorded against him, he had failed to bring up his sons, Hophni and Phinehas, in the right way. They grew up to be a pair of worthless scoundrels and 'had no regard for the Lord' (2:12), much less for his worshippers (2:16).

Neglecting the rules which prescribed set portions of sacrificial animals as food for the priests, they seized as much as they wanted (2:13-14), and would not even wait for the fat to be burned in the manner laid down (Lev. 7:31). Thus they 'treated the offering of the Lord with contempt.' Familiarity with holy things is no guarantee of reverence, and the example of Eli's sons stands as a warning to the people of God in all ages to keep well clear of that boundary beyond which familiarity becomes contempt.

Such an atmosphere was hardly propitious, for little Samuel's upbringing, and his parents refusal to remove him from an environment of whose spiritual pollution they could not have been ignorant is a testimony to their faith in God's protective power, and a testimony also no doubt to their prayers. Hannah bore Elkanah five other children (2:21) but it was Samuel, the child of her *continued at bottom of page eight*

The Divine Attributes *continued from page six*

But how can God's perfect holiness ever be expressed in the lives of such persons as ourselves? In the first place, we know God as a holy Father who can keep us despite our own weaknesses and the fact that we are in a sinful world (*John 17:11-15*). We are taught to pray 'Father, hallowed be thy name' (*Luke 11:2*). Thus our first desire is that God will vindicate His holiness throughout the world — presumably beginning with ourselves, which will involve the promises of *Ezek. 36*. We must cultivate the family likeness of holiness (*Eph. 4:24*), learning our ideas of holiness from Him who is its Source. The Father, for His

part, disciplines us in various ways (some of them unwellcome at the time) as part of our training to share His holiness (*Heb. 12:10*). If we realized the immense privilege this is, perhaps the discipline would seem less irksome.

Doubtless we feel that God's holiness is remote from ourselves and that it is hard to translate it into daily life in a fallen world. Well, we also have a holy Lord who is a perfect example for us. In Jesus we see God's holiness spelled out in human terms that we can understand. We see an active holiness that is not contaminated by evil but rather overcomes it with good. We

learn that this involves no arrogance, no aloofness — Jesus was the most approachable of men — but a life lived for the pleasure of God and the welfare of men. To know Him is to become, like Peter (*Luke 5:8*), aware of our sinfulness; yet He calls us to follow Him in the path of holiness.

But still we would never be actively holy if we only had His example. Our sanctification is completed by the Spirit of God (*1 Pet. 1:2*) — characteristically called the Holy Spirit — who dwells in us. Thus the divine holiness is imparted to us and we share in the blessings of *Ezek. 36:26,27* — 'A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit

I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you.'

Thus it is that *1 Pet. 1:15* can tell us to be holy in all our conduct, as God is holy, implying the responsibilities of *Lev. 19*. So we are to show God's holiness in our behaviour to the poor, the handicapped, the elderly, the strangers, and those with whom we do business; so we shall (*Lev. 19:18*) love our neighbour as ourselves. God's holiness, seen in our lives, will be attractive to others and glorifying to Himself.

The Rise of the Monarchy *continued from page seven*

agony, who knew the presence of the Lord in a distinctive way. When we are inclined to worry about the pressures and temptations that face our children, and Christian young people generally, we can take comfort in the fact that such a situation is no new thing to God and he is as well able to preserve those whom we love as he was the one whom Hannah loved.

However, one may be kept from the most blatant dangers of a particular environment, and yet still be subtly influenced by it. Eli knew very well of his sons' offences, moral as well as ritual, but his rebuke (*2:23-25*) was feeble and ineffectual. Since Eli was the dominant paternal figure in Samuel's childhood, it is no surprise that Samuel in turn was a failure in bringing up his own sons (*8:1-3*).

God could not let affairs at Shiloh go unchecked, and sent a prophet to announce judgment upon Eli and his family. Eli's toleration of his sons' sins was tantamount to complicity in them. As so often in Scripture, failure to esteem privilege rightly had to lead to loss of that privilege (*2:30-31*). The house of Eli would fall, and the priesthood they had exer-

cised would find a more worthy successor. Hophni and Phinehas would die on the same day, as a sign of the coming eclipse of Eli's family. This took place in the slaughter of *22:11-19*, from which Abiathar was the sole survivor. On Solomon's accession, even Abiathar was expelled from his priestly office because of the support he had given to Adonijah (*1 Kgs. 2:26-27*).

The Call of Samuel (*3:1-11*)

The prophetic rebuke of *2:27-36* was an example of a type of event that had not surprisingly become rare in those days (*3:1*). It was probably Samuel's first experience of direct divine revelation, and in all likelihood his reflection on it helped to prepare him for his own call. But he certainly entertained no arrogant fantasies about a prophetic ministry for himself, for when the voice of God did come to him, he did not even recognize it. It took Eli to perceive the significance of what was happening. The first interruption from Samuel could have been a natural mistake such as we all make at times. The second might have been some juvenile prank — is it too imaginative to detect a slight

asperity in Eli's reply of *3:6*? But at the third interruption, there must have been something in Samuel's manner or expression that forced upon Eli the realization that this was the Lord's intervention. At the fourth call, Samuel replied as Eli had told him, and the Lord did indeed reveal himself. The message dealt with a matter that fell within Samuel's still very limited range of experience, namely the sins of Eli's family. Samuel would have heard of the prophet's judgment in *2:27-36*, and the reiteration of that judgment by the Lord was consistent with what Samuel already knew, and relevant to his surroundings. The principal new element in the message was the imminence of the impending punishment (*3:13*).

The real test of Samuel's moral fibre came with the daylight. He naturally shrank from conveying such a harsh message to the gentle old Eli for whom over the years he had come to have considerable affection. But in the face of Eli's demand (*3:17*), Samuel steeled himself, and 'told him everything', with nothing softened, and nothing hidden. From a lesser man than Eli, this could have brought

scorn, reproof or even corporal punishment, as many another prophet discovered. But Eli, though his physical sight was impaired, retained spiritual sight enough to know that this unpalatable message was the authentic voice of God. And he wisely submitted himself to God's will (*3:18*).

For Samuel, this was but the initial hurdle in his ministry as a prophet. As he grew in size, so he grew in the knowledge of God. The Lord 'let none of his words fall to the ground' (*3:19*), no doubt because he spoke in the Lord's name only when commanded to do so. His authority and his reputation alike increased until he was acknowledged as a prophet throughout Israel. Thus the people knew not only that a divinely approved leader was among them once more but that the Lord himself was present and active in their midst. Not that he is ever absent, even though in periods of moral decline and spiritual reverse, his people may come to feel so. In Samuel, the bright and regular light of revelation was all the more illuminating for its sombre backcloth, and all the more welcome for its previous scarcity.

reader to wrestle with the argument of *Romans*. This has now been eminently supplied by John Robinson (once bishop of Woolwich and author of the notorious *Honest to God*, now Dean of Trinity College, Cambridge, and a first-rate NT scholar). He takes sections of the NEB text of varying lengths (printed in full) and comments on those aspects which he considers central, without getting bogged down in all the details. What he offers is a sort of conducted tour of *Romans*, setting the historical context, drawing attention to the points of interest and importance, and making sure that we follow Paul's arguments to their conclusion.

The result is a book which successfully wrestles with *Romans* and persuades it to submit some (at least) of its riches. Without oversimplification or lack of scholarship the author explains the meaning of this difficult document with clarity and enthusiasm. His treatment of chapter 7 is particularly good: 'It is not Paul as a Jew (what he once was) nor Paul as a Christian (what he is now in Christ), but Paul as a mere man . . . facing the law by himself, in his own resources . . .' We may not agree with Robinson on all points of interpretation (e.g. on 3:25), but we should be thankful for such a helpful and stimulating treatment of *Romans*. Preachers in particular could learn a lot from his use of pungent, modern language and telling, contemporary metaphors and illustrations.

Review by John W. Baigent

Commentary on Romans
Ernst Käsemann

SCM. xxix + 428pp. £12.50
Towards the end of a lifetime of studying *Romans*, Ernst Käsemann, Professor Emeritus of NT in the University of Tübingen, has produced a full-scale commentary in which he aims to show what the apostle Paul says to him in *Romans*. He has by no means ignored historical scholarship — in fact there are many references to 'the towering mountains of scholarly production' — but his main emphasis is on the theological meaning of what Paul wrote. He thus plunges straight into his commentary without an initial introduction, dealing with introductory matters as they arise in the treatment of the text. Each paragraph of the text is given in the author's own, rather literal translation and is followed by a very full bibliography before the commentary itself begins. There are no footnotes, all references to other literature and authors being placed in brackets (probably only the student will appreciate this). It is impossible to review here the positions taken on all the exegetical cruxes of *Romans* or the answers given to the many problems which face an interpreter of this difficult book. Suffice it to say that Käsemann is usually thorough in his treatment of disputed points (he does not, however, discuss the relative merits of 'expiation' and 'propitiation' in 3:25) and his conclusions are always worth serious consideration even when he takes a different line from that to which we may be accustomed. On the difficult passage 7:7-25, for example, he follows Kümmel in taking it as a depiction of 'pre-Christian being from a Christian standpoint'. It is not autobiographical

reminiscence. 'This pious person typifies as no one else can the nature of self-willed, rebellious, perverted, and lost creation.' Of particular interest, in view of the current debate, is his interpretation of the 'inexpressible sighs' of the Spirit (8:26) as 'praying in tongues': 'In tongues at worship there sounds forth in a singular way, and in such a manner that we do not ourselves comprehend the concern of the Spirit who drives us to prayer, the cry for eschatological freedom in which Christians represent the whole of afflicted creation.' Above all, Käsemann lovingly, persuasively and lengthily expounds his understanding of justification by faith. It is primarily declarative: 'What is meant is pronouncing righteous. This is an eschatological act of the Judge at the last day which takes place proleptically in the present.' But it is also effectual: 'God makes the ungodly person a new creature; he really makes him righteous.' This is a book for the serious student of the NT: it requires at least the ability to read Greek (and even a little Hebrew) and it presupposes a knowledge of much modern scholarship. In fact, it demands considerable theological awareness from its readers. It is a book to read right through, rather than to dip into for clarification on a particular verse. The translation (by Geoffrey Bromley) does not always succeed in finding a truly English expression for the German idiom. The only compensation is that it gives the English reader a feel of the Germanic style! Unfortunately the book has no indices. Nevertheless, it is clear that we have here one of the really

great commentaries on *Romans*.

Review by John W. Baigent

1 & 2 Corinthians — New Century Bible Commentary

F. F. Bruce
Marshall, Morgan & Scott.
264pp. £3.95 (paperback)
This is a softback reprint of the volume published in 1971. It would be interesting to know whether and where the author would make changes, had he been permitted. The series is based on the RSV, though not uncritically at times in this case (see the comments on 1 Cor. 5:1, 9-10; 7:16; 11:3; 16:12). 1 Corinthians is of course important both for Brethren emphases and for those of the charismatic movement. Neither group will find Prof. Bruce a partisan commentator. His aim was to be true to the text. He comments on 1 Cor. 9:9: 'His argument may clash with modern exegetical method and Western sentiment, but he must be allowed to mean what he says.' He has a disdain for what he delightfully calls 'harmonistic pilpulism' (p.92). Some sample interpretations are the identification of the 'rulers of this age' in 1 Cor. 2:6, 8 as spiritual powers rather than human authorities, interpreting 1 Cor. 15:29 in terms of proxy baptism on behalf of Christians who had died before being baptized, understanding 'all' in 2 Cor. 5:14 as all Christians and taking the 'thorn in the flesh' of 2 Cor. 12:7 as some unspecified physical ailment. The author is alert to the OT and Jewish backgrounds to the books. He has drawn upon valuable specialist studies in

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periodicals and Festschriften and tailed them to us *hoi polloi*. He endeavours to reconstruct the situations to which Paul primarily addressed himself, especially in 2 *Corinthians*. Most of us know the second letter mostly as a series of floating purple passages, but here they are anchored to their contexts. Sometimes one senses that the comment is too brief, as the author was aware at times (see his comment on 2 *Cor.* 5:1-10). Preachers and Bible study leaders will find this commentary an invaluable guide.

Review by Dr. Leslie C. Allen
London Bible College

Christian Unity

D. M. Lloyd-Jones
The Banner of Truth Trust.
277pp. £5.00.
The series of volumes containing Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones' systematic exposition of the *Epistle to the Ephesians* on Sunday mornings at Westminster Chapel between 1954 and 1962 is nearly complete. This one covers the section 4:1-16 and deals with

the vital subject of the unity of the Church. As usual, the doctor is hard-hitting in his opposition to those who (he believes) are wrong, in this instance the proponents of ecumenicity. 'That there have been sinful divisions in the past is painfully obvious; but the answer is not to be found in an amalgamation of organisations based on minimal truth. The greatest tragedy in the world today is not, as is so frequently asserted, a divided church, but the fact that the majority seem to place unity above truth, and that many who are genuinely interested in truth are governed in their practice by traditions.' But these sermons are positive rather than negative. They expound the true nature of the unity of the Body of Christ and they call on Christians to realise it in practice. In particular, they exhort us to pray for revival. 'Do not simply pray that God will bless some enterprise in which you are engaged; do not pray only for the missionaries who work in other lands; pray also for revival in this country . . . Let us pray that the whole Church may be connected vitally with Him, the Head, so

that His life and His power may come upon us and into us, and may work through us so that the Church may be revived and that many sinners who are outside may be converted.' As before, this series is strongly recommended for daily or weekly devotional reading.

Review by John W. Baigent

Philippians — New Century Bible Commentary

Ralph P. Martin
Marshall, Morgan and Scott.
176pp. £2.95 (paperback)
This is a reprint in soft-back of a commentary which first appeared in 1976. The author has clearly devoted much time and effort to the study of *Philippians* for he contributed the commentary on the epistle to the volume previously published in this series and, in addition, produced a study of 2:6-11 entitled 'An Early Christian Confession'. The introduction occupies a third of the book. It starts with a well-written description of the status, history and religious situation of the city and a review of Paul's visits there. We are then provided with a

detailed summary of the state of play between scholars who are engaged in an attempt to prove or disprove its Pauline authorship (in whole or in part), and whether it should be considered a unity or a compilation of hypothetical fragments. The other two matters of debate which are dealt with extensively are the identity of the proponents of the false teaching which Paul combats, and the date and place of the letter's composition. The latter is left an open question. In the preface Prof. Martin refers to *Philippians* as giving 'us a window into Paul's personal and pastoral character'. One might add that with this commentary the curtains are flung back and we are shown the view. Space does not allow detailed comment, but the reviewer found particularly helpful the author's explanation of 3:11. Some readers may find the text rather overburdened with references to works not readily available. But for those who have the necessary equipment this may well add to its value.
Review by Alan Nute

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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 contribution is by Mr. Brian Elliott of Southport.

Local Hospital Radio

God has different ways of opening doors for His children. Sometimes He wants us to put our shoulders down and work for access. At other times He shows us a chink of light, and asks us to put a finger of faith on the door. When we do this, often fearfully, whoosh! it swings open on well-oiled hinges. It was rather like this when I was catapulted into a Hospital Radio ministry in February 1980. It was my wife Audrey, who spotted an article in our local newspaper appealing for volunteers to present programmes on Southport Hospital Radio, a network which currently reaches three hospitals. Within a few hours, a letter was written to the Station Managers outlining proposals for a weeknight Gospel programme, and we got down to fervent prayer! Two days later, Graham Whyte, a Christian journalist, who was unknown to me at the time, telephoned to introduce

himself. As a member of the Station Management team, he had been particularly thrilled by my ideas. The committee had been hurriedly convened, accepted the programme, and the only question now was 'How soon can you start?' There was a one hour spot on Thursday evenings which suited me fine, and I then had a 'crash course' of training on how to operate the many controls. In nine days I found myself behind the microphone, going out live to a potential audience of many hundreds of sick patients.

All programmes need a title. Decisions had to be made rather hurriedly for publicity purposes. **Crosstalk** seemed to be the best temporary title we could think of. It has however 'stuck' and gives us the opportunity to tell listeners that our studio guests are not annoyed, but are about to engage in a spot of conversation across the studio, centring around Jesus Christ, His atoning death upon the Cross, and its implication for us.

On **Crosstalk** we play as many requests for patients as possible. These requests come in, either from local church people or directly from the patients themselves. In many cases, requests are obtained by visits to the wards. My wife and I have identity badges which give us access to the wards, and a great deal of profitable witness sometimes ensues. Of course we also gather requests of a secular nature for other programme presenters, who also provide some for us. We have had some special

Crosstalk 'get well soon' cards printed, and send these out as a further contact, once the request has been played.

We are now moving into a further phase of follow up, in association with our friends at Christian Hospital Radio (P.O. Box 11, Tunbridge Wells, Kent). We have been able to make regular use of their excellent productions, and are now going to begin offering free New Testaments to interested patients from a local stock, rather than having to be written for. For the future, we will be looking to the Lord with respect to the formation of home visitors from the nearest evangelical church. Their ministry to the recovering patient may well be both practical and spiritual.

About six months after I commenced broadcasting, the Lord provided me with a co-presenter. Ray Thurgood was very exercised about the ministry, from the moment he was one of my guests. He comes from the Home Counties and his accent and humour seem to blend in well with my native 'Zummerzet'! Two or three Christian electronics engineers from local churches have now joined the station to assist in technical and control room duties. Who knows where God may take them one day! Within the last few months, Jim McCallum, who is also a member of Canning Road assembly, has joined us to take responsibility for the weekly provision of a Sunday taped programme which is entitled 'Come and Praise'. This is a half hour mini-church service

type programme. A whole series is being produced for us by Bert Rafts and his co-workers in their Gospel Broadcasting System studios in Birkenhead. The programmes can be obtained from Bert at 67 Meadow Lane, Liverpool (tel: 051-226-4212). The team is being built!

Perhaps I should briefly outline a typical **Crosstalk** programme format to show the kind of items we include. After several records, we quieten our hearts for a time of prayer. Then another few requests lead up to a Bible Reading. We invite patients to use the Gideon Bibles in their lockers to follow the passage. One or two more records and then I interview my studio guest, who may be a local believer or a visitor to the town. Sometimes the guest brings in a record or two of their own choice. We chat initially about life, gradually leading on to spiritual matters. After finishing with my guest, there is time for a few more requests and the 'Thought for the Week'. Suddenly then the studio begins to fill with people involved with the next programme, another sixty minutes have flown and we fade out with our theme tune. If there are any believers exercised about opening up a similar ministry in their locality, I would be very happy to give any advice or assistance. At any one time, there are some tape recordings of **Crosstalk** circulating around to people who are housebound. I would be happy to loan a copy to any who write to me at 14 Curzon Road, Southport, Merseyside.



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.

Experiments in Outreach

From Mr. David Williams

Dear Mr. Coad,

The church at Canbury Park Road, Kingston, has been systematically visiting homes in the area over a period of about eight years, endeavouring to call on each of 1,000 homes at least once a year. In April a letter was circulated advising residents that they would be visited with a questionnaire. Visiting commenced about two weeks later. About 425 people completed the questionnaire which led to more profitable conversations on the doorstep than any previous efforts, using **Good News** Gospels, tracts and other materials. A final question asking people if they would be interested in following a home Bible study course, attending a local home Bible study; or receiving a further visit from a church member, resulted in about 30 requests for home courses (The Navigators' **New Life in Christ** was used) and six people expressed interest in attending a Bible study, of whom three came to the first study. Despite some fall-off, these are continuing.

But the outreach did not stop there. After the answers had been tabulated, a leaflet was prepared which presented the results and commented upon the question 'What is a Christian?' The leaflet was tactfully entitled 'Thanks for your help' to encourage people to read on and an offer of a booklet on the same subject was included. The Scripture Union booklet 'The Christian' (See 'Looking at Books', September) was used for this purpose. A Sunday Morning Family Service followed this distribution, the speaker handling the same question and indicating the biblical truth. Two further leaflets are being prepared, one on God and the Bible, and the other on the Person and Work of Christ, and the possibility of

releasing details to the local press is also being considered.

Although it is early to assess the results, response to the first of these leaflets has been encouraging.

Another idea we are using is a **Welcome Pack** which is taken to new homes in the area. It contains a list of handy telephone numbers, a local map, an underground map, C.P.O. tract for people moving homes, and details of our services. This also has been well received.

Yours sincerely,
David Williams,
23 Elm Road,
New Malden
Surrey, KT3 3MB

Leadership in the Churches

From Mr. Arthur Henderson

Dear Mr. Coad,

At the end of his otherwise balanced and succinct paper on ministry in the church 'Tending the flock of God' (**The Harvester**, Nov. 1981), John Wood makes a jump in his reasoning that I am unable to follow. He asserts that quoted NT passages imply that one elder should act as leader of the rest. I cannot see this implication, so until it is explained his conclusion that this 'leading elder' pattern of church government is ideal is one I must doubt.

The 'leading elder' pattern is just one of many possible patterns (perhaps a cross of two of the distinct patterns categorised in Brian Mills' paper in **CBRF Journal No. 30**, 'Leadership in the churches'). Whether openly acknowledged or simply a **de facto** development about which members joke, this pattern is no doubt in some circumstances the best available — for instance, when other elders are handicapped, less mature, or preoccupied with other specialised ministry. It may bring advantages of decisiveness and assurance to a dependent congregation who like to know 'who is in charge'. But the leading elder must beware lest his personality, while becoming a rallying-

point for some, becomes a test of loyalty for others. And, to avoid disturbance on his inevitable departure from office, he must try to work himself out of the pre-eminent position.

What I do not understand is why, having selected the concept of 'team' ministry as the chief principle, John Wood should want to compromise it by introducing some form of hierarchy (as pervades most secular and religious thought about government) — an archbishop among the bishops, as it were. So far my own reading of the NT has led me to a different ideal for a mature church — a team of elders, each supporting one another in different responsibilities and encouraging one another's leadership in varied ministries. Such a relationship may require more humility, trust, and wisdom than is normally found in councils and boards, but should the fellowship of elders not be an example to the church and a demonstration to all of the power and grace of God?

Yours sincerely,
Arthur Henderson,
Camrose,
Leckwith Road,
Llandough,
Penarth,
South Glamorgan.
CF6 1LY

What's in a Name?

From Mr. B. E. Knowles

Dear Mr. Editor,

The assembly in Southgate Street, Gloucester was for 70 years from its formation known as 'Albion Hall', latterly 'Albion Gospel Hall'.

In the early 1970's there was rapid and encouraging growth among young people and a considerable number in their late teens were saved. Many of these witnessed to their friends and brought them to outreach services. At this time the elders became aware of a difficulty some young folk experienced when inviting friends to come. The old name neither conveyed the building's function nor location

and, when these had been explained, the usual question followed, 'What denomination?'

The name was changed to 'Southgate Evangelical Church', clearly stating its location as a place of worship. The question now frequently asked is 'What is evangelical?' — an ideal springboard from which to explain the way of faith.

We have certainly not changed doctrine or practice. But we do believe there is a need to convey the message — and a name begins to do this — in a language which will be understood by those we seek to win for Christ. We live in the 1980's not the 1880's.

Yours sincerely in Christ,
Brian Knowles,
10 Honeythorn Close,
Hempsted,
Gloucester.
GL2 6LU

From Mr. T. H. Friston

Dear Mr. Coad,

With reference to Mr. Cousins's answer (*question No. 196*), it appears that, to quote Mr. Cousins, 'brethren involved have NOT written to **The Harvester** to explain the factors which influenced their decision to change the name of their assembly'. It appears, therefore, that brethren are either indifferent, or have not sufficient understanding of their own reasons, to be able to explain them.

It appears that there are two simple elements of the problem. We give a name to the building in which we meet, or, we give a name to the assembly which meets in that building. It is when you start changing names that you should have good reasons for doing so. The change of one name for the building (— Street Hall) to another name for the building (— Street Chapel) seems harmless enough. But when you change the name from (say) Blankton Gospel Hall to Blankton Evangelical Church, are you changing the name of the building (because 'Blankton Gospel Hall' then ceases to be used)? Or do you cease to give the building any name at all, and you replace it by giving the assembly who meet in it a name, instead? It appears that some modern brethren do not like 'Gospel Hall' because it implies that they are 'different', and they do not like to be thought 'different'. They prefer the modern ecumenical trend, and would prefer to be judged to be 'like the rest', whoever the 'rest' are supposed to be!

I am at present a member of an assembly which meets in a building called 'Gospel Hall'. We practice what is known as 'the open table', and I do not believe that to change the name would save an extra soul, or 'rescue' (I) any other believers. Nevertheless, if a change of name indicates a desire to have closer fellowship with all believers, without sacrificing fundamental principles, there is nothing wrong with that. But if the name of the church is Laodicea, it will remain Laodicea, even if it changes its name to Philadelphia. And, of course, the reverse is true.

Yours sincerely,
T. H. Friston,
12 Pearson Street,
Cardiff.
CF2 3EL

Music in the Churches

From Mr. L. M. Bickerton

Dear Mr. Editor,

Dr. Boyes's letter in the November **Harvester** expresses sentiments which have our wholehearted support. Alas, before music could be accepted as a valuable contribution to worship and witness among the assemblies there is a great deal of prejudice to be overcome. But how many of us have experienced the extreme embarrassment of wrong tunes or inaccurate pitch struck by a precentor or have endured the wheezy groanings of a bronchitic harmonium! And how simply these blemishes could be eliminated by quiet accompaniment by a competent pianist or organist as we experienced some years ago to perfection at the Chapelle de la Pelisserie in Geneva.

However, his plea deals with more fundamental matters than these. We are today trying to reach a generation accustomed to high standards of performance in music — and in public speaking, though that is another, if related subject — whose sense of beauty and worship is probably more readily awakened by music than by any other medium. Why then do we not try with whatever resources we have to use music to capture the interest and enhance the effectiveness of the spoken word?

Perhaps the loveliest example of the use of music in an assembly setting was our happy experience recently at a family service at Granville Chapel in Vancouver. There piano and organ played together sympathetically, supported quietly by a group mostly of young people forming a small,

unobtrusive orchestra. Then two items were presented (72 and 73 in the **Singspiration Music hymnal Praise**) by a choir which included two or three trained voices led by a most capable conductor and sung with such feeling for the words and such sincerity that made it a really memorable occasion. Oh, that we could have music of such quality in even a few U.K. assemblies. What an object lesson and what an encouragement they would be.

Yours sincerely,
Len Bickerton,
63 First Avenue,
Worthing,
West Sussex.
BN14 9NP

Comprehensive Education

From Mr. Albert Chapman

Dear Mr. Coad,

You will recall that in June 1977 you published a letter from me on the subject of religious education in schools, which was prompted by and supportive of Kathleen White's column. Towards the end of this letter I expressed the opinion that I would even use the facilities of the 'private' sector if that proved the only way of obtaining schooling for my children with a firm Christian and evangelical base. This elicited a response from Jeremy Mudditt (August 1977) to be commented on and/or countered by Miss A. J. Cousins and Charles Oxley in the October issue.

The purpose of this letter is not to resurrect the state/private debate, but to draw attention to H. E. Pope's review of Peter Warren's

Comprehensive Education in the October 1981 issue. H. E. Pope, in saying that comprehensives earn some fulsome praise, rightly draws attention to some of their current self evident deficiencies. Undoubtedly, there can be deficiencies in both state and 'private' schools and as educational experiences both public and comprehensive schools are open to criticism.

It is the child that is most important, and the question to be asked is: what is the most suitable form of education and school for my child in all the circumstances? The spiritual development of the child is as important and should receive as much attention as the secular. It is important, during the maturation process, that this takes place at both home and school in an environment of firm Christian training and instruction. Many children however become

successful citizens and effective Christians in spite of deficiencies in their upbringing. Nevertheless, the responsibility of the Christian parent is that of *Proverbs 22:6* 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.' Yours in our Lord Jesus Christ, Albert Chapman, 'Heathcote', 126 Fairfield, Buntingford, Hertfordshire. SG9 9NY

'He who now letteth'

From Mr. J. W. Forrest

Dear Mr. Coad,

As one who has possessed for many years a copy of **The Epistles to the Thessalonians** (Revised Edition) by Hogg and Vine, I was very interested to read the article under the above heading in the October issue by R. E. D. Clark. But with all due respect to his effort I cannot accept it as the answer to the problem. And for that matter I do not accept any of the six suggestions given in the aforementioned book.

These included, of course, the popular one, the Holy Spirit, and believe it or not, in sharp contrast, Satan!; and the one cautiously suggested: 'It may be that the Apostle alluded to Gentile dominion . . . If then, constituted government was in mind, the wisdom of indefiniteness is obvious.' And as

the two authors say, in other words, if the Holy Spirit or Satan were in Paul's mind he certainly would have said so — as he so often referred to them. But if Paul's indefiniteness was for the purpose of protecting the Thessalonian recipients would not that indefiniteness arouse the suspicions of the authorities, or Paul's enemies, and so lead to the interrogation of the Thessalonian believers? What did Paul say to them?

Concerning Dr. Clark's article: I think it is generally held to be unwise to spiritualize the parables to explain apostolic teaching concerning the church. By substituting 'minister of a church' for 'master of the house' (*Luke 12:39*) he is implying that churches are governed by one man rather than by a committee of elders. The parables seem to relate to the characters of individuals. And that is how we should understand the salt losing its savour. It is a warning to each one of us to maintain our Christian testimony. Dr. Clark's explanation of 'the mystery of lawlessness' suggests to me that he holds the unscriptural view of 'the church on earth', except that he includes in it all who profess to be Christians, 'having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof'. Even so, the bulk of God's people must be, by now, with the Lord, and so have no need to be 'taken out of the midst' of empty profession. And in overwhelmingly Islamic lands the

infinitesimal number of committed Christians are not in the midst of false Christendom either. To comment on every point of the article would require a letter nearly as long, but I think that I have written enough to reveal some salient weaknesses — not that it is all wrong.

For myself, I am inclined to my own personal view that stems from *Matthew 24:12* which might be rendered 'And because iniquity shall be out of control, human decency will decline completely'. Perhaps Paul spoke to the Thessalonians on the lines of *Romans 1:18-32*, *Galatians 5:19-21*; and in spite of the gospel, *2 Timothy 3:1-7*. This view suits the literal meaning of *ginomai* as 'become' instead of 'taken', and, if possible see H. & V.'s paraphrase on p.261. Perhaps Paul found it difficult to think of a phrase that described the teaching he 'used to tell' them (so H. & V. enlarge upon the verb). The 'man of sin' might then have no hindrance. Paul's ambiguous 'it' (therefore most likely) or 'he' involved with a vague 'midst' or 'way' baffle all expositors at present. But perhaps, the answer will eventually come in time for those who really need it.

Sincerely yours,
J. W. Forrest,
7 Blandy Avenue,
Southmoor,
Abingdon,
Oxfordshire. OX13 5DA

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The November Question

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?

Mr. L. M. Bickerton replies:

A very good candidate for the first 'missionary' hymn to be excluded from the repertoire must surely be:
*From Greenland's icy mountains
From India's coral strand
Where Africa's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand*
Many reasons suggest themselves. First the general language of the hymn; flowery, florid even. Secondly presenting an untrue, inaccurate concept of foreign lands, probably idealistic in its day (pre 1826) but how differently one would epitomise Africa

today, for example (if you could scan them!):

*Where Africa's drought and starvation
Hatred and apartheid mar the land*

Thirdly the presumption of superiority in the second and third verses:

*Can we whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high*

As though Britain still was a Christian land teeming with men holding aloft the lamp of life which they should be carrying to men benighted. In which country are there more 'men benighted' than in our own; self-satisfied, strike-prone, where mugging, terrorism and sex-shops are the fastest-expanding industries? Can we really still sing with unblushing cheeks?

*They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain*

Yes, 'From Greenland's icy mountains' would be the first to get the chop!

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

I cannot think of any old-time favourite that I would throw out. But I do regret the omission of No. 130 in the obsolete Echoes Missionary Hymnal. Hence we lose that lovely phrase in the first verse: 'Workers together'; 'Thy promised presence' in the second verse; 'If "tarrying by the stuff" at home' in the third verse; and 'Sharers together' in the last verse. Although revision is not the subject, I do regret that an old favourite gives the impression that unless some go 'salvation's story telling': 'Millions of souls for ever may be lost'. They will certainly lose out on the knowledge of salvation now, but what will eternity reveal? I cannot believe that anyone will be for ever 'lost' for failing to respond to a gospel which they never had the opportunity of hearing.

NEWS PAGE



Audio Visuals

Scripture Union has produced a series of soundstrips on the birth and life of Christ. **'The Challenger'** is a series of six soundstrips produced mainly for teenagers. The soundtrack includes songs written by Angela Reith and sung by Paul Field of Network Three. It is intended to be a 'prequel' to **'The Champion'**, a series of soundstrips on Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension, showings of which are known to have led a number of young people to a personal faith in Christ. The pack includes filmstrip, cassette, and a booklet with script and discussion material. It is available from Christian bookshops, price £27.94 including VAT. The pack can also be hired from SU bookshops.

Bible Society

The Bible Society in England and Wales has begun a restructuring of its field course teams. Bible Society extension secretaries, 14 men who cover England and Wales in a team led by head of Local Support the Rev. Byron Evans, have recently begun work under their new title. These are the men who have been known to local churches and Bible Society Action Groups as **district secretaries**. Now they have the task of expanding the Society's presence into new areas. They are briefed to make use of every opportunity for new contacts with churches, and church groups and others not yet concerned about the world's hunger for the Bible. Their role is to increase prayer and financial support from churches here to help meet the needs of the churches overseas for the Scriptures, and to make

new contacts with other groups of interested people — in fact to make Bible Society known whenever and wherever they can. Bible Society supporters gave £1.3 million during the last full year towards the world's need for the Scriptures. But with the size of the task before them the only way ahead must be expansion. Bible Society sees a major task is to challenge **new** groups of Christians, not yet giving to this side of God's work, with the needs.

Books

Hundreds of British husbands and wives without children of their own are so anxious to adopt that handicapped children as well as normal children born out of wedlock could easily find homes. So claims a press release commending **Light in the Darkness**, a collection of papers outlining a positive approach to handicap and chronic illness. It is published by the Order of Christian Unity, at £2.25.

Church Army

In its centenary year, the Church Army has sent out a distress signal. The average annual donation income is £360,000. But the estimated deficit for 1980 was £268,000. Supporters are being asked to treble their giving in an effort to meet the growing need for a caring Gospel ministry. The Church Army believes that God changes by personal conversion to discipleship of Christ and it aims to pioneer ways of telling and showing the good news of God's changes amongst people and places where those changes are least known and most needed and to work for changes in personal and social life.

Evangelism

In Contact Ministries ask for prayer for two initiatives in London. In the borough of Newham a new work is located in the middle of a large Asian community. Prayer is requested that God will establish his church and that it may be a testimony to his power and grace. Kim and Chryssa Taplin have begun their ministry in North London. They need God's continued leading in a pioneer situation and are looking for fruitful openings into the Greek community.

The New Heart for the Nation campaign will continue during 1982. There will be four fortnightly Saturday evening meetings, starting on January 30 in the Central Hall, Westminster. Max Sinclair will be presenting the programme, aimed at young people and adults alike; Roger Mayor will direct the music, leading the audience in a number of hymns and songs; Adrian Snell, John Pantry, Anne Linstrum, Graham Kendrick and other musicians will be taking part; Riding Lights, Footprints and Geoffrey Stevenson will provide the drama; and Justyn Rees will be speaking — bringing the evening to a close with a different message each Saturday and emphasising the need for true discipleship and whole-hearted commitment to Jesus Christ. In 1981, New Heart for the Nation was based in London, but New Heart '82 is extending its horizons, going to a number of places including Gravesend where, for example, 17 churches are involved in the venture. Evening meetings, factory visits, schools work, home meetings and a march of witness are among events being planned. Each local area will

have a special individual emphasis, according to its particular needs and there are exciting opportunities opening up in each place.

The Public Transport Scripture Text Mission exhibits Bible verses in public transport vehicles. During 1980 the Mission faced the possibility of closure through lack of funds. But the Committee 'put out a fleece' — if income rose to £5,000 in the year, it would be taken as a sign that the work was to continue. This is the extent to which those responsible dared to ask, and the increase was achieved — just! Unexpected encouragement came on an unprecedented scale with a legacy from the estate from someone who until 1978 had been a regular supporter of this work. Encouraged to think again about the ministry, the Committee has decided to shift its display emphasis from buses to the London Underground. It has been decided to go ahead with a pilot scheme covering 1,000 carriages for six months to commence, God willing, in April 1982. With little to see out of the windows for many miles, a captive public casts its eyes in all directions seeking diversion from the prevailing boredom. Now they will be able to see attractive new designs and the pointed words of Scripture. It is hoped that Christians who love to see the word of God in public places will contribute enough extra finance to make possible at least a doubling of this pilot scheme when it terminates.

During the summer of 1981 the Scottish Counties Evangelistic Movement provided an opportunity for many young

people to assist smaller assemblies throughout rural parts of Scotland, in outreach and visitation. Approximately 100 young people were involved in the 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 SCMEs themselves, experience and the knowledge that God can and does work when Christians are prepared to sacrifice time and energies for his purpose.

Far East

Overseas Missionary Fellowship recently highlighted four main goals for prayer and action through to 80s, at their annual council meetings in Singapore. The first is finding and developing more national leadership for all their projects and activities, whether that be churches, literature programmes, hospitals or theological institutions. Bible schools and colleges particularly need to break free from dependence on western teachers trained in the West to answer western problems, so OMF is aiming at more home-produced training in the Asian scene.

The second is to find the right people, and enough of them, to do the work already begun. More than half the membership of OMF has less than twelve years' experience. While having 58 Asian members is a cause for joy, OMF wants to increase Asian involvement in both missionary work overseas and in its leadership. The third goal is to see the Lord break through in power in Thailand and Japan particularly, countries with tiny Christian communities in large populations. In the same period in which the population of

Japan has grown by 33 million people, church growth has been numbered in thousands. These figures present a deep challenge to faith, prayer and action. Church planting remains OMF's main thrust throughout East Asia, often in close relationship to emerging and existing national churches. The fourth aim for the 80s concentrates on communication. In several countries OMF-initiated literature programmes are moving into national organization and leadership, but need continual strengthening with capital, personnel and ideas to keep floating and moving forward under constant inflation. Ideas caught by the eyes open the ears to hear God's voice. Many of Asia's peoples are far from hidden, flooding as they do the streets of some of the world's largest cities and bursting national economies at the seams. The 80s call not for moratorium but momentum, hand in hand with a dedicated church however small.

Hildenborough Hall

After 12 years at Hildenborough Hall in Sevenoaks, Justyn Rees and his wife, Joy, are moving on to a new sphere of service. Justyn's continuing burden is for evangelism but he feels that he could better serve the Church in future as an evangelist if he takes time to learn more of the life of the local church. He is therefore seeking a church that needs a pastor. Hildenborough Hall was founded in 1945 under the leadership of Justyn's father, Tom Rees. Following his death in 1970, Justyn and Joy returned to England from Canada, where they had emigrated, to take over the running of the centre. Justyn was General Director of the Hildenborough Trust until he resigned in 1978. Since then he has been free to concentrate on itinerant evangelism. In 1979 Peter Letchford was appointed General Director and has gathered around him a gifted team. Justyn will be leaving Hildenborough in the spring, when New Heart '82 is completed.

India

From Scripture Union India comes news of a seaside camp site approximately 36 miles

south of Madras. As funds permit, they plan to develop this ten-acre site as their first permanent camping and training centre. They plan to build concrete cabins to accommodate one hundred young people, a conference hall, a dining hall, a special building for worship — and a Vocational Training Centre for deprived children. The centre will be open — to quote the brochure — to all young people 'irrespective of caste or religion' and the aim is 'to provide an atmosphere of prayer, love and fun so that the children will more readily respond to Jesus.' The site lies between beautiful palm beaches and the main road which links nearby Mahabalipuram, a seaside resort and the ancient capital of the Tamil Kingdom, with the city of Madras.

Kingston-upon-Thames

Canbury Park Christian Fellowship in Kingston-upon-Thames said goodbye during summer 1981 to Susan Conlan, formerly employed as a full-time officer of Kingston Polytechnic Students Union. Susan has moved to Nottingham to take up the post of full time field worker with the Evangelical Race Relations Group. She will be spending a large part of her time forwarding research and education among Christian groups on a Christian understanding of race and encouraging the preparation of suitable material for use in these groups so that they may work for just and good relationships in society. At the recent ERRG Annual Conference, members expressed the hope that this appointment would help to improve links between mainline Christian denominations and the black churches.

Missionary Training

The Henry Martyn Training Centre (In Contact Ministries, St. Andrews Road, Plaistow, London E13 8QD) announces that in 1982 it is developing a module system of courses, with an emphasis on one area of missionary service for each four week module. The principal courses will run from March 15 to June 30 and from August 30 to December 17. Each of the two courses will be divided up into modules of four weeks and each module will have a guest

lecturer of international repute. During July 1982 there will be a four week module of Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. Students will be able to choose the non-Christian religion most applicable to their situation.

Radio

During 1981 the Way to Life Ministry celebrated its 16 years of radio broadcasting. In 1965 Dick Saunders commenced the Radio Ministry with just one 15 minute broadcast each week. Since then the work has expanded to nearly 100 programmes a week aired from many stations around the world. The response of over 20,000 letters each year is seen as confirmation that the programmes are speaking directly to the hearts of men and women all over the world. The Way to Life Ministry broadcasts, totalling twenty minutes daily, are heard twice daily in Great Britain from Trans World Radio, Monte Carlo. Concerning the radio ministry, Dick Saunders writes: 'We plan in the Lord's will to continue to air all the 4,000 broadcasts released this year and to add to these a new release of Rendezvous over TWR Swaziland. These daily broadcasts are due to commence in March.' If readers are interested in hearing more about the Way to Life Radio and Crusade Ministries, then they should write to WTL, 3a North Street, Hailsham, E. Sussex. A slide presentation is available for showing in churches and homes.

Reports

Annual Reports have been received from the Müller Homes for Children and from the Leprosy Mission. Readers who have not received copies may find a good deal to interest them in these pages.

Home Calls

John Boyd in October, aged 79. Born in Belfast in 1902, he attended Apsley Hall Sunday School from an early age and after qualifying as a doctor at Queen's University, practised for a short time in England. It was at this time that his parents' prayers were answered and he openly confessed his faith in Christ. Returning to Belfast, he commenced general practice on Ormeau Road and married Miss Lily McCleery of

Crossgar: their home was a truly Christian one. Later he left general practice and served as a consultant anaesthetist for many years.

His interest in missionary work led him to help in the arrangement of conferences and in helping missionaries and prospective missionaries in Northern Ireland: he also gave useful service to the Retired Missionary Aid Fund, the Missionary Homes Committee and other similar causes. His oral and written ministry, which helped so many, was based on a diligent study of the Scriptures. As a general practitioner when he had completed his round of sick visits he would drive to a quiet place on the Hillfoot Road for a quiet time of prayer and Bible study. Every study was carefully recorded for further reference. Small country assemblies benefited greatly from his help, especially Crossgar which he visited weekly until he was no longer able to drive. Prayer is requested for Mrs. Boyd, for brothers and sisters, for his dedicated housekeeper Miss Molly Stewart, for the assembly at Holywood and for the wide circle of friends.

James H. Y. Smith on August 19, 1981, aged 63. Born in 1918 into a small fishing community in Burra Isle, Shetland, he served with the Gordon Highlanders in North Africa, Sicily and Normandy. Subsequently he graduated at Edinburgh University and taught in Shetland and Edinburgh. He was converted as a lad through the Faith Mission, baptised in the forces and after joining the fellowship at Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks., was subsequently in fellowship at Camberley, Aberdeen and Elgin. Active at Ebenezer Hall, Lerwick, he was well known as a preacher throughout Shetland, and although remaining loyal to his own local church was not bound by sectarian barriers, preaching often in other churches. Removing to Edinburgh, he became Secretary of the Assemblies Bible School for many years and served as an elder at Bruntisfield Evangelical Church. Ill health led him to retire from teaching at 60 and he returned to Shetland in 1980. In frail health, equipped with a pacemaker, he was active once more in the Lord's

work until his home call. He has left an example of how strength of character and resoluteness of purpose can be blended with graciousness and a spirit of concern for others. He showed how a life of deep devotion to Christ may blend with a cheerful spirit, a ready humour and practical concern for the whole community.

Charles Frederick Walters on October 5, 1981, aged 103. Converted in Wolverhampton in his youth, he moved to Swansea in 1899 to begin practice as an ophthalmic optician. He remained a member of the local church in George Street for the rest of his life, being treasurer and local secretary for many years, also secretary of the Swansea United Conference. In early years he took a prominent part in several interdenominational evangelistic campaigns including those of Chapman/Alexander, Torrey/Alexander and Gipsy Smith. He was also closely associated with the founding of the local branch of the Y.M.C.A. His long and sincere Christian life was marked by outstanding reliability and integrity of character coupled with a deep and simple faith. He and Mrs. Walters, who predeceased him by ten years, were widely known for their active participation in the many meetings in the Swansea area and for their hospitality to visiting missionaries and other speakers as well as to friends away from home. Prayer is requested for his son, daughter and grandchildren.

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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 November amounted to £837.75.

Missionaries' Children's Fund

29 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during October 1981 amounted to £701.00.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during November amounted to £7,622.86.

PRAYER LIST

Blackburn, A. G.:

Umbrellagh 3; Tiverton 10; Chard 17; Exeter 19 & 24; Clayhidon 31.

Galyer, W. S.:

Guildford, Hook 3; Wimbledon 6; Catford 7; Kingston, Wembley 10; Claygate 12; Morden 13; Chingford 14, 21, 28; Hemel Hempstead 17; Worcester Park 19; High Wycombe 20; Hershaw 24; Wimbledon 26; High Wycombe 27; Fleet 31.

Gillham, S. A.:

Swanage 3; Wimborne 6; Senior Camp Reunion 8; Bristol 9; Lyme Regis/Stroudon Park, Bournemouth 10; Ferndown Middle School 11; Swanage 12; Thorncombe 16 & 17; Wallisdown 19 & 26; Bath 24; Dorset Regional Fellowship 25; Evershott 30; Basingstoke 31.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Eaton Park, Norwich 10, 19, 21; Bethel, Birmingham 23-24; Eaton Park, Norwich 28; Field Lane, London, and St. Jude's, Balham 31.

Iliffe, D. J.:

Teaching and training in W. Australia 1-5; Camps Work in New Zealand 6-25; Sheffield 30 & 31.

Lowther, G. K.:

Grimsby, Lincolnshire and Humberside. Possible visit to the Faeroe Islands.

Phillips, C.:

Croxley Green 3; Potters Bar 5, 12, 19, 26; Bush Hill Park, Enfield 6, 24; Hemel Hempstead 7, 28; Maidenhead 10; Kenton 13, 20, 27; Ewell 14, 21; Bath 17, 18; South Grove, Walthamstow 31. During January Mr. Phillips will be going into hospital for surgery, and some of these engagements will not be fulfilled. Prayer is particularly requested for Mr. Phillips at this time.

Pierce, D. H.:

Barnstaple and Eastcombe 10; Braunton 12, 19, 26; Little Hill 24.

Short, S. S.:

Warrington 3, 5; Sandbach 6; Hoyle 6, 7; Cleve 8; Exmouth 24, 26; Weston-Super-Mare 28; Ashbury, Wilts. 31.

Stringer, D.:

North London 1; Rugby 2-7; Saffron Walden 8; Letchworth 9; Rugby 10-28; Edinburgh 29; Glasgow 30-31.

Tatford, F. A.:

Hamilton 1-7; Newmilns 8-14; France 25-31.

Thurston, A.:

Dartmoor Prison 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Strete 3, 4, 11, 18, 25; Kingsbridge 5, 12, 19, 24, 26; Chillington 4, 17, 20, 27; Plymouth (Wolesley) 10; Assembly (Dawlish School) 12; Dawlish 13; Teignmouth (S. School Party) 16; Dawlish 31. Prayer is particularly requested for Mr. Thurston whose wife was called home at the end of November.

Tryon, G. C.:

N. Kensington 3; Tolworth 6, 13, 17; Lee Green 10; Balham 11, 24, 25, 31; Eltham Park 26.

Whitern, J. R.:

Basingstoke 3; Fareham 5; Stanmore 7; Youth Camp Fellowship 8; Fairlop 10; East Chaldon 11; Weymouth 12; Gosport (Solent) 13 & 14; Swanwick 14; Fareham 15; Gosport 17; Mildenhall 19; St. Albans 20; Dunstable and Potten End 24; Bedford 25; Pinner 26; Cambridge 27; Kensington 30 & 31.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Boscombe

Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, by kind permission. Conversational Bible Readings, Saturday February 6, at 7 p.m. Subject: The Epistles to Timothy. Portion: 1 Timothy 2. Speaker: K. T. C. Morris, Southampton.

Brierfield, Lancs.

Hebron Hall, Walter Street. Saturday Evening Rallies at 7 p.m. January 9, Speaker: E. Hughes, Liverpool and January 23, Speaker: C. Cavanagh, Manchester.

Cardiff

Bethesda Hall, Tyn-y-Parc Road, Whitchurch. 50th Anniversary, Saturday February 13. 3.00 — Meeting for past and present members and at 7.15, Speaker: Mr. K. Morris (Southampton). Tea at 5.15. Enquiries to S. K. Bateman, 74 Caer Wenallt, Cardiff, CF4 7HQ. Tel: 0222 66921.

Chesham

The Gospel Hall, Station Road. Ministry Meeting, January 23, starting at 7 p.m. Theme: The Sermon on the Mount. Portion: Matthew 5:27-37. Speaker: Mr. G. B. Fyfe (Ealing). The meeting will be followed with light refreshments and at 8 p.m. Questions.

Colyton

The Gospel Hall, The Butts.

Bible Study, Saturday January 23, at 7 p.m. Portion: 1 Timothy 4. Speaker: Mr. T. Ledger (Welling).

Croxley Green

Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Meeting Saturday January 23 at 7 p.m. Speaker: Dr. D. West.

Edinburgh

Assemblies New Year meetings: Annual Conference in Bruntsfield Evangelical Church, Leamington Terrace, Friday January 1 at 2.00-4.00 and 5.00-6.00. Speakers: Robert Scott-Cook (Bristol); William Beggs (Newmilns); and Sandy Morrison (Dunfermline). Also a series in Ministry: 'Be Renewed in the Spirit of Your Mind' by Robert Scott-Cook, in Bellevue Chapel, Rodney Street, Saturday January 2; Monday, 4 and Tuesday 5, at 7.30, followed by Church Rally on Sunday evening at 8.15. 'Evangelism in an Urban Situation'. Speaker: Robert Scott-Cook.

Grimsby

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. Young People's meeting, January 30 at 6 p.m. Speaker: Mr. David Moody.

Luton

Onslow Road Gospel Hall. January 16, Ministry Meeting 4-5 p.m. Conversational Bible Readings 6.30-8 p.m. Subject: Prosperity in Affliction, Genesis 39:1-23. Speaker: Mr. A. Leckie (Airdrie).

Maidenhead

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road. Monthly Conferences, January 2. David, in his circumstances. Speaker: Mr. K. Rudge (St. Austell). February 6, Elijah, in his conflict. Speaker: Mr. M. Horlock (Cardiff). 6.30-7.30 Address/Refreshments/8.15-9.00 Discussion.

Tyneside

Sunday School Workers Conference, Gospel Hall, Coach Lane, North Shields. January 16 at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Speaker: D. R. McMaster.



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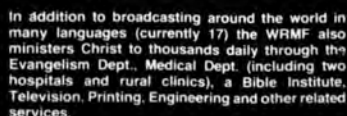
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Many Pebbles on the Beach

Sometimes it is as well that we should detach ourselves from the pressure of our obligations, and commitment to the running duties of our churches and Christian work, and ask ourselves objectively what we are seeking to accomplish, and why.

It is necessary, because any strong and time-consuming commitment can so easily become an end in itself. We can create churches and fellowships, because they are vital to the preservation and continuation of the Faith; because they are necessary for the up-building of our fellow Christians and ourselves; because God himself has chosen to give to the fellowship of believers an irreplaceable function in the continuing progress of the Church Universal — 'the pillar and bulwark of the truth'. And then, as the years go by, the ordinary humdrum daily and weekly activities of that fellowship can sometimes usurp the position of the Lord of the Church Himself. We can seek its advance, not for His glory, but because it is necessary that this organism should continue to exist, and to exist in the form and manner in which it has existed hitherto. Form and outward appearance become of increasing importance: the inner reality of life and spirituality wanes. We begin to fight battles, not for the Faith once delivered, but for the outward forms with which we have unconsciously identified that Faith.

In such circumstances, God Himself will sometimes intervene to break down and reshape that which we thought all-important: and the process can be painful and bewildering. It happens in church life, and it happens in the experience of the individual Christian also. Happy are those with the insight to understand when this is happening in their own circumstances.

'Are not you Israelites the same to me as the Cushites?' declares the Lord. Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt, the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?' It was a bitter lesson that the prophet Amos brought a self-satisfied people. But it is a happy people that can take such a lesson to heart: whether they are Western churches, or British evangelicals, or churches of people called Brethren. For the principle works both ways: and if God seems to bless others and at times to pass us by, He still reminds us that, if we are not superior to others, we too, in our failure, are the same to Him as those others.

TOMORROW'S GENERATION

A. G. Newell

Dr. Newell writes on books and our children

'Let them read any rubbish they like as long as they read at all. They will very soon discard the bad.' Such was the repeated opinion of a young teacher at Davidson Road School, Croydon, not long before the First World War. Although he was regarded as radical, the educational inspectorate of the day acknowledged his success there. His name was D. H. Lawrence. In classrooms of the 1980's, of course, his revolutionary dictum is a standard doctrine; children are encouraged to read and write what they will in the hope that such an approach will benefit both their grasp of their language and their power to appreciate the best that has been written in it. As a future professional writer himself, Lawrence was delighted when some of his pupils managed to get articles published and were actually paid for them. No doubt these youngsters profited from being taught by the man who was to become the most significant author of his generation and a novelist who ranks with the very greatest.

Yet our own observation suggests that this particular dogma is not always confirmed in practice. Children continue to prefer their 'rubbish' with remarkable tenacity. More factors are at work than Lawrence's then simple faith in evolutionary humanism can account for. Once it attains fluency, a child needs to be guided in its choice of reading material; it requires positive encouragement to read more; the superiority of good books over 'rubbish' has to be demonstrated to its satisfaction. Perhaps Lawrence took his own experience and sensibility as the norm. But geniuses provide poor models for ordinary mortals, who often display resolute resistance to absorbing rules of grammar and correct spelling from their reading, let alone acquiring good taste! Mere literacy, alas, certainly does not guarantee anything beyond the simple ability to read and write. The pendulum of educational theory has swung away from Victorian ideas, gainfully liberating multitudes of

pupils. That much more structured society, however, at least recognized that children needed reading matter of their own. Previously they grew up rapidly into a world which, insofar as it catered for them at all, accepted them as small adults. They were not perceived to possess any special needs until they were 'discovered' by the Romantic movement. Since the later eighteenth century children have acquired progressively increasing significance: a glance at modern advertising indicates their economic importance to present day manufacturers. D. H. Lawrence was a Victorian child, and that meant that he formed part of a vast readership which had secured the status of a sectional audience. Social and cultural changes had moulded pre-industrial Britain, when the child stepped straight out of childhood into manhood, rejoicing at having survived, into 'modern' society. One aspect of that modernity was a general outlook partially influenced by evangelical Christianity. Our post-Christian society identifies and satisfies children's needs as never before. It truly cares for its younger members, spending countless man-hours on assisting deprived, maladjusted and abnormal children, and catering widely for the requirements of the majority of boys and girls. Of course there are deficiencies and of course there is exploitation — but our parents, most of them, expected to go out to work at fourteen in order to bolster the family finances. My grandparents did not allow my father to take up the scholarship he won to the local grammar school because they could not afford to buy him the uniform. We have come a long way in a comparatively short time; the pace of social change constitutes part of what an historian has called 'the acceleration of history'. Suppose, for a moment, we set aside our enormous material gains, everything that can be expressed in economic terms and illustrated by tables and graphs and histograms, and turn instead to that side of life that can't be similarly quantified? Then we may well lament a general failure to recognize and satisfy the needs of the spirit.

Books specifically written for children used to try to do this. The Victorians placed great store by duty and learning and activity: they approved of abstract virtues which

produced tangible results, and were prepared to train their offspring accordingly. Once the old eighteenth-century children's books full of dry moral and rational instruction had been superseded by readable and even vigorous narratives calculated to appeal to youthful readers, there was a good chance of juvenile literature wielding an effective influence. Building on the successful originality of Hannah More's tracts for the newly literate, pre-Victorian children's writers (mainly women) tried to help all kinds of readers cheerfully to accept their situation in life by teaching them what practising the Christian faith meant. Sometimes, especially when they were evangelicals, they spelled out what the major Christian beliefs were; they nearly all demonstrated in their stories how they understood a Christian child ought to behave. Although hostile critics of moral tales for children have singled out for attack what they see as a means of establishmentarian social control (emphasizing quiet acceptance of one's lot), this was only one aspect of these writers' practical message. Their books were imbued with a Christian morality which must have been insensibly received by their readers. Most boys and girls for most of the nineteenth century were exposed to Christian belief and Christian ethics — if not at home, then in church, at school and in their leisure reading. The magazines and books they read were not the least of these influences, for children are less likely to guard against the presuppositions behind their reading for pleasure than they are to filter out the formal ethical prescriptions of teachers and clergy.

But evangelicals lost their grip on the field of juvenile literature when a new segment of the market was seized by authors who wrote for boys. They offered tales of adventure, exploration and school life, and paid little attention to their readers' likely employment. Their work was not simple escapism, however, for their books continued to present a morality (often a sub-Christian one) and a set of nationalistic and imperialistic cultural and political assumptions. The late W. E. Johns perhaps represented the termination of the tradition of Marryat, Kirgston, Ballantyne, Henty and the rest. Related prepossessions are found in books for girls, including the

staunchly Protestant historical tales by Deborah Alcock. Popular fiction regurgitates contemporary orthodoxy, which is why it so often quickly dates. Part of the remarkable achievement of the early evangelical authors like Mrs. Sherwood was their presentation of strong evangelical faith before the idea became fashionable. The articulate literary embodiment of assumptions about the world they lived in must have reinforced the acceptance of those values by the children and teenagers who devoured these books.

Some juvenile fiction today similarly reinforces the prevailing politicized humanistic values to which children are exposed at school and through the media generally. It is no coincidence that militant pressure groups are campaigning for what amounts to the censorship of older children's literature, although the very concept of censorship on moral grounds, they would have us believe, is for them 'the ultimate obscenity'. These people are aware of the power of imaginative writing to create favourable or hostile climates of opinion, and they have started to publish books for children which are designed to propagate their anti-Christian values.

Where are the Christian writers for children? When the evangelical ladies of yesteryear produced their children's books they were pioneers in a new field. Their successors soldiered on alongside the purveyors of fantasy, who followed Lewis Carroll, and the adventure, historical and school stories offering watered-down or non-existent Christian values. But the evangelical tradition finally petered out in a flurry of sentimental tales which jerked easy tears rather than convinced readers of the claims of Christian commitment and behaviour. And it hasn't experienced a renewal.

Left to themselves, most children will naturally read the least demanding material and accept current ideas and standards of conduct. That is why they need to be introduced to good writing. Those who have no other contact with Christianity — the majority? — can be reached through the medium of good juvenile literature written from an unobtrusive but convinced Christian viewpoint. A desire for higher values, even a decision to examine the claims of Christ, can be created and nour-

ished through the reading of Christian children's books such as those by C. S. Lewis. Nor ought we to forget the children of Christian parents, who also desperately need leisure reading material that will reinforce, not undermine, the assumptions on which their domestic life is built. And because all children should be introduced to good literature, Christian books for children must be able to stand comparison with the best contemporary juvenile fiction. Some Christian children's books published during the death-throes of the tradition were, indeed, 'rubbish', conveying a slick religion through sentimental plots and sloppy prose.

We don't find a great deal about children in the Bible. What there is in the Old Testament isn't very friendly towards them (if we ignore the recorded instances of parental love). Childhood is used as an image of weakness, ignorance and irresponsibility. 'Woe to you, O land,' declares the proverbial wisdom of Ecclesiastes, 'when your king is a child.' The Old Testament views children as labouring under manifest disadvantages which have to be removed by instruction and moral training. Israelites were commanded to teach their children their national history and its meaning; the moral training advocated in the collection of Proverbs consisted of verbal and corporal punishment designed to expedite a child's passage to maturity. Not so long ago an evangelical church achieved a brief notoriety by choosing *Prov. 23:14* as its displayed text! We all know the verse which affirms the vital importance of early guidance: 'Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it' (*Prov. 22:6*). Christian parents base their practice on this familiar precept; they do well to remember that it is a statement of common experience rather than a divine promise for un-failing success.

The New Testament has little to say, either, although Paul uses the Old Testament imagery in *1 Cor. 13:11*; *14:20*; and *Eph. 4:14*. Our Lord brought affection to the concept of childhood, seeing in boys and girls, not just deficiencies which could be made good with training, but that child-like simplicity and openness and trust which must also characterize all who come to Him. And

Paul reminds Timothy, in the spirit of *Prov. 22:6*, that he has been brought up from childhood to know the Scriptures.

There is a perfectly respectable, historically valid, anti-intellectual tradition in Christianity, which seems likely now to be reinvigorated and given a different direction by the charismatic movement. Unfortunately, Christians of this disposition have tended to restrict *Prov. 22:6* to Lois's and Eunice's scriptural indoctrination of Timothy. They faithfully taught their children the Bible and their understanding of Christian doctrine and Christian ethics — but nothing more, because anything beyond was 'worldly'.

But no boundaries are mentioned in that broad saying 'Train up a child . . .'. The wise man's precept is all-embracing, inclusive of the whole of life's activities and interests. So, as well as introducing their children to the Bible and its teaching, should not Christian parents also try to show them what they themselves have found to be the best in life? If only we evangelicals could throw off the philistinism which so easily besets us where man-made pattern and beauty is concerned! Our failure to give guidance to our children leaves whole areas of their experience open to influences owing allegiance to a fundamentally hostile set of values. Yet even D. H. Lawrence admitted his debt to the somewhat unorthodox Nonconformist upbringing which left him with a taste for hymns and a truly remarkable eye for the beauty of nature. The tragedy was that he just could not recognize nature's Creator or acknowledge his need of the Redeemer. More orthodox believers ought to ground their children firmly in Christian beliefs and ethics and in the Bible — and in good music and art and literature. Children need guidance and direction and encouragement; very few are capable of developing to the greatest advantage by themselves. We could do worse than to pray for a revival of concern for well-written, Christian-oriented literature for children, which would both reinforce the assumptions of girls and boys from Christian homes and bring the Christian message to those youngsters who would otherwise, perhaps, never know of it.

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OUR GOD IN AGES PAST (2)

Evolution

Maurice E. J. Packer

Dr. Packer continues his series on human origins.

Evolutionists usually maintain that life on earth began with a fortuitous concourse of atoms in primeval slime forming one or more simple living cells, from which all other living things evolved; this is expressed pictorially as a tree. One of the damning facts is the absence of supporting evidence relative to every part of the tree. This admitted situation is why evolution is called a theory and not a law. There is an almost total lack of fossils connecting 'classes' and 'orders' with earlier simpler types, or an adequate series linking back-boned fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals together. Normally new groupings have arrived suddenly without a trace of ancestry. Quite commonly preserved remains of a species or genus are discovered fully formed without any archaeological warning, only to disappear from the strata. Later on, another kindred type has been seen, perhaps slightly changed in features and size, yet without others bearing intermediate characteristics having been found. This may have been repeated several times. These are called 'jumps'. Dr. Rendle Short likened this to a teacher drawing pictures of a group on a blackboard, wiping them out and drawing the next ones with a few alterations.

For these reasons among others, there has been a strong wave of restlessness amongst scientists in the world of evolutionary thought today, with many frankly denying the validity of the theory. Not so long ago, there was stress on palaeontology, the study of fossils being advanced as a main support. On the contrary, evolutionists now confess that the **general** theory of evolution cannot be proved in this way. What an admission! That species vary according to the sequence of amino acids was referred to in the previous article.

Some evolutionists suggest that evolution may have taken place in spurts (punctuations' or apparent jumps) after a period of relatively no diversification ('equilibrium'). But this is not accepted by the 'gradualists'. Evolutionists produce three chief lines of argument today: species evolution, biogeography and hierarchical structures of taxonomy. Species evolution on a limited scale is observed and admitted, but this cannot be extrapolated to prove the whole theory; adequate evi-

dence is lacking. Admittedly, strange forms are produced in plants when the number of chromosomes is doubled etc., and when hybrids are cultivated.

Biogeography relates to species in the wild expanding their territory extensively and being modified in the process, until the latest forms very rarely mate with the original stock, as in the case of the herring gull and the lesser black-backed gull. This takes us thus far, but not necessarily any further.

Hierarchical structure of taxonomy concerns kinds of characteristics that can be traced back; say, from a species through a family, a genus etc. Evolutionists claim that this is evidence for evolution, but all it shows is that God naturally approves of the methods He has used and carries on repeating them. They put forward as an example the G,C,A and T coding of the previous article. It occurs in the cells of all creatures. To evolutionists, the only reason for this is that they all evolved from a common source. To us, the answer is the biblical one that God, the Creator, made them all. He knew from the beginning that this pattern was the best, and He continued to use it.

Professor J. A. Thompson of Aberdeen University, the writer's esteemed teacher in zoology, wrote 'Evolution itself is accepted by zoologists, *not because it has been seen to occur or is supported by logically coherent arguments*, but because it does fit all the facts of taxonomy (classification), palaeontology and, of course, geographic distribution' (writer's italics).

Moreover, the evolutionist has no answer to the questions of how the following originated: matter, life and a man's spirit by which he, uniquely, can commune with and worship God. No, but the Bible can give the answers to perfection!

In view of this evidence against the general theory of evolution without God, why is it so popular? One reply is that if an atheist rules God out of his reasoning, then an unproved evolution is his only alternative, unsatisfactory though it be. This leads us on to the news that was so prominently displayed in the **Daily Express** in August 1981 under the heavy heading 'There must be a God'. It stated that atheist Professor Sir Fred Hoyle and agnostic Professor C. Wickramasinghe of the department of Applied Mathematics and Astronomy, Cardiff, agreed

to work out independently the chances of life starting spontaneously on earth. For this, they calculated the number of random shufflings of amino acids needed to make the 2,000 or so enzymes that span the whole of life. (Enzymes are proteins, whose wonderful formation was explained in the previous article.) Then they stared almost unbelievably at the result. The chance of life arriving spontaneously was 1 in 1 with an astronomical 40,000 noughts after it; i.e. it was next to an utter impossibility. So much for the first step in evolution! The figure was sufficient to convince these two men of outstanding ability and reputation, both not having accepted that there is a God, that life could not have happened on its own, and that the only reasonable conclusion to reach was that there was a higher intelligence Creator, and that it was a matter of Creation on a cosmic scale! The Bible states that those who do not see God and His power manifested in nature are without excuse (*Rom. 1:20*).

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

I have recently had occasion to study some of what are commonly called the 'hard sayings' of our Lord. These fall into two categories: those which are hard to understand and those which are all too easy to understand but hard to accept and obey. Would any reader care to indicate what he/she regards as the 'hardest' saying in either of these two categories?

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

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GROWTH AND DECLINE

Brian Mills

Co-author of the recent survey 'The Brethren' Today, Brian Mills suggests some practical action that might emerge from its findings.

One of the original objectives of the group that launched the 1978 survey of assemblies was to try and 'discover what forms of evangelism are being used and to try and evaluate the effectiveness both of the total effort and the constituent parts.' From what had been heard and observed, it appeared that congregations were dwindling or dividing, halls were closing down with increasing regularity, and interest in personal witness and corporate evangelism was declining. But was this the total picture? Surely some assemblies were enjoying growth, even if at the expense of others? And some assemblies must have been started, or have enjoyed a new lease of life through re-siting, or renewal, or for some other reason? Did they have any lessons to share with assemblies elsewhere? Was there a detectable common trend that contributed to growth? And if there was, ought we not to know about it and be prepared to change if necessary?

It could be argued that the itinerant workers among us should have been able to provide many of the answers without conducting a survey. But we weren't. We all tended to visit the same assemblies who regularly invited us, so that many areas of the country and types of fellowships remained unknown. We also tended to visit the larger assemblies who generally felt it worthwhile to invite a speaker from afar. Our knowledge of them tended to be impressionistic rather than factual, and our knowledge of others was by hearsay, and rarely related to the true health of the Christians; instead we mostly found out about the serious problems being encountered!

So what does the survey tell us about the growth or decline of

those assemblies that participated? Does it provide any guidelines about how we can be more effective, how all fellowships can become growing communities of Christians? Does it help us to see where our evangelism in the future should be concentrated? Growth, surely, should be the prime aim of each assembly and of its leadership. The Christians over whom the leadership has a 'shepherd' responsibility should be growing in spirituality, in quality of life, in appreciation of the Lord. If not, what is wrong? Is it the fault of the flock or of the shepherds? The numbers in each group of Christians should be growing too, as the life of Christ is extended to others 'not of this fold', whom the Lord wants to bring to Himself. If the fellowship is not growing, it will eventually and inevitably die. Growth must be seen as part of life — it is inherent within the Great Commission (*Matt. 28:19-20*).

RESULTS

75 per cent of all the assemblies said that evangelism, preaching and conversions were their main aim; this headed the list of aims, with spiritual growth and the building up of Christians coming second with 37 per cent. To analyse this aim and its outworking, the survey focussed on the fundamental differences between those assemblies that had seen ten or more baptisms in the preceding two years and those that had seen none.

(a) Work Among Adults	Undertaken by	Rated as most effective by	Rated as not effective by
Gospel Meetings	93%	3%	18%
Women's Work	81%	19%	2%
Young Women's Work	28%		
Family Services	43%	Nil	1%

The above represent the main church-based activities of an evangelistic nature among adults. Reading further into these statistics, we find that 75 per cent of all churches having Family Services rate them more

successful than Gospel meetings in terms of attendance of non-members, but none rate them as most effective in terms of conversion. Maybe this is because we have yet to find a satisfactory way of using the opportunity afforded by having families together, in doing something that is more relevant to the needs of families and in particular to the adults who come. Women's work is one of the most successful means of adult-related outreach; can it be because our womenfolk give more time to the people among whom they work than the men do among their fellows? Or is it because we still make our main emphasis among women and children? None of the assemblies questioned said they had an activity specifically for men.

However adult conversions were not known in the two year period in 40 per cent of all assemblies. And in only 2 per cent were there 10 or more conversions. Yet, 3 per cent said that their adult work was the most effective area of evangelism, but only 29 per cent admitted it was not effective — the top of the list.

(b) Work Among Young People	Undertaken by	Rated as most effective by	Rated as not effective by
Sunday School/Children	91%	20%	4%
Youth Activities—			
Y.P.F.	47%	39%	7%
Youth Club	37%		
Covenanters	29%		

the two year period were among the non-adult age range, with 17 per cent more reporting 10 or more, and 10 per cent more having between 6 and 9 conversions. Although youth activities were listed by 39 per cent as the area in which evangelism was most effective, we have to ask the question 'in what terms do we rate effectiveness — numbers, interest, or conversions and baptism?' And do we set too low an expectation of ourselves in terms of response? What about integration of our young people into church fellowship — is that being achieved in any measure? Are they able to take responsibility in the life of the church, and are we encouraging them to do so, and providing opportunities for this to happen?

See table (c)

The above represents the sum total of all activities that took place where the emphasis was clearly that of 'Go', as opposed to the rest, which we can classify as a 'Come' approach. It seems that we don't take the Gospel to others nearly enough. We have

changed the 'Go' commission of the Lord to a more congenial and comfortable 'Come' strategy of our own.

The surprising fact of the above was the number of assemblies, from each of the categories, that had some form of visitation or literature outreach. One's impression had not been as encouraging as the facts revealed. However, evangelistic missions, which in some quarters have traditionally been regarded as the occasion for reaping, are seen not to count in terms of effectiveness or non-effectiveness.

ness, despite being undertaken by 63 per cent of the sample. Slightly more in the 10+ baptisms group had had a mission in the past 5 years (74 per cent) as against the nil group (46 per cent). The same applied proportionately with regard to evangelistic house groups — as did the response on effectiveness. The open-air work figures included other sectional activities of an outreach nature, which generally included some non-traditional approaches. It is significant that 11 per cent of the 10+ baptisms group found these to be most effective and 20 per cent of the same group found that personal contact was the most effective means of evangelism. It would seem, however, that we need more initiative in

sions as top priorities in three out of every four churches? It seems clear that our churches are not doing very well in pursuing and achieving that objective.

As far as **numbers** are concerned the gains generally cancel the losses. Those experiencing blessing were the ones who, generally, found total numbers increasing (72 per cent in the 10+ baptisms group, 47 per cent in the 6-9 baptisms group): whereas 48 per cent of those with no baptisms, and 45 per cent of the 1-5 group, say they were decreasing. This, in a sense, is to be expected. It seems too that the large assemblies are growing and the smaller are declining. 83 per cent of the 'no baptism' group were assemblies with less than 40 in fellow-

aren't they all growing, and why aren't they doing something radical to pursue their objective for growth? First, there must be a gap between desire and ability. For example, the tendency for smaller fellowships not to grow reflects that size has a self-limiting effect. They would be more concerned, by the fewness of numbers, just to keep things going — a 'maintenance' complex would predominate, although they would like to be mission-oriented if they could. This sense of failure must reinforce their sense of guilt at the lack of growth.

Secondly, three quarters of those fellowships having no baptisms said the majority of their members were elderly, and in over half they were mostly female. So age and sex are also limiting factors. Without injection of new young life, and a willingness for younger people to take responsibility and begin to reach out, there can be little hope for the future existence of smaller fellowships.

The question was asked too about reasons for effectiveness and non-effectiveness. Surely some constructive help would emerge from these questions, we thought. However, out of all those questioned, **reasons** for effectiveness were given in only a few cases. Some had more than one reason, others had none:—

	%
Enthusiastic support	11
Leadership	7
Fellowship/caring	2
Faithful service	1

80 per cent had no explanation for the effectiveness of the activities that they had viewed as 'most effective' — like Youth activities (39 per cent), Children's work (20 per cent), Women's activities (19 per cent) and Personal work (11 per cent). When it came to analysis of the **reasons** why evangelistic activities were not effective, the picture was even worse. Just under 80 per cent of assemblies stated an ineffective activity, but

reasons were given by less than 15 per cent. It made little difference in terms of the size of the assembly or whether the assembly was more or less successful overall, in terms of baptisms. For the record, the reasons that were given for ineffectiveness were:

	%
Lack of/or unsuitable workers	4
Insufficient commitment	3
Lack of leadership	3
Poor communication	2
Meetings wrong	1
Too traditional	1

It seems that we are woefully inept at evaluation, or we are unprepared to face up to the stark reality of the reasons for failure and of the cost involved for change. We asked the question 'What do you consider should be done to change this?' (in relation to ineffectiveness). Although the question may have seemed a bit impertinent, it was asked in order to help fellowships to think things through. In the event, **nobody** was able to answer the question!

REMEDY

So what is the answer? What can we learn from the survey to help us and to improve health?

a) Re-structure for growth

Where fellowships are able and willing to adapt to the reality of the situation there is much that can be done. Indeed the attitudinal questions seemed to reveal a greater propensity to change among those in the 10+ group, indicating a relationship between a more open attitude, and flexibility about certain practices and beliefs, and the ability to grow.

We shall be highlighting in some of this year's issues of **The Harvester** some of the success stories of today, as, for example, the 'Haven' story of January, and the lessons learned through their growing pains.

But there is something all can do. Some fellowships have **concentrated** on those areas and activities which are effective to make them **more** effective. With

(c) Evangelistic and Outreach Work	Undertaken by	Rated as most effective by	Rated as not effective by
Visitation	43%	6%	4%
Literature distribution	52%		
Open Air Work etc...	10%	8%	2%
Evangelistic Missions	63%	Nil	Nil
Evangelistic House Groups	12%	Nil	Nil
Other House Groups	37%		

our direct evangelism, and we need to find ways of making the traditional means relevant and effective for the modern world. With the increasing trend in other churches for house groups to be among the prime means of encouraging growth spiritually and numerically, we need to be less suspicious of these and more adventurous in planning for them to be incorporated into our regular church programme. Groups for pastoral and teaching purposes, providing they are community based, could well become the most natural outposts of the church for community evangelism.

REALISM

But where are we going as assemblies? Is our outreach — of the 'Come' or 'Go' kind — really producing growth? How do the facts compare with the stated aims of evangelism and conver-

ship, whereas 98 per cent of the 'over 10 baptism' group had larger numbers in fellowship.

It was interesting to note that 62 per cent of assemblies whose numbers were 'greatly increased' over the past 5 years said that the majority of their members lived within walking distance of their place of worship. This confirms the view that the church building must relate to its immediate locality if the fellowship is to grow, and for this to happen, most of the Christians need to live within easy reach to relate to their neighbours. Our assemblies were strong initially because they were community based. The changes over the years to what are now commuting congregations, militates against growth.

But if evangelism, Gospel preaching and conversions are the main objectives of three quarters of our fellowships, why

willing speakers being in short supply, however, it has been found necessary to sacrifice some activities which are not effective, or have outlived their usefulness. This has released people to concentrate their effort where it can be seen to be productive. The result of this pruning has been more fruit.

Other fellowships have **concerned** themselves more with the needs of the area, than with their own needs (but not neglecting their own). Thus they have begun to provide something which directly helps to meet an obvious need in the community as an expression of God-inspired compassion.

Some, despite smallness of numbers, have appointed a **full-time worker**. The cost and sacrifice involved for the membership has been seen to be well worthwhile — better than just sacrificing for a building project. Here their resources and interest are being shown to be channelled in the direction of people — people need people. People matter more than things.

As well as growing in numbers, the existing membership also needs to grow in spirituality. Leadership needs to address itself far more seriously to **ensure** that those in their care do grow in the knowledge of the Lord and His word, in the outworking of such knowledge in holiness and obedience, in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, in a Christ-centred life-style, in understanding the nature of the church as a body, and in the understanding of mission itself.

b) Re-emphasize 'Go' nature of Christ's commission

Most assemblies are far too activity-related. Everything seems to centre on the planned services, meetings, programme, speakers — and too little on the people themselves. God in Christ

has created a **relationship** with us — that needs fostering vertically, and horizontally. If it isn't happening, then something has to be done to enable it to happen. As the stability of society, the family and employment is so unsettled, what has Christ and the Christian to say and contribute to people caught in the lostness of their insecurity? How can the spiritual hunger that is emerging be satisfied? What distinctive, loving ministry can we bring to bind up the broken-hearted, bring deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to preach the Good News to the poor? People need the security of a heavenly family, deliverance from fear, help to feel wanted, loved, accepted — in short a true Christian community spirit that provides something for everybody to **do** as well as to **be**. One or two fellowships have had the courage to stop all activities and start afresh as if they were just starting as a church, seeking to follow God's leading for their needs and the needs of the community around.

Those who are able, equipped and willing need to embark on a church planting ministry in areas where no live witness to Jesus Christ is in existence.

For all these things to happen, I believe that house groups for prayerful, pastoral, teaching and evangelistic purposes, for fellowship and worship need to be started in every assembly and church. Then the church will truly become people-centred — the 'church in your house' of New Testament times will again become the norm. I am looking for the day when almost every street in the land will have its Christian house group.

c) Re-discover fellowship and a sense of belonging

What about the small fellowships, which, without radical change, new life or spiritual revival, face a slow death? The Baptists suggest that all churches with under 40 in membership are uneconomical to maintain and ought to close. Would not a better way be for them to become, once more, satellites of nearby larger fellowships? Then they would be under the spiritual oversight of the parent church, and the work could become a mission outpost. Many assemblies actually began like this — why not revert to this if a struggle for existence is on? There certainly is a need for more inter-church fellowship, and even interdenominational fellowship. No one congregation is the whole body of Christ in any area. The true body is made up of all who are in Christ — our separation from our true brethren is a block to lasting blessing. An isolationist policy is not biblical, is potentially weakening, and brings inevitable decline. We need each other — as individuals as well as fellowships of God's people.

Since the decline of Saturday 'conferences' very few Christians in a congregation know any others in Christ from the congregation two streets away, or in the next town or village. Yet there may be a lot going on in those other fellowships that could be a help to us, or we could be providing much needed help to a nearby struggling cause. Now is the time to get together — for worship, fellowship and evangelism — without needing to compromise cherished beliefs. We shall be a bright, shining light together, smouldering embers apart.

To sum up. The patient is sick, failing, weak. The diagnosis has been made by the survey **The Brethren Today**. What is the

prescription? Each has the choice — will the solution be euthanasia for some? Pep pills for others? Some need major surgery to remove dead matter, and to relieve other members from the effect of that spreading deadness. Others will be helped by a blood transfusion.

Sometimes we criticise a certain sect for not allowing its adherents to have blood transfusions and comment sadly when unnecessary death ensues because the proper medical remedy is not accepted. But are we any better if we fail to apply a proper remedy to our spiritual ailment? If we continue to have our conferences when we agree together, and yet do nothing — do we not deserve to die, unnecessary as that may be?

When all is said and done, the best remedy is divine healing. But unless and until we humble ourselves in repentance, absolute trust, obedience and love, and implore God at all times with burdened renewed prayer to 'revive us again that your people may rejoice in you' (*Ps. 85:6*), we can hardly expect to receive. But if we do spend hours and days before Him, in faith believing in His power to restore, will he not revive us again? 'If My people, who are called by My name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.' (*2 Chron. 7:14*).

The Brethren Today — A Factual Survey by Graham Brown and Brian Mills, is published jointly by The Paternoster Press and CBRF, and is available at £1.60 plus postage from the publishers of **The Harvester**.



HIGH AND DRY ON A ROCK-STREWN BEACH

European Evangelicals and the tide of revival: A report from the recent Conference on Revival (The European Evangelical Alliance).

'Imagine yourselves to be on the beach when the tide is out. There are ugly and jagged rocks; here and there pools of water left behind by the distant sea; and all over the stretches of sand lie creatures which have been left stranded, half-dead, abandoned. What you are looking at is a picture of the present condition of the churches of Europe', said the President of the European Evangelical Alliance in the closing session of its Conference at Haamstede, Holland, September 25th, 1981.

He went on to explain the analogy.

'The rocks are the ugly evidences of disunity and contention; the stranded creatures are those hapless men and women who are left half dead or dying in a secular culture; the pools are those churches and fellowships where there is some measure of spiritual life, and where a privileged few swim happily in their proper environment, hardly aware of the desperate emptiness around them.'

Morgan Derham then took his word-picture a stage further.

'What do we see happening?' he asked the Conference, which had been made up of representatives from every Western European country as well as from East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. 'Many people are busy trying to do something about the problems. Some have brought hammers and chisels and are chipping away at the rocks, trying to make them look less ugly. Another group is drawing a map of the beach, showing exactly where the pools are, how many fish are in them, and where the stranded sea-creatures lie. A few people are wandering round, picking up the odd stranded starfish and throwing them into the pools, but they barely touch the fringe of the need. Another group is

busy with buckets, taking water out of the bigger pools and putting it into the smaller ones. Then we hear a great noise, and along comes another group, singing happy songs as they drive up in their fire-engine. They run a hose down to the sea and begin to pump water into a few of the smaller pools as well as on to the drying sand. "We have the answer!" they say — "at least we are doing something . . ."

'But the tide remains out; the rocks still stand out in the ugliness; the beach is still barren. The efforts of the various groups make hardly any difference, except that those who are busy feel good about what they are doing. In the pools the fortunate few swim contentedly. If you suggest that something is missing they respond with "Tide? What tide? We are quite content. We never so much as heard whether there be such a thing as tide. The pumps will keep us going."

'And then, some days later, you go back to the beach' went on Mr. Derham. 'The scene is transformed. The ugly rocks are nowhere to be seen; no stranded creatures lie on the empty sands; instead of a few scattered pools there is water everywhere. The tide has come in, and all is life and wellbeing. That is the difference between historic revival and the various 'movements' and frantic activism which make up the modern evangelical scene: and the tragedy is that for many of us our little 'pool' is all that we know and all that we expect. We called this Conference on Revival in order to enlarge the horizons and awaken the expectations of European evangelicals. There is more — much more — to be experienced than any of us have known. The tide is out — but it may well come in.'

The Conference, held at the brand-new Centre known as 'de Burgh', had certainly been made aware of the possibilities of true revival. Accounts of what had happened in Europe in previous revivals were given and their lessons analysed by an im-

pressive list of speakers. Winrich Scheffbuch, from Stuttgart, spoke of revival in Russia, past and present. Warner Bayer, from the DDR, described the German experience; Ashjorn Johansen reminded the Conference of movements of the Spirit in Norway; two Czech pastors, J. Michal and S. Heczeko, described revivals in Moravia and Silesia, respectively; Mlle Clair-Lise de Benoit from Switzerland, shared the deep significance of the East African revival as it had affected her; and the Welsh revival was comprehensively and vividly brought to life by one of the two principal guest speakers, Dr. J. Edwin Orr, of Pasadena, California.

Dr. Orr gave three major presentations on the outworking of revival in uniting Christians, in stimulating evangelism, and in promoting missionary outreach. He demonstrated how a great part of what we regard as evangelical life and service could be traced back to origins in revival experience; he also sharply differentiated between revival properly understood, and those movements of the Spirit on a smaller or larger scale which we are more familiar with. He emphasized the place of prayer in preparation for revival, but made it plain that in the last analysis it all depends upon the sovereign intervention of God.

Dr. Orr's vivid descriptions of revival experience were given a proper balance by the contributions of Dr. Richard Lovelace, of Gordon Conwell Seminary, Massachusetts, author of an important recent book *The Dynamics of Spiritual Life**. Dr. Lovelace chaired the sessions in which the European experience was described, and also gave two papers in which he analyzed revival movements from the viewpoint of a biblical theologian. The need for a solid theological base for sustaining revival experience was evident from the different descriptions which had been given.

Peter Schneider, Secretary of the German Evangelical Alliance, gave a brief reflection on the proceedings at the end of each day. He struck a prophetic note, and a number testified to the deep effect of what he had said about the dangers of a hurried and superficial evangelical life-style; we can be so busy serving Jesus Christ that we hardly know him. As the Conference developed, the importance of prayer for revival was made very clear; the place of prayer in the total event was emphasized by the setting apart of one room for prayer by day and night. 'Room 31' became an important element in the continuing life of the Conference, in addition to the regular daily times for prayer in different language groupings.

The biblical foundation was well laid in a series of Bible readings by George Peters, currently lecturing at Liebenzell, West Germany, and well-known for his writings on missiology. The Conference divided into small groups for Bible Study based on his talks, as well as into national groups which considered how the findings of the Conference could be spread around more widely in the various European countries represented. Music and worship were led by Noel Tredinnick and a small group of singers and musicians from All Souls Church, Langham Place, London.

At the closing session, members from several countries spoke of how God had spoken to them through the Conference. It was clear that for many a new dimension had been given to their expectations, a new stimulus to their prayers, and a new clarity to their understanding of how God works in the world — and how Satan opposes Him!

What, then, did Haamstede '81 add up to?

In the spiritual wilderness that is modern Europe there is no lack of men and movements tinkering with the desperate spiritual needs of lost mankind. And — alas! — in an age dominated by

* (Paternoster Press — £5.00)

Continued on Page 14

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Receiving at the Lord's Table

Question 209

Since we began to hold the Breaking of Bread service in the evening once a month, several members of our Women's Meeting have been attending and taking the bread and wine. But we do not know whether they are really believers. Should the Elders not have interviewed them?

I share your concern, which is a biblical one, that only those who are truly the Lord's should partake of the Lord's Supper. This being understood, however, isn't it interesting that the 'assemblies' have traditionally been so much more concerned about the danger of people partaking who are not believers than they have been about the danger of excluding from the Lord's Table those whom he has received? I wonder which he would regard as the more serious?

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'.

I do not know the detailed circumstances of the situation which you describe. I should have thought it likely that those who help with the women's meeting might well have had a fair idea about the spiritual state of the women concerned. Indeed, it is an unhappy state of affairs if people can attend assembly meetings with some frequency and yet not be on sufficiently close terms with other people for it to be quite natural to converse about their spiritual experience. In a case such as you describe, I am sure we should not be thinking of anything in the nature of a formal interview. But nothing could be more natural than for interest to be expressed in the Christian experience of the individuals concerned. They have witnessed their discipleship by receiving the Lord's Supper — what is their present experience of the Lord and how long have they been believers? It is not in fact at all uncommon for a situation like this to arise when the Lord's Supper begins to be held in the evening. Appropriate ministry is obviously desirable.



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EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

THE HOPE OF GOD AND HIS SAINTS

J. H. Hughes

God is the God of Hope, and must of necessity hope for that which has not yet been realized. His saints also are 'looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ'. (*Tit. 2:13*) Thus the Father and his family are linked in the great hope of the Gospel. The goal is the Heavenly City which John saw 'coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband', (*Rev. 21:2*) and the last two chapters are occupied solely with its surpassing beauty and glory. The angelic guide greatly desired to shew the apostle its wonders, and through him to us also. 'Blessed is he that readeth . . . and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand,' (*ch. 1:3*). A brief reflection may be helpful to all those who wait for his return.

Zion is God's home, and our home also. He 'spared not his Son' to send him from it to be 'the Saviour of the world' at the price of his own blood, and having finished the work his father gave him to do, returned home. 'Now I am no more in the world, and I come to thee' (*John 17:11*). But not before having assured his disciples 'I go to prepare a place for you', and not only so but that 'I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.' (*ch. 14:3*.) Nor need we wait until we get there to enjoy in anticipation our inheritance. If we go abroad for a holiday we read first a guide book, and what we see is very much as we expected. It is a sad reflection on our spiritual condition that we hold the promise as a fact, but know so little about it. The pilgrim on his way to heaven should often linger at the mount with 'the church of the first-born ones, who are enrolled in heaven' as *Heb 12:22* assures us. 'Ye are come to mount Zion.' It is all there to the vision of faith.

*'Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest,
Beneath thy contemplation sink heart and mind
oppressed.'*

Yet having said this, we are in the world and away

from home. The Saviour longed to be back with his Father, even by the way of the cross. As it was with John, the world for us can become a Patmos, or with Paul a prison, and at times we long for release. John saw the visions which embraced eternity, and wrote: 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus'. And Paul: 'I have a desire to be with Christ which is far better.' At the gate of martyrdom, Peter recalled the vision he had seen on the mount of Transfiguration, all too briefly, through which 'the promise was made more sure' having seen the majesty and glory of the Son of God. This has been the song of many a saint, and who has not sung: 'A day's march nearer home'?

And what a Home it is! As with all spiritual realities it can only be presented to us in the finite shadows of the eternal. We see a city, a temple, and a throne set on the mount of God, a host of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, soon to be clothed with bodies immortal. We look with unveiled face into the ineffable splendour of God, and perhaps best of all we see Jesus, who stepped into our lives in redeeming love, crowned with glory and honour.

Here are all the promises of grace enthroned. Here faith becomes real and substantial, and nothing lacks to us along the pilgrim way. The writer was once engaged in shipping large quantities of goods to Australasia, and an enterprising broker gave us an insurance policy bearing the one clause 'Good for any amount'! It was too good to last, but not for us as we draw on the resources of Zion. They are inexhaustible and secure for ever.

Among the dying legacies of the Saviour were love, peace, and joy, and they are here, flowing to us in the river of life from the Throne. Love without alloy; peace without a shadow; and joy without change. Happiness is pleasant, and enjoyed by the many, but is emotional and transient. But joy plumbs the depths of the spirit, and, like the ocean depths, is unmoved by the wind and waves of circumstance. 'For the joy set before him' the Saviour endured the cross. When

continued on page eleven

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (56)

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)

(d) On the way to the tomb (John 11:28-37)
continued.

11:32 So, when Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said to him, 'If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died.'

Mary uses the same words as Martha had used not long before. It is likely that they had said this to each other several times since Lazarus died: 'if the Teacher had been here, our brother would not have died.' Martha had gone on to make an even more positive declaration of faith; Mary says nothing more, but it would be precarious to draw conclusions about the two sisters' varying state of mind. On each occasion where Mary of Bethany appears in the Gospels, she is at Jesus' feet (*cf. Luke 10:39; John 12:3*).

11:33-37 So, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her weeping, he became deeply agitated in spirit and shook with emotion. 'Where have you laid him?' he said. 'Lord, come and see', they said to him. Jesus burst into tears. So the Jews said, 'Look, how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not this man, who opened the blind man's eyes, have prevented him from dying?'

The verb **embrimaomai**, translated here 'became deeply agitated', means literally 'snort (with indignation)' and regularly indicates displeasure of some kind. (In *Mark 14:5* it expresses the spectators' indignation at the 'waste' of the precious ointment in Simon the leper's house in Bethany.) Here it points to Jesus' inward reaction ('in spirit'); but what was the cause of his displeasure? Most probably it was the presence of sickness and death, and the havoc they wrought in human life. On this occasion, no doubt, their effect was to be overruled by God for his glory (see *verses 4, 40*); but their effect was plainly to be seen in the grief of Mary and her friends. So powerful was Jesus' emotional reaction to the spectacle that he 'shook' (literally, 'troubled himself') under the force of it. Not only did he shake but, when he was shown (in response to his question) where the body of Lazarus was, he burst into tears

(this seems to be the 'ingressive' sense of the aorist). Some commentators have found it difficult to suppose that he who is presented in this Gospel as the incarnate Word, knowing what he was going to do, should be genuinely moved by sorrow and sympathy (as others might at the graveside), and have put his tears down to some other cause — anger and frustration, perhaps, at the blindness and lack of faith which he saw in those who were around at the time. But the friends and neighbours who were there had no doubt about the cause of his tears: he was weeping for a dearly loved friend. 'Look, how he loved him!' they said. Some indeed thought, and not unnaturally, that such a healer as he had already shown himself to be might have done something to prevent his friend from dying. In truth, the reader may feel some surprise that Jesus, who was so completely in command of the situation, and knew that the glory of God was about to be manifested in a signal manner, should nevertheless shed tears of grief for a departed friend and his mourning relatives as any one else might do. But in him the eternal Word became truly **incarnate** and shared the common lot of mankind: our evangelist would have agreed completely with the writer to the Hebrews that Jesus is well able to sympathize with his people's weaknesses, having been tested himself in the school of suffering. It was in sympathy with those who wept that he also wept. Here is no automaton, but a real human being.

(e) The quickening word (John 11:38-44)

11:38 So Jesus, again deeply agitated within himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone had been placed over it.

The tomb was a hollow in the rock, the entrance to which was blocked by a stone of suitable size and shape, fitting into it more or less like a cork. The description is quite like that of the tomb in which the body of Jesus himself was later laid. In the fourth century a church was built over the crypt which was believed to be the tomb of Lazarus; it was called the Lazareion (from which is derived the Muslim name of the village, El-Azariyeh). The opening in the hillside which is shown to visitors today as the tomb may or may not be authentic, but if it is, its present condition tells us little about its appearance or arrangement in A.D. 30.

11:39-42 'Take away the stone', said Jesus. 'Lord', said Martha (sister of the dead man), 'by this time there will be a stench; he has been dead four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that, if you would believe, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. For my part, I knew that thou hearest me always, but I have spoken because of the crowd standing around, so that they may believe that thou hast sent me.'

Martha, practical as ever, points out that the effect of removing the stone, as Jesus had directed, will be unpleasant. Jesus reminds her of his promise. The actual words he uses now are more reminiscent of what he had said to the disciples earlier (verse 4), but they sum up the substance of the assurance he had given to Martha (verses 23-26). Evidently Martha now gives her consent to the removal of the stone, and it is removed.

Jesus does not pray that Lazarus may be raised from death at his word; it is implied that he has already prayed for this, and that he is assured of the granting of his prayer. He has no need to pray aloud to God; he does so now for the benefit of the bystanders, 'so that they may believe that thou hast sent me' (cf. John 17:21). Some commentators have seen a certain artificiality in such a prayer; however, 'if prayer is a form of union with God, then the Johannine Jesus is always praying, for he and the Father are one' (R. E. Brown). The raising of the dead is a divine prerogative which the Father shares with the Son (cf. John

5:21, 25-29), and it is important that the bystanders should understand this. So, in their hearing, he thanks God for having heard him.

11:43-44 Saying this, he called with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out here!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound in winding sheets and his face wrapped round in a napkin. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go free.'

The shout which calls Lazarus back to life is a parable of that coming day when all who are in the tombs will hear the same quickening shout and come out. It is only a parable, because Lazarus is called out to a renewal and continuation of mortal life, whereas those who hear the shout on the last day are called out to resurrection life. But before resurrection life could be imparted to others, Jesus himself must be raised from the dead. The difference may be indicated by the fact that, when Jesus was raised, the grave-clothes were left behind in the tomb (John 20:5-7). The body of Lazarus, like the body of Jesus later, had been swathed in winding sheets and a napkin (**soudarion**) had been wrapped round his head. He was still impeded by these as he made his way blindly out of the cave in the direction of the voice that had called him. Much need, then, that helping hands should unwind the cerements and the napkin, so that Lazarus could see and walk about freely. (This liberation has been used as a parable of moral and spiritual liberation, and not improperly, although the evangelist does not make this point.)



THE HOPE OF GOD AND HIS SAINTS

continued from page nine

Paul and Barnabas were expelled from Antioch by unbelieving Jews, they were 'filled with joy and the Holy Ghost'. Our Lord truly said: 'In the world ye have tribulation', and the saint faces life's circumstances as they come to him. Happiness is usually a fleeting experience, but the joy of the Lord abides, unchanging and eternal.

The Queen of Sheba saw the earthly glory of

Solomon, so soon to pass away, and exclaimed: 'The half hath not been told.' John had already written concerning the Lord Jesus that 'if all the books were written the world could not contain the books which should be written.' How much more should we exclaim with him when he had described the vision of eternal glory: 'Even so! Come, Lord Jesus.'

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (2)

The Righteousness of God

M. L. Burr

We have seen that God's holiness, which we instinctively and with reason think of as against us, turns out to be a cause of blessing to His people. The righteousness of God is another attribute which we may well feel is an uncongenial subject. Gospel preachers not uncommonly explain that God is loving and wants to bless us, but He is also righteous and must condemn sin. This rather suggests that His righteousness is an obstacle to His desire to bless us. Indeed, God's righteousness really does preclude the possibility that He will overlook sin, and the point needs making repeatedly. And yet, surprisingly perhaps, we discover that in both Testaments the righteousness of God is more often connected with blessing than with judgment. So how can it be positively in our favour, we being sinners who deserve only condemnation?

Whereas holiness refers to God's nature, righteousness applies to His actions: 'The LORD is righteous in all his ways' (*Ps. 145:17*). In the Bible, 'righteousness' has a fuller meaning than that which we attach to the English word. For this reason modern translations tend to use different words to express various shades of meaning according to the context in which the term occurs. The NIV usually renders the same Hebrew word as 'righteousness', and for convenience this version will therefore be used here.

It is clear that the word means far more than the keeping of rules or an abstract moral quality. It has been suggested that it refers to the behaviour which is true to the claims arising out of actual relationships between two people,

With reference to God it denotes His moral nature in action, providing a standard by which all other actions must be judged. Thus God will judge the world in righteousness (*Ps. 9:8*), which means punishing the wicked and blessing the righteous: 'O righteous God, who searches the minds and hearts, bring to an end the violence of the wicked, and make the righteous secure . . . God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day' (*Ps. 7:9, 11*). The ultimate triumph of right is a cause for praise: 'I will give thanks to the LORD because of his righteousness' (*Ps. 7:17*).

Whereas our ideas of righteousness tend to be negative — not breaking this or that commandment — the Old Testament idea is positive, implying the actual doing of good. Partly because the poor and needy provide the greatest scope for well-doing in their favour, and partly because most people were often deprived of human justice, God's righteousness is often connected with their deliverance from oppression. Thus in *Ps. 31:1* the afflicted man cries 'Deliver me in your righteousness', and the coming king will judge (i.e. vindicate) the needy with righteousness (*Isa. 11:4*). Similarly, God's deliverance of Israel from foreign oppression shows His righteousness. The victories over their enemies are termed (*Judg. 5:11; 1 Sam. 12:7; Mic. 6:5*) God's righteous acts (literally 'righteousnesses'), and throughout the latter part of Isaiah the return from Babylon is said to display God's righteousness. In such passages RSV, NEB and GNB often render 'righteousness' by words like 'victory', 'deliverance', 'triumphs', and 'saving

acts', which the word obviously means in these contexts. We would not naturally associate these meanings with 'righteousness', which the same Hebrew word seems to mean elsewhere. Presumably the connection is firstly that these passages describe the triumph of right over wrong, of divine goodness over human badness; and secondly that God is righteous in standing by His covenant. God's people are the seed of Jacob His chosen one and Abraham His friend (*Isa. 41:8*), to whom God had committed Himself by an oath. It is therefore righteous of Him to stand by His word and save them from their enemies.

But what if their real enemies are internal rather than external, and the perils from which they need to be saved are their own sins rather than foreign oppressors? Can God's righteousness help them here? It is the message of *Isa. 40* onwards that it can. Thus in *ch. 59* sin has separated Israel from God, the people confess their sins (or the prophet does so on their behalf), and God acts to save them, sustained by His own righteousness. He provides them with a robe of righteousness (*61:10*). He is a righteous God and a Saviour, the only source of salvation for the Gentiles as well as Israel. In Him alone are righteousness and strength (*45:21-24*). The same idea occurs in *Ps. 51:14*: 'Save me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness'. David cannot possibly mean that simple justice should acquit him — he is thoroughly guilty and knows it — but he believes that God's goodness can somehow overcome his badness, by sheer undeserved mercy. Exactly the

same point appears in *Ps. 143:1, 2*. And *Mic. 7:9-20* describes confession of sin, witnessing God's righteousness (NIV 'justice', RSV 'deliverance'), and experiencing His forgiveness because of His oath to Abraham.

How this will actually happen is not revealed in the Old Testament, although certain hints are given. The mysterious Servant of the LORD, who suffers for His people's sins, is called in righteousness to be a covenant for the people and a light to the Gentiles (*Isa. 42:6*). And *Jer. 23:6* describes a coming king whose name will be 'The LORD our righteousness'.

NEW TESTAMENT FULFILMENT

To see all this fulfilled we must turn to the New Testament. In the first three chapters of Romans we find that God's saving righteousness, of which the law and prophets had spoken, is revealed in the gospel (*1:17; 3:21*). Paul describes man's moral corruption, and then shows that God can put us right with Himself through the death of Christ. There is some uncertainty about the exact meaning of one of the central words in his argument ('propitiation' in *3:25* AV), but the main point is clear. Sin has not been overlooked or excused but thoroughly judged. We are cleared of guilt, not by some arbitrary decree of questionable justice, but because of a costly intervention on our behalf. The details are not explained, but we are assured that God's personal righteousness, expressed in His judgment of sin, is entirely in harmony with His saving righteousness in justifying us. Thus

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THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY

Studies in 1 Samuel

David J. Clark

(2) The Philistine War: Samuel Ascendant (1 Sam. 4-8) The Capture of the Ark (4:1-22)

The punishment of God upon the house of Eli had been announced (2:27-36) and confirmed (3:11-14). Now the scene is set for its fulfilment. The Philistines were an Aegean people (*cf. Amos 9:7*) who had settled in the coastal plains of Palestine. In their general culture, they had assimilated much Canaanite influence in language and religion, but in their technology, they enjoyed a lead over the Israelites (13:19-22) which made them a serious military menace. There were frequent encounters between them and the Israelites, (*cf. the exploits of Samson against them*), and two of the more significant are narrated in this chapter.

The first resulted in a setback for Israel which caused some questioning among the elders. With little reflection and no sign of any repentance (contrast *Josh. 7:6-9*), they concluded that the physical presence of the ark on the battlefield was all that was required to tip the scale in their favour. It was accordingly brought from Shiloh, accompanied by its unworthy 'guardians' Hophni and Phinehas. It was treated with about as much respect as a regimental mascot by the Israelite forces, who greeted it with a loud cheer. Indeed, one could say that the Philistines showed more respect than the Israelites, for they at least recognized the ark as representing a deity. But instead of panicking, they stiffened their resolve (4:9), determined to avoid the complete reversal of fortune

which they feared the ark might bring about. Their victory was total. The Israelite army was routed, the ark captured and the priests slain. The Israelites were punished indeed for their 'slot machine' view of God. They learnt at the expense of many lives that, as C. S. Lewis expresses it in his Narnia stories, 'Aslan is not a tame lion.'

News of the battle reached Shiloh and caused an uproar in the town, and further disaster in Eli's family. The old man himself for whom the loss of his sons was not unexpected, could not bear the news of the ark's capture. On hearing it, he fell from his seat, and sustained injuries which proved fatal. His daughter-in-law, who was pregnant, on hearing all the news, went into sudden, possibly premature labour, and died in childbirth. In her extremity, her concern was for the loss of the ark rather than of her family, a concern commemorated in the name Ichabod bestowed upon her baby son (4:21).

Thus, at one stroke, the influence of the evil priests was eliminated and the possibility of false deference to Eli was removed. The way was now clear for Samuel to be recognized as the sole leader in Israel, combining priestly and prophetic functions. But first, the story follows the fortunes of the ark.

The Ark among the Philistines (5:1-12)

The ark was taken as a battle trophy and set up in the house of the corn god Dagon in the Philistine city of Ashdod. The victors considered that because they had defeated the people of Israel in battle, their god had also overcome the God of Israel. But they were

soon to be disillusioned, for the image of Dagon was found next day prostrate before the ark of the Lord. One such occurrence might be shrugged off as chance but a second could not, especially when next day the Dagon image was shattered by its fall.

The religious significance of these events was reinforced for the Philistines by the outbreak at this time of an epidemic that seems to have been bubonic plague. Their solution was to transfer the ark from Ashdod to Gath, but when the plague also broke out there, panic spread. The people of Ekron refused to have the ark in their city for fear of the consequences, and as a result a council of the Philistine leaders decided to send it back to Israel. If the Israelites had had to learn the lesson that the presence of the ark was no automatic guarantee of the Lord's favour, the Philistines had to learn the converse lesson, that the ark was no mere empty token of a defeated deity. To give the Philistines credit, they do at least appear to have grasped the point quite rapidly!

The Return of the Ark (6:1-7:1)

The religious leaders of the Philistines had enough insight to realise that the Israelite God whom they had offended could not simply be brushed off.

It was necessary to make a guilt offering to him, and they decided that this should be in the form of golden replicas of the mice (or rats) which were associated with the spread of the plague, and the tumours which were one of its symptoms. Presumably by a process of sympathetic magic, the Philistines aimed in sending away the replicas, to rid themselves

of the realities which they represented. Nevertheless, their religious insight was leavened by a marked dose of worldly wisdom. Golden offerings were worth good money and were not to be parted with unless there was absolutely solid reason for doing so. The Philistines loaded the ark and the offerings onto a cart. If the animals pulling the cart headed straight for Israel, then they would know that it was indeed Israel's God who had caused their troubles. But if not, then they would avoid the waste of their guilt offerings. However, the Philistines used to draw the cart two cows which had been freshly separated from their calves, which were of course kept safely in Philistine territory. In the normal course of events, the cows would have made their way directly back to their calves, so that the Philistines thus loaded the odds heavily in their own favour. No doubt to their astonishment, the cows set off straight for Israel, and the Philistines were once more reminded of the sovereignty of Israel's God. Again it can be said to the credit of the Philistines that once the result of the test became clear, they accepted it without demur.

The Israelites at Beth-shemesh who first saw the ark return were delighted and showed their joy by offering sacrifices. Some of them, however, had the audacity to look inside the ark, and consequently the Lord punished them with death. It may seem incredible that the Lord's own people could treat the ark with less respect than the heathen Philistines, but this was indeed the case. When the punishment was meted out, the reaction of the people of Beth-shemesh was similar to

that of the people of Ashdod and Gath, namely to send the ark away. The men who received it at Kiriath-jearim profited from the lesson, and treated the ark with due respect.

Samuel the Acknowledged Leader (7:2-17)

The story of the ark provides as it were a 'literary interval' during which we are to understand the growth of Samuel's authority and influence in Israel. No detail is given and the mention of 'some twenty years' (7:2) is quite vague. It is not certain whether the challenge delivered by Samuel in verse 3 is given at the end of the twenty year period, or at some point during it, nor is this of major importance. The real point is that Samuel was the undisputed leader of the nation and had clear authority to issue such a challenge. The challenge itself was to translate repentance from feeling into action by destroying the images of Baal and Astarte used in the Canaanite fertility rites.

Samuel linked this renewed dedication to the Lord with deliverance from the Philistines.

When the Israelites were pre-

pared to obey, Samuel summoned them to Mizpah for an official ceremony of repentance. The Philistines heard what was happening, and as if to challenge the Israelites' renewed zeal, gathered for an attack. Special intercession from Samuel brought a clear answer from the Lord. A thunderstorm threw the Philistine forces into disarray, and paved the way for a victory for Israel which ushered in a period of relatively peaceful coexistence with her neighbours.

The victory itself was commemorated by the setting up of a stone called Ebenezer, the Stone of Help, doubtless intended to act as a constant reminder to the people of the faithfulness of their Lord.

At this time, Samuel acted as a judge in the legal as well as the military sense, and went on an annual circuit settling disputes among his people.

The Rejection of Theocracy (8:1-22)

Samuel's own conduct as a judge was above reproach, but that of his sons was not. Successful though Samuel was as a father to the nation, he nevertheless failed as a father in his own family.

No details are given, but the

very fact of his failure stands as a warning to each generation of Christian leaders that it is all too possible to give oneself to the work of the Lord at the expense of one's family, with disastrous results. The behaviour of Samuel's sons Joel and Abijah in his old age became the excuse for the elders of the nation to request a profound change in the social structure of the nation. They wanted to have a human king instead of acknowledging the Lord alone as their king. Verse 5 carries the implication that a king should stamp out corruption and verse 20 specifies that he should be a strong military leader. These hopes were, however, merely excuses to rationalize the desires of the people. The underlying motivation is revealed in the phrase 'like all the nations' which also occurs in verses 5 and 20. The chosen nation wanted to conform to the social pattern of the nations around them, regardless of how this affected their relationship with the Lord. This is a kind of pressure still very much with us today, and while the Christian will not adorn his testimony by trying to be different just for the sake of being different, nevertheless there come times for all of us when

we must be prepared to stand apart from our contemporaries for the sake of our faith in the Lord.

Samuel saw in the people's request a measure of rejection of himself as a person, but the Lord reassured him that the people's attitude was really one of rejection of their God, and was all of a piece with their conduct since the wilderness days. Inevitably the man of God shared in the rejection of God, and such rejection can still be the uncomfortable experience of the Christian who is willing to refuse to conform to standards around him with which he disagrees.

It was Samuel's task to point out to the people the consequences of the choice they were making. A king would introduce taxes and forced labour, and would prove militaristic, grandiose, extravagant and tyrannical. Despite this clear warning, the people persisted in their choice and the Lord allowed them to go ahead. But as with any human moral choice, the people had to live with the consequences of their decision. Much of the rest of the book is taken up with describing what these were.



The Righteousness of God

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He is righteous when He justifies the believer in Jesus (3:26), echoing *Isa. 45:21* 'a righteous God and a Saviour'. As a result, grace reigns through righteousness to bring eternal life (*Rom. 5:21*). Again, in *1 John 1:9* 'he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins'. Christ was made to be sin for us so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (2 *Cor. 5:21*). And in *1 Cor. 1:30* Christ is called 'our righteousness', fulfilling the promise of *Jer. 23:6*.

But is it really important to know that God's righteousness is involved in our salvation? We may possibly feel that it is rather a technical theological point and we would be just as happy thinking that we are

saved simply by God's love. There are, however, good reasons for seeing the gospel in this light. Firstly, it gives us a right view of God, correcting any misapprehension that He overlooks or condones sin. Secondly, it gives firm grounds for assurance in the security of all who are in Christ, since God's very righteousness is at stake in their salvation. It is the right and proper thing for Him to bless those who are linked with His Son, for He once bore their sins and now represents them before God. Thirdly, it rids us of any lingering belief in our own merit; we can say with Paul, 'not having a righteousness of my own, . . . but . . . the righteousness that comes from God' (*Phil. 3:9*).

God intends that His righteousness shall be seen not only in our standing before Him but also in our behaviour. We are to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (*Eph. 4:24*). Our example is Jesus, the Righteous One (*Acts 7:52*). Whose followers are to be righteous as He is righteous (1 *John 3:7*). The Sermon on the Mount shows that Christian righteousness goes far beyond mere legal rectitude — it means doing good to all, even our enemies, as we have opportunity. This righteousness is like God's as we have experienced it.

The New Testament also speaks of God's righteousness expressed in judgment and executed by Christ (*Acts 17:31; Rom. 2:5*). In the vision of the

seven bowls of wrath it is repeatedly stated that God's ways in judgment are just or righteous (*Rev. 15:3; 16:5, 7*). It is clear that God's judgment will be seen to be absolutely fair, and this is in itself a cause for worship (15:4). Furthermore, in His capacity as the righteous Judge the Lord will award the crown of righteousness to those who love His appearing (2 *Tim. 4:8*).

Thus the New Testament takes up the various aspects of God's righteousness referred to by the Old and shows them all fully revealed in Christ. Not only are believers delivered from the fear that it is against them; they rejoice in it as the basis of their eternal security.



CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (7)

J. E. Todd

... of Resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3-58)

God never asks us to believe his promise without first giving us an example of his ability to perform that promise. We are promised in Scripture that the bodies of Christians who have died will be resurrected at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. 'The dead in Christ will rise first' (1 Thess. 4:13-18). 'The dead will be raised imperishable' (1 Cor. 15:51-55). But how can bodies which are in an advanced state of decomposition or have even disappeared altogether be made to live again? There are certain facts to be borne in mind before a final answer is given to this important question.

First, the Scriptures teach that although our bodies are part of us, they are by no means the whole of us, not even the most important part. We are told that we live in our bodies as if in a tent, and that we can live apart from this temporary dwelling. 'The putting off of my body (lit. tent) will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. And I will see to it after my departure (i.e. from the body) you may be able at any time to recall these things' (2 Pet. 1:14-15). 'We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord' (2 Cor. 5:6-8). The Scriptures refer to our own self, which lives in our body, as the soul. But never as the 'immortal' soul: the word

immortal (i.e. deathlessness) is used in Scripture of the resurrection body. The soul does exist for eternity, but in the unbeliever it is already spiritually dead and after the last judgment will be eternally dead. Hardly a state of deathlessness!

Second, in answer to the objection of how it can be the same body when the former body has disappeared through complete corruption, it is to be remembered that we have had many bodies. The bodies of babyhood, childhood, youth, adulthood and old age are different in every way (often unrecognizably so), even to material composition. But it is the same person, the same soul, living in each. It is the continued existence of the soul, of the person themselves, which is the vital factor. The resurrected person is the same person who died, it is the same soul.

Third, a help to our understanding comes from an unexpected source, the recent discoveries of science. Scientists have discovered the existence of the DNA code. In the centre of each of the millions of living cells which make up our bodies is a copy of our DNA code. This is a microscopic strip of material with a code upon it made up by four acids. This complex code describes our whole bodies, from the number of hairs on our head to the colour of our eyes, even our growth pattern. Each cell reads off from the code the part it is to play in our bodies. Our own DNA code is unique to ourselves. This code is known to God. He has our

physical blueprint to work to at the resurrection! Our resurrection body will be a perfect expression of our DNA code, unmarred, as at present, by malnutrition, deformities, disease, accident and old-age.

But the final answer to the question of how God can raise the dead is that he has already done so. Resurrection is recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures (1 Kgs. 17:22, 2 Kgs. 4:34). Our Lord raised the dead on three occasions, the widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:15), the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:55) and Lazarus (John 11:44). But the supreme example of God's ability to raise the dead is the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. His resurrection is the example of our resurrection. 'Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ' (1 Cor. 15:23).

The Scriptures teach that the resurrection of Christ is an example of divine power. 'Designated Son of God in power . . . by his resurrection from the dead' (Rom. 1:4). 'His (God's) great might, which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead' (Eph. 1:19-20). This is an historical example of the same divine power which will raise Christians from the dead and change living Christians at the second advent. 'The Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself' (Phil. 3:21).

This verse, 'Our lowly body to be like his glorious body', also shows that the immortal body of Christ at his resurrection is

an example of our bodies at our resurrection. A body not subject to death, in which we can live out our eternal life. Flesh and blood in its present mortal state of aging and dying obviously cannot inherit an eternal kingdom (1 Cor. 15:50-54). But Christ's resurrection body is an example of our physical immortality. 'See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have' (Luke 24:39). He has already lived in that body for 2,000 years!

He is also an example of our sinless perfection at the resurrection. 'We know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure' (1 John 3:2-3). We shall be like him in his sinless purity. He could not sin, we shall not be able to sin. In the eternal state of the new heaven and new earth, a second 'fall of man', as in the Garden of Eden, will be impossible. 'According to his promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells' (2 Pet. 3:13).

The Scriptures refer to our Lord Jesus Christ as the pioneer of our salvation (Heb. 2:10 RSV). A pioneer is one who goes before to prepare the way for those who follow after. The Lord has passed through death and resurrection into the physical immortality of eternity as an example of the Christian's future joyful journey.



PREACHER'S WORKSHOP

Preaching from the Old Testament (III)

H. L. Ellison

The first two articles on this subject were largely unsatisfactory, for they were mostly negative. It was not surprising that they produced some polite squeals from those who love allegory and typology. Though these were in measure justified, they largely failed to carry conviction. The man who has no interest in or knowledge of the Old Testament is little likely to be moved by such an approach, though he may well be by a straightforward use of one of the Old Testament's many stories. Even to the believer the dynamic power of the Word of God is likely to be lacking, however pleased the speaker may be with his skill at discovering what is not there. With rare exceptions commandments and prohibitions have an easily discovered moral purpose behind them. It takes spiritual insight to discern their applicability today, but applicability there is. This should be fearlessly stated, even if none will obtain eternal life by doing or refraining from these things. It matters little whether the motivation we discover was

actually that of the original lawgiving, so long as our suggestion accords with the general tenor of Scripture. When Paul wrote, 'These things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction' (1 Cor. 10:11), it is extremely unlikely, that he meant that God willed Israel's sins, so that we might learn from them. It is rather from their punishment that we are to learn. Even so today, seeing that God has not changed, His rewards and punishments for Israel show how He reacts to man's obedience or disobedience today. Indeed, providing we always recognize that there are heights and depths in God's revelation in Christ, which we shall normally look for in vain in the Old Testament, we can apply commandments, history and prophecy to our own satisfaction, without explaining away by allegorizing or spiritualizing. In fact the last mentioned finds its justification and necessary use in the fact that we live in a material world so created by

God that there are constant analogies between the material and spiritual worlds. There remains typology to be considered. This is often confused with allegory, but it is entirely legitimate, though in many circumstances we may question its wisdom. Allegory is based on our unfettered imagination, finding meanings in a story, which are fairly obviously not there. Typology is based on a story or a piece of legislation, like the structure of the Tabernacle, or the details of its worship. Since it is obvious that the details were in themselves intended as a revelation to Israel, so they will equally convey one to the Church today. In addition we are shown in Hebrews how we can best use them. The danger arises when we start drawing lessons which Israel knew nothing of and indeed would never have reached. We are also on dangerous ground, when we seek to draw lessons from what could hardly have been otherwise, e.g. if we seek to learn from the boards of the Taber-

nacle having been acacia wood, for that was the only larger timber available in the Sinai desert. Even here a caveat is in place. There was a time, when in certain Christian circles the details of the Levitical legislation were known and familiar to all, except those who had been bored stiff. There typological teaching could be most welcome. Today, however, such a knowledge cannot be taken for granted, so the speaker proclaims the unknown on the basis of the unknown. To apply typology to stories is always to run the risk of allegory. It assumes that God overruled and fixed all the details, an assumption we find no justification for in Scripture. It is one thing to say that God rules and overrules, quite another to maintain that God forces us into a pattern not of our choosing. God did not force David to commit adultery with Bathsheba and murder Uriah, though some of the consequences were clearly of His ordering.

Sidelights from the Old Testament

The Go'el

H. L. Ellison

December's theme of the blood-feud leads logically to that of the Go'el. This term, which comes from Israelite family law, has so many applications, that the normal English translations do not indicate the relationship of the various contexts. Go'el is the verbal noun from a verb meaning to claim something, a person or a thing, from another, i.e. to redeem him or it. As indicated by *Ruth 3:9, 12* this legal right was strictly confined to the next-of-kin. Among the things that could be redeemed were houses and land (*Lev. 25:29,31,32*) under

certain conditions, or a man who had become a slave (*Lev. 25:47-49*), though in this case it did not have to be the next-of-kin. The concept of next-of-kin seems to disappear completely when ga'al is used for buying back or 'redeeming' animals, houses, land dedicated to God (*Lev.27*) or the tithe (*Lev. 27:31*). It is not clear which meaning the dominant usage in *Ruth* has. However we interpret Boaz' actions, it is almost certain that we are not to see in it an extension of levirate marriage, for which the ga'al root is never used. Rather the pri-

mary stress seems to be on land (*4:3*) and this may explain the vocabulary used and the stress on the next-of-kin. There is nothing surprising then that ga'al came to be used for deliverance in general, or redemption, when there is no real question of a price paid, e.g. *Gen. 48:16, Exod. 6:6, Hos. 13:14*. All this means that we have no right, when God is called Israel's redeemer (go'el) — *Isa. 41:14; 43:14; 44:6, Jer. 50:34*, etc. — to ask ourselves what price was paid, or to suggest that God is being called Israel's kinsman. The question of price

is more pressing, where padah is used, e.g. *Isa. 29:22, Jer. 15:21; 31:11*. *Job 19:25* is translated in NEB, 'I know that my vindicator lives', so also RV, mg. The context confirms that this is the true sense which shows how elastic the inner meaning of go'el could become. When it is used of God it seems to come very near the New Testament *parakletos*, which we render inadequately as Advocate, Counsellor, Comforter. Surely all these meanings are foreshadowed in the use of go'el as applied to Israel's God.



LOOKING AT BOOKS

BIOGRAPHY TO PROFIT

In Retrospect: Remembrance of Things Past

F. F. Bruce. Pickering & Inglis. 319pp. £7.50.

No Mere Chance

John Laird. Hodder & Stoughton. £5.50 (paperback)

Recent months have seen the publication of memoirs by two men who have by any criterion been among the formative influences on late twentieth century evangelicalism. What makes their stories of particular interest to readers of *The Harvester* is that both of them were brought up and have spent the whole of their adult lives with churches of Brethren: their stories are therefore no small part of the wider story of the influence of such churches in the Church at large.

Both Fred Bruce and John Laird were products of Scottish Brethrenism: though one might qualify as a Highlander and the other as a Lowlander. The similarities in their early background are part of the fascination which their reminiscences will have for our readers. Their later careers have been spent in widely different aspects of the Church's life: both men are too modest for their books to be adequate aids to the assessment of their contributions respectively to the Church's biblical scholarship and to its evangelistic approach to the modern world; but that will, one trusts, follow from the pens of other men. In the meantime we have these two wholly delightful volumes of personal reminiscence and practical wisdom.

Professor Bruce's book reprints, with some expansion, the series of articles of personal history that appeared over an extended period in the pages of *The Witness*. It gives, therefore, a unique insight into the now distant world of provincial Brethrenism as it was in the earlier part of this century: older readers will find their own nostalgic memories being constantly stirred. But, Professor Bruce having been the man of wide experience and learning that he is, the book goes on to take us into wider pastures at home and overseas, and to

take us behind the scenes in all sorts of interesting places in the worlds of international biblical scholarship and of wider church life. (The reviewer admits to one deep regret, in that the chapter which the contents page promised on 'Some bore books' did not materialise; that, from Professor Bruce, would have been quite something, and under his hat as editor of *The Harvester* he hopes that it might yet appear in the pages of our magazine!). The personal character, with its dry humour and its sagacious asides, and the unassuming personal modesty that is so characteristic of its wearer, and that has made so many of his fellow-Christians look upon Professor Bruce with a real affection, is everywhere evident.

John Laird's story of his early life, his days as a medical student, of his journey as a ship's doctor to New Zealand where he found himself involved in the Napier earthquake, and then of how he came to leave his promising professional career to devote his life to the international work of Scripture Union, should be read not only for its intrinsic interest but even more for the many wise comments and counsels with which it is liberally filled. Some of the book must have cost Dr. Laird a great deal to write. He spares neither himself nor his organisation where he feels that a mistake has something to teach others, and for that very many are going to be grateful to him. This book is not merely interesting reminiscence: like Professor Bruce's, but in a different manner, it ought to be required reading for any young person who wishes his or her life to be its best for God. Pre-eminent through its course is its writer's consciousness that his life was under the hand of God, and his ability to point to many times when God's leading was unmistakably apparent.

Thank you, both of our brethren, and may you long remain with us to build us up in the Faith.

Review by the Editor of The Harvester

BIBLICAL PROPHECY

The Presence of the Future

George E. Ladd. SPCK. xiv + 370pp. £4.95 (paperback). When this book first appeared in 1964 with the title *Jesus and the Kingdom* it was immediately recognized as a most comprehensive and satisfying treatment of the Kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus. Professor Ladd, who teaches at Fuller Theological Seminary in California, is a fine evangelical scholar. He is fully acquainted with the writings of other scholars, past and present, and deals fairly but firmly with their opinions; but he develops his own view of

the kingdom with clarity and persuasiveness. Without forcing the evidence into a straitjacket, Dr. Ladd shows how 'the dynamic rule of God', which was promised in the OT, invaded history in the person and work of Jesus in such a way that it is possible for people to enjoy now the blessings of the messianic age, and yet to be assured that the consummation of the kingdom in all its fullness of salvation is still to come.

This new edition — with a new Preface, a revised and updated chapter on 'The Debate on Eschatology' and an updated Bibliography — is strongly

recommended for anyone who really wants to understand the teaching of Jesus.

*Review by John W. Baigent,
West London Institute of
Higher Education.*

God In Control

Robert Gurney. H. E. Walter. xiv + 196pp. £7.75 (hardback), £2.95 (paperback).

Dr. Gurney, who is a medical missionary working amongst Muslims in Kenya, has long been fascinated by the prophecies of Daniel. His researches in this area have already resulted in a number of

articles in journals. Now he has set down and explained his views for a wider Christian readership.

He believes 'that the prophecies of Daniel are the most remarkable predictive prophecies ever made'. Unlike most conservative commentators, however, he argues that Daniel's fourth kingdom is the Greek empire not the Roman. He agrees with those who say that the book of Daniel was written to encourage the Jews who were persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes, but he believes that it was genuine prediction written in the sixth

century. Above all, Dr. Gurney sees Daniel's seventy weeks as predicting the exact date of the beginning of the ministry of Jesus (A.D.26) and closing with the conversion of Paul (A.D.33). *Dan. 9:26,27* is seen as being fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D.70). He also goes on to show that *Dan. 11:40-45* is not an erroneous prediction of how Antiochus was to meet his fate, but an accurate prediction of

how the Greek empire was to be destroyed. A final chapter relates Daniel to the book of Revelation. There is much to interest and provoke in this fresh look at Daniel. Whatever else may fail to convince, surely no one will quarrel with the statement that the message of Daniel's prophecies is as true now as it was over two thousand years ago: God is in control.

Review by John W. Baigent



READERS' FORUM

READERS' FORUM IS HELD OVER THIS MONTH FOR LACK OF SPACE

HIGH AND DRY ON A ROCK-STREWN BEACH

Continued from Page 11

technology, Christians have been unduly influenced by the world's way of handling problems. We are experts at analysis, we are fertile in producing fresh gimmicks, we uncritically allow sociology to trespass into areas of spiritual need where it has nothing in fact to contribute. History and the Bible combine to teach us what was made clear at Haamstede — that the needs can

only be met, and will only be met by a sovereign gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit in revival.

For evangelical Christians God 'writes the agenda', not the world around us. And whatever may come first on the world's scheme of things there is no doubt what is first on God's — it is Revival.

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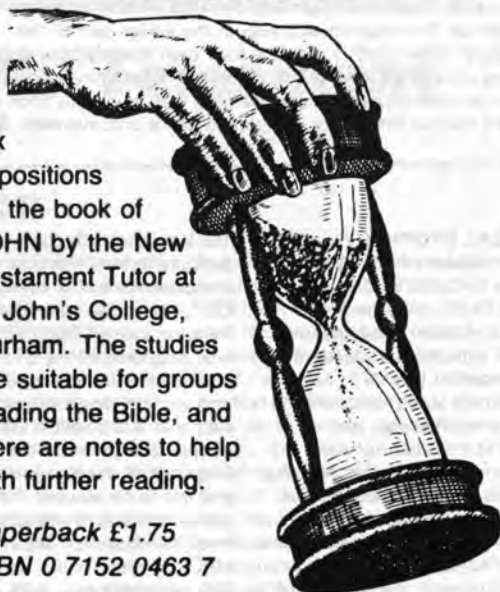
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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The December question:

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?

Mr. M. G. Schmidt of New Zealand (replying to the earlier question, but relevant to this) writes:

I fully recognize that an Antipodean has no chance of attempting to answer an FFB question to meet the dead-line of 15 July so expect no reply, but here goes!

Re *John 13:14*, at the risk of offending the injunctions of *1 Cor. 13*, I first of all sense a faint cynicism in the references to 'cultural conditioning'. Those who dismiss the 'cultural conditioning' defence of rebels against the controversial sections of *1 Cor. 11* and *1 Cor. 14* are hereby hoist to their own petard, the inference being, so to say: 'You who sneer at a "cultural conditioning" defence — how can you apply it to a literal interpretation of footwashing and claim to be consistent?'

My (lay and feeble) answer is: There are a handful of NT customs not observed in 'assemblies'. Included are: feet-washing, greeting one another with a holy kiss, lifting up holy hands and laying on of hands. Taking these in order; —

Feet-washing. I gather from a source I regard as reliable that this is practised at Grace Theological in USA — a top

quality institution. This gives me to feel encouraged to obey. As to frequency or setting for it I'm at a loss.

The Holy Kiss. Last year in France and other parts of Europe I experienced it for the first time — very acceptably and decorously — I found it. (Brothers greet brothers, I noticed, and not the pretty young girls.)

Lifting up holy hands. This, like the previous one, isn't given much prominence, though I'd conform with a bit of prodding. I shrink a bit from it as it seems ostentatious, especially against the current 'loud' and somewhat pretentious convolutions of the hyper-charismatics.

Laying on of hands. I have no objections provided it stops short of (a) pretensions to apostolic gifts e.g. imparting spiritual gifts, and (b) being reserved only for 'clerical' appointments, e.g. establishing someone to a monarchical presidency of some kind. My guess is that early 'brethren' shied away from it because of its abuse.

The controversy about sisters wearing head-coverings seems to me more crucial because of its connection with such a fundamental doctrine as headship, other Scriptural principles and the Apostle's specific reference to its universal application. As Harold Lindsell pointed out in Auckland recently, we need to resist purely feminist pressure, noting that nowhere does he find men in church in hats. He also lamented the rigid neutrality of evangelical scholars — their total refusal to stick their necks out on anything at all.

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

Yes; I can think of two 'externalities' — perhaps three, and all to be found where one would expect: in the *Acts of the Apostles* (and others). The first is in *6:6*. Here the twelve apostles, to show their confidence and fellowship, laid their hands on the seven men presented to them by the church members to be responsible to distribute sustenance equitably to the widows among them so as to restore

unity where there was then grumbling. I can recall the occasion in London many years ago when a certain brother, on the occasion of his farewell for missionary service in Africa, found himself surrounded by the elders, on the platform, who each placed a hand on his shoulders in commendation. Perhaps there should be more of this when a brother or sister is commended for full-time service if he or she prefers it to the normal handshaking afterwards.

The other 'externality' is found in *20:37*; when Paul had sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus for a farewell address. At its conclusion, and after they had all knelt in prayer together, the elders embraced and kissed Paul because they realized that they would see him no more. Today, some older brethren who have not seen one another for a long time, or for an indefinite departure, have been known to kiss each other. Perhaps there should be more of this, too, even among younger brethren as well as shaking hands with both sexes. The sisters kiss one another regularly, and so perhaps more brethren should do so on significant occasions.

Mr. Malcolm Jones replies:

It seems to me that whilst there are some 'externalities' of New Testament religious practice which were based on cultural or climatic considerations (e.g. feet-washing, and the manner of greeting with a holy kiss) there were others which were established independently of, and sometimes in direct conflict with, local customs and culture.

Among these latter 'externalities' might be placed the regulations made in *1 Cor. 11* as to head-coverings during church gatherings. For it would appear that whilst Jewish males covered their heads in the synagogues and Gentile women left their heads uncovered whilst attending their pagan temples, Paul reverses both for Christians meeting together in local churches.

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.

Financial Support of Evangelists

From the Principal of Haven School of Evangelism

Dear Sir,

As a School we have been making enquiries into the financial living conditions of evangelists, some of whom have been trained in our own centre.

I have spoken to quite a few and would like to identify three which have given me the following figures.

No. 1 After deducting all his expenses had £45 per week. Out of this £45 he had to provide for his family (including two children).

No. 2 To pay all his expenses, running a car and having to provide for his family (two children) £64 per week.

No. 3 With all expenses to pay, running a car and providing for a teenage daughter in college £74 per week.

By these examples you can see that assembly evangelists are living on the 'bread line' and I am wondering whether we are supporting the Lord's servants as we should.

A pastor minister lives on a higher stipend and has his car expenses, telephone and petrol covered by the church, yet the evangelist is serving a more varied area in his work: factories, campaigns, door to door visitation and many types of work which most Christians shrink from.

Perhaps it would be possible for someone to set up an Echoes of Home Service that could help to support the home worker. Our experience here is that assemblies seem interested in both the foreign mission field and work in their immediate area. No provision is made for the 'evangelist of courage' who is prepared to church-plant in districts where the Gospel is not being preached.

Yours sincerely,
Douglas Burton
Haven School of Evangelism
1 Westgate Hill
Pembroke
Dyfed. SA71 4LA

In search of Mammon

From Mr. W. Dickson

Dear Mr. Editor,

Two or three years ago **The Harvester** carried a series of advertisements inserted by a Mr. Applegate, in the small print of which the words 'church treasurers' was misprinted 'church treasures'. This caused me no small merriment. It also made me look back over some 50 years of association with the kind of churches in which **The Harvester** normally circulates. I was able to recall one or two church treasurers who in retrospect might also be regarded as church treasures. I remember particularly one good brother who not only produced and signed the annual financial statement but also signed it himself as auditor! At the moment the same Mr. Applegate's advertisement carries wording which, while there is no misprint, might perhaps be fairly described as a gaffe. I refer to the bold heading 'And now for the good news'. The clear implication in such words is that all the previous content of the magazine has been 'bad' news. I know that there is no such intention. But if the words 'and now for the' were deleted leaving the heading to read 'Good News' there could be no such suggestion!

Yours sincerely,
W. Dickson
18 Raith Hall
Ayr KA7 4UF

(Noted! — Ed)

Structured Leadership

From Mr. D. A. Sims

Dear Mr. Coad,

I have just read Dr. Boyes' response to

the Readers' Forum article on Structured Leadership contributed by Mr. Warren. It is clear to me that both contributors are making valid points which need not be mutually exclusive. On the one hand, Dr. Boyes is right to stress that shared eldership is a valuable asset — as many other churches are discovering. We ought not to contemplate any course of action which would undermine that principle.

However, there are equally important considerations which tend to support Mr. Warren's case. My own experience is that an 'Oversight' is a very impersonal entity (and probably unbiblical anyway) whereas individual elders can be related to more personally. It is very desirable that church-members should know of someone who speaks for the elders and who can also communicate questions and comments to them. It is noticeable in our own Assembly (where there is no recognised Chairman) that church members themselves identify one of the brethren as 'the Leading Brother'.

Turning to Scripture I would offer two thoughts. The first is that whilst it may not be right to appoint a leader for the sake of it we ought to recognize the fact that sometimes God raises up such an individual. If, in our Assembly, there should be a man who, under God, has the potential to provide strong, spiritual leadership we should acknowledge him and give him as much freedom as possible. Is it not possible that the loss of gifted young leaders from the Assemblies to other churches (or to inter-denominational organisations) is partially due to our failure to give them enough scope? Although I, myself, remain in the Brethren, I understand only too well the frustration of seeing initiative and vision neutralised by a system that is inherently conservative. Secondly, the recognition of such gift should not deter others from playing their full part. On the contrary, Eph. 4:11,12

suggest that God raises up people with strategic gifts so that every believer may be helped to play his/her God ordained role more effectively. In short, we would be wise to avoid overmuch dogmatism on either side of the question. Let us recognize the value of what we have. But let us also be flexible enough to realise that, within our present framework, there is scope for fresh development as and when the Lord directs.

Yours very sincerely,
David R. Sims
17 Beaulieu Road
Christchurch
Dorset
BH23 2EA

Practical consideration for others

From Professor Coralie Rendle-Short

Dear Mr. Coad,
The Year of the Disabled has recently ended. It has been of value in bringing to light some of the problems these people have to face, and how they could be helped.

Attending a place of worship can be particularly difficult. Many of our churches are old, and to reach the central hall it is often necessary to go up several steps and turn abruptly to left or right and enter through a narrow door. This may be well-nigh impossible to someone in a wheelchair, or who has difficulty in walking.

Surely something should be done? A sloping board over half the steps, or it may be easier to use a side door. What about a notice saying 'If you have difficulty with steps, please go . . . where you will find it easier'.

It is no good saying, 'but we don't have anyone attending in a wheelchair'. Maybe, if they knew they were welcome, and could get inside, they would attend! It could be a good talking point to people in the neighbourhood of the church.

Blind people usually do get helped, but the hard-of-hearing seldom. For one thing, no-one may know they cannot hear well, or they may be visitors. The Breaking-of-Bread service, by its very informality, difficult for those with abnormal hearing. Hymns are not announced beforehand on a board.

People get up and speak from the back, or sides. In some churches an amplifier is provided, but at the communion service, it is seldom used; sometimes even rejected.

Hard-of-hearing people rely a great deal on lip reading. If they cannot see the speaker, they are lost.

Would it not be possible, when a hymn is given out, for someone with normal hearing, to write the number quickly on a small blackboard*, and hold it up, in the way people are

**Or a further use for that back-projector that every church should possess and use! — Ed.*

'paged' in a large hotel? Similarly, if someone is going to talk on a special passage, 'Galatians 2', or 'Psalm 64', might be written. A reliable teen-ager could do a real service this way. An Anglican communion is much easier to follow, as there is a written liturgy, and many people have given up the Brethren, for this very reason. Actually it is not only those with hearing difficulty, who would benefit. For someone whose mother-tongue is not English, hearing a brother mumbling 'two-thirty-two' at the back, may be quite incomprehensible. Anyway, a hymn number should always be repeated, the second time, as 'two, three, two'! Surely, this is one way in which we can 'bear one another's burdens', as instructed by Saint Paul.

Yours sincerely,
Coralie Rendle-Short
9 Winchmore Drive
Trumpington
Cambridge CB2 2LW

What is the Gospel?

From Mr. Robert McGeechie

Dear Mr. Coad,
In my earlier letter on this topic, I confined my remarks to *John 3:16*, largely to show that the scope of the verse is much more comprehensive than the preaching on it usually is. Mr. David Lillie's comments on the Gospel

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

Continued from Page 15

If, then, this externality does not now convey the spiritual value which it conveyed in the first century (though it was established independently of first century customs) the cause might well lie in the area of it not being taught to convey what it did in the first century. On such grounds the remedy is not to disregard the 'externality' but to give it the value it was introduced to convey. For example, our normal diet today is far different in the U.K. from what it was in the Eastern Mediterranean during the first century, and yet we still remember the Lord Jesus by breaking bread and drinking from the cup; for whilst much has changed in society over the centuries and continents, this 'externality' is taught to convey what it originally did.

Should we not apply the same attitude towards the 'externality' of the first half of 1 Cor. 11 as we do to the second half?

(The Editor adds:

I note that Professor Bruce asked for externalities that should be preserved regardless of the degree to which they still convey the spiritual values. Mr. Forrest instances two which he considers should be preserved just because they do preserve their spiritual values. Whether an attempt to fly in the face of all our environment and to insist on reinserting spiritual values that have long since been lost, as Mr. Jones advises, is a profitable use of our energies, might be a moot point. What, however, must be clear, if we

*insist on externalities, is what those externalities were. One thing is clear about 1 Cor. 11; as a friend recently remarked to me, 'it has nothing to say about millinery'! Few passages have been more subject to interpretation in the course of translation. A favourite view of translators seems to tend to the veil — but such a conservative and learned NT scholar as the late Dr. W. J. Martin gave solid reasons for the 'covering' being the woman's unshorn hair (a view which some English versions seem to make untenable, but which Dr. Martin's exposition of the Greek makes far less so) (see '1 Cor. 11:2-16: an Interpretation' in *Apostolic History and the Gospel* ed. Gasque and Martin, Paternoster 1970, pp. 223-241).)*

are much appreciated, and in general I agree with them.

The only quarrel I have with him is in making any statement on chronology based on the Gospel of John. I should have thought that the fourth Gospel was a meditation on the life and works of Jesus, written many years after the events and in which chronology was much less important than the meaning of the words and the events.

In any case, this turns out to be irrelevant since there is only one Gospel as Mr. Lillie correctly says. I would go even further than he does in his demolition of dispensationalism. I believe that the relationship with God enjoyed by the Jewish people long before the Coming of Christ was based, like ours, on repentance and faith and was expressed as ours ought to be, in 'doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly . . .'

I still believe that *John 3:16* has in germ all the elements of the Good News, if Mr. Lillie will allow that Eternal Life is both a gift from God and the description of a relationship with vertical and horizontal components and commitments.

Yours sincerely,
Robert McGechie
81 Laburnum Grove
Stirling

Women in the Church

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,

It may be that Mr. Hotchin had his tongue in his cheek when, Dec '81, he asked as to women's role, 'Is it really impossible for our Bible teachers to settle the question by a careful exposition of the relevant Scriptures?'. Taking the matter seriously, the short answer, I submit, is that really it is impossible.

One reason concerns the relation of local churches to each other. Their independence is a doctrine most surely believed among so-called 'Open Brethren'; so the exposition emanating from any group of 'bible teachers' might not commend itself to all local churches, and could not bind the decision of any of them.

The other reason is sufficient of itself to veto the idea of 'settling' a controversial question in the way envisaged. This is because that way foreshadows the production of a kind of papal bull — the formulation of a rule. It cannot be repeated too often that in this day of the Spirit, when we

are in the good of the new covenant, any idea that a local assembly should have a rule book is quite invalid. The fact that there are assemblies that act as if they **did** have a book of rules is regrettable. It is most sad that thereby such demonstrate that they 'know not what manner of spirit they are of'.

Before me is a pamphlet that must have appeared for the first time at least some 120 years ago. It is entitled 'By faith ye stand', and concerns the way Paul, in his Corinthian epistles, dealt with the state of affairs in that church. One quotation must suffice:—

'No present authority, however legitimate; no creed, however orthodox; no regulations, however wise, can supply the place of standing by faith, which is the ground of all healthy action in the Church'.

As to women's role, a book to set beside W. E. Vine's **The Church and the Churches** might be G. H. Lang's **The Churches of God**; and has Mr. Hotchin, I wonder, sampled the food for thought in Dorothy Pape's **God and Women**? Meanwhile the following three points suggest themselves:

(1) Mary of Bethany 'sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word'. Did the Spirit not bring to her remembrance (*John 14:26*) the things Jesus had told her?; and is it to be thought that subsequently she did not re-tell them to the disciples?

(2) In the garden, the risen Lord specifically instructed Mary Magdalene to go to His brethren and **say unto them**, 'I ascend . . .'

(3) The Lord promised to be in the midst where two or three are gathered together in his name. Was he not present when Aquila and Priscilla and Apollos discussed the scriptures? and did He not approve as Priscilla, in addition to Aquila, unfolded to Apollos the way of God more exactly?

I can well imagine some of the retorts to these points. Even so, it remains for consideration whether some of us have not been rather too ready to put all our eggs into the basket labelled 'Made in Corinth'.

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

Typology: the case against

From Mr. T. B. Wattam

Dear Mr. Coad,
In last month under 'Correspondence', the old subject of allegory is given

another airing. If this subject was merely to do with the question of the names of people and places, reason would that we could bear with it, but many of us have lived long enough to recall that a lot of allegory and typology has been used for sinister purposes, especially in the realm of what is called for the want of a better word 'Church Truth'.

A certain book was loudly acclaimed a few years ago on the subject of 'Recovery'. It was based on the *Book of Ruth*. The plan or allegory was very simple. Naomi and Ruth's family were a type of the Early Brethren and their recovery of the real truth in 1845 or so. This was linked with the letter to the Church at Philadelphia (*Rev. 3*). Any throughgoing 'assembly man' could fill in the details and use them to the scornful criticism of his brethren whom he deemed to be not enjoying this aspect of 'recovery'!

One could easily give dozens of interpretations of allegorical teachings drawn from articles in the *Tabernacle*. Mr. Darby believes the Cherubim spoke of the judicial attributes of God. Mr. T. Newberry said they spoke of the Spirit and his activity in God's people.

Mr. Handley Bird in his able book **The Cherubim of Glory** said they spoke of redeemed mankind: etc, etc.

One feels convinced that for clear thinking and exposition we should always remember that life and incorruptibility have been brought to light through the Gospel: that is, the teaching of the N.T. When I read the works of Prof. F. F. Bruce and Mr. Ellison I always feel they have this principle in mind. Therefore we are never led into what is hazy or nebulous or questionable.

Yours sincerely,
T. B. Wattam
81A Charnock Dale Road
Sheffield S12 3HR

We regret that on page 16 of the January **Harvester** Mr. D. Williams' address was incorrectly given. It is: 91 Arundel Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey. KT1 3RY

NEWS PAGE



Africa

Ethiopian Churches have been recording higher attendances than ever, according to Winrich Scheffbuch, working for the German Evangelical Alliance. 'When people are converted in our country, they become evangelists the same day' a pastor told the German visitor. This growth has taken place in spite of setbacks and problems encountered as a result of the revolution in 1974 which brought a change in government. However, the most recent news from Ethiopia is of increasing persecution of confessing Christians.

From Uganda Festo Kivengere writes of living in a community of broken relationships due to inter-tribal hostility and the aftermath of the Amin regime. Yet the message of the Cross is doing its work of rehabilitating and reconciling. Some employers say they want Christians only working for them because they know that Christians don't steal. At a school in Kigezi many boys and girls accepted Jesus after hearing a preacher's testimony. On Monday, the amazed headmaster got back many of the pencils, books, ink, and papers that had been 'lost'.

Bible Colleges

Bangui is in the Central African Republic — not the best known state in Africa. But it is the home of a French-speaking evangelical school of theology where 51 students are training. They and their 37 wives and 95 children could have a tremendous influence in Africa. Prayer and cash directed here are a good long term Kingdom investment. The address is Bangui Evangelical School of

Theology, B.P. 988, Bangui, Central African Republic.

Belfast is also a needy area but the Belfast Bible School (44 full time students, 150 evening students) needs to expand. Well over £60,000 has been raised to date but a similar amount is needed for the next phase.

The Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology is due to take its first class of 25 students in October 1982. It is the first evangelical English-speaking graduate theological college in Africa. Mr. Tony Wilmot, the British principal and project director, has announced that a Kenyan, Dr. Joash Okong'o, is to be the first registrar of the college. He took up his appointment in January. The new college is appealing for a million dollars in 1982 as part of its four-year capital development programme. In appealing for funds Tony Wilmot pointed out that the church in Africa is exploding, but so too is the void of trained leaders. This college should have been in existence 20 years ago, he says.

Bible Society

Bibles usually travel from the West to the East. But when a van belonging to Peter Brierley of the Bible Society broke down, the AA found that the repatriation process included bringing 400 Bibles in Polish to London. Peter and his colleague Alan Isaacson had travelled to Poland taking soap, washing powder, shampoo, aspirin and other items in short supply as gifts from staff in London to those in Warsaw. Polish Christians, grateful for the help they had received in securing supplies of the specially fine

paper needed for printing their own Bibles (United Bible Societies had contributed a quarter of a million pounds for this purpose) asked Peter and Alan to take back a supply of the Bibles printed on this paper for Polish Christians in Britain. Thanks to a combined operation by the Polish Motoring Organization (PZM) and the Dutch AA, the Bibles finally reached South London.

Bible Study

The Emmaus Bible School (Eastham, Merseyside) reports enrolling its 500,000th student by December 17, 1981. It took nineteen and a half years from the beginning of the work in 1951 to reach 200,000 and only ten and a half years to enrol the 300,000 students since 1971. This progress would not have been possible apart from Christian giving which has provided roughly 50% of the general fund expenses. The other 50% comes from fee-paying students. In the prison ministry, by contrast, the whole of the cost is supplied from gift income. 1981 saw the enrolment of 5,000 detainees, the material sent out cost £5,294 and donations received totalled £5,243.

Evangelism

East Anglia benefited from two missions at the end of 1981. In Ipswich David Watson and his team led a five day festival. On the opening night 1250 were packed into the main hall and overflow rooms, and nearly 600 had to be turned away. On the second night the two overflow halls with closed circuit TV were filled and Suffolk evangelist Victor Jack took over a nearby church for another overflow meeting. In addition a couple of hundred stood

outside in the cold and heard the message relayed into the streets. Festival chairman David Meikle saw this as a sign of a tremendous spiritual hunger. As many as half those attending the various fringe meetings made a positive response and many nominal and lapsed Christians came to a new commitment through the festival.

Eric Delve's Norwich mission, held in a previously derelict coach garage specially renovated for the meetings, was preceded by a week in local schools. Regional television also showed interest. Local Christian leaders commented warmly on the impact the predominantly youth mission had made in the city. Having seen bands or drama groups at their school during that day's lunch time, many young people came to the evening meetings of the mission which was entitled 'Down to Earth'. The message was complemented by drama and music, together with some cheerful worship. Some 600 people came forward to enquire, so that the mission was extended to four weeks. Youth for Christ staff believe the good response was a result of work with local churches for 6 months before; also contacts in schools and youth groups.

From Dorset Stephen Gillham reports many visits to schools during December 1981. One headmaster commented: 'That was just what the staff needed as well as the children.' At the Dorset Annual Rally in Dorchester, 20 Dorset Assemblies were represented. Reports were given by John Stewart (Isle of Wight) and John Hall (National).

Lincoln will see a Christian Festival for young people and families being held on the Lincolnshire Show Ground during the early Spring Bank Holiday, May 1-3. The programme starts early Saturday morning and camping is permitted from Friday evening. The main speakers are to be Nick Cuthbert of the Birmingham Jesus Centre and John Allan. Music, film, drama and dance will play their part in the programme. There will be special sessions for children and young people along with growth groups and teach-ins. Full details from Fresh Ground '82, c/o Lincoln YMCA, St. Rumbolds Street, Lincoln LN2 5AR. (Please send SAE.)

France

Easter Campaigns are planned as follows by the France Mission Trust (Old Chapel, Chapel Lane, Minchinhampton, Glos. GL6 9DL. Tel: 0453-884454): Paris, Brest, Nancy, Nanterre and Chatres. All the teams will work from Wednesday April 7 to Thursday April 22. The basic cost (from London) is £65. **Harvester** readers who are over 18 and reasonably fluent in French should get in touch with the France Mission Trust as soon as possible.

L'Eau Vive, Provence. There is need for a co-leader/administrator to work with other people in the team and specifically to give leadership and counselling within the centre, to act as administrative secretary of short-term Bible training courses and to take charge of a variety of correspondence and administrative work — not forgetting responsibilities in maintenance of one sort and another. Fluent French would be necessary, a willingness to share in unforeseen work and to act as loyal members of a team. For further details write to Dr. Brian Tatford, L'Eau Vive Provence, 13122 Ventabren, France.

Literature

It was officially announced in December 1981 that Marshall, Morgan & Scott and Pickering & Inglis had united within a new company, Marshall Pickering Holdings Ltd. The Chairman of the Board of the new company is William Fitch, Chairman of Marshall, Morgan & Scott and the Managing Director is David Payne, the Managing Director of Marshall, Morgan & Scott. The Deputy Chairman is Andrew Gray of Pickering & Inglis. It is stated that both companies will retain their independent identities,

each pursuing an extensive publishing programme and maintaining such particular interests as the retail shops of Pickering & Inglis and the Pilgrim Records operation of Marshall, Morgan & Scott. Distribution will be centralised at the Basingstoke warehouse of Marshall, Morgan & Scott. The news came at the end of a year that had seen a great deal of stress within the book trade generally, with redundancies, mergers and take-overs as almost every day occurrences. Among other comparatively recent changes in the Christian book trade have been the sale of Marshall, Morgan & Scott by the Pentos Group of which it formerly formed part; the absorption of the Church Pastoral Aid Society's Falcon Press by Kingsway and the taking over of Methodism's Epworth Press by the SCM Press.

Prisoner of the Month

At the meeting of the Council of the European Evangelical Alliance in 1981, it was agreed that the EEA should stimulate prayer for believers in Eastern Europe who were being persecuted as a result of their Christian activities. The EEA has traditionally taken a special interest in the matter of religious freedom wherever it

has been endangered in the Continent — in Turkey, Greece, Spain and elsewhere. It was agreed that details of a 'Prisoner of the Month' should be circulated to all EEA member bodies and to other likely media agencies. The information is mainly obtained from Keston College, which specialises in dealing with the situation of Christians in Communist lands. The New Testament contains a number of references to prayer for one another within the Christian family especially for those members who are suffering in special ways because of their faith. 'Pray for me', says Paul the prisoner, 'that I may be bold in speaking about the gospel as I should.' Without in any way entering into the political issues as between East and West, the EEA urges all who count themselves to be 'fellow-believers' in Christ to make time regularly to intercede for the 'prisoner of the month', and for their families who so often suffer in less direct but no less hurtful ways.

Radio

During the latter part of 1981 FEBA Seychelles was in the news when the aftermath of an attempted coup forced it off the air. However, from December 14 broadcasting was permitted

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10-17 July 17-24 July — Family Week

Details from: The Secretary, Keswick Convention, 25 Camden Road, London NW1 9LN.

between 07.00 and 18.00 hours local time, representing about 46% of normal output. Earlier in the year, a planning conference had been held in India. The decisions taken here were probably of far greater long-term importance than the coup which attracted such publicity. Among the matters considered was the need to ensure that programme suppliers were helped to provide material of a satisfactory standard. It was agreed to try and avoid time clashes with more than one Christian radio station broadcasting in the same language into the same area. The importance of a good news service as an audience builder was recognised and it was decided to introduce news into vernacular language programmes. Among the projects requiring finance are new buildings for Bangalore and an East African office and studio.

Home Calls

James Drynan on October 29, 1981, aged 87. Born again in February 1935 under the preaching of the late Fred Elliot, he ultimately associated with the assembly in Roman Road Gospel Hall, Motherwell, about 12 years ago. Of a quiet disposition, he had a gift for putting his thoughts into verse, making much of the person of Christ in all his poems. Through his poetry he had a wide circle of friends and will be greatly missed.

Mrs. Eric Glasgow on October 15, 1981. Converted as a teenager about 55 years ago at Newtownards, she and her husband were among the founder members of the Comber assembly. Latterly they returned to the Scrabo assembly. Mrs. Glasgow used her home in giving hospitality to many including preachers and missionaries and helped spread the gospel in other practical ways. Prayers are requested for her husband Eric, her son Fred and her daughter Margaret (McEwen).

Mrs. Gertrude Popplestone in December 1981, aged 84 years at Okehampton, Devon. Her early life was spent in Kingsbridge, Devon and she emigrated to Detroit, USA, after the 1914-18 war. Converted in Detroit during

special Gospel Meetings, she married T. H. Popplestone and during the 1930s they both returned to the UK with their two young daughters. After 25 years in Taunton, the family moved to Bow, Devon, for seven years, moving to Okehampton in 1962. Mrs. Popplestone was buried in the cemetery at Bow Gospel Hall. Prayer is requested for her sorrowing husband, now 89 years of age and very weak, also for their four sons and daughters.

Harold Wildish on December 24, 1981, aged 79. Sydney and Brenda Calcraft write: 'He was saved as a schoolboy whilst a boarder at a school in Weston-super-Mare. It was under the preaching of Garnet Thomas at Waterloo Hall that he received Jesus. He served his apprenticeship with a County Evangelist called Hodson; they lived in a horse-drawn caravan in Essex. Although known for his work in Jamaica, his missionary life started in a canoe with three other young men when they paddled up the Amazon to Manaus. His death was quite unexpected. He had been out preaching and returned home tired but happy to die in his sleep. He had been preaching for over sixty years. He has had the thrill of leading literally hundreds to the Lord. He never preached but his message was bathed in prayer. He always preached for a verdict whether it was to sinner or saint. He always expected something to happen and it always did. He had an infectious enthusiasm, a winning personality and a genuine humility. Harold Wildish was the finest preacher I have ever heard and the greatest saint. His motto through life was **Only one life, 'twill soon be past/Only what's done for Christ will last.**'

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

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29 Queen Street, London, EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund during November were £443.00.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received for the month of December amounted to £6,405.42 and included an anonymous donation of £5 (Swindon).

PRAYER LIST

Campbell, B.:
Falmouth 1-6; St. Ives 7; Falmouth 13-14; Ringwood 19-23; Southampton 24-26; Redruth 28.

Clifford, D. L.:
Haven School of Evangelism, Pembroke 1-12; Bournemouth 14, 25; Malagar, Spain 28.

Galyer, W. S.:
Wimbledon 3; Dorking 4, 11, 18, 25; Ruislip 7; Teddington 9; Sheen 10, 17, 24; Ewell & Tolworth 14; Leatherhead 21; Barking 28.

Gillham, S.:
Chickerell/Bethany Hall, Weymouth 2; Bethany Hall, Weymouth 6; West Moors 7, 14, 21, 28; Heatherlands Parkstone/Dorchester 9; Ebenezer Hall, Weymouth 10,

17, 24; Wallisdown, AT Club Prize Giving 13; Three Crosses 16, 23, 27; House Party Reunion 20; Wyke Regis 22; Charminster Chapel, Bournemouth 26, 28.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Mableton Tonbridge 1-3; Eaton Park, Norwich 10; Briston, Norfolk 16; Costessey, Norfolk 23.

Iliffe, D. J.:
Sheffield 1-2; London & Selsey 3; Chichester 7, 14; Moorlands Bible College 9-12; Westergate 13; Littlehampton 17, 18; Storrington 20, 21; Angmering 22; Bristol 26; Newent 27; Bolton 28.

Lambert, P. A.:
Calne 2; Corsham 3; Salisbury 4; Frome 5; Bristol 7; Swindon 9; Prison work 10; Swindon 11; Wokingham 14; Trowbridge 15, 16; Devizes 17; Melksham 18; Wellow Wood 20; Corsham 21; Village work 22-25; Trowbridge 26; Southampton 28.

Lowther, G. K.:
Grimsby, Lincolnshire & South Humberside 1-6, 8-28; Hemsworth, West Yorkshire 7.

Phillips, C.:
South Ruislip 1, 8, 15, 22; Elmfield, North Harrow 4, 7, 11, 18, 25; Kingston 9, 16, 23; Aylesbury 10, 17, 24; Greenford 14; Cardiff 20, 21; Luton 28.

Pierce, D. H.:
Braunton 2; Tiverton 9; Okehampton 10; CEW at Umberleigh 12; Eire 17 February to 15 March.

Short, S. S.:
Chingford 1, 8, 15, 21, 22; Walthamstow 2, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24; Whetstone 4, 11, 18, 25; Leicester 6, 7; Weston-super-Mare 14; Cardiff 20; Eastbourne 28.

Stringer, D.:
Rugby 1-4; North London 5; Bloomsbury, Central London 6; Rugby 7-12; Essex Area 13-19; Warwick Area 20-28.

Tatford, F. A.:
Ventabren, Aix-en-Provence, etc., 1-5; Orange 6, 7; Belgium 8-18; Bournemouth 25.

Tryon, G. C.:
Kenton 7; Eltham Park 14; Welling 17, 24; Tunbridge Wells 21; High Wycombe 28.

Whitern, R. J.:
Newent 2; Youth Camp Preparation 5; Hatfield 7; Redbourn, Herts. Regional Fellowship, Croyley Green 8; Chelmsford 14-15; Seven Kings 16; Chingford 18; Wokingham 21; Hatfield, Family Camp Preparation, Leverstock Green 22; Harpenden 23; Luton 25; Borehamwood 28.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Brierfield, Lancs.
Hebron Hall, Walter Street. Saturday Evening Rallies at 7 p.m. February 6, Speaker: I. Grant (Manchester) and February 20, Speaker: G. Payne (Swindon).

Chesham
The Gospel Hall, Station Road. Ministry Meeting, February 23, starting at 7 p.m. Theme: The Sermon on the Mount. Portion: Matthew 5:38-48. Speaker: H. Tickner (London). The meeting will be followed with light refreshments and at 8 p.m. questions.

Colyton
The Gospel Hall, The Butts. Bible Study, Saturday February 27, at 7 p.m. Portion: 1 Timothy 5. Speaker: G. Davidson (Camberley).

Croxley Green
Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Meeting Saturday February 27 at 7 p.m. Speaker: Dr. A. Linton.

Greenock
Ardgowan Square Evangelical Church, Ardgowan Street. Annual Conference on Saturday February 20 at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Wm. N. Dean, Kilmarnock; George C. Hanlon, Glasgow. Written questions will be answered at evening session.

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Grimsby

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. Monthly Rally, Saturday February 20 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Wilf Cryer (Stapleford).

London, Bloomsbury

Bloomsbury Central Church, Shaftesbury Avenue. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. on February 6, 'The Meaning of Worship', Speaker: Derek Stringer; February 13, 'Patterns of Worship', Speaker: Robert Scott-Cook; February 20, 'The Expressions of Worship', Speaker: Michael Griffiths; February 27, 'Worship and Life', Speaker: Clayton Dougan.

London, Walthamstow

Folkestone Road Hall, Walthamstow, E.17. South West Essex Women's Missionary Conference, Saturday March 13 at 3.30 and 6.00 p.m.

Luton

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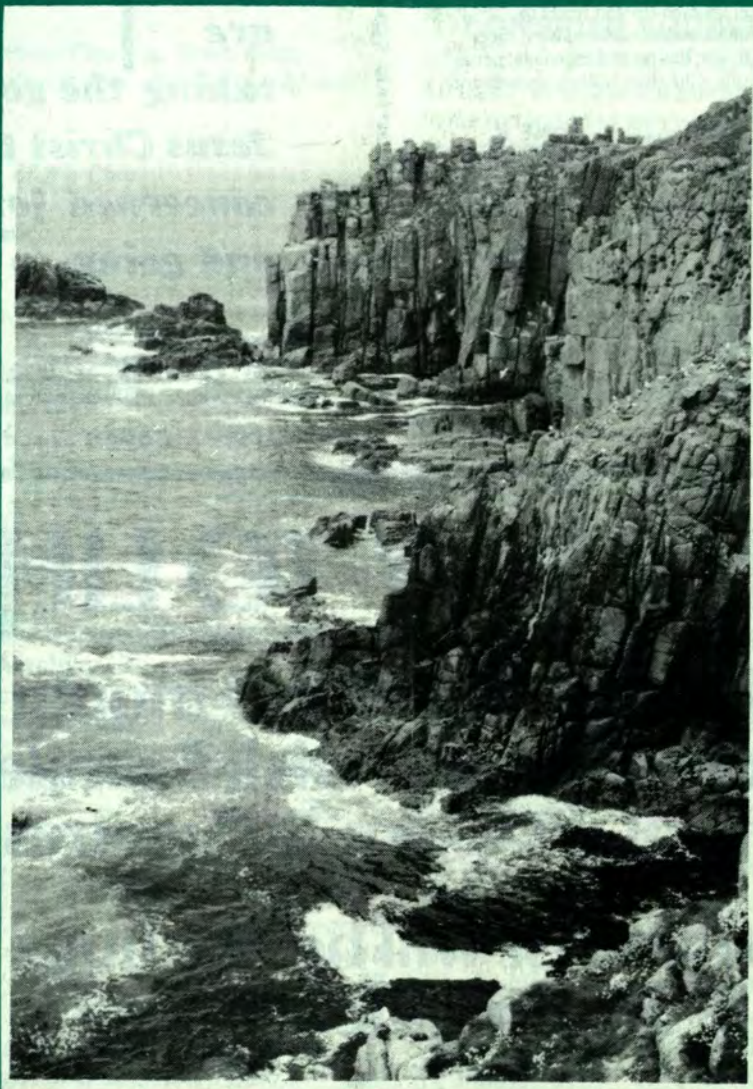
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CONSIDER YOURSELVES, LEST . . .!

To traffic in words is a strange and hazardous business. I was reminded of this when reading through the February editorial when it was too late to have any amendments made. There, within a few lines, three times the expression 'God Himself', or its equivalent, was used. The result was inexcusably clumsy: and if all three 'himself' had been omitted the meaning would have been as clear, and the prose infinitely tidier.

Perhaps it is a trivial example: at least the meaning was not affected. How easy it is to write one thing, and be understood to have written another. A year or two ago a correspondent wrote complaining of the use of a certain word in an editorial. The word, he said, had a clear and unambiguous meaning, namely 'x'; and if I meant 'y' why did I not write 'y' plainly? For he had read 'y' into the passage. Yet, as I pointed out in my reply, I had not desired 'y' — I had in fact intended 'x'! But that meaning had been unexpected to the correspondent, and he had therefore read what he expected.

If reading can be so hazardous, what of hearing? As I am even less of a performer on the platform than on the printed page, I speak publicly fairly infrequently. On one occasion many years ago, however, I had done so: it was (I thought) a carefully prepared address explaining that in my view the scriptures did not warrant such and such attitudes to other Christians. After it was over an enthusiastic lady approached me. She had so enjoyed my address, she said, and if her late husband had been there, how delighted he too would have been, for he was such an enthusiastic upholder of the attitudes referred to, and considered them so important!

All of which reminiscence has one purpose: to point to the fact that God too communicates with us through human speech, in human language. Moreover, He sited the origin of much of His written Word in local situations and experience. Yet so many of us are prepared to insist that it is **our** understanding and **our** interpretation of that Word that must be correct, when others understand something different from ourselves. Do we not sometimes hear a small voice suggesting that it behoves us to be humble: to consider ourselves, lest **we** are mistaken?

JACK CLEMO PRYDYTH AN PRY: *Poet of the Clay* Leslie James

Leslie James introduces Harvester readers, in our Spring Books Issue, to a modern Christian poet, with a strange and distinctive voice.

When you approach Jack Clemo, be warned; for you will hear a strange voice, the kind of voice seldom heard in these times of pressure media and stereotyped thought — the voice of a rare original. True, he admits to having been influenced by Donne, Bunyan, Browning, Spurgeon, Barth, Hardy, T. F. Powys and others, but nowhere is it possible to detect a turned up or toned down version of anyone else, not even of his twin beacons, Robert Browning or Karl Barth.

Now it is this very originality, this baffling compound of dogma and mystical eroticism, of clay, tar and soot, with an ingredient of violence thrown in, which will make some of his work unpalatable to many orthodox Christians. Those who find his vision too complex and difficult to grasp had better leave him alone; otherwise they might judge much of his work, particularly his earlier poems, to be downright offensive. Indeed, those of us who now read him with profit might do well to ask ourselves whether a too deep penetration of the misty frontiers between eroticism and love, paganism and natural religion, is not best left to the D. H. Lawrences of this world. Like every other genius, Jack was once young — very young when he began writing.

Anyway be this as it may, Reginald John Clemo was born on Saturday 11th March, 1916, in a granite slate roofed cottage under the shadow of Goonamarris Slip, a few hundred yards east of Bloomdale Clay-dump in Cornwall. It would be hard to find a more contrasting couple than his parents. Reginald Clemo was a weak fluctuating character while Eveline Polmounter was a devout

sensitive girl, the daughter of John Polmounter, a lovable old Methodist local preacher. How she came to marry Reginald is perplexing until you realise that Reginald was an actor who could turn on the charm when the occasion arose. The Clemos lost their first child, and then Jack was born, but before he was two years old his father had been lost at sea in the Royal Navy. Like so many other war widows of the period, Eveline Clemo now found life difficult, and it was not made any easier when she had to take care of her deformed sister Bertha as well as her small son. Then there were the elements: during the winter the little cottage was buffeted by gales sweeping in from two coasts, and an icy norther howling down from Billy Bray's Bodmin Moor. There was no electricity, gas, drainage or water supply, and no back-door. The landscape around has been described as 'lunar'. It is a good description except that, while we are uncertain who devastated the moon, the clay-tips rearing their cone-like triumphant heads tell us who ravaged Clemo's **China Clay Cornwall**. Not that this worried young Jack; he took the industrial rapine for granted and loved it. He tells us: 'The stark scene did not make me shudder: nothing made me shudder except school and snakes.'

He takes on the tone of his surroundings quite early. His home is an outpost and he claims it is here his preoccupation with borders began. A war was going on in which the clayworks were the ruthless aggressors. Fields, patches of downs, lovers' walks, farms and cottages were being blasted to bits as the clayworks invaded. This raw elemental set-up provided the background for his unpublished 'prentice' novels, but it was some time later that he sensed the upheaval on his doorstep as symbolic of soul-battle. The relentless invading clayworks

symbolised a virile rugged Absolute attacking sentimental falsehood. Jack sided with the invaders because he 'detested the slop of nature poets'. 'The natural religion produced by art, poetry and idealism is not only inadequate, but deadly apart from the grace revealed by God.' Heights are also symbolical: 'A sensitive dweller on the heights is more conscious of solitude as an aid to vision. He is also more aware of violence, of the need to protect himself and his stores against hostile elements.' We are not certain when he first detected the movements of another invader reaching across the frontiers of Eternity to destroy his **natural** righteousness. But we are running ahead.

Jack was a normal healthy infant. He was also 'distressingly precocious' and could recite most of the usual nursery rhymes and the Lord's Prayer at eighteen months! The Methodist friends and neighbours were astounded, as well they might be. Some could see a sinister foreshadowing. 'E'll suffer for it, Mrs. Clema.' 'E's too forward 'e is — no 'ealthy sign, Mrs. Clema.' Whether Mrs. Clemo was pushing him too fast we cannot say, but at the age of four he was picking up scraps of newspapers to read, and was excitedly looking forward to school. All this does knock on the head the portrait of him as a sort of Cornish Helen Keller. His description of landscape alone proves he could once see very well: 'Standing at my bedroom window as a child, I could scan twenty miles of countryside sloping away to Truro . . . and on to the squat sullen Tor of Carn Brea, and sometimes when the weather was clear I could catch a glint of sunlight on the Channel, ten miles to the south.'

Then, just before the age of five, Jack began to complain about his eyes; the sunshine became unbearable and he could not even face the glow from the



kitchen oil lamp. Truro Hospital ordered him to spend some time in total darkness. He recalls something of the trauma caused by those long weeks without a glimpse of a known face in **Confession of a Rebel**. Sad Eveline Clemo. She had looked forward to the time when he would become a servant of the Lord like his grandfather. She still had one thing, however — the promises of her heavenly Father, and He still had a plan for the blind tortured child lying in the push-chair. Even so Jack was almost six before this first attack of blindness passed, and when it did so it had changed him from a plump, merry little boy into a thin, pasty-faced loner. Worse, he now froze at the thought of school. But to school he had to go, to fit into that system where the odd kid who cannot fit in must go to the wall.

It was during April 1922 that little Jack met his first sign of rejection. He appeared with his mother at nearby Fox-hole School, he was a year late and apparently backward — an awkward prospect. What was to be done? Easy! He was not actually resident in Foxhole so the headmaster refused to enter his name in the register. We hope he slept well on it for he had condemned a partially sighted six year old to a daily struggle over gale swept terrain to Tre-

thosa School over a mile away.

Jack's school life does not make happy reading. Generally he was left on his own, which is not surprising, for in most normal subjects he had no common ground with his teachers at all. One or two of them, however, did recognise a germ of literary talent; they would have been blind not to have done so for he won a prize for English at seven. Speaking of his teachers he says: 'I dare say they pitied me, handicapped as I was by ill-health . . . It never occurred to them that sympathetic nurture of my abilities was impossible in any Council school, and that the pressure of that system would have crippled me for life had it been exerted on me continuously for nine years as upon other children.'

'The pressure of that system' was not to be exerted for nine years, for between twelve and thirteen his blindness returned and school ended. Meanwhile he had partly educated himself with the help of Mee's **Children's Encyclopaedia**, and as he grew older and sight returned he began to read the classics. Strangely he took a dislike to Shakespeare, Scott, Bennett, Stevenson and Dickens (although he later became reconciled to *Copperfield*). Among his likes was, of course, Browning for whom he formed an early fixation. Sig-

nificantly he also points out that his mother's Sankey hymn singing plus Spurgeon's sermons helped him more than anything he heard in school. Master Jack was already applying his own narrow border-lines, which at the time were narrow indeed.

It was during this second spell of blindness that Jack entered the magnetic field of his first inspiration — Evelyn Phillips of Nanpean. She was a year younger and was obviously keen to mother this poor blind boy. What she did in fact was to trigger off half-a-million words of confused, agonizing, yet imaginative writing during the next six years, which is quite a literary explosion when, like Evelyn, you are unaware you have sparked it off. Alas, her natural enchantment later dimmed to his failed Nanpean vision. Nevertheless it is evident that from the day he met Evelyn his sight began to improve, and it was a day to be remembered when he opened **Westward Ho!** and found he could read again. He had returned to a normal world, but it was a world in which he felt himself to be an alien. He refused to resume attendance at Sunday School and Chapel. Indeed he began to express hostility towards all forms of organised religion in a manner which hurt his mother considerably, especially

when he did so in front of neighbours. As for his writing, before the Nanpean inspiration he had no desire to be a writer. He later affirms: 'I could glimpse the irony of God — the fact that, though I often detested literature, He meant me to be a writer; and an artistic one, though I hated art'. His first prose story was a sentimental love tale which earned no more than the first of a hundred or two rejection slips. His mother was puzzled, 'If God meant 'ee to write stories, 'E would take what you wrote.' There was natural logic in this, but Jack was never one to deal in **natural** logic. He did, however, begin to get humorous sketches, written in Cornish dialect, accepted by Netherton's Almanack. So the news got around, young Clemo was to be a writer. Unfortunately few believed it. Among the exceptions was Sam Jacobs, his old Sunday School superintendent. Sam badgered everyone on behalf of the war widow's disabled son, and at last the Ministry of Pensions in Plymouth made a grant for him to study with a well known school of journalism as a correspondence pupil. And an exasperating student he proved to be, but his tutor, Gordon Meggy, soon sensed talent, although he pronounced his novel to be hopeless. He tried to encourage Jack to write on modern lines: 'Don't be too humble', he advised, 'work away. You can do it. It's because you have so much grit in your character that I am taking such trouble with you'. It was of little use; the mechanical atmosphere, the copying of other people's work, paralysed him — he was Jack Clemo and no one else. Meggy persevered for nearly two years, and with the help of the local rector managed to squeeze a typewriter out of the Ministry of Pensions. Even so, by his sixteenth birthday Jack was not making enough progress to notice. When the Nanpean vision failed, baby Barbara Rowse, who lived next door, became his inspirational source. He claims she had set him on the road to spiritual stability, clear vision and even material success before she was ten. By 1931 Clemo was emerging as a press controversialist, and was being given a

great deal of publicity by A. Browning-Lynne, editor of **The Cornish Guardian**. Among those who took issue with him were A. J. C. Hawken and S. E. Burrow. Jack agitated the readership for a considerable time until he was squashed by Daphne du Maurier who complained that the controversy was lowering the tone of the paper, adding: 'We are not interested in his views, religious, political or sexual, and if he wishes to express them let him do so in private correspondence and not before our eyes in print.' Things were not going Jack's way at all. By seventeen he admits he had become a particularly nasty kind of rebel, 'the sensual, cunning malicious sort'. 'I deliberately **wished** to make the worst possible impression on everyone I met . . .' He was certainly succeeding, and fortunately for all concerned it was only a phase. After all, little Barbara was still next door, and through her inspiration he once again responded to the rhythm of life. But think of the burden his mother had been bearing, and she was doing it all on a pitiful war widow's pension. Yet all said and done we must admit we do not get the impression that Jack was exhibiting eccentricity in the hope that it would be mistaken for genius. Read **The Confession of a Rebel** and decide for yourself. There is also another factor: 'I may perhaps, without uncharitableness, imply that my teen years might have been less wayward had there been fewer modernists and worldlings in control of Cornish Methodism.' Obviously the angels were not on the side of the theologians. We must forgive him quite a lot, for anyone who has read to any extent in biography will see at once that he is exhibiting many of the symptoms of a **natural** genius faced with unanswerable ultimate spiritual problems. Besides all this, Jack's progress was hardly reassuring: his fifth book had been rejected and short stories and articles were being returned every week. **Private Snow** was written entirely under the influence of little Barbara. It never found a publisher. Then just before nineteen he began to

go deaf, but in spite of adverse medical opinion the condition improved. This poor lad certainly needed encouragement, and it was not far away. During October, 1936, his eighth novel was accepted by a London literary agent. Spurred on he finished its successor by April, 1937! Alas, neither novel was saleable, the second less so than the first. Yet, despite his set-backs, he assures us that by the end of 1937 his faith was stable. There is little doubt that his mother's continual playing and singing of Sankey's hymns — which he loved and often played himself — combined with a persistent reading of Spurgeon, Talmage and Browning, had gradually edged Jack towards God, although not yet towards the visible church. He had also read extracts from Calvin's *Institutes*, Edwards' **Freedom of the Will** and Carlyle's **Cromwell**, and anyone who is captivated by such works can only go in one direction. He recalls: 'I found myself isolated from the Churches not so much by my paganism as by my awareness of movements on the eternal frontier . . . I could not reach beyond the frontier, but something from beyond it was reaching me, leading me to recognition of the basic fallacy of the unregenerate search for God'. Most surprisingly his contact with Browning appears to have reassured him that sensuous vision could be reconciled with the most rigid orthodoxy, and encouraged him to continue his probe along the border-lines. From now on — like it or not — Browning is his pole star. Everything was pre-ordained; he was to be cut off as much as possible from the influence of adults. God was now forcing him into a pattern alien to his tastes. With Francis Thomson he believed that the hounds of heaven were hunting the souls of men as deliberately in the twentieth century as in any other age; but — and this is important — his Calvinism was not the 'pre-destination to damnation' creed. Only the elect were compelled, and they formed a bridgehead from which the non-elect might be reached and persuaded, much the same as Israel formed

a bridgehead to reach the Gentiles. God never consults the will of the elect; they are driven to him by a divine bludgeoning if necessary. So the symbolism comes into sharper focus: the invasion is not of nature by industrialism, but God's grace invading natural righteousness. As Clemo's writing had been brooded out on the clay-dump or in the still pits at nightfall, so his theology — and the two are really one — is determined by a symbolism which rejects all natural beauty. All nature fell at the Fall. The pleasant scenery around is corrupt and dying, and the greater the corruption the more rank and flaunting the growth. God is not immanent in corruption as depicted in natural art. He is only inherent in Christ and His Word. Therefore God must invade this corruption for he is an enemy to it, and no significant invasion can be made without shock and upheaval. He extends the thought. The thing which came the biggest cropper in the Fall was the intellect. There is no point in the natural mind at which God's supernatural revelation in Christ can be received. The old Puritan writers like Bunyan never appealed to the intellect; the doctrine of total depravity taught them that their highest thoughts were as much a production of original sin as their grossest lust. Sadly, more sadly, nothing is more potentially dangerous than man's religious instinct — it is the root of all his sin.

There is very little original in all this is there? Many of us with Calvinist leanings will see something of scripture, while wider readers might detect Barth, although Jack tells us he had much of the Barthian theology before he read that celebrated theologian. What is original is the astonishing manner in which Jack puts it over. Just get hold of *The Invading Gospel* and you will see what we mean.

Whether you have read Clemo or not, you will by now realise that we have something of a phenomenon on our hands — a novelist poet who is inspired by Puritan theology; a writer who cannot find a setting arid enough to match the thoughts of God which possess him. With this in mind let us move into 1939. He tells us this is the 'blankest year' he

had known; yet it was the year in which he made his first public statement of explicit Calvinism, which would have surprised one or two of his old opponents, if they had time to be surprised in that momentous year when that hoary old criminal War was stalking through the land snatching away the healthy youth. The unhealthy he ignored; so Jack wrote on. Barbara's parents had moved; his new inspiration was Irene, an eight years old evacuee who had come to live next door. A stocktaking during the next year, 1940, of his progress over the previous decade should be read by those who accused him of being a scrounging lay-about: 'I had written over a million words in novels alone, with another quarter of a million words in short stories, essays, Press controversies and verse. Of this mass of output only a tiny fraction had been printed: twenty-four stories (all in Cornish annuals), three articles, seventy letters to the Press, and forty-four juvenile poems. My total earnings for this material amounted to £19 0s 6d. I had not sold a single manuscript in the open competitive literary market. Yet after a decade of unrelieved failure I faced the wartime difficulties with a buoyant, publicly expressed faith in the efficacy of prayer.'

During February 1942 he began writing *Wilding Graft*. The title was from Browning; and, briefly, it was a war book in which none of the characters play any part in the war, but work out its moral and spiritual implications in a remote hamlet. Here he is attempting to crystallise in fiction his Barbara (now Irene) inspiration — the substitution of a divinely grafted faith for natural ideals. It came easy and needed little revision, but he was on dangerous ground, very slippery treacherous ground. All right, little girls genuinely possess innocent qualities which are overlaid with conventionality — sometimes rank flaunting sophistication — in their elder sisters, and how he detested make-up; but can you introduce heroines with such simple child-like qualities in a novel aimed at adults? Jack was being even more awkward; he was going to make his heroine a twelve years old girl! Admittedly T. F.

Powys might have pulled off something similar in *Unclay*, but could a book which embodied the Christian message get away with it? The whole thing is too complex to discuss in a Christian magazine, even if we had the space. If you are interested you must read the book yourself, but before you do so just bear one or two things in mind. His mis-fit heroine Irma (Irene) reflects much of his own complexity, and he claims the autobiographical element in his hero, Garth Joskin, is the record of his own spiritual development.

The manuscript was finished in April, 1943, but he was reluctant to submit it under wartime conditions. When he finally did send it we are not surprised that Raymond Savage, the agent, suggested that twelve years of age was too young for the heroine (Irene was eleven at the time). Grudgingly Jack agreed to raise her age to fifteen, and in it all still claims his inspiration was based on Christian dogma: 'No experience, however thrilling, could inspire me until I had measured it by a theological foot-rule and found what doctrine it affirmed.' Ah well, he does warn us he is a rare bird. By February, 1946, the novel had been refused by four publishers and, in spite of his first attack of eye trouble for twelve years, Jack decided to revise it. He did have some success, however, for two of his poems were accepted: *Christ in the Clay-Pit* by Orion, and *A Calvinist in Love* by Penguin New Writing.

The signal from across the frontier was 'forward', and by the end of May the revision of *Wilding Graft* was completed. The struggle, however, was by no means finished, but Mr. Savage did not give up, and after a fourteen month campaign in post-war London, he at last placed it with Chatto and Windus. The toil of nearly twenty years, involving fifty-three rejections of novels, including seven of *Wilding Graft*, was over. The book won an Atlantic Award; was a Book Society recommendation; A. L. Rowse broadcast a review of it, and an uneducated villager found himself set incongruously among the most brilliant intellectuals of his day!

The book was dedicated to his mother,

and he assures us it 'had been written as an act of faith . . . I was saying things which only my marriage could prove to be true.' Like his follow up book, **Confession of a Rebel**, it presents the working of grace as a divine grafting from outside, a grafting in which the knife cuts and the branch has no choice. **The Invading Gospel**, 1958, which he began with diminishing sight, was copied out by his mother in longhand. Here he changes the symbol, for as he points out, an invasion leaves more scope for free-will: it can be resisted, whereas a grafting cannot. For most of us, perhaps, it is this very ability to resist which makes the struggle so appalling; an automaton knows no combat. Poor Jack ended 1955 in total blindness; yet his writing now becomes buoyant, and in common with most other poets contains much of the poet.

But what about his poetry? After all it is this which earns him his spot in the **Encyclopedia Britannica**, not to mention a Cornish Gorsedd bardship. The God he presents is not 'a tolerant natural deity', he is still an invader; an alien force: an 'upsetter of nature':

*I love to see the sand and stone I tip
Muzzle the grass and burst the daisy
heads;
I watch the hard waves lapping out to
still
The soil's rhythm for ever, and I thrill
With solitary song upon my lip
Rejoicing as the refuse spreads:
'Praise God, the earth is maimed.'*

I doubt whether many of my Calvinist friends would see an excavator ripping up **natural beauty** as an accurate picture of invading grace destroying **fallen nature**; of God destroying sin in the soul. Neither would they take kindly to the use of erotic imagery to describe spiritual experience as exhibited in **The Burnt Bush** etc.; they might well misinterpret the image, and they would not be the only ones. God forbid we should criticize a man who is light years ahead of us in talent and experience, but can we just ask: is it wise to seek for an equivalent in the New Testament to the

elemental vision in the Old? No doubt all of us who have stopped to think about it have reasons for believing a reproduction of the Old Testament primitive love stories to be impossible after he who is **Love** and **Light** had come. I certainly have my own. But what do I know of being torn apart on the borders of mysticism, fantasy and hard realism? You must assess Jack's poetry yourself, but please remember he has changed considerably over the years. He explains: 'The creative impulse is so easily fooled; it will function on illusion as powerfully as on truth, and therefore cannot be trusted until it has been placed under Christian discipline'. Jack's writing is now under that discipline, but he is still a poet.

One thing which has not changed is his theology. He still sees the need for primitive regeneration. 'So do we!' you exclaim. Wait a minute; Jack feels that much of our preaching with its intellectual and entertainment gimmickry is **naturalistic**. Certainly, if the degeneration of society is anything to go by, few of us have had much lasting influence. Do we look in vain for a post-war Evan Roberts?

Jack's four published editions of poetry are: **The Map of Clay** (1961), **Cactus on Carmel** (1967), **The Echoing Tip** (1971), and **Broad Autumn** (1975). His prose works are **Wilding Graft** (1948), **Confession of a Rebel** (1949), **The Invading Gospel** (1958), and **The Marriage of a Rebel** (1980). My selection would be **The Invading Gospel**.

It was his re-immersion in Browning which apparently set flowing again the poetic vein within him; indeed, this **Browning fixation** stands out as the most incredible element in this singular life. Jack was convinced that God had pre-ordained his path after the pattern of Browning's, right through until he met his Elizabeth Barrett. Unless divine grace miraculously produced an Elizabeth Barrett, the whole divine pattern would collapse, and as we all know — or should do — no **divine** plan can ever collapse. But pause and ask yourself; what normal Christian girl would understand **A Calvinist in Love**?

*Our love is full-grown Dogma's
offspring,*

*Election's child,
Making the wild
Heats of our blood an offering.*

I doubt whether any of the charming Calvinist ladies of my acquaintance, and I know quite a few, would understand that. Again, **naturally** speaking, where would this great-hearted soul, now blind and deaf, find a girl seeking marriage as an 'offering' within Christian worship? But Jack was not moving in the area of **natural** possibility, he was moving in the area of **supernatural divine grace**. Furthermore he did not trust the devil. He had no doubt that the devil had made him unmarriageable just to thwart God's purpose. Relentlessly he pursued his **Wimpole Street fixation**, even naming his little dog **Flush**, and after one or two let-downs, failures, misguidings — it is difficult to know which word to use, after all he was jilted at fifty — he found his Elizabeth in Ruth Peaty, who had been in fellowship with the assemblies. The pattern is suddenly etched more clearly. Ruth first wrote to him on Browning's wedding anniversary, after reading some of his works. Jack was now in a position to marry, for C. Day Lewis and A. L. Rowse had sponsored a successful appeal on his behalf to the Royal Literary Fund, and during 1961 he had been awarded a Civil List Pension. They were married on 26th October, 1968. So the Wimpole Street destiny was fulfilled, and for the consequences of that we must refer you to **The Marriage of a Rebel**.

Jack and Ruth still live in the cottage at Goonamarris, but Eveline Clemo, after living to see the pattern in her son's life fulfilled, passed on to her reward. And if we are sure of nothing else we are certain of this: in that land where grinding toil, poverty and pain are no more, her reward will be large. God has plenty of time the other side of Eternity to make up to people like this dear old Primitive Methodist for what they have lost down here.



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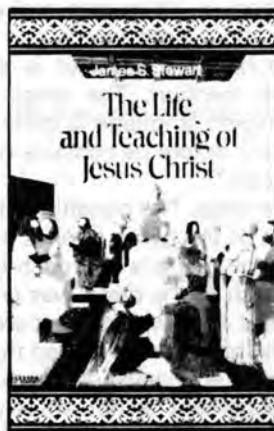
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MUSICAL INTERLUDE—6

Tuneful Praise

A. F. McIntosh

The Words

Were we to look for a word to describe the approach so often made to the choice of hymns for public worship, perhaps we could find none better than the word 'serendipity'. It was coined by Horace Walpole in 1754 and derives from the fairy tale entitled 'The Three Princes of Serendip', the heroes of which were always making accidental discoveries of things they were not looking for. Serendipity — the faculty of making happy chance finds — is a gift with which many choosers of hymns assume they have been endowed. Experience shows that its incidence is not as high as is imagined.

Hymns may be chosen by preacher, organist or chairman. When the preacher chooses, probably the **words** are thought about most carefully: and when the organist chooses, the **tunes** are given most thought. When the chairman chooses, there is a real opportunity for careful thought about both words and tune. Consultation with preacher and organist is so desirable as scarcely to need mention. The range and quality of hymns in the English language is quite incomparable, but the hymn book before us contains only a selection. Where do we begin?

Begin at the beginning. The condition of the 'Contents' page at the front of the hymn book is as good an indication as any of the owner's approach to choosing the hymns. Is it as fresh as the day it was printed, the least thumbed, the least stained, the least worn page in the book? Most hymn books are arranged thematically, and the 'Contents' page is an invaluable guide to the selector. Where arrangement is not entirely according to theme, it is a worthwhile exercise to scout through sections labelled 'Solos' and 'Choir Pieces' to extract suitable hymns for congregational singing.

We must take time to say something about the indexes of a hymn book, with special reference to those provided in the music copy. The first-line index is the best known and most widely used. Sometimes the whole hymn book is arranged alphabetically, surely a less desirable format. Even then, a thematic or subject index

may be included which thereupon assumes the importance of the 'Contents' page in a thematically-arranged book. The author index is well worthy of perusal if only to see the debt we owe to writers such as Watts and Charles Wesley and to translators such as J. M. Neale. It provides an incidental indication of the section of the church for which the book has been compiled. Happily, most hymns are transdenominational.

The Tune

We turn now, albeit briefly, to the question of tunes. It is such a pleasure to find good words married to a good tune and the two living happily together ever after. We pass over the stylized 'professional' music of the Latin church and come to post-Reformation times. The psalm tunes dominated the scene for a very long time. There were few of them. A book of 'Twelve Common Tunes' was in use in the Scottish Church in the late seventeenth century. It is easy to forget that the printing of a tune for nearly every set of words in a book is a comparatively recent innovation. It was only with the publication of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' over a century ago that for the first time in a hymn book of wide circulation, words and tunes were printed together. Before that, one book had contained the words and another the tunes. Another practice was to split each page throughout the book, or throughout the Psalm section at least. The words were on a separate half of the page from the tune. The half-pages could be turned independently so that the book could be opened at any set of words and any tune. These earlier ideas of separate books or split pages have been replaced by a valuable, if little used, tune index system which corresponds to the word indexes we have already considered.

There are usually three kinds of tune index. There is the Index of Composers, which demonstrates how much so many owe to so few. Look out for classical composers like Bach, Handel and Mozart whose tunes adorn the words. Look at the contribution of composers like the Victorian Dykes, or the more recent Ralph Vaughan

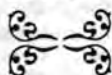
Williams. It has been said, sadly, that the main thing the public wants of a composer is that he be dead. To avoid this attitude we must constantly scrutinize the works of living authors in the smaller and newer hymn books that are published from time to time. The alphabetical index of tunes allows us to trace the tune we want, an index which obviously becomes increasingly valuable as we learn more tunes by name.

The metrical index is the most valuable of all the indexes and allows us to replace an unknown or unwanted tune or to find a better tune for a set of words before us. If we have an old hymn book with indifferent tunes, the whole armoury of a modern hymn book is open to us through its metrical index. Most psalms and many hymns have a simple, readily identifiable metre. **Christian Worship** (Paternoster) has a particularly wide selection of standard-metre tunes. How refreshing it is to find within two covers so many hymns which previously seemed to be scattered here, there and everywhere — 'Glasgow', 'Orlington', 'Brother James' Air', 'Deep Harmony', 'Kedron', to name but a few. As an aid to choice of tune, **Hymns of Faith** (Scripture Union/C.S.S.M.) is outstanding. There, laid out for maximum convenience, is a metrical index which not only names the tune, but gives the first few bars in staff notation for each, so that laborious cross-checking in the body of the book is eliminated.

An interesting tune makes a real contribution to the praise and reinforces the words. It has been complained that in the harmonic arrangements for some of the old evangelical hymns 'every tension, rhythmic, melodic, contrapuntal, has gone' (Routley). Refreshing words deserve a refreshing tune and there are plenty of these around.

A word for those who have to choose hymns and who can play an instrument moderately well. The habit of playing through, over a period of time, every hymn in a hymn book, is to be encouraged. This can be done in the same way that one reads through a book. Only then can we assess whether the aim of the compilers has been fulfilled. We can learn whether the book's strength is in its words or in its tunes. We can determine its value to us individually and its possibilities for congregational use.

Our hymn books, indexing systems and the like are aids for the hymn-chooser in the way that concordances and Bible helps are aids for the preacher. However, choosing hymns is, like preaching, a spiritual exercise. It deserves to be treated as such.



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H

NEW LIFE IN THE CHURCH

A report by C. T. Bocutt on the CBRF Seminar on Revival.

The CBRF Autumn Seminar on the subject 'New Life in the Church?' took place at London Bible College on 7 November, 1981 with Dr. John Boyes in the chair. The participants represented a wide spectrum of opinion on the subject and there was plenty of lively discussion on the papers which were given.

Bob Gordon, of LBC and GEAR (Group for Evangelism and Revival in the United Reformed Church), was first to speak, on the subject 'Renewal Patterns in the UK'. He began by identifying three basic characteristics of true revival; revelation, repentance and response. He went on to trace the vast growth of spiritual interest in revival and renewal from the early 60s up to the present day. None of the main line churches had been unaffected by the charismatic movement, which had introduced a fresh emphasis on church growth, and encouraged the coming together of Christians to discuss such things as evangelism. The growth of 'house churches' was a particularly important development, and he mentioned the five main streams which had so far emerged. In these churches stress was placed on the operation of the whole Body of Christ in ministry and fellowship, as well as on renewal of the worship life of the Christian community, and there had also been a recovery of the ministry of healing. In the wake of these developments, renewal groups had been formed in the main line churches. The move away from exclusivism had resulted in the formation of such bodies as the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism. He identified the tensions between extremism and compro-

mise, and division and restoration in order to show the need for biblical and spiritual balance.

John Baigent led the Group Discussion, providing four basic aspects to be examined in detail. He suggested that both the theological and practical difficulties should be considered. The first Group ('Reformation, Renewal or Revival?') defined the three terms as a purification of doctrine and structures, a personal return to newness, and a contagious renewal in the church. When corporate renewal was being sought by a part of an assembly, the lack of formal structures in the church gave rise to fears of insecurity amongst the leaders of the church, and a sense of frustration on the part of those wanting to see change. The 'Charismatic or Noncharismatic?' Group agreed with Bob Gordon's definition that 'charismatic' meant the operation of the full range of gifts with a focus on an experience in addition to conversion. Such an experience was not regarded as essential by the group but rather the result of inadequate teaching (easy believism) and an inadequate response by very young converts. The danger they saw was of an overemphasis being placed on an experience rather than on the effect that renewal and revival should have on the life of the individual and the church. The third Group ('Party Line or Godly Truce?') drew attention to the role of the leaders in avoiding a polarisation of views, but at the same time not allowing tradition or the fear of giving offence to others to quench the Spirit. They also had to be able to recognise and test the particular manifestation of gifts in the church. The last Group discussed whether the different interests could co-exist

in the same church. Outside speakers could help by giving a more objective understanding of the charismatic movement as a preliminary to a more open discussion of some of the more emotive subjects; e.g. tongues.

Dr. Michael Griffiths, the Principal of LBC, spoke on 'Spiritual Dynamics', referring to the infinite variety of methods by which the Holy Spirit worked. Within this variation, the biblical pattern of revival was first of all a judgement by God on His people to bring them to repentance, followed by the restoration of communion and fellowship with Him. This could be seen in the history of Israel in the Old Testament and of the Church in the New Testament. There had been similar revival movements since the Reformation. These all underlined the principle that when the Church repents the Holy Spirit comes in to refresh it, not by fits and starts but rather in a continuous way. Unfortunately the attack of the Devil was to press those touched by the Spirit to go to excess. Thus, he said, the presence of error and sin should not be taken to mean that God was not in a particular movement. The reviving work of the Holy Spirit was to be seen today in the healthy dissatisfaction in the main line churches which had stimulated the development of house churches and a much freer attitude to worship. He cited the gradual decline in the last 25 years of 'Prayer Book fundamentalism' in the Church of England as a further example of the pattern of revival which had begun in the revival prayer groups which had been formed at the time. Within the Brethren movement the effect of rigidity was being recognised as a hindrance to more effective pastoral

care and more systematic teaching.

The whole day provided a most useful background to current developments in the renewal of the spiritual life of the church today, as well as a forum for discussing some of the problems which cause the old wine skins to break.



PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

A busy Christian man remarked that he was able to halve his potential correspondence by consigning to the waste-paper basket all letters from perfect strangers which began with the words 'Dear Brother'. I could not go all the way with him because I know that when a letter from certain parts of the world (especially from east of the Iron Curtain) begins in this way, a genuine appeal is being made to the family bond that unites believers in Christ. But in our own culture it is too often a relic of religious convention. What do readers think?

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

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

SEMINAR TAPES

A series of Seminars have been held at the London Bible College covering a range of subjects of a thought-provoking nature. Some of the main talks are now available on cassette tapes as listed below.

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Christian Brethren Research Fellowship

Seminars Programme 1982

1. Saturday, 1st May 1982

'Small is Beautiful'

An examination of the experience and contributions of house groups in the local church.

Speakers: Dr. Derek Copley, Moorlands Bible College and others.

2. Saturday, 23rd October 1982

'Healing Ministries in the Church'

A study of the biblical teaching and contemporary experiences in the healing and restoration of the whole person; the reconciliation ministry in the body life of the local church.

Speakers: Dr. David Atkinson, Corpus Christi College, Oxford, Dr. Roger Hurding (author: **Restoring the Image**) and others.

Both seminars will take place at the London Bible College (Green Lane, Northwood, Middlesex — nearest Underground is Northwood on the Metropolitan Line) from 1000-1730 hours.

These are participative events and your contributions in the form of case studies or comment will be welcomed beforehand; please send material to Dr. John Boyes, CBRF, 13 The Meads, Northchurch, Berkhamsted, Herts. HP4 3QX.

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Forgetting Ourselves

Question 210

A frequently-used chorus tells us to 'forget about ourselves and concentrate on' Jesus. How far do you think it is possible to forget about ourselves completely?

I don't think it is necessary to understand the chorus as demanding that we become totally unaware of ourselves. There is a quite common usage whereby 'not a but b' is understood to mean 'much more of b and much less of a'. And the appeal to 'forget about' often means no more than 'don't think about it', e.g. 'forget that you've got to be back at work tomorrow and enjoy your holiday today!' On the other hand, I should have thought that there were times when people do lose awareness of themselves. Concentrating on a job that is totally absorbing (scoring a try, performing an intricate operation) being taken up by the presence of another person (sexual love, mysticism) — these experiences suggest that the chorus may be pointing towards a possibility that is not outside the experience of quite a number of people.

'Righteous Lot?'

Question 211

Would you kindly expound 2 Peter 2:7 & 8 and explain why the Scriptures say that Lot is righteous?

This section of the epistle is concerned with God's judgement upon sin and with his concern to deliver the righteous from this judgement. The examples given are those of Noah (5) and Lot (6-8). From these examples the conclusion is drawn that God will preserve his people in a time of future judgement (9, 10). Within the framework of Scripture, Lot is first introduced as righteous in (probably) *Genesis 18:22-33* where Abram pleads on behalf of the righteous people within Sodom. Chapter 19 shows Lot not merely separating himself from the wickedness of Sodom but opposing its inhabitants to the point

where his house is attacked. In this crisis he receives supernatural protection (19:10, 11) and accepts the good news that it is possible for him and his family to escape the judgement that threatens the city (12-14). In view of this, and in spite of the possible implications of 19:29, it seems reasonable to interpret 'righteous' in a relative sense as implying that compared with his neighbours and with reference to the standards of the city in which he lived, Lot was a good man.

Salvation under the Old Covenant

Question 212

What must I do to be saved? We all know the Apostle Paul's short answer to this question. Can you suggest a similar short answer that might have been given to this question had it been asked by someone living, say, in the days of the Judges or in the days of the Maccabees?

The message of the Book of Judges is perfectly straightforward: Israel must trust in the Lord as the only hope of deliverance. In fact, this is the first duty of God's people throughout the Old Testament. When Israel heard the promise of deliverance from Egypt, 'the people believed . . . bowed their heads and worshipped'. At the Sea of Reeds, Moses told the people: 'fear not, stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord . . . you have only to be still' (*Exodus 14:13, 14*). Centuries later, it is Isaiah who encourages Ahaz with a promise of salvation (*Isaiah 6:7*) but reminds him that 'if you will not believe, surely you shall not be established' (v.9). So I would suggest that the Old Testament equivalent of Paul's injunction is: 'Trust in the Lord with all your heart.' 'But what about the law?' somebody asks. What indeed? It is a good New Testament principle that 'faith without works is dead' (*James 2:17*). Yet Paul's response to the jailer in Philippi made no mention of discipleship or of a new pattern of life. Nor for that matter did he go into any detail about the way in which saving faith operates to deliver the believer. No doubt the practical implications of trust will vary in detail from age to age. But faith remains the basic issue.

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



CHRISTIAN POETRY: SOME RECENT ANTHOLOGIES

Reviewed by John Peters

The Lion Book of Christian Poetry

Pat Alexander
Lion Publishing. 123pp. £4.95 (hardback).

The Bridge of Love

Elizabeth Basset
Darton, Longman and Todd. 169pp. £5.95 (hardback).

The New Oxford Book of Christian Verse

Donald Davie
Oxford University Press. 302pp. £7.95 (hardback).

The Gift of Love

Malcolm Saville
Lion Publishing. £4.95 (hardback).

Words for All Seasons

Malcolm Saville
Lion Publishing. 185pp. £1.50 (paperback).

Eliza Doolittle (in Shaw's *Pygmalion*) professed to find words perplexing, even tiring, but those with a delight in words will find the anthologies listed above fascinating.

Alexander's work claims to be an 'introduction to the rich heritage of Christian poetry in the English language over a period of 1300 years'.

The poems are arranged chronologically according to the authors' dates of birth, beginning with Caedmon (seventh-century) and ending with Steve Turner's searching, even uncomfortable, 'How to Hide Jesus', part of which reads:

*There are people after Jesus.
They have seen the signs.
Quick, let's hide him.
Let's think; carpenter,
fishermen's friend,
disturber of religious comfort.
Let's award him a degree in
theology,
a purple cassock
and a position of respect.
They'll never think of looking
here.
Let's think;
His dialect may betray him,*

*His tongue is of the masses.
Let's teach him Latin
and seventeenth century
English,
they'll never think of listening
in.*

Not all the poems would have been my choice (e.g., the Medieval Carols, C. S. Lewis's 'Eden's Courtesy', Mary Coleridge's 'I Saw a Stable'), but the final selection is a reasonably happy combination of the famous and not-so-famous names who have written Christian verse. Elizabeth Basset, the compiler of *The Bridge of Love*, has edited two other anthologies, *Love is My Meaning* and *Each in His Prison*. Many years of reading and meditation have gone into the making of this new volume, which takes as its central theme the fact that the spiritual life cannot be divorced from living and the world. There are so many excerpts I would like to quote, but the following must suffice, beginning with George Herbert portraying God as the source of all creative art:

*O Sacred Providence, who from
end to end
Strongly and sweetly movest/
shall I write
And not of thee, through whom
my fingers bend
To hold my quill? shall they not
do thee right?*

*Of all thy creatures both in sea
and land
Only to man thou hast made
known thy wayes
And put the penne alone into
his hand
And made him Secretarie of
thy praise . . .*

*. . . All things that are, though
they have sev'ral wayes
Yet in their being joyn with one
advise
To honour thee; and so I give
thee praise
In all my other hymns, but in
this twice.*

Then there is John Taylor's penetrating observation in *The Go-Between God*: 'It is not more wonders that we need but more wonder.' And thirdly King George the Sixth's words broadcast in 1945: 'For merriment is the birthright of the young. But we can all keep it in our hearts as life goes on if we hold fast by the spirit that refuses to admit defeat; by the faith that never falters; by the hope that cannot be quenched.' This last quotation strikes the keynote of a book bearing the sub-title, 'An Anthology of Hope'.

Malcolm Saville's intriguing title was suggested by the famous description of Sir Thomas More as a man for all seasons. This volume aptly complements Pat Alexander's selection by including poems which reflect on nature, love and the world in general. While the concept of choosing poetry and prose relating the seasons of the year to our lives is hardly original, the overall impression is of a sensitive and highly pleasing work. Saville's clear understanding of Christianity is nowhere more apparent than in his choice of this extract entitled 'The Christmas Tree':

*At last there is the tree . . .
Suppose then, it has been
reserved for this evening,
decorated and kept behind
locked doors for this hour.
When the children enter that
room it is already alight, and all
other lights are extinguished;
found there like a presence
already arrived and serenely
awaiting them, patient in
splendour, becalming at first, or
almost hypnotic, it needs only
to be looked at. Even to older
eyes it seems to be more than it
is, more than a conifer covered
with objects of metal and glass
and wax, this image of a tree
whose buds are flames,
flowering at midwinter, a tree
burning and unconsumed,*

*evocative of the flourishing bay
tree, and the burning bush, of
the mystical 'Dream of the
Rood', the Tree of Calvary
itself, whose shadow is faint
but indelible across the lights of
the Nativity.*

The self-confessed aim of *The Gift of Love* is to capture the feelings and fears of young people in love. Ulrich Schaffer's poem in particular pin-points the immense pressures upon young people to conform to today's worldly standards:

*Jesus,
my friend and I live in a sex-
oriented world;
we are exposed to sex
everywhere;
everywhere your gift to us,
the physical union as an act
of love,
is made cheap: in films and
novels
in advertising
and in the talking of people
around us.*

*Everywhere sex seems to be
more important than love
and for many love means
just sex
divorced from responsibility
and from the decision to share
life on a deep level.*

*All that is left is: make love!
and love is produced
grotesquely
in one area of life and in one
way
and few realize
that that can never be love.*

*We need you so desperately
in this world
if we want to experience our
relationship
as a gift from you
and if we are not to be
washed away
by a wave of cheapness.*

*Help us
and teach us to wait for your
time
before joining our bodies.*

Lavishly illustrated, this volume will be appreciated by discerning teenagers and understanding parents. Each of these works is valuable — Alexander's for clarity of presentation, Basset's for catholicity of taste, Saville's for its devotional content, and Stroud's for sheer common sense and perception — but towering over them all is the massively authoritative new edition of the **Oxford Book of Christian Verse**. Donald Davie's choice was governed by a number of important considerations: his acceptance of the traditional — though admittedly 'rough-and-ready' — distinction between sacred and secular verse; his determination not to confuse Christian verse with 'devotional' verse; his unequivocal view that 'a poem, to be a Christian poem, must have at its core something either doctrinal or scriptural; it must treat of scripture to show how scripture embodies doctrine, and of doctrine to show how it has scriptural authority'; his acute understanding of poetic standards: 'What readers did not find in Lord David's anthology (published in 1940), and must not expect to find in this one, is verse which fails to measure up strictly in **artistry** to the best of secular verse written through the same centuries'; and finally his special regard for 'the plain style', which eschews elaboration. Unlike Alexander's anthology, Davie's is truly representative of Christian verse through the centuries: it ranges from the Anglo-Saxon masterpiece, 'The Dream of the Rood', to such modern poets as T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Sir John Betjeman and R. S. Thomas. Donald Davie is an eminent critic, scholar and poet, and his anthology will give pleasure, set standards of poetical excellence

against which all practitioners of Christian poetry must assess themselves, and it will be as substantial a work of reference as was Lord David Cecil's original work.

CREATION WAITING — FOR WHAT?

Bent World: Science, the Bible, and the environment Ron Elsdon. IVP. 170pp. £2.95 (paperback). It is Gerard Manley Hopkins, and not Uri Geller, who provides the inspiration for the title. Elsdon, a geologist and a Church of Ireland lay reader, puts his expertise to good use in the vertebral chapters 2 to 5 (the section entitled 'Getting the Picture') in which four main problems are reviewed, viz. metals, energy, cities and food. The picture is of fast-fading resources in some instances, yet doomsday predictions are checked by the possibilities of alternative resources and technologies. Elsdon considers that 'metals will never run out in practice; what will happen is that, as supplies dwindle and demands increase, the prices will go very high.' But what starts as an economic consequence will have 'repercussions in every aspect of human life'. No need for the author to lose sleep over this prophecy; he is sure to pass the Deuteronomic test! Chapter 6 ('Getting it Wrong') considers the effect of sin on the environment — as also of that monarchical view of man displayed in the biblical creation account (c.f. also *Psalms* 8) and regarded by some environmentalists as sharing in the responsibility for man's abuse of his habitat (one thinks of 'Nature whacked' in ch. 3 of C. S. Lewis's *The Abolition of Man*). Elsdon resists the suggestion that man has any biblical warrant for mistreating his environment; *Genesis* 2:15

is cited as showing man in a position of trusteeship in relation to the physical world. (To which might be added the observation that the biblical portrayal of 'King Adam' is in conscious opposition to lesser views of man as propounded in near eastern cosmology.) A judicious blending of Calvin and Kidner, Brunner and Westermann — it shall be more tolerable for geologists than for theologians! — helps Elsdon to underline his points. 'Getting it right' (ch. 7) looks at the implications of salvation and concludes that there is 'an environmental dimension to the gospel'. *Romans* 8:19-21 provides an apt quotation, but

it is a pity that 2 *Peter* 3:10-13 was not allowed to warm up the discussion! The burden of the final chapter ('Getting on with the job') is that the Christian, especially in conjunction with like-minded souls, is not powerless to help the situation; and the effects of modern missionary enterprise in Africa is given as an example of a notable achievement — under God — by 'the few'. This is a most useful study and one that might provide background for a series of addresses or a group Bible study course.

Review by Dr. Robert P. Gordon, Cambridge University

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EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

MORE MEDITATIONS ON MARK

He was with the wild beasts David Brady

David Brady, Ph.D., is Assistant Librarian in the John Rylands University Library at Manchester. Following up his useful series of articles last year, he has provided More Meditations in Mark, which we shall be featuring from time to time in 1982.

Unlike Matthew and Luke, Mark records in brief the temptation of our Lord, without going into the details of the three different temptations. However, while his note is brief, he does record for us one significant fact which is passed over by the other evangelists: 'He was with the wild animals' (Mark 1:13). Indeed, this fact seems to have been of such importance to Mark as characterizing the dangers of the wilderness endured by Jesus that it was impossible for him to leave it out. For Mark, the dangers faced by Jesus were three-fold: the inhospitable wilderness itself providing no food or water to quench the unremitting thirst occasioned by the environment: the temptations of Satan with whom the Lord battled in this desolate place; and the wild animals prowling for food by day and by night. These were the wild creatures which since the fall of man had lived in constant contention with humanity (e.g. 2 Kgs. 17:25).

But Jesus was never subject to the innate weakness deriving from sin which was the lot of every man since the fall. There was surely no reason why he should fear the ferocity of wild animals at all. Indeed, they had been our Lord's companion from birth, for when no room was found for his mother among human society, God's

anointed was brought into the world and found his first earthly resting place in an animal feeding-trough. There was a sense in which our Lord was even less welcome in the world than the animals among whom he lodged: 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head' (Matt. 8:20), and yet the wild animals of his pilgrimage were not a peril to their Creator. If with his word he could still the raging storm at sea, then he might also still the fury of the brute creation. That the Lord had such special ability with animals denied to other men seems implied in the statement that the colt on which Jesus rode into Jerusalem was one on which no one had ever yet sat (Mark 11:2). It is not everybody who is able to mount an unbroken animal and then proceed to ride it for any distance. If Jesus then demonstrated the ability of the Creator himself with his animal creation, it is perfectly in keeping with his person that on another occasion he should refer to himself as 'the good shepherd' (John 10: 11, 14). The wonder is that he should not only take the station of shepherd, but also that of Lamb (John 1:29; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 5:6, etc.)

So paradoxically he also bears the title of 'lion' (Rev. 5:5), while the Holy Spirit appears in the expressive form of a dove (Matt. 3:16), reminiscent of the new beginning after the flood. If God is pleased to use these animal metaphors of himself, how wrong it is of us to say of those who demonstrate the basest behaviour that they act like animals. Animals do not act in the perverse ways that men so often act and

when men so act they do not act like animals at all, but rather like demons. It was not without purpose, nor without affection, that the living creatures of the earth were called into being by their Creator, for in the beginning they had their own proper place in creation and were not merely devoted to the exploitation of man. We may without thought pass by a dead bird on the road or in the gutter, but God does not so ignore the sufferings of his animal creation (Matt. 10:29). Not only does God for instance feed the ravens (Job 38:41; Ps. 147:9; Luke 12:24), but on occasion he may commission them to feed his servants (1 Kgs. 17:6). Let us not despise one of these little ones of his.

In our Lord's time, the wild beasts that roamed the wilderness of Judaea might have included such predators as the panther, bear, wolf, hyena, and lion, all of which might on occasion be a menace to any man wandering alone in this desert place (cf. Paul's reference in 2 Cor. 11:26 to 'danger in the wilderness'); we remember for example the conflict that David had experienced with some of them (1 Sam. 17:34-37). But it was to be the triumph of the righteous that the wild animals should be at peace with him (Job 5:22f.), as indeed Daniel had proved in the past (Dan. 6:22) and the Messiah was to prove in the future when creation was to be restored and released from its bondage (Isa. 11:6-9). But the serpent, which had characterized the Devil and had been the tempter in the beginning, was to be exempted; still he would be 'cursed continued on page twenty-four

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (57)

F. F. Bruce

The final phase of the ministry 'to the world'

ii. THE RAISING OF LAZARUS (*John 11:1-46*)

(f) The spectators' reaction (*John 11:45, 46*)

11:45-46 So many of the Jews who had come to Mary and had seen what he did believed in him. But some of them went off to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

The account of the raising of Lazarus raises a number of questions to which no answer is given. Some of those questions have been given memorable expression by Tennyson (*In Memoriam*, canto 31):

*When Lazarus left his charnel-cave,
And home to Mary's house return'd,
Was this demanded — if he yearn'd
To hear her weeping by his grave?*

*'Where wert thou, brother, those four days?'
There lives no record of reply,
Which telling what it is to die
Had surely added praise to praise.*

*From every house the neighbours met,
The streets were fill'd with joyful sound,
A solemn gladness even crown'd
The purple brows of Olivet.*

*Behold a man raised up by Christ!
The rest remaineth unreveal'd;
He told it not; or something seal'd
The lips of that Evangelist.*

The raising of Lazarus is the climax of the series of 'signs' which characterize John's record of Jesus' public ministry, serving as manifestations of the divine glory which resided in the incarnate Word. At the same time it precipitates the series of events which culminate in the passion narrative.

At such a revelation of the glory of God (*cf. verses 4, 40*), it was not surprising that many believed in Jesus: whatever doubts they might have had before, it was now plain that he was the Sent One of God. 'The Jews who had come to Mary' are presumably those who left the house and followed her, 'supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there' (*verse 37*). Even if we read, with other authorities, 'the Jews who had come with Mary', it is the same

persons that are meant. But some went off and told the Pharisees what Jesus had done; it is implied that they did so with no friendly intention (the more so as they are set in contrast with the many who believed).

iii. THE FATEFUL COUNCIL (*John 11:47-53*)

11:47, 48 So the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a meeting of the Sanhedrin. They were speaking like this: 'What are we to do? This man is performing many signs. If we let him go on like this, everybody will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.'

The Sanhedrin, the supreme court of the Jewish nation, comprised seventy-one members, including the high priest, who presided over it by virtue of his office. The chief priests (the high priest, the captain of the temple and members of the leading priestly families), together with the party of the Sadducees, to which most of them belonged, formed a majority of the court; the Pharisees constituted an influential minority.

It is plain that the members of the court were desperately afraid that Jesus' presence and activity in and around Jerusalem would attract a large following and, whether with or without his approval, spark off a popular rising. This would inevitably bring down the heavy hand of Rome and might lead to the abolition of the internal autonomy and temple-constitution of Judaea. 'Our place' which, they feared, would be taken away was the temple ('this holy place' of *Acts 6:13 f.; 21:28*). By the time this Gospel was written, the catastrophe which they dreaded had taken place, but not because of the presence and activity of Jesus.

11:49, 50 But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, 'You know nothing at all; you do not consider that it is to your advantage that one man should die for the people, rather than that the whole nation should perish.'

Caiaphas, whose personal name was Joseph, had been high priest since A.D. 18, when he was appointed to that office by the Roman prefect Valerius Gratus. He was son-in-law to Annas (*cf.*

John 18:13), who had been high priest A.D. 6-15 and for many years thereafter retained considerable authority as the power behind the throne. Matthew is the only other evangelist who names Caiaphas as the high priest in the passion narrative (*Matt. 26:57*); Luke mentions him twice in other contexts (*Luke 3:2*; *Acts 4:6*). It has been inferred from the phrase 'high priest that year' (cf. *verse 51; 18:13*) that the evangelist, being imperfectly informed about the Jewish high-priesthood, imagined that it was an annual appointment (cf. R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, p. 410). What the evangelist means, however (as is indicated by his repetition of the words), is that in that momentous year Caiaphas was high priest. (His high-priesthood, in fact, lasted for the unusually long period of eighteen years.)

Like most members of the chief-priestly group, Caiaphas belonged to the party of the Sadducees. According to Josephus (*Jewish War* 2.166), Sadducees had a reputation for rudeness, even among one another, and evidence of this has been seen in the abruptness with which Caiaphas now broke in on his colleagues' agitated chatter: 'You know nothing at all' (or, more freely, 'you don't know what you are talking about'). You ought to consider, he went on, that it is better that one man should die than that the whole nation should be destroyed. If the safety of the nation could be secured by one man's death, it was a matter of prudential calculation that that one man should die. In such a situation, he would die 'for the people'. (In this sentence the Jewish community is referred to both as the *laos*, the people, and the *ethnos*, the nation.) Justice took second place to prudence: it was a pity that a man should die unjustly, but if the choice lay between the death of one and the destruction of a nation, then the Sanhedrin should be in no doubt which decision to take. The high priest may not have intended to use language which could be interpreted in a sacrificial sense, but his words could very well mean that Jesus was to be 'devoted' to death as a scapegoat, an apotropaic offering, to ward off disaster from the people.

11:51, 52 In saying this he did not speak on his own initiative but, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation — and not for the nation only, but also in order to gather into one the dispersed children of God.

Whatever the high priest's intention was, John views

his words as overruled to express a nobler purpose than he himself had in mind. He implies that Caiaphas prophesied involuntarily by virtue of his office. In earlier days the high priest of Israel declared the will of God by the operation of the Urim and Thummim; and there is some evidence that even later the occasional gift of prophecy was believed to attach to the office. So John treats his words as a prophecy of the vicarious character of Jesus' death, and adds something not implicit in the high priest's language — that Jesus' death would be endured not only for the Jewish nation but for all mankind (cf. *John 6:51*, 'for the life of the world'). In particular, Jesus' death would effect the bringing together into a unity, into a united community, of the widely dispersed 'children of God'. The 'children of God' (according to *John 1:12*) are those who believe in Jesus' name, children of the new birth; John here repeats in different language what Jesus said in his discourse about the good shepherd: that he was to bring his 'other sheep' who did not belong to the Jewish fold and join them (with their fellow-believers of Jewish birth) into 'one flock', under one shepherd (*John 10:16*). Once again, the Gentile mission is foreshadowed (see also *John 12:32*).

11:53 So, from that day, they decided to put him to death.

Jesus' death was resolved upon at that meeting of the supreme court; it remained only to give effect to the resolution as promptly as was compatible with discretion.

iv. JESUS' WILDERNESS RETREAT (*John 11:54*)

11:54 So Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews; instead, he went away from there into the territory near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and he stayed there with the disciples.

The Sanhedrin's resolution was not unknown to Jesus. He left the vicinity of Jerusalem and took his disciples to an out-of-the-way spot. Ephraim is mentioned by Josephus (*Jewish War* 4.551) as a small town (*polichnion*) near Bethel; it is probably the place called 'Ephron' in *2 Chron. 13:19*. It is commonly identified with the modern et-Tayibeh, about 4 miles N.E. of Bethel.

The passion and resurrection narrative (*John 11:55-21:25*) was dealt with in *The Witness* for 1971 and 1972, apart from the upper-room discourses and high-priestly prayer (*13:31-17:26*). In the remaining issues of 1982, therefore, it is hoped to cover this remaining material and so complete our studies in the Gospel of John.

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (3)

The Love of God — In the Old Testament

M. L. Burr

In considering God's holiness and righteousness we have seen how both these attributes operate not only in judgment but also in salvation. We now turn to the question of why this should be so. Why should God go to such lengths to display His holy and righteous character in blessing us when it would be more simply revealed in our condemnation? The answer, in so far as we are given one, lies in His love.

The Old Testament refers to God's love mainly in connection with Israel as a nation. Obviously the question arises as to why God should love Israel at all. Was it because they were especially lovable? Deuteronomy makes it clear that God's love is spontaneous, not called forth initially by anything in His people. It was not because they were a great nation that God set His love upon them, but 'because the LORD loves you, and is keeping the oath which he swore to your fathers' (7:7, 8). Neither was it because of their righteousness, for they were rebellious from the very start (9:6, 24). So there is something inexplicable about the love of God — He loves them because He loves them. In so far as His love can be attributed to anything it is due to His oath to the patriarchs, but this itself is quite unexplained. It is a fatherly love, manifested in both care and discipline (1:31; 8:5). Moreover, God expects Israel to keep His commandments, so that His love can be shown in blessing (7:12, 13).

But would God still love Israel when she turned away from Him? Hosea saw that his love for his unfaithful wife resembled, in miniature, God's love for unfaithful Israel (Hos. 3:1). There is nothing sentimental about that love. God really hates sin and will bring Israel low because of it. Yet His objec-

tive is to restore the rebels despite themselves. His love is again described as that of a father, who taught his child to walk only to see the child walk away from him (11:1-4). God's feelings are described in a remarkable way: 'How can I give you up, O Ephraim? . . . My heart recoils within me' (11:8). Yet how can God love those who are incorrigibly rebellious? Eventually God Himself will heal their faithlessness and so be able to love them freely (14:4). Jeremiah takes up this line of thought, especially in ch. 31. Here we read of the everlasting love with which God loves Israel. His heart yearns for His dear son Ephraim, who has been repeatedly rebellious. The only hope for permanent restoration is the New Covenant which God promises to make with His people. God will write His laws in their hearts, forgive their sins, and give every individual a personal knowledge of Himself. Thus God's love will bring His people into communion with Himself.

In Isaiah God's love is connected with His sovereign power in creating and restoring Israel. He tells His people 'You are precious in my eyes, and honoured, and I love you' (43:4). Not only will He bring them out of distress, He is actually with them in it. 'When you pass through the waters I will be with you' (43:2). He even feels their sufferings Himself — 'In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them' (63:9). The relationships of mother (49:15), husband (54:5) and father (63:16) are mentioned to suggest aspects of God's love for His people. Zephaniah (3:17) portrays God's love as finally triumphant. He will rejoice over His people with gladness, He will renew them (RSV) or quiet them (NIV)

in his love, exulting over them with singing. So they will ultimately be fit for the love of a holy God.

In view of all this it is sad that the last reference in the prophets to God's love shows that the people distrust it. 'I have loved you, says the LORD. But you say, How hast thou loved us?' (Mal. 1:2). Again we see the inscrutable character of divine love, which chose Jacob rather than his twin brother Esau. The people apparently claimed that God was their father (1:6), but they neither recognized His love nor responded to it.

There are only two other specific individuals in the Old Testament whom God is said to love. One was Solomon as a newborn baby (2 Sam. 12:24), and the context shows that this was in spite of, not because of, the circumstances of his birth. The other was (apparently) Cyrus (Isa. 48:14), who did not know God at all (45:5). So again we see the spontaneous, unexplained nature of divine love.

A more general reference to God's love for individuals occurs in Prov. 3:12: — 'The LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights'. Again it is a fatherly love, shown in the discipline needed to produce a suitable character in His children.

The passages quoted above (and a few others) use the ordinary word 'love'. There is, however, another word sometimes rendered 'love' which occurs much more often in the Old Testament. This word seems almost to defy translation. Coverdale, in his translation of 1535, was unable to find a suitable English equivalent and therefore coined the word 'lovingkindness'. AV usually renders it as 'mercy', RSV

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CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (8)

J. E. Todd

... of Welcoming Fellow Christians
(Rom. 14:1-15:12).

'We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves; let each of us please our neighbour for his good, to edify him (15:1-2, RSV). We are told to bear with the failings of our weak fellow Christians, whether they are mistakes of doctrine or behaviour (14:2-6), with a sympathetic understanding. We are not to please ourselves by setting up our own view (however right and scriptural it is) as the standard by which all others are to be judged, condemned and rejected (14:10-12). Our Lord Jesus Christ is the example of sympathetic understanding towards those with whom he did not agree (even ourselves!), to the sympathetic extent of saving us. 'For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me" ' (15:3). Could there be a greater gulf between the weakness of our sinful and guilty state and the strength of his sinless perfection and divine glory? Yet he did not despise and reject us. He said, 'Him who comes to me I will not cast out' (John 6:37). He welcomed us!

'As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions' (Rom. 14:1). Our fellow believer who is weak in faith is not to be rejected but accepted, not merely to be accepted but welcomed, not merely to be welcomed but not to be hectored into better ways. Our Lord is set before us as the example of this gracious behaviour. 'Welcome one another, therefore, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God' (15:7). We are to welcome our fellow Christians because the Lord has welcomed us. The Lord welcomed us on the grounds of our repentance from sin and our faith in himself, we must welcome others on the same grounds. And this to the glory of God. In our case, received to his glory as a soul saved; in their case, received to his

glory as demonstrating the unity of his people.

It has been said that the Christian church is a fellowship of love not a fellowship of doctrine. This is not true. Certain fundamental doctrines must be accepted in order for a person to be regarded as a Christian. These fundamentals are the deity of Christ, 'You will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he' (John 8:24). The Lord Jesus as the only Saviour, 'For there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved' (Acts 4:12). Repentance from sin, 'Unless you repent you will all likewise perish' (Luke 13:3 and 5). Justification by faith, 'Without faith it is impossible to please him' (Heb. 11:6). The resurrection of Christ, 'If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins' (1 Cor. 15:17). The new birth, 'Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God' (John 3:3). The gift of the Holy Spirit, 'Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him' (Rom. 8:9). It is imperative that one accepts these doctrines, to be regarded as a Christian.

But it is true to say that the Christian church is a fellowship of love not a fellowship of opinion. For it must be remembered that this command to welcome one another is given in the context of the most divergent opinions among Christians. That is the different viewpoints of the Jewish and Gentile believers (15:8-9). The Jewish Christians observed dietary rules, sabbaths, festivals and even circumcision (Acts 21:19-21), but the Gentile Christians observed none of these. Although it is clearly stated in Scripture that none of these is necessary to salvation (Col. 2:16-17, Acts 15:1 and 11) yet their practice by some Christians was to be tolerated by the others (14:3-5). 'Let everyone be fully convinced in his own mind' (v.5).

But are there not dangers to the assembly in welcoming Christians who

have different opinions? Some differences of opinion, such as on prophetic subjects for example, need only a small amount of spiritual grace and good sense to deal with. But the brother who hammers away at his own pet theory at every opportunity, knowing many do not agree with him, is a menace, and should be silenced in that respect by the elders.

Some differences of opinion are more serious, for example a failure (for many possible reasons) to accept the teaching of believers' baptism. There are many born again believers of many years standing who are not baptised. They believe their infant sprinkling to be baptism, or that baptism is unnecessary (the Salvation Army does not practise it at all), or their attitude is a complete blank, they have never even considered it! If such seek fellowship in a local church, what is to be done? We must avoid the superficial attitude of informing them that believers' baptism is scriptural, and then if they do not accept baptism there and then, we condemn them as rejecters of the truth! The human mind and will cannot be expected to work in such a mechanical fashion. We must, as in all things, turn to the Scriptures for guidance. Here we are told to welcome all whom Christ has welcomed (15:7). Every member of the body of Christ has the right to partake of the bread, compare 1 Cor. 12:12-13 with 1 Cor. 10:17. Those weak in the faith are to be welcomed (14:1) in order to be edified (15:1-2), in whatever they are deficient. For they are better edified inside the church than outside it.

Other differences of opinion are even more pressing. A sister in Christ who believes she has the right to speak in the meeting, seeking to join an assembly where the silence of women is enjoined. A brother who believes he speaks in tongues, seeking to join an assembly where the gift of tongues is

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CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (8)

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deemed to have ceased. If they sought to practise these things it would disrupt the assembly. It is to be expected on the grounds of common courtesy, to say nothing of Christian charity, that a person joining a church should respect its order. If they are not prepared to do so, it can rightly be taken that their desire to join the fellowship of that church is insincere, since their behaviour is to disrupt the fellowship, not to enjoy or enhance it. 'Not for disputes over opinions' (14:1) applies to the received as well as the receivers! But would it not be safer and easier to refuse fellowship to those Christians who have different opinions? Indeed it would! But this behaviour of welcom-

ing one another and so avoiding the division of God's people (1 Cor. 1:11-15, 3:1-4) was never meant to be easy. It was not easy for the Lord to receive us, 'For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached thee fell on me" (15:3). It cost him the reproach of the cross!

But what is to be gained by adopting this more difficult course of action? In a word, obedience to Scripture. 'I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to live a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the

Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit' (Eph. 4:1-4). The basic principle of local churches known as assemblies of open brethren is that Christians should gather together simply as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The other side of this truth is that all believers have the right to this fellowship. For if any believer is excluded (other than as a result of discipline, 1 Cor. 5:11-13) then that assembly does not meet simply as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, but they have added some extra qualification which the excluded believer does not possess.

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (3)

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as 'steadfast love', NEB as 'true love' or 'love unfailing', GNB as 'constant love'. Now if a word exists in one language, appearing frequently in its literature, and has no exact equivalent elsewhere, it presumably represents something more or less peculiar to that culture. So it seems to be with the Hebrew word *hesed*. It is perhaps the most prominent attribute of God in the Old Testament, and the whole narrative illustrates its meaning. It is usually regarded as representing the covenant-love of God — that abiding benevolence which leads Him to commit Himself to Israel and indeed to His whole creation. Presumably the Hebrews' idea of a corporate national personality helped them to understand God's love to Israel as something permanent, though experienced in different circumstances by each succeeding generation. Ps. 136 reiterates that it endures for ever, grounded in God's divinity and lordship, worked out by His power and wisdom, and demonstrated in creation and history. It is a subject of immense scope. Although it is mostly connected with God's covenant with Israel, it provides the nearest idea in the Old Testament to a universal aspect of God's love. 'The earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD' (Ps. 33:5); His people are those who hope in it (v. 18). It is shown in His provision of food for all flesh (Ps. 136:25). All the nations are

invited to rejoice in it (Ps. 100, 117). But it is also enjoyed by the individual. Often the psalmists refer to a personal sense of God's lovingkindness, which is better than life (63:3). It is the basis of David's hope for forgiveness (51:1), and will follow him all his life (23:6). The ultimate disaster is for it to be withdrawn, as it was from Saul (2 Sam. 7:15). It is especially associated with David, extending to his descendants for ever (Ps. 18:50). This was expressed in a covenant in which God swore by His holiness to preserve David's line and by that means to bless His people continually (Ps. 89). Thus God's covenant-love to one man was the basis of His relationship with the nation. And in Isa. 55:1-5 these benefits are extended without restriction to every one who thirsts and will come — 'I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David'. So again a universal aspect appears in God's love, this time through the expansion of His covenant with David, whom He will make 'a leader and commander for the peoples', including 'nations that you know not'.

The covenant-love of God is also seen in relationships between man and man. When David made a covenant with Jonathan he asked him for 'the loyal love of the LORD' (1 Sam. 20:14 RSV) or 'unfailing kindness like that of the LORD' (NIV). And when later this

same covenant led David to help Mephibosheth, he spoke of showing him 'the kindness of God' (2 Sam. 9:3). Thus one who has experienced God's covenant-love shows that same loyal kindness towards those with whom he himself stands in a covenant relationship.

The same word is used of the loyalty to God that arises in response to His lovingkindness, for example in Hos. 6:4 and Jer. 2:2. But, as these passages show, human loyalty is unreliable, and it is well that God's covenants depend on His love, not man's.

In summary, the Old Testament presents God's love mainly towards Israel. It can be traced back to His choice of the patriarchs; beyond that, all is mystery. It is a strong, jealous love which will not let Israel go despite her rebellion. Above all it is a holy love that will not be satisfied until Israel's condition is such that God can have unhindered fellowship with her. God's lovingkindness is a broader idea; it is shown in His providential dealings in creation, His covenant with Israel, and His care for individuals. It expresses God's changeless goodness, by which He maintains the relationships of love that He has chosen to make with men.

But to learn what lay behind these hints and suggestions, and to see God's love fully revealed, we must turn to the New Testament.

THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY

Studies in 1 Samuel

David J. Clark

(3) Saul Appointed
(1 Sam. 9-12)
Saul Chosen Privately
(9:1-10:16)

It was one thing for the people to decide that they wanted to have a king (8:5, 19-20), but it was another thing to decide who that king should be. Even though the decision to have a king was against the Lord's best purposes for the nation, at least the people seem to have been content to leave the selection of the right man in the hands of the Lord. When one considers the publicity and the rivalry that surround the making of an American president in our day, the simplicity of the process of choosing Israel's first king is truly astonishing. In a situation for which there was no precedent, one might have expected all kinds of factions to bring forward candidates with resulting inter-tribal squabbles leading to anarchy or even civil war. Scripture makes no mention of anything of the kind, and this is a mute testimony to the esteem in which Samuel was held. Since he was the acknowledged leader of the nation, presumably people expected him to give some kind of lead in the appointment of the man who was not merely to succeed him in the same office, but to hold a position that could render the office itself obsolete.

This was indeed a large and inconsiderate demand for the people to make, yet Samuel rose to it and remained humbly open to the Lord's guidance (9:15-17). This came, as it so often does, through the apparently incidental experiences of everyday life. The loss of his father's donkeys brought the young Saul into unexpected contact with Samuel. To Samuel, he must have seemed a man of great promise. He came of a good family (9:1),

was tall and handsome (9:2), obedient (9:3-4), thoughtful (9:5), and ready to acknowledge authority (9:6, 10). When faced with Samuel's hints of greatness (9:20) he responded in a humble manner (9:21) and showed no great ambition for power.

One wonders what his fellow guests made of the way Samuel honoured him at the feast (9:22-24). Perhaps some of them guessed what was afoot, but even if they did, nobody else was permitted to be present when Samuel anointed Saul the next day (10:1). As if this were not enough, Samuel gave him a series of signs for further proof that he was indeed chosen by God in a special way. The first two were mundane enough, but the third one was of a more directly spiritual nature (10:5-6, 10). Saul joined in the ecstatic activities of a group of prophets. This was evidently a surprise to the people who knew him well, and gave rise to a proverb apparently of a sarcastic nature (10:12, cf. 19:24). We are not told what Saul himself thought of all that had happened to him. At any rate, he kept it to himself for the time being and did not divulge it even to members of his own family. Like many another, he probably needed time to adjust to the new situation before sharing it with others.

Saul Revealed Publicly
(10:17-27)

It is not clear what length of time elapsed between Saul's private anointing and the assembly of the people called by Samuel (10:17). This was to be a religious ceremony to confirm to Saul and make public to the nation his choice as king (10:19).

The means by which the choice was made is not stated, but it was probably similar to that by

which Achan had been picked out (*Josh. 7*), perhaps involving the mysterious Urim and Thummim (*cf. 14:41*). Whatever the means, the choice was in the hands of the Lord and Saul was unerringly picked out — only to be found missing (10:21). The Lord who had selected him from among the thousands of Israel knew where he was hiding and was able to reveal his whereabouts. Saul was brought out to public view, and his impressive physique gave him the needed recognition in the eyes of the people. Samuel proclaimed him as the one "whom the Lord has chosen" (10:24) and the people responded with the cry that has become traditional "Long live the King!"

What are we to make of the curious incident of Saul hiding among the baggage? Natural modesty? Last minute cold feet? Or could it be that Saul had not really reconciled himself to the role for which the Lord had marked him out, and was already showing that reluctance to follow the revealed will of God that proved so fatal to him later on? We cannot know. At any rate Samuel gave no rebuke, but contented himself with explaining once more to the people the implications of the choice they had made (10:25).

The assembly was dismissed in peace even if not in unanimity. The minority who were dissatisfied evidently regretted the choice of Saul as king rather than the choice of monarchy as the form of government (10:27). They denied to Saul the outward tokens of allegiance, but were not openly in revolt. Saul for his part took no action against them.

Saul Proved and Acclaimed
(11:1-15)

A little while later (about a month, according to the Sep-

tuagint, followed by several modern English versions), the chance came for Saul to prove himself.

Nahash, the king of the Ammonites led his troops against the Israelite town of Jabesh, in the transjordanian area of Gilead. The men of Jabesh offered to make a pact that would acknowledge Ammonite suzerainty. However, Nahash in his pride would agree to this only on condition that he could humiliate the men of Jabesh by putting out all their right eyes, and thus disgracing Israel. The leaders of Jabesh requested a week's grace to seek for help, which curiously Nahash granted. Presumably this gesture is to be seen as evidence of arrogant self-confidence on his part rather than humanitarianism. The anticipated failure of the men of Jabesh to raise any help would add to their eventual humiliation.

The appeal for help reached Saul (who, though now king, was still doing his own agricultural labour, 11:5), and in the authority of God's Spirit, he promptly raised a relief force which crushed the Ammonites. For this resourceful action, Saul earned the lasting gratitude of the men of Jabesh. They eventually repaid their debt to him posthumously after his disastrous defeat on Mount Gilboa by rescuing his body from the walls of Beth-Shan, where the Philistines had made an exhibition of it (31:7-13).

For the present, Saul's victory over the Ammonites established him firmly as King of Israel. Not only had he performed a notable exploit that forestalled the humiliation of the whole nation, and thus proved his ability to fulfil one of the purposes for which he had been appointed, to "fight our battles" (8:20); he had also defeated an established king, and thus set the nation on equal terms with those neighbours that Israel so desired to emulate (8:5, 20).

Internally, his position was secured to the point where his supporters wanted to take punitive measures against those who had been slow to acknowledge him. But Saul was magnanimous in victory, and refused to indulge in vindictive persecution. Samuel supported him by calling for another assembly, this time at Gilgal. Possibly this was a

deliberate attempt on Samuel's part to promote national unity by giving those who had before been reluctant a second opportunity to declare their allegiance publicly. If so, he was successful, for this time "all the men of Israel" joined in the celebrations without reserve (11:15).

Samuel Retires (12:1-25)

Seeing that the opposition to Saul had melted away, Samuel took advantage of the assembly at Gilgal to step down officially from his role as leader of the nation. Despite his personal misgivings he had done what the people had asked, and appointed for them a successor to himself whose acceptance was to change the whole political and social fabric of the nation.

He now moves graciously into

the wings to let the new system come into effect without undue pressure from tradition. As many an elder has discovered, for those who have held the centre of the stage for a long time (12:2) to stand aside, and let others take over can be one of the hardest tests of Christian maturity. Yet Samuel passed this test with no apparent trace of bitterness or resentment. He first of all submitted his life's work to public scrutiny (12:3), and the people were obliged to testify that his conduct had always been above reproach (12:4). Never had he used his privileged position for personal gain. If only the leaders of today's world, not least in developing countries, could maintain such integrity, how many of the thorniest contemporary problems would solve themselves almost

overnight? For Christians, whether in high position or not, the standard of honesty required can never be less than that of Samuel (compare 1 Tim. 3:7), even if the range of our influence is far less than that of his.

Samuel's sermon (12:6-17) contains much to challenge and encourage the people of God in any generation. By a selective survey of national history, he reminded the nation both of its fickleness and of the Lord's faithfulness. On the basis of the Lord's past dealings with his people, Samuel could confidently reassure them that even in their present situation, after persisting in a choice that was not the Lord's, they could still look for his blessing if they would honour, serve and obey him (12:14). Is it not a source of en-

couragement for the Christian also that the Lord is still willing to deal with us where we are rather than where we ought to be? The way back to his blessing is always open to those willing to repent and start afresh with renewed obedience (12:20-22).

Samuel for his part promised to pray for the nation, and to supply them with moral guidance (12:23). Had the Kings of Israel followed Samuel's advice more fully, perhaps they would have had no need for Samuel's string of successors, the prophets whose prayers and precepts proved with the passing of the years to be ever more necessary pillars of support for the nation as it increasingly founded its public life upon the sands of disobedience.



BOOK REVIEW

Judges and Ruth by Samuel Ridout. Loizeaux Brothers.

332 and 77pp. \$7.25.

The author, who ministered widely in the United States during the closing decades of the last century and the opening ones of this, provides in this reprint thirteen 'lectures' on the book of *Judges* and a meditation in seven sections in the book of *Ruth*. We are taken back into the past in a double sense: more than thirty centuries to the days when the judges ruled in Israel and, at the same time, more than four-score years to the days when preachers had eyes to pick out type and allegory even from obscure places. For the treatment of a historical book of Scripture, the section of this publication on *Judges* is the most ingeniously allegorical the reviewer has encountered.

'Israel', the author explains, 'stood for

humanity in all their probation' — 'stood for', with its frequent variants, because his prime object is to apply the narrative, seldom to bring out its plain meaning. 'As the book of *Joshua* abounds with typical narrative which applies in a most marked way to the blessings of Christianity, so this book (*Judges*) will be found to carry the typical lessons further.' A few examples of the author's method may be cited. 'Typically it was necessary for Moses to die, in order that the people might pass in to their heavenly inheritance'. 'Joshua is a type of Christ risen'. 'If the believer in apostolic succession would simply take the spiritual meaning of the book, he would see that while we have apostles introducing the saints into the truth, we have not apostles to maintain them in that position'. 'Jebusite means "treader down", and all that is not of

Christ will trample down His Word'. 'Tola died and was buried where he lived. Death, we might say, made no change in the principles for which he stood'. 'Will you tell me what all this aping of Rome in architecture, in church ritual, means? Does it not mean that we are servants to the Philistines?' 'Any effort', however, 'to make Samson a type of Christ does violence to our spiritual sensibilities'.

Ruth, we are told, is 'a type of the seeker in general, apart from the dispensational application. But we must not forget that the connection with God's earthly people in the latter days is clear'. 'Ruth represents the faith in the remnant'.

For those who relish 'types and shadows', here is a feast indeed. Over-indulgence, however, could result in a failure to see clearly the distinction between what God means to say to us and what we mean to say on God's behalf. And blurred vision can be serious.

Review by Clifford Wadey

MORE MEDITATIONS ON MARK *continued from page seventeen*

above all cattle and wild animals' and would grovel in the dust (*Isa. 65:25*). So when the Devil came to Jesus in the wilderness and tried him with temptations, it was perhaps more appropriate than at first appears that he should quote those words from *Ps. 91: 11f.*: 'He will give his angels charge of you . . . on their hands they will bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone' (*Matt. 4:6*). If Satan had cared to read on into the very next verse of this Psalm, he would (as perhaps he

knew) have read of his own doom: 'You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.' This remains the destiny of the serpent (*Gen. 3:15; Rom. 16:20*), who is also characterized as 'a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour' (*1 Pet. 5:8*). It is he that Christ resisted firm in his faith and it is his wolfish appetite that we must also resist with wisdom and innocence (*Matt. 10:16*). Jesus has shown us the way, but better still, he *is* the

way. He who overcame when tempted in that scene of abandonment and peril, the very opposite of the luxurious garden in which the first Adam succumbed to temptation, he it is who for the time of testing has given us 'two wings of the great eagle' (the wings of faith and good works?) that we might 'fly from the serpent into the wilderness' to a place of nourishment (*Rev. 12:14*). Greater is he who is in us than he who is in the world (*1 John 4:4*).





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 contribution is by Mr. A. Hugh Michael, Director of Studies at the Haver School of Evangelism (see January issue). Do you consider his diagnosis apt? Comment would be welcomed.

The spirit that led Tyndale to say to the papal theologian 'If God spares my life, o'er many years, I will take care that a ploughboy will know more of the scriptures than you do' is for the most part lacking amongst our assemblies today. We are aware of the mass ignorance of the Gospel around us, from the children to the grandparents, yet we are content to 'tut tut' about it, as though it was no fault of our own. Everywhere there is a dearth of evangelistic enterprise. We have all the foundations of orthodoxy, but we are building nothing upon it. The Saviour's gifts to His church include the gift of evangelists (Eph. 4:12). Why then are we not stirring up this gift in our assemblies? Well might Mr. Coad in his editorial (Harvester, August '81) warn us of sinking 'ever more beyond retrieval into that which we have always been . . . it is a

comfortable and undemanding condition . . . why should we disturb ourselves?' We suffer from the blight of the television age which has bred a generation of vicarious humans, content to sit idly by and watch the great crusaders and others accomplish what they can. But someone may say 'In our assembly we are all past the age where we can do much outreach.' This ignores the fact that an older person can lead people to the Saviour as well as a younger. Another says 'We must wait until we feel moved to do something.' John Wesley's experience led him to record 'It is a lively doctrine of demons to engage in no spiritual work until moved thereto.' Yet another hides away from responsibility among the doctrines of sovereign grace, but no one is ever brought to Christ where the Gospel is not made known. The fact is that the Saviour has given us marching orders, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, and we have chosen rather to ignore the fact. Why should we remain cloistered in our Gospel Halls, feathering our own spiritual nests at the morning meeting, around the Lord's table, the midweek Bible study and prayer meeting, and then trying to save our consciences with the evening Gospel meeting where we preach to the converted most of the time? Our responsibility is to take the Gospel to where the people are: the market places, shopping centres, university common rooms, factories; in fact wherever the opportunity exists to tell people the Good News. You may give me many reasons why your assembly is justified in its own eyes in not going

outside the four walls of the Gospel Hall; but I can almost guarantee that they will all boil down to the following excuses.

1) It is not in keeping with our image of respectability to be seen in a place like a market preaching, or 2) we are cowards. The evangelist is poor cousin to the pastor in non-conformity today. It is respectable to be a pastor, but not an evangelist. A pastor can work in the confines of the flock, amongst sympathetic people. The evangelist is on the factory floor at teabreak giving account of his faith amongst men who are rebellious to the Gospel. He is in the market place persuading men to repent. He is knocking on the doors speaking to the households of the neighbourhood about their need of Christ. He is on the farm talking to the men, the racecourse, the building site and the shopping centre. I can understand why there are few evangelists. The work is hard, the cost is great, he is often a living martyr, pilloried, alone, but always preaching Christ as the Saviour of men. An unpleasant truth is that some assemblies are in danger of becoming geriatric. If the Gospel is not being preached to those who are living in ignorance, how shall they be saved? If they are not being saved, how shall they be added to the church; and if they be not added to the church how can the church avoid becoming an ageing group reducing annually? If some assemblies are not to die a natural death, if we will only be prepared to 'keep the feast' till the parousia, to worship but not to witness, someone must cry **Awake!** My brethren, we are not a

retreating church, afraid of what we believe and ashamed of the Christ whom we seek to serve. We have the glorious Gospel of the conquering Son of God. He is the Light in the present darkness. He is powerful to save your neighbours and local townfolk. Do you want to rejoice in newly converted people joining your assembly? Then go out and preach the Gospel to the people who have not heard. While the message is infuriating some, it will be challenging and convicting others, and drawing them to Christ. Who are the evangelists in your assembly? If you do not know, say 'Lord, is it I?' If you do know, then encourage them to do the work. Go with them, stand with them, identify yourself with them in the service of Christ. Abandon the complacency that we are 'all right thank you' while the folks in the towns we live in are going as fast as each day will take them to the awful destruction at the end of the broad road. It may be a hard road to begin to tread when we thought we were doing all that could be reasonably expected of us, taking into account the materialism and easy living to which we have become accustomed. But the command has been given 'Go . . . preach the Gospel'. The promise of evangelistic gift is indelible in Eph. 4 for the church. Is the cost too great, is the stigma so disarming, is the task too hard? Brethren, we will never accomplish on velvet what it took nails to procure. 'As my Father has sent Me, even so send I you.'



REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The January question:

Further to the revival of expectation of the Second Advent at the end of the second millennium A.D., may I suggest that there is nothing specially significant about the figure of 1000 years? The writers of Ps. 90:4 and 2 Pet. 3:8 were concerned to point out that what is a very long time by human reckoning is a very short time in the sight of God. That the figure of 1000 years should be chosen to denote a very long time (in our estimation) is a corollary of the decimal principle (1000 being 10^3), and the decimal principle is based on the fact that each of us (normally) has ten fingers to count on. Or am I missing something of profounder significance in the choice of the figure 1000, and if so, what is it that I am missing?

Mr. Alan Levett replies:

The question asked by Professor Bruce in the January issue seems to be a variation on an original theme raised in a recent issue and I should like to comment as follows:

First, I am not too happy with the idea that 1000 years could mean a long period of indefinite length. To be consistent we should have to interpret Eph. 6:3 'That it may be well with thee and thou mayest live on the earth for a 1000 years'! See also 2 Peter 2:3, Luke 20:9 etc. If the oft repeated 1000 years of Rev. 20 means simply a long time, why not say so as in the above scriptures? What would an unbeliever think about a book which we claim is incontrovertible truth if we say '1000 years in this passage can mean a much longer period'? It has been claimed that all the numbers in Revelation are symbolic but this cannot be true: see ch. 1:11, 21:12, 14 and 22:2.

Second, if we accept Archbishop Ussher's chronology, supported at the beginning of the Christian era by the Epistle of Barnabas, it is not so much

the '1000' years that is significant as the fact that it would then be the seventh millennium. It is plain that the number seven has great significance. From the beginning God established a week of days. It was given in mercy so that man should enjoy a rest every seven days. (Those who regard the first day of the week as a New Testament Sabbath often do despite to this concept!) The Old Testament shows that this idea was perpetuated into weeks of weeks, Lev. 23:15, 16 and weeks of years ch. 25:3 and weeks of weeks of years ending with a Jubilee v.8-11. How serious God was about this is shown by 2 Chron. 36:21 and its reference to the captivity in Babylon.

We hear much about a tired, polluted earth with its wild life decimated. Is it altogether unreasonable in view of the above to suggest that God will give it a long rest? I use the word suggest as I have no intention of being dogmatic about such a matter. I feel strongly, and would value the views of others in this respect, that the whole 'A'-Millennial/pre-millennial controversy should be given a decent burial and the people of God unite in proclaiming the coming of the Lord in simplicity. I go further. I believe if God's people of all denominations would meet regularly for PRAYER, not debate, please not debate, and focus prayer on a lost world, we should begin to get somewhere. I am not saying we should agree to differ, rather agree to pray; and the spiritual unity that would develop would enable the great Teacher of the Church to guide us into all truth.

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

In endeavouring to answer this question I have observed that the term 'thousand' is the highest exact quantity used in scripture. It occurs, either singular or plural, with or without a

multiplying prefix, between four and five hundred times, and it predominates in the Old Testament. For comparison: 'hundred' occurs about 100 times more; again, overwhelmingly, it is in the Old Testament — even when the greater size of that book over the New is considered. I do not suppose exact quantities were always intended, but only an approximation thereto. Incidentally, no other character after 'M' (1,000) was used by the Romans; a horizontal line above any character/s increased it by a thousandfold. But not enough for today's billions! The crescendo is reached in Rev. 5:11, which in modern terms means 100,000,000 plus millions, but a colossal number is surely intended. And in 7:4-8 of the same book we read of 12,000 from every tribe of Israel, which is undoubtedly a symbolical number. But the possibility of 'missing something of profounder significance' seems to be with the flexible 12 (divisible by 2,3,4,6) and not with the 1,000 which is multiplied by $12 \times 12 = 144,000$.

Incidentally, we are told in Genesis 5 of the ages of the first ten generations from Adam via Seth to Noah when, other than Enoch who was translated at 365, seven of the remaining nine exceeded 900 by from 5 to 69 years. But I question whether there is any significance in none of them reaching a thousand. Were those who lived the longest better men than the others? Therefore I conclude that the biblical use of the word 'thousand' in the verses mentioned in the question are merely a way of referring to a reasonably large number which was within the compass of the ordinary person's mind. But I wonder what Panin says, for what it is worth, in his Numeric New Testament, on both problems?

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.

Six volunteers at your service!

From Mr. John Allan

Dear Mr. Coad,
For the past few years we in British Youth for Christ have grown increasingly concerned about the number of assemblies and churches in our country who simply do not have the manpower resources to meet the needs of the situation in which they find themselves. Often nowadays wealthier assemblies are taking on full-time workers of their own in order to cope with the demands of their work; others, whether from conviction or from poverty, are unable to do so. There must be many assemblies that could use the services of a group of volunteer workers.

At the same time, we have been approached by scores of committed and gifted young people who want to be used by God within Christian service in this country, who for various reasons have a year to spare. Consequently two years ago we began our Teams Project, taking such young people and forming them into six-man teams so that they could work for a year in evangelism and church growth with a specific local church which needed help.

In the first year of the project we sent out only three experimental teams. This year we have five in action, in situations ranging from the affluence of the Thames Valley to the run-down inner-city conditions of the Craigmillar estate in Edinburgh. Next year we are planning ten teams and three short-term (three-month) experiments. My job in BYFC is in Training, but I am temporarily caretaking the Teams Department, and it concerns me that although our teams are doing a fine job around the country — and although they include some Brethren young people — they are not generally working with assemblies. I should be extremely interested to hear from any

of your readers who feel that a team of six volunteers might be of use in the evangelistic programme of their local assembly next year. It seems to me that the project could help to answer some of the needs we are experiencing in many of our fellowships at the moment, and I'd be glad to send fuller information about it.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

J. D. Allan

(Director of Training)
British Youth for Christ
52/54 Lichfield Street
Wolverhampton
WV1 1DG

A Nationwide Chain of Prayer

From Mr. Alan Levett

Dear Mr. Coad,
People everywhere are busy today about evangelism — and rightly so. But sometimes it seems that we are still fighting the 'spiritual battle of the Somme'. Our evangelists are meeting opposition which needs breaking down before the enemy will yield.

Some of us have had a vision of forming prayer groups to co-operate with other towns and cities around the country to pray for the nation. In some places a united prayer fellowship already functions and a meeting of this sort might easily be organised. In others where no such fellowship exists, Christians might feel the challenge and unite against the spiritual darkness in our nation. Who knows what such spiritual unity might not bring about as a side effect, so to speak?

If any readers are sympathetic to the suggestion and would like to have more details, I should be pleased to hear from them.

Yours sincerely,
Alan Levett
Timberdown
25a The Avenue
Branksome
Poole
Dorset
BH13 6LH

(The meetings referred to are reported on the News Page.)

A Golden Jubilee

From Mr. J. Knight and others

Dear Mr. Coad,

We write to you in the hope that you will find room in your pages to mention that the assembly at Manor Road Hall in Guildford celebrates its Golden Jubilee in March 1982. This milestone gives an ideal opportunity to acknowledge the goodness and grace of God in maintaining this testimony to His name.

Our membership may be the lowest in the history of this assembly but we praise God for a real sense of unity and purpose and that the desire for His lordship and will in all activities is as fervent now as it was at the establishment of the testimony in this area.

We hope to use this Jubilee year as a means to present the claims of our Lord Jesus Christ to as many in our locality as possible, and we'd value prayer for the special outreach efforts that are planned.

For a variety of reasons there are many fellowships like ours with a small membership — we would particularly like to encourage such with our humble testimony to His keeping power. The Lord is at work amongst the twos and threes, as well as amongst the hundreds and thousands and He is pleased to honour those who honour Him and loves to direct those who will obey Him and cleave to His word. Our desire above all else must be 'to know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering, being made conformable to His death'. With Christian greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours sincerely on behalf of the assembly,
J. Knight
W. Lamdin
B. Shorton
Manor Road Hall
241 Stoughton Road
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 6PG

Downend (Bristol)
Christian Fellowship

From Mr. T. Brinicombe and others
Dear Mr. Coad,

I am writing to inform you with great regret of the decision to close Downend Christian Fellowship from the end of 1981. This was a difficult decision to make but was reached after some years of prayer and uncertainty. Finally there was a period of three months during which prayer was made that the Lord would indicate clearly if closure was not His will and no such indication was apparent to all but a few.

The final choice was all the more difficult because of the affection all have experienced towards one another and in worship of the Lord. Indeed there was much hesitation in taking the step but the decision was based mainly on three factors. First, the Fellowship had never managed to acquire a building of its own or to obtain a site. Second, the activities which could be arranged were limited; there was no Sunday School or youth club. Third, in recent years numbers declined through transfers, change of residence, and the need of finding congenial spiritual fellowship for our teenagers to the point where there was a great limitation in service to the community. We were particularly sad not to be able to continue our week-night children's service.

Although there is much sadness, we look back upon many blessings, such as the help we were able to give to a number of young Christians who were with us and to much growth in our Christian life. For these things we praise God. We hope and pray that our lives will still be of some use to the Lord in other fellowships in the future. Indeed we feel sure that God is going to work in the area in other ways and with other groups.

Yours a little sadly in Christ,
T. Brinicombe, G. Philpot
D. Temlett, W. Winstanley
(Church Leaders)
14 Grange Park
Frenchay
Bristol
BS16 2SZ

Modern Bible Versions

From Mr. J. M. Vellacott

Dear Mr. Coad,

Referring to recent correspondence on this matter, I feel there is one good reason for using a Modern Version which has not been mentioned — the fact that our very familiarity with the well-known and greatly-loved Authorised Version causes us often to miss the real meaning. Test yourself on some well-used verses. I have found real help and also challenge from using N.E.B. and reading it as though it were an entirely new book.

Sincerely,
J. M. Vellacott
Winchester

Hymns: comprehensible?

From Mr. H. A. King

Dear Mr. Coad,

I am both sorry and surprised that Mr. McIntosh's article in the July

Harvester, and Professor Bruce's question in October, concerning the 'translation' of hymns into modern language appear to have produced so little response. For some time I have been concerned that many children and young people, and newly-converted and less intellectual adults, do not understand some of the words they are invited to sing. Probably very few **Harvester** readers are in those categories, but it might be quite informative to ask the carol singers at our doors what they understand by 'Late in time behold Him come, Offspring of a virgin's womb!' before parting with a coin.

How many wedding guests have any idea of the meaning of 'Let us see Thy great-salvation, Perfectly restored in Thee'; and do the Primaries in our Sunday Schools understand 'Pity my simplicity, Suffer me to come to Thee. Fain I would to Thee be brought? The larger than usual Easter congregation sings 'Lo! Our sun's eclipse is o'er; Lo! He sets in blood no more', while another might sing 'Sun of righteousness arise, Triumph o'er the shades of night; Day-spring from on high, be near; Day-star in my heart appear'. What would our neighbours

and work-mates make of such lines? The above are only a few examples from Charles Wesley's work. Other authors have given us 'Thy unction grace bestoweth' and 'Lo! He abhors not the virgin's womb'. Almost the whole of 'Praise to the Holiest' means nothing in day-schools where it is often sung.

It has been a blessing to me to go through the hymn books to pick out the above examples, as I have been reminded of the wonderful truths, and enjoyed the beautiful poetry — but I have been thinking of a bricklayer living nearby, who was converted last year. Such lines would convey nothing to him, and are likely to deter him from coming to services altogether. If our great hymns are not up-dated soon, eliminating not only old-fashioned words and phrases, but also doubtful theology and bad rhyming and scanning, we shall soon have to expound them publicly, as we do the Scriptures. Many of our great hymns are likely to fall into disuse, and be replaced by modern composition. A good number of these are very good, but our Christian heritage will be the poorer without the contributions made to it of Watts, Wesley and Havergal. In his article in the July 1981

Harvester Dr. McIntosh calls for our older hymns to be updated — and this is something with which I entirely agree — but I wonder whether such revisions would be accepted and used in our Assemblies, Churches, and Fellowships. If something is not done soon, we may find that by the turn of the century our hymn books will either — as mentioned by Dr. Andrews and Bernard Manning in the December 1981 **Harvester** — present an historical record of the day before yesterday — or consist almost entirely of pieces written since about 1960.

Yours sincerely,
H. A. King
1 Britannia Way
Dorchester
Dorset



NEWS PAGE



The Bible Society

Books of the Bible have been published in 1739 languages and dialects according to the latest Scripture Language Report of the United Bible Societies. This is an increase of 29 languages over the previous year's figure. The whole Bible has been produced in 277 languages and the New Testament in a further 518. Another 944 languages have a single book of the Bible. Last year the whole Bible was reported to have been published in two languages for the first time ever. These Bibles were in the Mbaï-Moissala language which is spoken in Chad and the Somali language of Somalia. New Testaments were reported published for the first time in 25 languages and dialects. Nine of these were African languages, including four from Nigeria. Six of the first ever New Testaments were in languages spoken in Papua New Guinea. Four were in Mexican languages. The United Bible Societies' report also shows that 27 languages were reported last year to have received their first translations of a Bible book. Nine of these were languages of Papua New Guinea and five were African languages. One of the languages, Tadjik, is spoken in the USSR; another, Southern Tiwa, is used in the USA; and yet another, Inari Lapp, comes from Finland. Most of the 'first' Bible books in these 27 languages were translations of a Gospel or one of the New Testament Epistles. It must be noted that books of the Bible are not **currently available in print** in 1739 languages. Books of the Bible have been published in this number but some languages have fallen into disuse.

Books

The Christian Book Fairs organized throughout the country between November 1 and 15, 1981 aroused widespread interest. 660 Book Fairs took place, backed by 33 specialist publishers and many booksellers. Winner of the associated competition was a Mrs. Cox of North Humberside who organized book parties at 16 different venues in her area and as a result sold about £1500's worth of books.

Kingsway Publications has suffered a sad loss with the passing of Charles Henshall, who had been a director since the company was formed in 1977. He had served the Christian book trade for 35 years. He leaves a widow and two sons.

William Montgomery of Cumbernauld, who was called home on November 11, 1981, was a prolific writer. Shortly before his death he was able to see published his extended poem, *Why?* or *The Bridegroom Cometh* which he had begun 45 years earlier. Written in heroic couplets, it tells of God's plan to deliver the world through the Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection and return in glory of the Lord Jesus. It is available at 20p plus postage and packing from Gospel Tract Publications, 48 York Street, Glasgow, G2.

Evangelism

Dick Saunders reports that during 1981 — the 25th that he and Betty have spent in an evangelistic ministry — the team reached 70,000 people with the Gospel. He claims that more than 1400 received Christ through this ministry. A crusade in London NW10 was held

during the worst weather that the team had ever experienced. But, in spite of the wet and cold, hundreds were saved in that multi-racial area. Then, the small committee in Hastings responding to the vision that God had given them were rewarded when many were brought to Christ through the crusade there. Finally in Edinburgh thousands were reached with the Gospel with over 2500 crowding into the tent for the final meeting. It was whilst on a tent Crusade in 1965 that Dick Saunders commenced the WTL radio outreach. Now 16 years later nearly 100 programmes a week are broadcast around the world. Each day letters were received in the WTL office telling of individuals who are being blessed. With 4000 broadcasts aired each year at a cost of £2,500 each week the faith of the WTL has been tested in this time of economic recession. But, they report that God has again supplied the need.

The Pocket Testament League, known for its evangelistic activities, reports that its Bromley office is due for demolition because the centre of Bromley has been declared a 'development' area. The League is seeking alternative accommodation in the Bromley district and would welcome enquiries from any other organization who would be prepared to join them in a joint venture.

An International Evangelists' Conference is scheduled for July 12-21, 1983. They will come from all over the world to exchange ideas and information and to consider the theology of evangelism.

A Day of Prayer for World Evangelization will take place on May 30, 1982. In previous years this day of prayer on Pentecost Sunday has been widely observed. It stresses the indispensable relationship between world evangelization and fervent prayer. In addition to prayer for evangelization of the earth's unreached people, Christians are asked to remember in prayer the plight of those who are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ. Prayer kits are obtainable from: LCWE, Whitefield House, 186 Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BT.

Hospital Visiting

Readers who are concerned in this ministry will be interested to know that a new magazine has been published specially for hospital patients. A group of Christian businessmen are involved, together with the publishers, Herald House Ltd. (Grafton Place, Worthing, W. Sussex BN11 1BR). There are informative hospital and health orientated articles, articles of general interest and spiritual material with an emphasis on comfort and hope. A full page has been contributed by Doug Barnett of Moorlands Bible College. *Hospital Herald* is tabloid size with a 14p cover price but will be sold only in bundles of 25 at a low discount price to chaplains, news agents and churches.

Israel

Chua Wee Hian, General Secretary of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, has set down some impressions of a visit to Israel. They may be of interest also to

Harvester readers. Only 10% of the Jewish population believe in God . . . Jewish theological students training to be rabbis concentrate on the Talmud rather than the Old Testament and are therefore more at home with a wide range of Jewish traditions and interpretations rather than the Word of God itself . . . A remarkable number of Arabs are devoted followers of Jesus Christ . . . Several thousand Arabs have enrolled in Bible correspondence courses and are hungry for God's Word . . . Jewish believers have a hard time working through their identity as followers of the Messiah . . . On a local level, it is still a struggle for these believers to accept their Arab brethren and vice-versa.

Poland

Warsaw's Bible shop is open and in business as usual, despite the other disruptions. News from the Bible Society there says that all is well. People are being rationed to just one Bible per purchaser — but that has been normal in recent years. 35,000 Bibles had just been delivered when martial law was declared on December 13. Supplies of paper are regularly sent to Poland by gift through the United Bible Societies — in 1981 the total was 2½ times greater than in any previous year.

Prayer for the Nation

Prayer for the Nation was the theme of a day of prayer held in Bournemouth on Saturday, January 2 from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. at Christ Church, Westbourne. During this period hundreds of people attended as consecutive hourly sessions were led by ministers and elders

representing 40 churches from many denominations. The closing session, which was taken by the minister of Christ Church, Revd. Alec Motyer, featured Edwin Orr's film on Revival.

Race Relations

A press conference held early in January 1982 served not only to introduce Susan Conlan, the newly appointed full-time field worker of the Evangelical Race Relations Group, but also to speak of the developments that have taken place since the Group was founded. Originally formed in 1972, it aimed to help Christians understand pastoral, theoretical and social implications of a multi-racial society and to study the Bible concept of race. There had been considerable changes over the past ten years. Cultural differences were less important today: power, education, and the need for justice were as important as reconciliation. The issue is a national one and not at all confined to local 'trouble spots'. In multi-racial areas today there is a need to bring together all evangelical Christians including black Pentecostal leaders and in areas where there is no visible need, Christians needed stirring up, a sustained interest needing to be stimulated not just a passing interest as was generated by incidents like the riots of summer 1981. Susan Conlan can be contacted at the Shaftesbury Project, 8 Oxford Street, Nottingham (0602 40876).

Radio

Eric Hutchings reports that each week an average of 6 write in to tell of their conversion experience through radio work.

At least 4 long-term prisoners in British prisons and 5 Hindus in Southern Africa have professed conversion to Christ through one or other of the six different styles of radio programme produced in Eastbourne weekly. The volume of radio production is such that two radio stations are needed for the work each week.

Reports

Among reports recently received are one from the Lancashire Gospel Tent and also from the Missionaries' Children's Fund. Readers may also be interested to know about **London Day by Day** (£1.25, London City Mission). It contains 21 chapters providing glimpses of the ministry of the Mission.

Romania

Exiled from Romania, Josif Ton has made an impassioned plea to Christians in the West to 'save the lives' of two of his friends. They are Costel Gheorghescu and Dr. Silviu Cioata. 'On November 10, 1981, a large number of people in Ploiesti had their houses searched for Bibles. Bibles were found in some of their places. All of them were taken in by the police. They were beaten to tell who gave them the Bibles and who they had given them to. Eventually they were released with the exception of these two. Costel was arrested last year and he was beaten for his part in the distribution of Bibles.' He describes Dr. Cioata as 'one of the most able preachers of the Brethren assembly in Ploiesti'. Pastor Ton continues: 'He is a great man of God. As soon as we heard about his arrest, we rang

the family and I spoke with his daughter, Christina. She was converted under my preaching. Christina told me the whole story. She said that her father is being beaten. When I tried to comfort her, she replied, "Brother Josif, I know it happens only as much as my Father in heaven wants it to happen."'

Pastor Ton has suggested that letters of protest be sent to Romanian Embassies in various western countries and also letters of encouragement and support be sent to Christina at Dr. Cioata's address: Str. Petuniei No. 9, Bloc 148, SC.B., Ploiesti, Romania.

Scripture Union

Chairman of the Scripture Union Council since 1976, Douglas Kahn has resigned although he will remain on the Council. His successor is David Owen who started to read SU notes at the age of 8 or 9 and as a boy was 'on the receiving end' of SU beach missions at Sheringham and Nefyn in North Wales. As a teenager David attended SU's Iwerne Minster houseparties; and as a student he was for four summers on the team at SU's seaside mission at Criccieth. He joined the SU Council in 1967 and was Chairman of the Frontier Youth Trust Committee from 1973 to 1980. David, who is 45, is Chairman of Rubery Own (Holdings) Ltd., a family company based in the West Midlands. He was President of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce for 1980/81. David's hope and prayer for Scripture Union is that the movement 'will be Christlike in all that it does and will pursue Christian excellence in a changing world'. He believes that one of SU's

DO YOU FIND IT DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN THE HARVESTER?

If so, please contact Jeremy Mudditt at



THE PATERNOSTER PRESS
Paternoster House
3 Mount Radford Crescent
Exeter, UK, EX2 4JW

distinctive contributions is that the movement 'strides across age barriers as well as denominational barriers'.

Youth

Readers of **The Harvester** will wish to pray during March for the final stages of the 'Earth Invaders' programme sponsored in 20 centres round the country between January 26 and April 3 by four Christian youth organizations: British Youth for Christ, Church Youth Fellowships Association, Crusaders and Scripture Union. What makes it unique is that there are not only four major evening events with drama, mime, music, teaching and

worship, but that the young people who attend these will be involved also in local training sessions. The aim is to help 'young Christians to invade every part of society to establish the Kingdom of God . . . in the power of God and with the authority of Jesus'. If the enterprise is successful, then prayer will also be needed for local churches who may be tempted to 'quench the Spirit' as enthusiastic young Christians stand in need of encouragement, support and guidance.

Home Calls

Mrs. Edith Joyce Cooper on January 10, aged 66. Saved

and baptised 53 years ago at the Gospel Hall Clayhanger Road, Brownhills, she and her husband worshipped for the last 15 years at the Beeches Evangelical Church, Great Barr, Birmingham, where she was greatly loved and respected having an open heart and an open door for the Lord's people. Despite failing health she maintained a cheerful spirit up to the time of her home call. Prayer is requested for her husband, son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

William Gilbert Cutler, suddenly on November 17, 1982, aged 71 years. He had been a member of Church Street Gospel Hall, Coventry, since its commencement in 1928.

Charles Leghorn, on December 24, 1981, aged 79. Converted on November 26, 1924, a few days before he was due to appear in the Scottish boxing

championships, he immediately engaged himself in the 'good fight of faith' and was noted for his thoughtful interest in hospital visitation, tract distribution and open air witness. He will be missed by believers at Roman Road Hall with whom he enjoyed fellowship. Prayer for his wife and family would be appreciated.

William D. Whitelaw, on January 11, aged 85. For 65 years he was well known throughout the British Isles and elsewhere as an able and acceptable minister of the word, always exalting the person of Christ. Associated with the Waterside Street assembly at Irvine, Ayrshire, and for the last 19 years at Largs where he was an elder whose wise counsel and shepherd care were greatly blessed. Prayer is requested for his widow and three sons.

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Home Workers Fund:

Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London, E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during December amounted to £4,207.50, and during January, £605.53.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during January amounted to £14,131.59.

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.:

Teignmouth 2; West Monkton 7; Bradninch 14; Tiverton 16; Plymouth 21; Seaton 23; Kilmington 28; Exmouth 30.

Campbell, B.:

Falmouth 1-17; Camborne 21; Redruth 24; Falmouth 26; Carnhell 28.

Clifford, D. L.:

Malaga, Spain 1-12; Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 17-20; Nassau, Bahamas 21-31.

Galyer, W. S.:

Dorking 1; Borough Poly. C.U. 3; Croyley Green 4; Aldershot 6; Balham & Chingford 7; Ham 10; Weston-super-Mare 11-18; Bristol 21; Kingston 23 & 30; Bush Hill Park 24 & 31; Harrow 28.

Gillham, S.:

Three Crosses 2; Thorncombe 3; Ilminster 4; 3rd Junior House Party 5-7; Swanage 9; Dorchester 10; West Moors 12; Moorlands Bible College, Missions Week 13-21; Cheddar 20; Clitheroe, Lancs. 22-April 4.

Greenaway, G. H.:

East Harling, Hopton, Dereham, also personal work.

Grimsey, A. W.:

Waldensian Committee 5; Dane Hill, Sussex 6-7; Harlesden, London 14; Party to Israel 16-23; Farnham, Surrey 27.

Iliffe, D. J.:

Bolton 1-7; Walthamstow 8; St. Helen's Children's Mission 13-22; Liverpool Bible College 18; Hong Kong — camps and lectures in child evangelism 26-31.

Loader, G.:

Chandlers Ford 4-7; Clevedon C.F. Houseparty 19-21; Plymouth 'Faith for Our Times' Campaign (Whitleigh Estate) 27-April 4.

Lowther, G. K.:

Grimsby & Humberside 1-7, 23-31; Sturminster Newton, Dorset 9; Ebenezzer, Weymouth 10; Dorset 11-15; Seaton, Devon 16; Isle of Wight 17-22.

Morgan, G.:

Newport 1; Tywyn 6; Ebbw Vale 7; 'Christian Family Festival', Porthcawl 10-21; Glamorgan, Tywyn, Missionary Week 22-25; Bermuda 26-April 19.

Phillips, C.:

Woodcroft, Burnt Oak 1; Mayo Road, Sydenham 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Luton 4, 11, 18, 25; High Wycombe 7; Folkstone Road 10, 17, 24; Bury Street, Edmonton 13; Kingston 14-21; Wokingham 28.

Pierce, D. H.:

Eire 1-15; Lovacott 21; Ilfracombe Bible Teaching Conference 26-28; rest of month Barnstaple.

Short, S. S.:

Eastbourne 1, 2, 8; Sevenoaks 2, 9, 16, 23; Ashford, Kent 3, 10, 17, 20, 21, 24; Tunbridge Wells 4, 11, 14, 18, 25; Bath 7; Weston-super-Mare 8; Nailsea 30; Cheddar 31.

Stringer, D.:

Essex Area 1; Woolpit 2; Rugby 3-7; Bristol 8-14; Rugby 15-26; Southampton 27; Bournemouth 28-31.

Tatford, F. A.:

Portsmouth 4; Fareham 6; Winchester 7, 8; Littlehampton 13, 14; Redditch 19-21; Motherwell 26-28.

Thurston, A.:

Strete 1; Bunny & Bradworthy 2-5; Kingsbridge 7; Strete 8; Great Parks, Paignton & Dawlish School 9; Chillington 10; Dartmoor Prison 12; Plymstock 14; Strete 15; Paignton, Great Parks 16; Forde Park School, Chillington 17; Dawlish School 18; Dartmoor Prison 19; West Hill 21; Strete 22; Kingsbridge 23; Chillington 24; Dartmoor Prison 26; Chillington 28; Strete 29; Kingsbridge 30; Chillington, Forde Park School 31.

Tryon, G. C.:

Welling 3; Redcar 7-14; Buckhurst Hill 17; 21; Eltham Park 24; Fetcham 25; Redhill 29.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Ayr Bible Readings:

8-14 May 1982, Saint James Church, 1 Prestwick Road, Ayr (Near Tam's Brig). Bible Readings 4.00 p.m.; Ministry 7.15 p.m. Epistle to Romans. Speakers: A. Leckie and A. Gamble. (Full details from the Secretary, T. H. Cooper, The Knowe, 104 Midton Road, Ayr, KA7 2TP.)

Bognor Regis:

Baptist Church, Victoria Drive. Bible Convention arranged by the Bognor Regis Evangelical Fellowship, Wednesday to Friday 28-30 April, 1982 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Rev. George Duncan.

Boscombe:

Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, by kind permission. Conversational Bible Readings, Saturday, 3 April. Subject: The Epistles to Timothy (1 Tim. ch. 3). Speaker: B. Osborne (Dinas Powis).

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Brierfield, Lancs.:

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Chesham:

The Gospel Hall, Station Road.
Ministry Meeting 7.00 p.m.
Theme: The Sermon on the
Mount (Matthew 6:1-15).
Speaker: D. C. Hinton (Hayes).

Colyton:

Annual Conference to be held
in the Town Hall on Easter
Monday, 12 April. Speakers:
R. Fenn (Swansea) and
A. Wiseman (Northampton).
Afternoon Meeting 3.00 p.m.
Tea & Fellowship 4.45 p.m.
Evening Meeting 6.00 p.m.

Croxley Green:

Fuller Hall, Fuller Way.
Meeting, March 27 at 7.00 p.m.
Speaker: R. J. Bolton.

Grimsby:

Wellowgate Chapel, 67
Wellowgate. March 20 at 7.30
p.m. Ministry. Speaker:
R. Richardson (Chelmsford).

High Wycombe:

Cherith Gospel Hall,
Desborough Avenue. Saturday,
March 27. Ministry, 3.30 p.m.
and 6.00 p.m. Speaker: John
Baigent. Also Sunday, 28th at
6.30 p.m.

Horsham, W. Sussex:

The Gospel Hall, Denne Road.
Annual Conference, March 13,
6.00-8.30 p.m. (Refreshments,
6.50-7.20 p.m.) Report and
Ministry. Speaker: W. E.
Grunbaum.

Largs:

Netherhall Bible Readings, 3-7
May 1982. Conducted by Albert
Leckie (Airdrie). Subject: 1st
Epistle to Timothy. Enquiries to:
The Manager, Netherhall,
Largs, Ayrshire, KA30 8RP.

Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall.
Saturday, March 20, Ministry
Meeting 4.00-5.00 p.m.
Conversational Bible Readings
6.30-8.00 p.m. Theme: Studies
in the Life and Times of
Joseph. 'Brought before
Pharaoh' (Gen. 41:1-36).
Speaker: G. Anthon
(Manchester).

Maidenhead:

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road.
Monthly Conference, 3 April.
Theme: The Man of God:
Timothy in his teaching.
Speaker: Dr. R. Townsend
(Hounslow).

Southall:

Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Kingston
Road. Annual Conference,
Monday, 3 May 1982. Ministry
3.00 p.m. Tea 4.45 p.m.
Ministry 6.00 p.m. Speakers:
J. B. Hewitt (Chesterfield) and
D. Angell (Harrow). Mr. Hewitt
will continue in ministry on the
following three evenings May
4-6, at 8.00 p.m.

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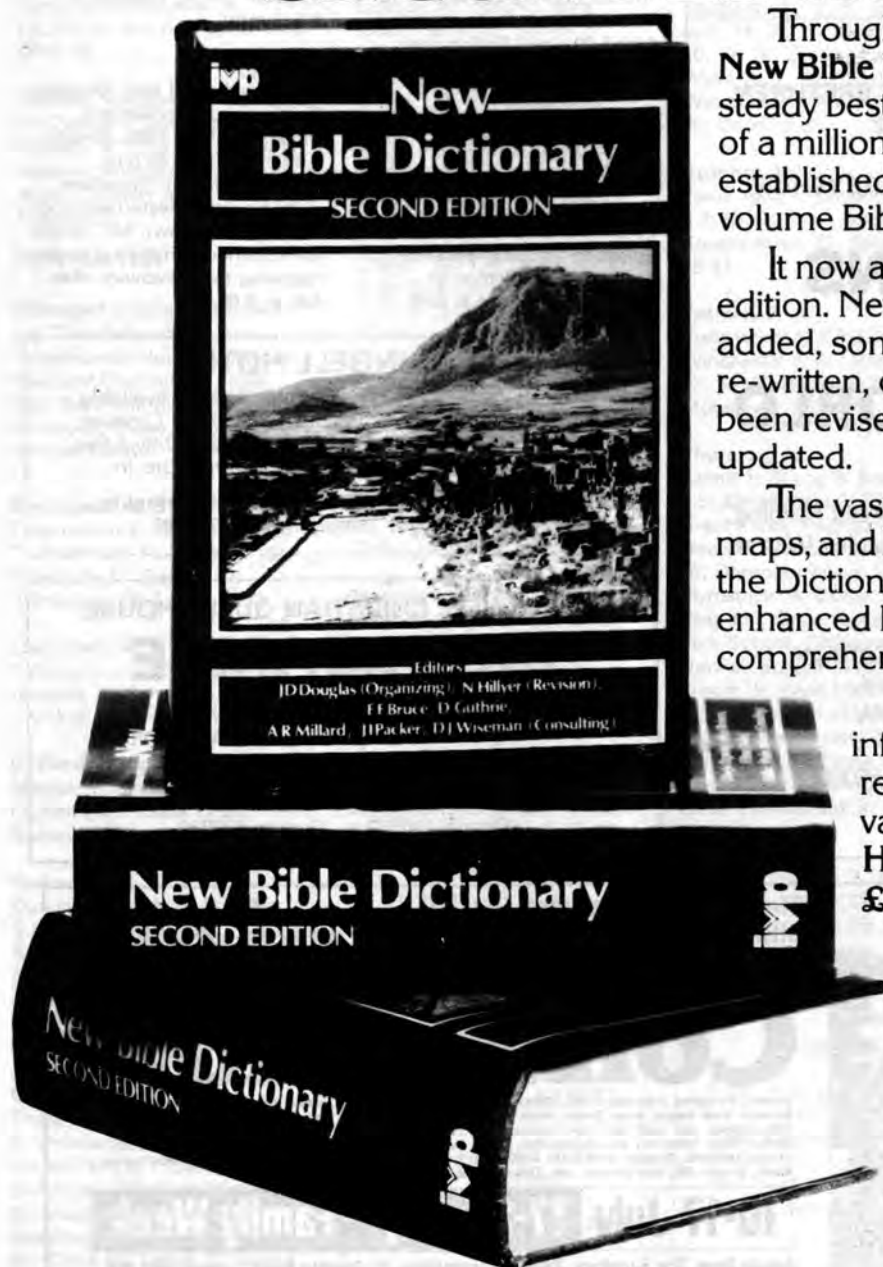
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Details from: The Secretary, Keswick Convention, 25 Camden Road, London NW1 9LN.

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El Salvador **TODAY'S NEWS**



In two years, over 30,000 people have been brutally murdered. Thousands have fled the countryside, terrorised victims of a bloody and gruesome war.

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Tear Fund have made an initial grant of £25,000 to launch a resettlement project and have committed themselves to supporting CESAD (the National Evangelical Council) in their ongoing rehabilitation programme of building homes, setting up a health care centre and establishing small farms.

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Editor: Roy Coad



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WAS IT NOT NECESSARY?

'Pilate said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no crime deserving death . . ." But they were urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed.'

Their voices prevailed . . . So it has too often been: so it is still. 'The voice of the people is the voice of God'. As a small boy I could read that motto (or rather its Latin equivalent) on the frieze of the local Town Hall. A monstrous lie: too often it is the voice of the devil. Give men, a few men, or still worse a mob, a moment of temporary power; and the result is a glaring injustice, an act of tyranny, a victim crucified. It is so today in many different parts of this world: it can be so, on a small scale, in our own district (sometimes in our churches themselves).

The victim was God, incognito, incarnate in His Son. Who can tell the limits of the doctrine of the substitutionary death of Christ? Who can list the full symbolism that attaches to that death, adding and filling out the central reality of redemption? Surely here — in those events that form the centre of our thinking at this Easter time — we see, too, the central act of this world's history. For those who understand its meaning, the whole of life — the whole story of mankind — takes on an entirely new perspective. It is as though the whole sad history of suffering and pain and sin receives a focus: a concrete embodiment.

Let us pause during this holiday season to think a little more deeply about these things. In their light our own anxieties and problems, the burdens of this world in all their overpowering weight, take on a new meaning and a new hope.

'We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since this happened . . . "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"' For, that third day, early in the morning, He had conquered death.

MOORLANDS BIBLE COLLEGE

Moorlands Bible College tells us something of its story.

England was in a bad way financially. Oliver Cromwell sent his men to search the land for silver. Upon their return they reported that the greatest amount of silver was to be found in the images of the saints in the churches. On hearing this, Cromwell commanded the men to go and melt down all the silver images and 'put the saints into circulation'.

For over thirty years, Moorlands Bible College, starting in a Brethren context, has been seeking to train men and women for Christian service: to 'put the saints into circulation'. The College has had a number of homes over the years, beginning life in Matlock, in the rolling Derbyshire Dales. Later, it occupied a cliff top position overlooking the English Channel in Dawlish, Devon. In

wide variety of backgrounds and Christian experience, and reflect the interdenominational and international character of the College. Currently, Moorlands is under pressure to construct facilities that will enable it to function efficiently and effectively. This year another building for accommodation and offices has been completed. It has cost £100,000, and is debt free. All this is part of a long term plan with further facilities to be added, costing approximately £400,000, giving comfortable, purpose-built accommodation for at least 100 students. This building programme has always been a venture of faith. Many thought the concept unrealistic but God apparently had other ideas and He was faithful in providing the needs. Some money came as grants from charitable trusts, but the vast majority has been given by churches and individuals in the U.K., Canada and



Student studying in her room

1970, a manor house situated in fourteen acres of parkland near to Christchurch, Dorset was purchased, and the College was reconstituted in co-operation with the Greater Europe Mission. It was at this time that Dr. Derek Copley joined as Principal. At that time it was known that the building was in a poor state of repair, and the intention was to redevelop the site, rather than make alterations to the existing building.

From the original 27 students and three staff, only those with great vision could have foreseen the development over the next ten years, and the influence the College would begin to exert in the nation. Currently, there are 85 students, and 8 full-time members of staff, besides domestic and administrative personnel. Expansion continues, as young people in ever increasing numbers apply for training. Students come from many nations, a



Entrance to accommodation complex of College campus

U.S.A.

Development is not confined to new buildings. The College is developing a reputation for the quality of its training, the creative nature of its courses and the commitment of its students. The comprehensive two year diploma course is supported by a unique advanced third year course. This involves the student in a three month field project at home or overseas, working with and learning from experienced Christian workers.

Staff and graduates are to be found serving on evangelism planning groups, missionary councils and advisory groups. Most of the faculty have leadership responsibilities in local churches in the Bournemouth area. Dr. Copley is known as an author and speaker, and Brian Butler is involved in the work of S.I.M. International and has been a seminar speaker at Spring Harvest and Royal

Week. Doug Barnett engages in an international ministry of evangelism, serves on the British Evangelists Planning Committee and is co-chairman of the U.K. Luis Palau Advisory Board. Geoff Fewkes is involved in the work of the Advent Witness Testimony Movement. A national leader recently acknowledged the important place the College has in the eyes of many: 'Wherever events of evangelistic and missionary significance take place, you can be sure to find Moorlands participating or supporting.'

At a time when the Church in Britain is seeking a new dawn, Moorlands is equipping itself to provide the task force that the next two decades will demand. Striving for excellence in all that it does, the College seeks to produce men and women who are both well-trained and also utterly committed to the work of the Gospel in the world. It aims to train leaders who will be spiritual catalysts not chameleons: catalysts produce changes in others, but chameleons simply reflect the company they are with.

Moorlands doesn't claim to have discovered the ultimate teaching programme. What it seeks to demonstrate is an openness and flexibility in its training that will enable the curriculum to reflect and debate current issues; that will try to put before the students what God is doing and saying in His world, at any given time. The aim throughout must be 'so that in all things He might have the supremacy'.

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OUR GOD IN AGES PAST (3)

The Creation of the World

M. E. J. Packer

Dr. Packer, a retired medical practitioner, with a degree in anthropology also, concludes his series on the origin of the world.

To many young Christians, the first chapter in Genesis is fraught with difficulties and may seem to be a stumbling block. Yet, rightly understood, it is one of the greatest arguments for the inspiration of the Bible. Although the information contained therein was given at the dawn of humanity, nevertheless it reveals accurately the general line of creation from the commencement of time.

The holy record starts with 'In the beginning'. Scientists could say so much about this, but God had far more important facts to enunciate than what they have in mind. 'God' **Elohim** (Hebrew plural) 'created' (singular). The Hebrew structure denotes the mightiness of the Creator, and may hint at what we know from other scriptures that He is a mystic tri-unity.

After introducing the universe, He leads us into our first vision of the world. He tells us that it was without form and void. This fits in perfectly with the stage when, the learned ones tell us, our planet was a condensation of a solar cloud of particles, upon which exploding stars, supernovae, rained a whole range of elements, some radioactive, in abundance. Much later it became a solid globe, and in the process it extruded vast volumes of steam (*Job 38:8,9*) and carbon dioxide, which formed a dense mist that blanketed the earth. (The water and carbon dioxide would be needed by the Great Gardener on

day three.) The total situation also could be described very aptly by a celestial onlooker as without form and void. So let us continue from here.

Geology, vv.2-10

Day one, vv.3-5. 'Let there be light.' The cooling world caused condensation sufficiently for rays of light from the already existing heavenly bodies to pierce the mist and reach the earth. Through the rotation of our sphere, there was day and night, although the sun etc. were not yet visible.

Day two, vv.6-8. 'Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water' NIV. Further condensation took place thus making a continuous ocean around the world and an unbroken layer of cloud above, with a space dividing the two (*Ps. 148:4; Prov. 8:28*).

Day three, vv.9,10. 'Let the dry land appear.' By now great continental masses were resting upon tectonic plates, which floated upon a hot semi-molten heavier layer into which they partly sank, somewhat like an iceberg in the sea. Probably, cooling of this lower layer pushed the plates up so that the continental crust appeared in various places above the water.

Botany, vv.11-13

'Let the earth' (including the submerged part) 'bring forth':

(a) 'Grass'. The Hebrew is 'grow green that-which-is-green', i.e. vegetation of all kinds.

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(b) Seed-bearing plants. The earliest were ferns which are so clearly seen in the coal measures.

(c) Fruit trees whose seed is in the fruit. This is at a later period.

Chlorophyll in vegetation absorbs energy from the red and blue wavelengths of sunlight and reflects the intenser green rays, thus protecting plants from destructive over-absorption. This energy changes carbon dioxide and water in the cells into cellulose, sugars and starches. In the process, oxygen is released and finds its way into both air and sea — an essential prerequisite for fish and animal life. No accident this!

Day Four, vv. 14, 15

There were lights to divide day and night. Heavenly bodies became visible after further condensation.

'For signs', that God is. 'For seasons', for sowing and reaping, and to show that God cares for His people.

Vv. 16-19. God 'appointed' or 'had appointed' (Heb. *asah*) two great pre-existing lights to rule by day and night (*Ps. 104:19*); the stars also.

Day Five, Marine Zoology, vv. 20-23

The waters brought forth abundantly:

(a) Moving creatures; contrast fixed plant life. Fish in the Silurian period.

(b) 'Flying things' (Heb. *oph*), here meaning insects, e.g. types of cockroaches and dragonflies (last-named up to 29 inch span seen in coal). By this time insects were needed to pollinate the flowers of seed-bearing plants.

(c) 'Great creatures of the seas' (NIV). These included amphibians of the Carboniferous period.

(d) Every winged thing; birds of the Jurassic period.

Day Six, Terrestrial Zoology, vv. 24, 25

Land creatures, creeping things e.g. reptiles of the Permian period which came after the amphibians and before the Triassic period with some early small mammals. It was in the Eocene period that mammals came into lasting prominence.

Botanical and zoological periods started as stated and overlapped as regards time. Archaeological terms have been used to emphasize as vividly as possible that all the above biblical sections are in the correct order according to the teaching of geology today.

Man, vv. 26, 27

'Let Us make man in Our image.' The likeness of God was demonstrated by man being a spiritual entity, unlike the rest of creation. He was able to enter into the thoughts of God, have communion with Him and wor-

ship Him. As he left the Maker's hands, he was sinless and perfect.

Day Seven, ch. 2:2

'God rested.' There have been no creations of importance since the creation of man.

Theories of the Six Days of Creation

There are:

1) The Verbal Revelation theory by P. J. Wiseman in **Clues to Creation in Genesis**. He maintained that God described to Adam on each of six days the history of creation; further, that where 'made' occurs in *Genesis 1*, the Hebrew word concerned also has other meanings as in *Ps. 104:19* quoted for day four.

2) The Age-day Theory of E. K. Pearce in **Who was Adam?** (recently out of print). He believes that the six days were of indefinite duration, and that each day tells of the start of a form of creation which continued or progressed during the succeeding days, i.e. they overlapped like fish scales. **Creation Revealed** by F. A. Filby follows similar thoughts.

The Hebrew singular noun *yom* usually means either the day time or a day of twenty-four hours, but it can refer to a period of indeterminate length (see **The Illustrated Bible Dictionary** p.334), depending on the context and relevant facts. Question — how long was the day in *Gen. 2:4*?

3) The Literal Six-Day Theory of Prof. E. H. Andrews in **God, Science and Evolution**.

Critical Assessment

We have had a rough summary of the Creation Story. Every fact that has been stated has been confirmed by what we know today to be the geological and biological sequence. It is quite incredible that anyone ignorant of the scientific discoveries from the strata, should have guessed all that has been revealed in the God-inspired first chapter of the Bible. To the honest unbeliever, it is a tremendous challenge to get right with God. To the believer in the midst of a godless world, it is a wonderful stimulus to faith, and a great spiritual encouragement to continue to fight the good fight.

Our God in Ages Past created this world, and His 'writing' in the rocks in plain for all to read.

Clues to Creation in Genesis is obtainable only from the U.C.C.F. Bookcentre, Norton Street, Nottingham, NG7 3HR, £1 post free.

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AN APPEAL FOR RE-THINKING ON LEADERSHIP

John Carrick

John Carrick, of Portswood Church, Southampton, writes from personal experience.

The interesting correspondence between Messrs. Warren and Boyes on 'Structured Leadership' and John Wood's November article on 'Tending the flock of God' demonstrates the dilemma of many Christians in assemblies today. On the one hand many hold to the understanding that leadership must have a corporate nature in which no single person is given a more prominent role than others. Over against this, many are witnessing the blessing and growth that is being enjoyed by other churches, as a direct result of 'benevolent leadership'. It is true to say that, in general, the evident growth in evangelical witness throughout the land is not being experienced by Brethren Assemblies. What is just as evident is the fact that in almost every such situation there is clear leadership, vested in one, or a small group of persons, functioning with the blessing and support of other leaders and endorsed by the whole fellowship.

Our problems are twofold. First we cannot see the position of a full-time person, or persons, as anything other than mutually exclusive from a typical assembly pattern. Secondly (and this is not intended as a criticism) we write, and one must therefore conclude, think in clinical terms. It may well be that those who take up this issue from time to time are deeply involved in pastoral care, but it is not always evident from what is said. This point is of the utmost importance. In fact, in the writer's opinion, it is the most important factor in the debate.

I put it to our readers that our thinking must move, at least for a time, from

concepts and criticisms of orders of church government, to the more pragmatic subject of people and problems. Let us commence with the great army of widows. How often are they visited by elders? Do these visits cover more than courtesy calls? What about families wrestling with generation gap tensions; teenagers with intellectual difficulties; marriage problems that have been engulfing couples for some time, but no one knew it, to say nothing of the lonely persons who 'don't fit' and always remain on the fringe of things? Then there are the people with whom we all have tenuous links. In many churches, if the barriers preventing such friends from a closer link with our Lord could only be removed, the buildings would prove inadequate to hold us all. In almost every case mentioned the reply to these matters will be the same: 'Yes, a genuine problem, but we are all so busy. If only we had time.'

If a body of elders seriously undertakes to care for the flock of God, living in these seductive days, I suggest that they will find colossal demands on both time and energy. It will not be long before the thought is expressed that perhaps so-and-so could give more time to these things, or a group be available at certain times. Is this not exactly the 'benevolent leadership' of which Mr. Warren speaks? Is this not just the way in which some early assemblies grew? What of George Müller's fellowship which grew at one time, we are told, at a rate of 200% per annum? Surely it is nothing short of deception to present these things to later generations as a cloaked form of clericalism, or to ignore them as if we have nothing to learn from that era. It behoves all who are called to leadership to follow scriptural patterns and one of the most significant is fruitfulness (*John 15:5*).

If one factor in the growing life of a thriving fellowship is the availability of compassionate leadership, another is clear exposition of the Word of God. One of the hall-marks of the most thriving churches in the land today is consecutive Bible teaching, in which the whole counsel of God is presented in depth and range. With no disrespect intended to many of God's servants, the peripatetic approach to ministry cannot possibly offer this. We may be thrilled by stirring addresses given for the umpteenth time on 'The Seven Feasts' or 'The Second Coming', but what of the Word applied to today's issues? What of those books of the Bible from which we seldom read in public? Is not this the province of leadership? Thank God for a new approach to this by many in recent years. A speaker is now guided as to what subject he should take up. Quite right! But one has heard from a number who feel that this does not go far enough. A month or two on *1 Corinthians* merely scrapes the surface. Then, a visitor is at a disadvantage when he comes to a difficult or controversial passage. For the sake of future invitations he may be tempted to skate round the issue. Yet another problem: does he know these people in depth? Is he able to apply these important truths as could a local man? A local man! But if one, or just a few, were to undertake the bulk of ministry of God's Word, would not that smack of prelacy? In any case most assemblies only have a small deposit of such gift.

Bullseye! Why are we so slow to realise that God has only given such gifts to a few whom He has chosen? Is the body all mouth? We need more clearly to distinguish between 'sharing a thought' or 'giving a word' and expounding God's Word in the power of God's Spirit. Serious consideration of this will drive us to

recognise in a new way those gifted as preachers and teachers among us (1 Cor. 4:1). But again there is that old problem of time. Is it then not worthy of our tradition that a man, or men should be supported at a local level to give time for study and waiting upon the Lord?

So far, I trust we have wended our way through the minefield of comments like 'a king ruling over God's recalcitrant people' — and 'sheep herded into one man's fold'. We have simply recognised facts. Yes, this will mean a limitation on those who wish to preach, if they are not gifted in this way; but will there still not be an opportunity to share a thought at the prayer meeting or Breaking of Bread? In most preaching services the actual speaking time is 50%. Will there not be ample opportunity for others to lead, testify, pray, read the Scriptures, play an instrument, or bring a spiritual song? We may all be priests, but we are certainly not all preachers.

Two final questions remain, at least in the writer's estimate. First, will such gifted brethren (i.e. in teaching and preaching) automatically become elders? While the answer will vary from church to church, it must surely be concluded that where there is a teaching gift that brings God's Word powerfully to bear on God's people, it must be seen as a gift of leadership. After all, is not that the purpose of such ministry in Eph. 4: leading us on to spiritual maturity (Eph. 4:11-16)?

Preaching, if one rightly understands the terminology, does not necessarily suggest pastoral leadership, and is in the NT usually associated with the work of the evangelist. Nonetheless, oversight of a church's outreach requires wise counsel. All too often in the hands of young enthusiasts, youthful enthusiasm has failed to substitute for holy zeal, and apart from the useful therapeutic value, energy has been wasted and the glory of God not enhanced. Evangelism requires the skills and burden of those who have been called, and they are the ones to encourage others to discover their gifts. Preaching must also be a leadership gift. Pastoral care is wide and usually requires much experience. Not every pastor is a preacher, but when the pastors function with the others in leadership, knowledge and experience shared will make for an enriching and applied ministry of God's Word, supported by the healing and help that follows the surgery and implantation of the Word. Happy indeed is the fellowship which has at least one person gifted

with both teaching and pastoral gifts. That person will be much in demand by the local saints.

Which leads to the final problem. Do we want one, or even a few, who will become the centre, or at least pretty near the centre, of the public life and work of the church? For many this will be the nub of the whole issue. Dare we put it another way? Why not? Remember all we have done is to recognise that in most churches there is more work in leadership than can be undertaken by the average body of overseers. We propose that leadership is not something that one attains because of age, social standing or personal achievement in the secular field. It is all wrapped up in gift. If it will enhance the life and witness of the fellowship, why not set apart one or more to spearhead this work, in partnership with other men gifted in leadership, who cannot, nor feel called at this time to be separated in this way? (They will, however, do what they can.)

Answer: fear. We are worried about a cult following? But have we not already identified a key issue as expounding God's Word? Do we not recognise that such a ministry will glorify Him? Perhaps we fear less opportunity? But should we have had that opportunity in the first place? If a gift is evident the whole church will see it, if not, perhaps we must stop playing games and thinking we do God a service with our three alliterated points. Or again, are we afraid of some takeover by one individual or a small group? Is this why democracy is so precious to many of us? Safety in diffusion.

The writer has been involved for seven years in just such a situation as has been outlined above. When the 'experiment' began, a formal agreement was drawn up and signed by all the elders. In it were contained guidelines and parameters for the full-time pastor; safeguards for both pastor and fellowship as a whole, and a commitment from every elder, including the only full-time one, to inform, support and encourage all the others in our mutual and varied work. It can be truthfully stated that no take-over has resulted; no herd mentality has developed and people have not become indolent. Indeed there is more involvement now in every area of the church's expanding inreach and outreach. More people are involved in actual leadership in the growing congregation. With each passing year, leadership seeks to uncover, not stifle, undiscovered gift so that the local representation of Christ's body is being seen to be much, much more than

mouth (there is little clamour to be heard), but a genuine concern in the hearts of many to say, 'Lord, what can I do to enrich the fellowship?'

I say at length, it can work. While it may not be the way for many assemblies, there is little doubt that it could help some. No reference has been made to abortive attempts by some, but in every case known to the writer, definite, if painful, answers are there before our eyes. But for the sake of that steady stream of persons, both young and older, who are departing our folds for the lack of 'benevolent leadership', may I appeal again for yet another look at this exciting but vexed question.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

What precisely is 'the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus' for the sake of gaining which Paul pressed on toward the goal (Phil. 3:14)?

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

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TRANSLATING THE BIBLE INTO ENGLISH

Alan S. Duthie

The second of Dr. Duthie's series on the nature of our translations.

Before comparing and evaluating different Bible translations, we must look at the nature of language and of the translation process.

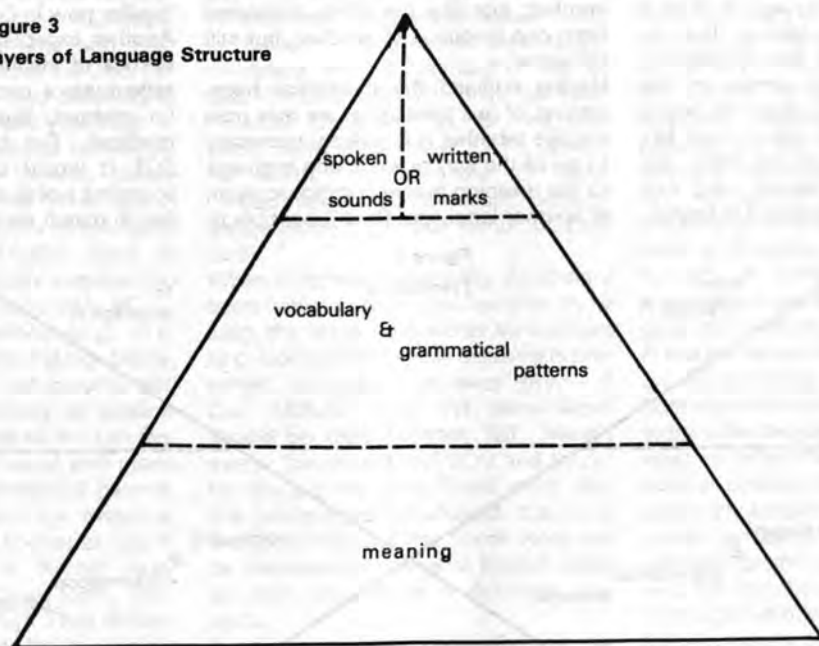
Let us picture **language** as an iceberg (*figure 3*). Only the tip of the triangle is visible or audible above the surface. But, as with icebergs, there is a great deal more below!

neath. If French is the language spoken, you also hear sounds and maybe catch a few words here and there. However, if the language is English, still you hear the sounds of course; but the actual sounds are of no interest to you — you want to distinguish the words and sentences, and especially the meaning of what is said. For you, there is far more to language (if it is English) than mere sounds. If you get a postcard from friends on holiday abroad, you will see writing on

distinguish all the words, and understand the full meaning, without even thinking about it.

So, in the case of a language we do not know, we hear only sounds or see only written marks on paper. If you have ever learned French or Latin, you may recall, if you persevered, how you gradually came to recognise more and more words and more and more grammatical patterns as you progressed. However, even quite advanced students, though

Figure 3
Layers of Language Structure



If you turn the dial of your radio, you will hear different stations with many different voices speaking. If they are speaking Chinese or Swahili, then you hear the sounds, but probably understand nothing: for you, it is just sound (like the tip of the iceberg), with nothing else under-

neath. If French is the language spoken, you also hear sounds and maybe catch a few words here and there. However, if the language is English, still you hear the sounds of course; but the actual sounds are of no interest to you — you want to distinguish the words and sentences, and especially the meaning of what is said. For you, there is far more to language (if it is English) than mere sounds. If you get a postcard from friends on holiday abroad, you will see writing on

the card and on the postage stamp. If the writing is Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, or Russian, you can see it, of course, but possibly nothing more. If the writing is Spanish or French, you can see it and perhaps understand some of the words. If the writing is English, then you see it, they may puzzle out the meaning of individual words in their grammatical patterns, still may feel they do not understand what the passage is all about; it doesn't seem to make sense. When it comes to English, however, spoken or written, we do not even think of the

sounds or the spelling (unless there is some difficulty), nor do we think much of the individual words or grammatical patterns; rather, we go straight for the meaning, the bottom of the 'iceberg'. After all, that is what really matters. **Meaning** is what language is all about; it is expressed by a particular **wording**; which in turn is expressed by a particular **spelling** or '**sounding**'. The spelling and the sounds are accessible to anyone with eyes and ears; while the meaning is accessible only to those who know the particular language all the way down through the layers of its structure. We could compare meaning to the merchandise displayed for sale in a shop, what the shop is 'there for'; while the spellings, sounds, words, grammatical patterns, are like the display shelves, stands, and windows, which are necessary for the shop's business, but are not what the shop is there for.

The **translation process** can be pictured (figure 4) as two adjacent icebergs, joined far below the surface, but widely separated at their tips, which represent the writings of two languages. Everyone can see the written marks of language A. If he knows the language, he can recognise the words and grammatical patterns of language A. If he is really capable of translating, then he must also understand the full meaning. Though the meaning comes to him through language A, it does not belong to that language, but rather to all languages. In the case of the Bible, language A is Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic; in our case, language B is English.

So the translator is a receiver of the Bible message in these languages, and immediately becomes a sender of an equivalent message in English. So, when translating, he tries to express the original meaning in the words and grammatical patterns of English; and then he writes it out following the spelling of English. All this procedure is indicated by the arrows in figure 4 passing down, across, and up. If we wish to call a translation 'close' or 'accurate' or 'faithful', then we should be claiming that the **same meaning**, first expressed in language A, is now expressed in language B. Indeed, we could actually define meaning as 'that which is preserved in translation'.

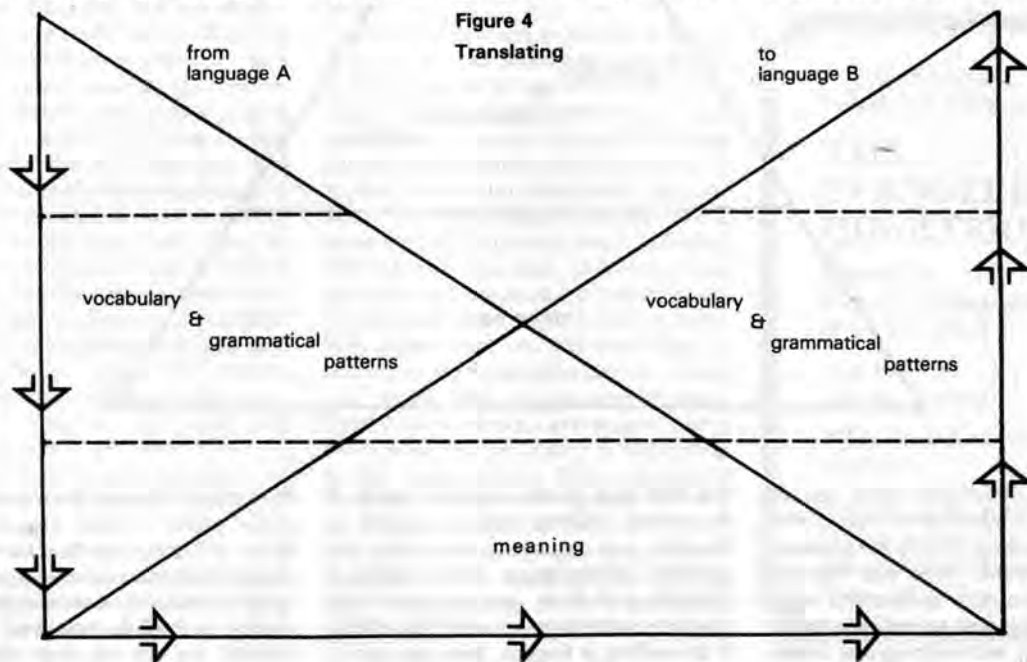
Imagine a 19th-century missionary conveying his baggage from Britain to the Gold Coast. The baggage starts its journey in a horse and cart, before reaching a railway, which leads to a seaport, from where it is carried in a ship round the west coast of Africa, till it anchors some way off the shore, where it is offloaded into a surf-boat and brought to land, and finishes its journey on the heads of several porters. The same baggage throughout, the missionary hopes; but 'translated' from one conveyance to another; just like the Bible, translated from one language to another, but still the same.

Having outlined the theoretical background of real translating, we may now enquire whether it is entirely necessary to go all the way down in one language to the meaning before coming up again in another language. Or is it possible to

leap straight across from the **writing** of one language to the **writing** of the other? Bare'shith bara' 'elohim 'eth hashshamayim w'eth ha'arets (*Gen. 1:1*), here transliterated from Hebrew to 'English', is obviously meaningless to the English reader (even if he recognises 'elohim'). Egeneto Iōannēs baptizōn en tē erēmō kai kērussōn baptisma metanoias eis aphesin hamartiōn (*Mk. 1:4*), transliterated from Greek, looks slightly more acceptable (indeed, a few words are quite recognisable), but is still virtually meaningless to the English reader. As a general principle, leaping across from Greek writing to English writing is quite useless as translation.

But there are slight exceptions. Proper names, like Iōannēs, Marko(n), Iēsou Christo(u), Ēsaia, Ioudaia, Nazaret, Iordanē (transliterated from *Mk. 1*), are expected to keep the same sound (represented by the spelling) between languages. In the Old Testament, God's name is written YHWH (consonants only); with its own vowels, this comes out as 'Yahweh' (JB). But, as the name was normally written with the vowels of 'adonay 'my lord', it also comes out as 'YeHoWaH' or 'Jehovah' (BLE, NWT, ASV, Darby, Young), which is relatively familiar now in English.

Another exception is where the actual sounds of Hebrew words are used to accentuate a contrast: 'And he looked for mishpat, But behold, mispah; For tsēdāqah, But behold, tsē'āqāh' (*Is. 5:7*). It would be desirable if similar sounding words could be found in English to match those in Hebrew; but this



has proved impossible to translators. Again, in the acrostic psalms (e.g. *Pss. 111, 112*), it would be desirable, other things being equal, if successive lines of the translation could begin with successive letters of the English alphabet. But this also is difficult.

So, these are areas where a direct transliteration might be desirable; but they obviously occupy only a tiny fraction of the total message that has to be translated.

However, in the transliterated *Mark* passages above, we notice two other recognisable words, 'baptizōn' and 'baptisma', which appear virtually unchanged in most English translations. These have become familiar through long usage; and they avoid an awkward theological question. But, strictly speaking, mere transliteration is not acceptable in a translation; what we expect is an expression of the meaning (e.g. 'plunge, immerse, dip, bathe').

Now, we must enquire whether it is possible to pass across from one language to another at the middle layer, that of **vocabulary and grammatical patterns**. 'And after the to-be-given-over the John came the Jesus into the Galilee and preaching the good-news of the God and saying that Has-been-fulfilled the appointed-time and has-drawn-near the kingdom of the God; be-YOU-repenting and be-YOU-believing in the good-news.' (Kingdom Interlinear — *Mark 1:14-5*). This interlinear translation is excellent for those learning Greek. Though it captures the Greek grammatical patterns and every Greek word corresponds to an English word or phrase, it only incidentally conveys the Greek's meaning, if it does so at all.

Other English translations (e.g. BLE, NASB, NWT, Rotherham, Young, Darby, ASV, RV, Concordant, Letchworth) also attempt to pass as directly as possible across the middle layers of the two languages, from word to word and grammatical pattern to grammatical pattern, with little overt regard for meaning. These translations are known as 'word-for-word' or 'literal' or 'formal' (concerned with grammatical form, etc., more than with meaning). They deliberately transport the reader to ancient times and a strange land and culture. Such translations are noticeably preferred by theological conservatives, perhaps because they do not trust the average non-evangelical translation committee to translate meaning properly; or perhaps because of a mistaken idea of 'verbal inspiration', as if it meant that each individual word were independently inspired, irrespective of

its meaning in the context of the whole Bible.

We should not expect every Greek or Hebrew grammatical pattern to be matched by an English pattern. What is normal in one language may be abnormal in the other. 'For verily that which hath been made glorious hath not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasseth' (RV — *2 Cor. 3:10*): this represents the Greek construction and words, but has little meaning in English. *Ephesians 1:3-14* is one sentence in Greek, its clauses linked by participles; but English does not need to copy Greek sentence length. Every Greek participle does not need to be copied in English (e.g. 'he answering said'). Both Hebrew and Greek regularly start sentences with the equivalent of 'and'; but it is bad English if copied. 'With desire I have desired' (KJV — *Lk. 22:15*) is not English nor Greek, but Hebrew. Similarly, the Hebrew 'holy of holies' should have been properly translated as 'most holy'. Then, there are many literal translations from Greek and Hebrew which involve 'of' between two nouns though the actual meaning varies considerably from example to example: 'children of Israel' (= Israelites); 'Nazareth of Galilee' (= N. in Galilee); 'baptism of repentance' (= 'repent and be baptised'); 'will of God' (= God wills it); 'love of God' (= either God loves us, or, we love God); 'word of his power' (= his powerful word); 'righteousness of God' (= God makes men righteous); 'sons of disobedience' (= those who disobey God).

When it comes to matching vocabulary items between languages, we may try to keep the same equivalents throughout (e.g. Concordant). If the meaning is preserved, as in 'be done away' (RV — *1 Cor. 13:8-10*), then the same word should be kept; contrast 'fail', 'vanish away', 'be done away' (KJV and NKJV) for the one recurring Greek word. But this example is rather unusual. It is not in fact expected that one Greek word will be translated by the same English word on each occurrence in different contexts.

If we take a Greek word, *phobos*, we would translate it sometimes as 'fear' (of a ghost, *Mt. 14:26*; of the Jews, *John 7:13*), sometimes as 'reverence' (for the Lord, *Acts 9:31*), sometimes as 'respect' (for authority, *Rom. 13:7*). If you look at a Greek dictionary, you will find all three English potential equivalents given for *phobos*; but in a particular passage the actual meaning is determined by the context. There is partial or considerable

overlap between the areas of meaning covered by words of different languages. The Greek *kurios* is equivalent in different contexts to 'sir, master, owner, lord, Lord'; *sarks* could be translated correctly as 'flesh' (*Lk. 24:49*), 'body, human nature, physical limitations, sexual urge, human standards, countrymen' (*Rom. 11:14*), 'man-kind' (*Ac. 2:17*). Similarly, Hebrew *paqad* covers 'care for, visit, inspect, punish', in different contexts.

Should *splangchna* always be translated 'bowels' (*Col. 3:12*; *1 Jn. 3:17*)? Is 'heavenlies' (Darby) a suitable English word (*Eph. 3:10*)? Must *haima* always be translated 'blood' (*Mat. 26:28*) and not sometimes 'death' (*Eph. 1:7*)? Should we have 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand' copying the Greek words, or should we express the meaning, 'God will soon establish his rule'? 'Put the branch to their nose' (*Ezek. 8:17*) or 'insult most offensively'? 'Anoint with oil' or 'treat as honoured guest' (*Ps. 23:5*)? 'Gird up the loins of your mind' (*1 Pet. 1:13*)? In most of these cases, we find that slavishly following the original words tends to obscure the meaning.

So we discover that, if we translate word for word and grammatical structure for grammatical structure, we may or we may not express the meaning of the original. Indeed, when a translator does not understand the meaning of a passage, he may take refuge in a word-for-word translation, thereby transferring the burden of understanding the meaning to his reader (who is much less capable of working out the meaning for himself). A literal translator is like an engineer whose bridge across the river goes only halfway!

A real translator concentrates at all costs on the **meaning** of the original, trying both to understand and to re-express it in the other language. He does not worry whether or not the words and the grammatical patterns also match; that is a secondary consideration. The Septuagint Greek translation of the Old Testament, normally quoted in the New Testament, was far from being a literal translation. Although we have used the term 'meaning' frequently above, it should be observed from figure 4 that the bottom section of the language structure diagram is much larger in area than the rest. This is meant to symbolize the width of the term 'meaning', covering several different facets, all of which are the concern of the translator, as we shall see.

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

'I need Christian fellowship'

Question 213

I am a single professional woman in my mid-thirties. When I first came here, two years ago, having changed my job, I joined the local assembly where there were three couples about my own age, the rest being older. These couples have now left, along with others who arrived after me. I am the only one of my age group and there is little or no fellowship shown when I go to the meetings. At first I attended all the meetings but now I go on Sunday mornings only because I get depressed at being ignored. The age difference makes it impractical to invite people to my house and I have not been invited elsewhere. I attend regularly on Sunday morning but recently was away for some time due to illness and experienced more loving concern from the people at work than the church.

Before moving here I had taken a full part in the life of three different assemblies. I miss the fellowship. I could go to a local live evangelical church but do not wish to sever my connections with the assembly. I don't approve of going only on Sunday mornings but I love the morning meeting. Although my personal quiet times have become very important to me, I need the fellowship of others. How can one resolve a dilemma such as mine?

In general terms, I am always slightly wary about complaints from people who feel they are not 'getting' enough from their local church. Too often the problem is that they are unwilling to 'give'. But what you say about your previous experience in other assemblies and the whole tone of your letter, suggests that this does not apply in your case. And your commitment to the assembly in principle is equally clear.

One solution would be to place yourself consciously and deliberately in the context of 2 Corinthians 12. You know that you are suffering and you know that you are deprived. Perhaps the Lord wants you to learn from this and to hear you saying, not, 'this church is more dead than alive but I can survive!' but rather 'this church is half dead and I feel more than half dead and if I am to remain alive the input must

come from your love and your Holy Spirit, Lord Jesus!'

If this were the way for you, then there would be something else to do. But I think you should do this whatever your final decision. You owe it to the elders and to other people who find themselves in your position and also in some sense to the Lord, to go to the elders and explain your situation. Sad to say, it is possible that they may 'not have realized'. Perhaps your openness in sharing the situation with them may be just what the Lord can use to change the situation. (In any case, even were you to break your connection with the fellowship, honesty would demand that you take this step.)

In the same spirit, perhaps you should consider ignoring the age differences and inviting people (elders and their wives?) to your home, perhaps for a cup of coffee.

In addition, I should pray — as you surely have been praying? — for Christian fellowship outside the local assembly. Perhaps this is a way in which the Lord wants you to find support.

However, I would not rule out the possibility that the right thing for you might be to continue, for some time at least, to attend your local assembly on a Sunday morning and the other church on a Sunday evening, seeking the fellowship there that you are not experiencing at present. 'It is not good for man to dwell alone' and if after taking the steps suggested above, you find there is no change, then perhaps the right thing in your situation would be to seek fellowship with the Baptist church you mention. But please do not take this step without explaining the situation to the elders. If Ezekiel 34:4-6 is true of them, then they need to be made aware of it. Shepherds who fail to shepherd must bear a tremendous responsibility for the decline of assembly life up and down the country. But some of the responsibility must be borne by the sheep. Animals and babies let it be known in no uncertain fashion when they are hungry or deprived. Human sheep find it difficult to humble themselves enough to do this. But, however difficult it may be to achieve, greater openness can do nothing but good. Nothing less will open the eyes of some people to what is going on around them.

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'.

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

THE REBIRTH OF HOPE

An Easter Meditation

G. J. Polkinghorne

Easter Day for us means joy — The Lord is risen indeed, winter is ended, spring returns, hope is reborn. Yet for the first disciples it dawned in depression, doubt, fear, gloom — the entire subjunctive mood. The Emmaus pair lamented the decease of the man they thought was going to redeem Israel. The eleven shut themselves in lest the authorities strike again. No one would believe Mary Magdalene. When the Unexpected Christ appeared, confusion was further confounded: they were terrified, thinking they had seen a ghost. At last, the hard facts of the wounded hands, feet and side convinced even Doubting Thomas. So far from being swayed into credence by wishful thinking, the apostles were compelled to bow to undeniable fact. The rebirth of hope was completed when the Lord spoke to them (*John 20:19-23*). Twice He says 'Peace' — a time-honoured Jewish greeting, still used today. How much the startled and alarmed disciples needed such reassurance! Maybe the first time they took it conventionally, as a kind of formal 'Good evening'. Perhaps the Lord was trying to calm their panic. But the second time, it seems to fill with new meaning. He who has made peace with the blood of His cross is bringing

them the peace of God which passes human understanding. The God of Peace who has brought Him back from the dead would henceforth fill them with joy and peace in believing.

Christ's physical presence, however, is to be temporary, because He is to return to His Father. Therefore, He commissions them to continue His work — 'As the Father sent me, so I send you'. He came to be the Saviour of the world and His sacrifice on the cross, confirmed by His resurrection, has laid the indispensable foundation. No one else can in any way contribute to that. Now His followers are given the task of publishing the good news to the world, a task that would involve their bearing a share in His rejection — an unavoidable prelude to their sharing His eventual glory (*Rom. 8:17*).

In view of this persecution, for all the authority they have, how can a handful of frightened fishermen and the like, locked cravenly in a secret retreat, tackle the mighty Roman Empire? They are afraid even of the Jews, a tiny fragment of it; what can they do? Jesus provides the answer, once more in a manner which, like His own resurrection, they ought to have expected but had failed to grasp. He gave them the Holy Spirit, to be with them for

ever. How exactly the inbreathing in *John 20:22* relates to the events of Pentecost is not easy to decide. Is it an earnest of what they were later to receive? Are they, as men with a special role in the Master's plans, given in advance what a larger company was shortly to have? Either way, they have both the authority and the power to take out to a hostile world the divine message of forgiveness and salvation. In the confidence of the Spirit of the Risen Christ they can find courage to proclaim the good news.

There is a parable for us in the manner in which the two on the Emmaus Road 'stood still looking sad' when the Risen Lord was right beside them. Do we not often fail to reckon with Him and stagnate in our gloom? Are we not frequently surprised by the Unexpected Christ? Too often, also, we are like the original disciples in scepticism and fear. Immediately we know the Risen Christ, hope begins to revive. We hear His word of peace; we are warmed by the joy of His presence; We are emboldened by His commission and empowered by His Holy Spirit. Then we can go forth to battle and triumph for Him. May this Easter see the rebirth of hope and the recovery of confidence for us also!

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (58)

F. F. Bruce

The Upper Room Discourse (*John 13:31-16:33*)

i. DEPARTURE AND REUNION (*John 13:31-14:31*)

(a) The glorification of the Son of Man (*13:31-32*)

13:31,32 So, when Judas had gone out, Jesus said, 'Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him immediately.'

A few days previously, while teaching in the temple precincts, Jesus had said, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified' (*John 12:23*).

We saw then that he was speaking of his impending passion. Now, with the departure of Judas from the upper room, bent upon his work of betrayal, the passion narrative is set in train, and with it, from the perspective of this Gospel, the climax of the glory revealed in the Son of Man.

If Judas's mind has been made up, the Lord's mind has also been made up. He has accepted the suffering and death which lie ahead (had he not accepted them, he might even at this late hour have taken evasive action), and therefore he can refer to the passion and the glory in the past tense; they are as good as accomplished 'The Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him' (*edoxasthē*, aorist passive, in both clauses). God is glorified by the Son's fulfilling of the Father's will; cf. *John 17:4*, 'I have glorified thee on earth by finishing the work thou gavest me to do' (where *edoxasa*, aorist active, is used).

The opening if-clause of *verse 32* is omitted by P66 and a number of early and reliable witnesses; even if it is not expressed, it is implied. (Even so, it is more probable that the clause was omitted inadvertently than that it was added intentionally.)

The words, 'God will also glorify him in himself', appear to have much the same meaning as Jesus' petition, 'And now, Father, glorify me with thyself . . .', in *John 17:5*. This presupposes that 'in himself'

here means 'in God the Father himself'; as the Father is glorified in the Son, so the Son is to be glorified in the Father. The alternative is to take 'in himself' as meaning 'in the Son himself', but this is less natural. Westcott sees here an affirmation 'that God would glorify the Son of Man . . . by taking up His glorified humanity to fellowship with Himself.' Moreover, he would do so 'immediately'; the course of events had already been set in motion and would quickly be accomplished.

(b) The new commandment (*13:33-35*)

13:33 Children, I am still with you for a short time. You will seek me and, as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am, you cannot come', so now I say also to you.

This is the only place in the Gospel where the diminutive *teknia*, 'little children' ('my dear children') is used; it is used seven times in the First Epistle by the author addressing his readers (its one other NT occurrence is in *Gal. 4:19*, in a particularly tender appeal by Paul to his Galatian converts). At the Last Supper especially Jesus filled the rôle of head of the family, the disciples being the 'children' whose function it was to ask him questions designed to bring out the significance of the occasion.

Jesus now begins to prepare the disciples for his departure from them. The 'short time' during which he will still be with them will be over in a few hours. Then, as he had already said to the Jewish leaders (*John 7:33,34*), they will look for him and not be able to find him. (Since the disciples were themselves Jews, it is plain that 'the Jews' here, as so often in this Gospel, are Jews of a special category.)

13:34-35 I give you a new commandment, to love another: as I have loved you, so do you love one another. This is how all will recognize that you are disciples of mine. If you have love among one another.'

He is about to leave them, but he will bequeath spiritual treasures to them before he does so; his love, his joy (*John 15:11*) and his peace (*John 14:27*). The 'new commandment' (*mandatum novum* in the Vulgate) has given its name to the anniversary of the Last Supper: Maundy Thursday. And, while John does not record the institution of the holy communion, its association with the 'new commandment' is commemorated to this day in the introduction to the Creed in the Greek liturgy; 'Let us love one another, that with one mind we may confess Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Trinity one in essence and undivided.'

The standard of the love which the disciples are to have one for another is the love which their Lord has lavished on them: 'he had set his love on his own people who were in the world, and he loved them to the uttermost' (*verse 1*). The commandment of love was not entirely new: all the law and the prophets were summed up in the twin commandments 'You shall love the LORD your God . . .' and 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself' (*Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:35-40*); but by his teaching and still more by his example (cf. *verse 14* above) Jesus imparted a new depth of meaning to it. When the commandment is taken up and repeated in *1 John 2:7,8*, it is called 'no new commandment, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning', but at the same time 'a new commandment, as it has come to be truly in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.' If the Christian fellowship is marked by such love ('love among one another'), then it will be recognized as the fellowship of Christ's followers; it will bear the unmistakable stamp of his love. So Tertullian reports the pagans of his day (a century after this Gospel was published) as saying of Christians, 'See how they love one another!' (*Apology* 39.7), and it was no merely superficial love that they spoke of, for they went on: 'How ready they are to die for one another!' (cf. *John 15:13; 1 John 3:16*).

(c) Peter's confidence and the Lord's warning (13:36-38)

13:36-38 Simon Peter said to him, 'Where are you going, Lord?' Jesus answered, 'You cannot now

follow me where I am going, but you will follow me later.' 'Lord', said Peter, 'why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.' Jesus answered, 'Will you lay down your life for me? Indeed and in truth I tell you: the cock will not crow until you have denied me three times.'

This division of the upper room discourses (*13:31b-14:31*) contains more dialogue than the second division (*15:1-16:33*). Four named disciples break into Jesus' words of farewell: Peter (here), Thomas (*14:5*), Philip (*14:8*) and Judas (*14:22*). But it would be far-fetched to compare their interpositions to the questions traditionally asked on Passover Eve by four sons — the wise, the foolish, the simple, and the one who does not know how to ask.

Peter's question and subsequent response are completely in character. Wherever his Master is going he will need company and support; Peter proposes to go with him and supply whatever attendance and help may be necessary. Peter, naturally, has no conception of what lies immediately ahead for his Master. Nor has he reached the state of heart in which he can take up his cross and follow him. One day things will be different. 'You cannot now follow me where I am going', said the Lord, 'but you will follow me later.' A new phase of discipleship would shortly begin, and then, restored and recommissioned, Peter would follow his Master, until he crowned his discipleship by following him in death (cf. *John 21:15-19*).

Peter would understand these words after Jesus' death and resurrection; for the present their meaning is obscure to him. Wherever his Master is going right now, he insists, he is prepared to follow him. He is utterly devoted to his Master; he will even die for him if necessary. So he said, and said so sincerely. But the Master knew the disciple better than the disciple knew himself. There, in the upper room, it was not too difficult to believe himself prepared to die for his Master; later, in the uncongenial and intimidating environment of the high priest's palace, his resolution would weaken. That very night, before cockcrow, he would deny his Master three times. (Cockcrow was the third of the four Roman night-watches, halfway between midnight and dawn; cf. *Mark 13:35*.)

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (4)

The Love of God — In the Old Testament

M. L. Burr

In the New Testament the love of God is revealed through the only One who is really worthy of it. At His baptism Jesus was told 'Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased' (*Mark 1:11*). Until this time Jesus had been living in obscurity, but evidently His life was such that it wholly pleased the Father. The Gospels proceed to illustrate His holiness and self-sacrificing obedience, so that we can see why He alone merits the Father's love (*Matt. 17:5; John 10:17*). And it is very important that we should understand His uniqueness in this respect. We rightly judge a man's character by what he finds attractive. Now if we think of God's love primarily in terms of His love for us, we may very well suppose that He likes us as we are. And, imagining that such creatures as ourselves are pleasurable to God, we shall inevitably have a totally false idea of God's character. But if we see that Jesus is the only proper Object of the Father's love we shall gain a deeper understanding of God's holy character and begin to appreciate the marvel that His love has anything to do with us at all.

The special character of divine love in the New Testament arises also from the unique relationship between Christ and the Father. God has been made known by His only Son, who alone knows the Father's heart (*John 1:18*). And this relationship of love did not arise at the Incarnation but existed before the foundation of the world (*John 17:24*). So the statement that 'God is love' (*1 John 4:8,16*) relates to His inherent nature, not merely to His love for us. God did not need to create anyone in order to have someone to love.

He is eternally self-sufficient: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit enjoy a perfect fellowship of love which needs no other beings to make it complete. Yet in fact God has created us and declares that He loves us. This love is presented in several ways in the New Testament.

In some places it has a universal application — 'God so loved the world'. It is attributable solely to the fact that it is God's nature to love and not to anything lovable in mankind. Its greatness is seen in its universal scope, in the utter unworthiness of its objects, and in the extraordinary way it was expressed. 'God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us' (*Rom. 5:8*). This is obviously not a vague sentiment, and it certainly does not imply any admiration for the world; it is a spontaneous motive which, at great cost to Himself, seeks our truest welfare.

GOD'S PEOPLE

The New Testament also describes God's love for those who are actually His people, shown in the great privileges He bestows upon them. 'See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God' (*1 John 3:1*). We feel and know this love through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us (*Rom. 5:5*). The most amazing statement of all is that the Father loves us as He loves Christ (*John 17:23*). How can this be? Even if we had never sinned, we would not have been worthy to be placed alongside Christ in the Father's affections. But God has chosen to bestow His grace upon us 'in the Beloved' (*Eph. 1:6*) and sees us in Christ, not as we

are in ourselves. The Lord Jesus shares with us His knowledge of the Father's love. So nothing can separate us from 'the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord' (*Rom. 8:39*). If Israel could be sure of God's love because of His covenants with David and the patriarchs, how much more confident can we feel, since He has linked us with His beloved Son?

It is therefore abundantly clear that God's love for us arises initially from His own nature and was not drawn forth by anything attractive in us. 'In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us' (*1 John 4:10*). And yet we also read that God does love His people because of something in them. Three times in the Upper Room discourse Jesus said that the Father loves those who love Himself (*John 14:21, 23; 16:27*). 'The Father loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from the Father'. The disciples to whom Jesus was speaking understood very little of His words; they were about to desert Him and had just been arguing about who was the greatest among them. Yet they did really love their Master and believe in Him in rather a confused way, and this was something the Father valued. Jesus made it clear that love for Him is more than sincere appreciation — it is necessarily expressed in keeping His commandments. Of course, we well know that 'we love, because he first loved us' (*1 John 4:19*), and gratefully acknowledge that anything which the Father prizes in us was created by His undeserved love in the first place.

The Father's love to the Son is also extended to us in the love of Christ

Himself. Jesus told the disciples 'As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you' (*John 15:9*). Divine love has been revealed in human terms that we can understand. It brought Jesus into this world to share our circumstances, so that quite literally 'in all their afflictions he was afflicted'. It was constantly shown during His earthly life in kindness and sympathy, and above all in the laying down of His life, which is the greatest form of human love we know (*John 15:13*). It is shown in affection for individuals — thus Jesus loved Lazarus and his sisters, the 'beloved disciple', and even a man who declined to follow Him (*Mark 10:21*). Every believer can, like Paul, speak of 'the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me'. This individual aspect of Christ's love, expressed in His death for each believer personally, has a unique significance for the Christian and is a powerful incentive to a new kind of life (*Gal. 2:20*).

But the Christian also needs to remember that he is not the only one Christ loves like this. 'Christ loved us and gave himself up for us' (*Eph. 5:2*), so we should walk in love, regarding our fellow-Christians as persons who are very precious to Christ.

Furthermore, 'Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her' (*Eph. 5:25*). Perhaps we are less aware of His love for the church than for ourselves individually. But the church is obvi-

ously very important to Christ as the bride destined to be His eternal companion. He will ultimately make it a fitting object for His love, and it is our great privilege to be part of it.

EFFECTS

What then should be the effect of knowing divine love towards us? There are several practical implications mentioned in the New Testament. Firstly, we are told to keep ourselves in the love of God (*Jude 21*), and to abide in Christ's love (*John 15:9*). We must actively foster our link with Him and not allow anything to come between ourselves and the Lord. Secondly, the very magnitude of divine love and the privileges it bestows should humble us — 'God . . . out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ . . . and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus . . . not because of works, lest any man should boast' (*Eph. 2:4-9*). Thirdly, we are delivered from fear of judgement, for 'perfect love casts out fear' (*1 John 4:18*). Fourthly, we can trust God through all the trials of life, since nothing can separate from His love (*Rom. 8:35-39*). Fifthly, we learn to accept God's discipline, 'for the Lord disciplines him whom he loves' (*Heb. 12:6*), and Christ rebukes and chastens those He loves (*Rev. 3:19*). God's is a holy and jealous love, as the Old Testament shows, directed

towards making us share His holiness. We should recognize our constant need of correction, and also accept the disappointments of life as part of God's loving discipline, not necessarily implying faults in us, since our training includes learning to let go of legitimate things in order to know God better. Sixthly, as we appreciate divine love more we become increasingly aware of our indebtedness to Him who so loved us. 'The love of Christ controls us', and we live no longer to ourselves but to Him who died for us (*2 Cor. 5:14, 15*). We should therefore show the obedience not of law but of love, to please Him who has the supreme claim on our allegiance. Seventhly, we must obey that command which Christ specially emphasized: 'Love one another as I have loved you' (*John 15:12*). He loved us at great cost to Himself when we were utterly unlovable. So Christian love is primarily an active seeking of the welfare of others rather than a feeling of admiration for them. We can love those we do not naturally like. Yet there is something of God in every Christian, so that we should be able to detect in one another that which is of real value to Him and therefore to us. Finally, as we consider God's love in all its aspects, we can look beyond the blessings it has brought us to the Source of those blessings, and worship Him for what we have learned of His nature of holy love.

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (8) J. E. Todd

. . . of a Holy Walk (*1 John 2:1-11*)

'He who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked' (*1 John 2:6 RSV*). A characteristic of John's writings is his very careful choice of words. Sometimes Paul writes with power like the blows of a lumberjack's axe, but John uses words with the precision and care of a surgeon with a scalpel. The opening verse of his Gospel is a classical example of this fact. Such is the verse

quoted above, it yields its truth to careful analysis. It could be paraphrased, 'The one who says that he lives in communion with God, he is bound to live in the same manner even as Christ lived.' The word 'walk' is often used in this way in the New Testament, and is an apt description of all the varied aspects of daily living. We are portrayed as walking through life with all its experiences, both happy and sad. The person who claims to be in communion with God, that is, the Chris-

tian, is to substantiate his claim by living in a manner similar to the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Two things are to be carefully noted. First, John is not speaking about a life of sinless perfection. *Verse 1* makes this clear, 'My little children, I am writing this to you so that you may not sin; but if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' We can never live a Christlike life in the sense of sinlessness. 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive our-

selves' (1 John 1:8). But John tells us that we can live a life which has three features which are Christlike. One, a life which has love for God as its motive force. 'In him truly love for God is perfected' (2:5). Our Lord taught us that love for God is the foremost commandment (Matt. 22:37-38). Two, because of that love, a life which is against sin, 'I am writing this to you so that you may not sin' (2:1). Not just a mere disapproval of sin, but, as Paul puts it, 'Hate what is evil' (Rom. 12:9). Three, on the positive side, a life which desires above all to obey God, 'By this we may be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments' (2:3). These three characteristics of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ can be demonstrated in a Christlike walk. The second thing to be carefully noted is this. John never says in his epistle that because a certain fact is true, therefore we must react by behaving in a certain way. Concerning the Christian's walk in this verse (1 John 2:6), the verb 'walk' is not in the imperative mood, that is a command, that we must decide to obey it and walk in this fashion. No, John says we are bound to (opheilei) walk in this fashion. John always says that if a certain fact is true the automatic and inevitable result will be such and such. The fact and result are cause and effect, NOT action and a possible reaction. Communion with God will result in Christlike living; no Christlike living means no communion with God. With John it is just as simple as that!

THE GOSPELS

But the important question is, how can we come to know how Christ walked? This calls for a personal study of the Gospels. It has been said that Christians study the epistles at the expense of the Gospels: we need to be bal-

anced in our reading. Also in reading the Gospels we need to study the Lord's behaviour as well as his teaching. For his behaviour is the best visual aid to understanding his teaching. John points out the overriding characteristic of our Lord's walk, which we are to follow, that is his obedience to God's commands. 'Whoever keeps his (God's) word, in him truly love for God is perfected . . . in the same way in which he (Christ) walked' (2:5-6). Jesus himself said, 'For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me' (John 6:38).

Compared to the study of his teaching, the study of our Lord's behaviour is a comparatively neglected subject. For example, have you noticed our Lord's serenity, his 'unflappability'? This characteristic is conspicuous in Christian circles more by its absence than its presence. The Lord was ever calmly walking on the water in the midst of the storm, unaffected by the raging wind and waves of disaster. 'When he was reviled, he did not revile in return: when he suffered, he did not threaten' (1 Pet. 2:23). In the midst of a life of physical, emotional and political turmoil, he radiated the peace and calm of heaven itself. 'I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world' (John 16:33). 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid' (John 14:27). Not only does he demonstrate that serenity, but he actually offers it to us!

Another outstanding but neglected aspect of our Lord's behaviour is the balance of his character, 'Full of grace and truth' (John 1:14). His grace is shown in often withdrawing so as not

to antagonize, but his truth is shown in never retreating when attacked: his grace in kindly dealing with the weak, but his truth in angrily attacking the hypocrisy of the strong. How often we defer to the strong and are hard on the weak. Then again, so many Christians are all 'soft' or all 'hard', either 'liberal' or 'tight'. But our Lord had the balanced behaviour of gentleness and strength. How rare this is.

It would seem that the greatest hindrance to a personal study of the commands of God and the example of Christ in the Scriptures, is the false assumption that it is a very simple matter to distinguish between right and wrong. We are content with a most elementary knowledge of this subject, and so our unconscious faults are innumerable. Paul says, and this comes as a warning to us, 'Be renewed in the spirit of your minds' (Eph. 4:23). The thinking of the 'old man' needs a complete re-education before he can behave as the 'new man'. We, each one, need a divine 'brain-washing', a complete re-orientation in our thinking and attitudes. Only a personal and continual study of the Scriptures can re-educate us in the commands of God and the example of Christ. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that the study and practice needed to distinguish between right and wrong is long and difficult. 'For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of God's word. You need milk, not solid food, for every one who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their faculties trained by practice to distinguish good from evil' (5:12-14).

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THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY (4)

Studies in 1 Samuel

D. J. Clark

(4) Saul Rejected (1 Sam. 13-15)

INTRODUCTION

It is not clear how long elapsed between the events of *chapter 12* and those of *chapter 13*. At the time of his anointing, Saul was 'a young man' (9:2), and the events of *chapters 9-11* seem to cover only a short period. In *chapter 13*, however, he has in Jonathan a son of military age, so evidently some years have passed, years which perhaps included the events of *chapters 16-18*. The narrative of *chapters 13 and 14* seems designed to show up some of Saul's weaknesses prior to the disobedience that led to his decisive rejection by the Lord in *chapter 15*. All of this is dealt with before David is introduced into the story at all. Thus David's anointing in *chapter 16* is presented as a natural sequel to the rejection of Saul. There is, then, no injustice in the Lord's choice of David to replace Saul as king. Saul is seen to have had his opportunity and to have lost it. This is the theological picture underlying the narrative. Whether the events actually happened in the order they are related seems not to have been of great interest to the compiler at this point. It is our Western presuppositions that lead us to assume that events must be recorded in chronological order unless otherwise stated.

As an example of one theme being rounded off before another is introduced, irrespective of chronology, we could cite *Gen. 25:7-26*, where the death of Abraham is recorded before the birth of Esau and Jacob, even though on the basis of the figures

given, the twins were 15 years old when their grandfather died (compare *Gen. 21:5, 25:7,26*). There, the account of the Lord's dealings with Abraham is completed before that of his dealings with Jacob is begun. Perhaps something analogous is to be seen in the structure of *1 Sam. 13-18*.

Saul's impatience (13:1-14)

For the textual problems of *13:1*, see Laurence Porter's summary in *A Bible Commentary for Today*, pp. 392-3.

The victory over the Ammonites (*11:1-11*) may have secured Saul's position among his own people, but could not have had any real bearing on the main military threat to Israel, which came from the Philistines in the west. Such was their technological superiority (see *13:20*) that the people of Israel were at a permanent disadvantage. Nevertheless, spurred on by Jonathan's success at Geba (*13:3*) they assembled for battle. The initial harassing by the Philistines (*13:6*) cooled their ardour, however; some deserted while others remained with Saul, albeit in fear and trembling.

The pace of ancient warfare was often more leisurely than today. For a week, the Philistines failed to press home their initial advantage, and Saul bided his time (*13:8*). However, the rate of desertion from his ranks was sufficiently high that he finally lost patience and took upon himself the priestly duty of offering sacrifice (*13:9*). No sooner was this presumptuous act completed, than Samuel appeared. He immediately realised what had happened and his question 'What have you done?' (*13:11*) carries an implied rebuke.

Saul's lengthy excuse (*13:11-12*) failed to cloud the issues in Samuel's eyes. He could see that the real question was one of obedience (*13:13*). It is not clear whether the seven day period of waiting 'appointed by Samuel' (*13:8*) is that referred to also in *10:8*. Though the location at Gilgal is the same in both cases, other factors such as the presence of Jonathan in the army on this occasion make it seem unlikely. Be that as it may, Samuel had at some stage commanded Saul to wait for him. Saul had failed to do so, and in disregarding Samuel, he had disobeyed the Lord.

Such open disobedience could not go unrequited, and Samuel had to announce to Saul his rejection by the Lord. Like his appointment (*10:1,24*) this came in two stages, and in this first stage, the emphasis is on the loss of Saul's hope of founding a dynasty. There is as yet no clear statement about Saul himself forgoing the right to rule. *Verse 14* is of course a cryptic reference to David, but whether or not David had already been secretly anointed (*16:13*), the focus here is on Saul's loss rather than another's gain. What would the outcome have been had Saul waited for Samuel just one hour longer? We cannot know, but we can learn the solemn lesson that the large issues of our lives may depend in ways we cannot possibly foresee upon obedience in matters which impatience would urge us to consider trivial.

Jonathan's Exploit (13:15-14:23)

Samuel departed, leaving Saul to face his problems both spiritual and military. The daunting nature of the mili-

tary situation did not seem to impress Jonathan, and he sneaked off with his armour bearer on an unauthorized reconnaissance patrol. Little detail is given about Jonathan, but his recklessness (14:1,6) and brash attitude to guidance (14:8-10) create the impression of an impulsive teenage tear-away with a faith undoubtedly genuine, but probably rather immature. At any rate, he had a good tactical eye and chose well the spot for his skirmish, apparently a narrow point where the Philistines could approach only one at a time. The Lord honoured his faith and Jonathan and his armour bearer between them wiped out a twenty man garrison (14:14).

The ensuing panic among the Philistines was reinforced by an earth tremor, and what started as a relatively minor setback for them turned into a rout. The account of 14:16-23 is not as clear as it could be, but it appears that Saul called off an attempt to consult the Lord (14:19) and ordered his men into immediate action to take advantage of the confusion caused by Jonathan's exploit. It also seems that on seeing the tide of fortune turn, some Israelite deserters changed sides again, and contributed to the Philistine debacle (14:21).

Saul's Vacillation (14:24-52)

The victory was marred by Saul's thoughtless oath forbidding his men to eat food, apparently until nightfall (14:24). This had three unfortunate results. First of all, the Israelite soldiers grew weak, and were unable to make full use of their military opportunity (14:30). Secondly, when the time of the oath expired, the men were in such a hurry to eat (14:32) that they failed to drain the blood properly according to the law (Lev. 17:10-14). Thirdly, Jonathan in his ignorance of his father's rash oath, had eaten some wild honey (14:27), and this infraction prevented the Lord from giving guidance on whether to follow up the day's victory with a night attack (14:36).

Saul, perhaps intimidated by Samuel's recent reproof, was keen to have the matter cleared up, even if it meant the death of his son (14:44). Jonathan did not refuse to die (14:43), but since he was the hero of the hour, the people refused to allow Saul to carry out his threat, and so they ransomed Jonathan (14:45).

In this section we see Saul's own stupidity over the oath putting him in the position where he himself was obliged to order the death of his heir and thus contribute to the fulfilment of the Lord's threat that he would never set up a dynasty. Though the people undoubtedly acted for the best in rescuing Jonathan, their clamour (14:45) shows up Saul's inability to withstand popular pressure. Both the rashness and the vacillation were in evidence again in the days of Saul's decline and in their way hastened his ignominious end (cf. 28:20-25).

This section closes with a brief summary of Saul's family and achievements. Placed where it is, this summary has the overtones of an epitaph. The good that can be said, has been. From here on, Saul can only go down.

Saul's Further Disobedience

(15:1-35)

Once more, there is no indication of the time lapse between chapters 14 and 15. But even if the events of chapter 15 should date from later on in Saul's reign, they amplify and underline both his rejection of the Lord and the Lord's rejection of him.

Thus they are theologically appropriate at this point and form a fitting prelude to the introduction of David in chapter 16.

Samuel gives Saul a command from the Lord to exterminate the Amalekites because they had opposed the Israelites on the way up from Egypt (Exod. 7:8-16, compare Deut. 25:17-19). After warning the Kenites to separate from Amalek (15:6) Saul won a resounding victory over the Amalekites. However, he failed to carry out the conditions

imposed by Samuel, and thus earned the Lord's displeasure again, this time forfeiting his own right to the throne. We might expect Samuel to adopt a 'serves him right' attitude, yet far from showing such petty-mindedness, Samuel spent a night in prayer (15:11), apparently on behalf of Saul. How many of us could do the same when we see someone reaping the results of his own folly?

But on this occasion prayer was of no avail. The Lord's decision was final, and Samuel had to go and face Saul with it next day. Saul's claim to have obeyed the Lord could have been falsified even by a blind man (15:14), and his attempts to shift the blame on to his men (15:15,21) were pathetic. The claim that he was intending a sacrifice to honour the Lord was patently untrue and drew forth Samuel's memorable retort that 'to obey is better than sacrifice', and the news of the decree that Saul himself had been rejected from kingship (15:22-23).

Saul finally admitted his guilt, but could not bear the loss of face (and perhaps loss of political support) that would have come from an open breach with Samuel. He physically constrained the prophet to appear with him, and after doing so, Samuel publicly slew Agag the Amalekite king, thus repairing Saul's disobedience. Saul and Samuel parted never to meet again (15:35). The measure of Samuel's greatness is that he so deeply and genuinely regretted that the appointment of a king, though forced upon him through the people's intransigence, had turned out so badly. Samuel had evidently been able to see the genuine potential in Saul, and shared the Lord's sorrow over Saul's failure to actualize it in a life of dependent obedience.

Yet despite this dismal outcome to Saul's career, the Lord had not abandoned his people, and better things lay ahead.



LOOKING AT BOOKS

MEN, WOMEN AND THE BIBLE

Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective

James B. Hurley
IVP. 288pp. £4.95 (paperback).
Man and Woman in Christ
Stephen B. Clark
Servant Books. 753pp. \$15.95.

Two issues that trouble the church in the twentieth century are the role of women in the church and the role of women in the home. Evangelicals are deeply divided over the questions posed by the modern women's liberation movement. Even Christian Brethren

assemblies are finding that it is not sufficient simply to appeal to traditional practice and inherited interpretations of Scripture; we need to restudy these issues with open and renewed minds and with a greater understanding of all the factors involved. These two recent books will be of considerable help to us in this vital exercise.

Dr. Hurley begins by considering the patriarchal structures of Assyrian, Babylonian and Israelite societies in which women were situationally subordinate even if not considered intrinsically inferior. Moving on to NT times

he notices the male oriented societies of the Graeco-Roman world and especially of Judaism where conservative tendencies had resulted in women being largely excluded from religion and considered as unfit to learn. The place of women in the ministry and teaching of Jesus is thus presented as sharply contrasting with the culture of the time and providing the foundation on which the early church built. Women were incorporated on equal terms into the body of believers. They were not only considered able to learn but many of them played a major role in the expansion of the church.

The bulk of the book examines in detail the NT teaching on women and marriage, relations between marriage partners, the role of women in worship, and the role of women in church offices. Of particular interest is Dr. Hurley's exegesis of *1 Cor. 11* in which he sees Paul as teaching that women did not need to wear veils providing they had long hair which they kept pinned up. He also provides an answer to the current view that headship in the NT does not refer to authority but to origin or source of life.

The main conclusion of this book can be briefly summarised: the NT teaches the 'appointive headship' of men both in marriage and in the church. The book closes with some examples of how the basic NT principles might be applied in the modern situation. The author takes the view that women should be free to play a full part in public worship and even to engage in preaching and teaching providing they do not adopt the authoritative role of the elders. This is a carefully and sympathetically written book which calls for thoughtful and prayerful reading before its thesis is either glibly accepted

or impatiently rejected.

Mr. Clark, a Catholic who runs an interdenominational Christian community in Ann Arbor, Michigan, has produced a massive and widely-acclaimed treatment of the roles of men and women in the light of Scripture and of the social sciences. After a careful survey of the scriptural teaching he concludes that, although the details of the NT teaching are not always clear, a broad role difference between men and women underlies the specific injunction of the NT (but he points out that the NT teaching about Christian character and Christian love is much more important!).

The next part of the book assesses the validity of the scriptural teaching for defining Christian life and demonstrates that it is unified, authoritative and clearly supported by Christian tradition. The third part of the book discusses the applicability of the scriptural teaching in contemporary society and, making extensive use of the findings of the social sciences, argues that it is not only possible but also desirable to adapt the NT teaching to the circumstances of the modern environment: the sexual differentiation of the human race has not changed with the passage of time. The concluding part develops a sketch for how Christians should approach the roles of men and women in the midst of the contemporary situation. This is the most thorough Christian treatment of the whole issue of the roles of men and women that is available and those who dislike its conclusions will need to bring equal industry, erudition and spirituality to convince us that it is not on the right lines.
Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education



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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The February question

I have recently had occasion to study some of what are commonly called the 'hard sayings' of our Lord. These fall into two categories: those which are hard to understand and those which are all too easy to understand but hard to accept and obey. Would any reader care to indicate what he/she regards as the 'hardest' saying in either of these two categories?

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

For me the answer for the saying most hard to understand are His words: 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore . . . ' (Matt. 28:18). And that because of the colossal opposition to the gospel in extreme Moslem, etc., lands; and also because of all the contrary incidents that sometimes occur in connection with the Lord's work, and from which not even whole-time evangelists and missionaries are exempt. This is well illustrated by Dr. Brian Tatford in his *L'Eau Vive Story* (Echoes of Service),

pp.100-4. In the midst of his examples he says: 'Being a Christian worker provides no immunity from the "whys?" of life.' And neither was Paul (2 Cor. 11:24-29). But why, in view of the Lord's authority?

Regarding the other question (easily understood but hard to practise) my answer is: the exhortations in general given for would-be followers of the Lord in His 'sermon on the mount'; and, in particular, the words: 'Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life . . . ' (Matt. 6:25-34). One's enemies are not always around to love, but the concern to preserve a reasonable life standard for one's self, and any dependants, is ever with us when it might be so easy to take the faithless and morally doubtful way out.


Mr. L. L. Fox replies:

My mind went to the Lord's reply to the question as to which is the great commandment in the Law: 'You shall love the Lord your God — You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' I -

recalled, too, our Lord's thrice stated command to us to love one another. John showed how crucial is obedience to this command, by his criterion: 'If some one says, "I love God", and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen' (NASB). Paul wrote 'Owe nothing to anybody except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law.'


Peter wrote 'Above all, keep fervent on your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.' In the light of the above testimonies, not least the last, I take as the hardest saying of the Lord to accept and obey that about forgiving a brother's sinning against one, till seventy times seven (Mat. 18:21,22). This reply of the Lord to Peter reflects the quintessence of a Christ-like spirit (Luke 23:34). Remembrance of failure to forgive is too painful for further words.

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CORRESPONDENCE

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Holidays in France

From Mr. Peter Farley

Dear Editor,

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.

Last year I was able to help several hundred British Christians by supplying the names and addresses of French churches. I shall be happy to help your readers again in this way, if they would care to tell me the area where they will be staying, and enclose a stamped, addressed **foolscap** envelope.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Farley

General Secretary, France Mission Trust, The Old Chapel, Chapel Lane, Minchinhampton, Glos. GL6 9DL

James St. Church, Oxford Centenary

From Mr. A. H. Ford

Dear Sir,

In connection with the centenary of the above church on 19th November 1982, we wish to compile a history of the assembly. We would therefore be grateful to any of your readers who may have relevant information, personal, printed or pictorial, if they would contact us. Details of the Praise and Thanksgiving programme will be supplied when available.

Yours faithfully,

on behalf of the assembly

A. H. Ford

Addresses:- Secretary, J. Thomson, 44 Norreys Road, Cumnor, Oxford, tel: Cumnor 2322.

Treasurer: A. H. Ford, 3 Ashlong Road, Headington, Oxford, tel: Oxford 66676.

A Cambridge Anniversary

From Dr. R. P. Gordon

Dear Mr. Coad,

It is now fifty years since the assembly at Panton Hall here in Cambridge began meeting in the present premises. To mark this fact, and more especially to give thanks for what God has done through this centre of witness in the intervening period, we have decided to hold a conference on June 12th of this year. The two speakers whom we have invited for the occasion are Dr. F. A. Tatford, who has served for a number of years as a trustee of Panton, and Prof. David Gooding, one of our distinguished old boys.

We should be very glad to hear from old members and friends, especially if they are likely to want further details nearer the time.

With Christian greetings,

Yours sincerely,

Robert Gordon

31, St. Laurence Road, Foxton, Cambridge. CB2 6SF

Is Revival Possible?

From Mr. Nigel Rankine

Dear Mr. Coad,

My reading of **The Brethren Today** by G. Brown and B. Mills convinces me that the average English assembly today is situated in an urban area, has fewer than sixty members, many of whom drive past another assembly on their way to the one of their choice, and is, of its own admittance, not very effective at anything. Sadly, it seems that in many, particularly smaller, assemblies the lack of success in achieving either qualitative or quantitative growth over a growing span of years is replacing enthusiasm and thought of effectiveness with a spurious philosophy of faithfulness as the goal of Bible based believers and fellowships. The frustration that David Sims writes of has, in recent years, not only caused many to leave Brethren fellowships altogether, but has also contributed to a significant re-allocation of members among local assemblies. There has been a noticeable drift from assem-

blies where, as Brian Mills puts it, 'a maintenance complex' exists, to those with a more dynamic understanding of the will and power of the Holy Spirit. Thus the polarisation among local fellowships that already exists is tragically thrust into yet sharper focus, with the active fellowships growing larger, while the generally less motivated ones become smaller and smaller and often less fruitful too.

It seems ironic that those who are supposed to be identifiable by their reflection of God's love, so frequently alienate each other and prefer to devote all their energies to their own pet projects and ventures to the exclusion of any thought of co-operation, united prayer and service or voluntary assistance among neighbouring assemblies. How long will we continue to hide behind a facade of doctrinal quibbles as an excuse for exclusivism and sheer laziness?

One encouragement lies in the fact that some assemblies are rediscovering a freshness and vitality in their relationship with the Lord himself as an indirect result of a decline in numbers or a breakdown of their long established **modus vivendi**. Worship, prayer and fellowship are thus enhanced but breaking the habit of faithfully maintaining meetings for meetings' sake is not easy to achieve. Sadly, the sense of endless strife or lack of achievement and progress can drive yet more away from even an assembly that is experiencing renewal and freshness in fellowship, thereby adding to the problem of ineffectiveness.

Surely, it makes more sense and is more in keeping with New Testament principles that, as the Holy Spirit leads, the industrious and Christ-glorifying assembly should take a lead in aiding the struggling and ineffective neighbouring fellowship rather than repeatedly watch its own numbers swell at the expense of that neighbouring church's witness to the glory and power of the Lord Jesus. If those who have the responsibility of leadership in our assemblies could only kneel together before the Lord and submit themselves to the Holy Spirit's influ-

ence with open hearts and minds, we might once again see the Lord's hand building up fellowships that truly glorify him, up and down our land and adding to their number those who are being saved.

Sincerely,
Nigel Rankine
Heathcotes, 37 Cogdeane Road,
Darby's Corner, Poole, Dorset.

Reception to the Lord's Supper

From Mr. Will Cochran

Dear Mr. Coad,

I wonder if Peter Cousins is strictly correct (Question 209, February issue) in holding that 'only those who are truly the Lord's should partake of the Lord's Supper' is a biblical precept.

Such a view is usually based on 1 Cor. 11:27ff., but these verses are addressed to the Church. It is members of the Church who have become weak and ill through partaking unworthily or in an unworthy manner. It is therefore when we come and fail to examine ourselves that we profane the body and blood of our Lord and bring upon ourselves the strictures of the passage.

Evidently, the Lord would welcome the unsaved, provided they come seekingly, sincerely and worshipping as best they know how: but is displeased when His own children come with carnal, critical, or other unworthy feelings. And although I have quoted from the RSV, the AV is seen to agree: 'unworthily' is an adverb.

I think it was Mr. Ellison who pointed out that the only specific case of an unbeliever coming to repentance in a Christian meeting, mentioned in the Bible, was at a worship service!

Yours sincerely,

Will Cochran

9 Hillside, Greystones, Co. Wicklow,
Eire.

From Mr. John Knipe

Dear Mr. Cousins,

Thank you for your answer to Question 209 in this month's **Harvester**. I wonder if the experience of our assembly would be of interest to your readers.

We are a young assembly and have only had our chapel three years. It is a somewhat boisterous place teeming with young people, many of them brand new Christians, and mainly 'one off' from non-Christian homes.

At the breaking of bread we have 'no policeman at the door' (to use the phrase of the late Harold St. John), although we have a few of the 'boys in blue' in the fellowship! Two brethren, one of whom is an overseer, welcome

folk as they come and nobody is 'tackled'. From time to time, one of the overseers will read appropriate scriptures and explain gently how wrong it is to break bread if you are an unbeliever. At some stage, not always immediately, a very informal and low key visit is made to these lovely folk at their home by an overseer and we have always been welcomed and in each case where it has not been found that the people were in fact already Christians, they have been led to the Lord there and then with such ease that it is almost unbelievable.

Thank you for all the thought you put into 'Question and Answer'.

Yours sincerely,

In Jesus name

John Knipe

Bridge Farm House, 190 Deyes Lane,
Maghull, Merseyside. L31 9AW

Financial Support of Evangelists

From Mr. Peter Jones

Dear Mr. Coad,

Mr. Burton's letter (p.16, Feb. 1982) comments on what seems to be a serious defect in our allocation of financial support. I have heard it said that support of foreign missionaries in the past had diverted some funds which would have been more properly used in replacing some of the 'tin tabernacles' by premises which would be more attractive to those whom we wish to reach. However, my own observation does not lead me to think that many missionaries working overseas are lavishly supported. It may be that we are spending too much on ourselves and our own concerns. If so, are we being less than honest? Our material possessions, together with our time and any abilities we may have, are not owned by us outright but are entrusted to us by the Giver of them all to be used as we conscientiously believe he would have us do. He will ask us about our stewardship sooner or later.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Jones

59 Westfield Avenue, Deanshanger,
Milton Keynes. MK19 6LH

From Mr. Phil Game

Dear Mr. Coad,

Mr. Douglas Burton has no need to wonder about the financial support of evangelists (February **Harvester**, p.16). We are clearly not supporting these commended workers as we should. Whether the establishment of yet another organisation designed to look after them and help to provide for their support is the answer to the problem at

this stage remains doubtful, at least in my own thinking.

Surely the answer lies in a radical re-assessment of the way in which all commended workers are supported by the assemblies. Mr. Burton mentions those in other churches who are comparatively well provided for and we perhaps need to learn from the principles which they employ in determining the level of salary or stipend.

First, it is generally assumed or agreed that the congregation being served by the minister/pastor pays the bills. This is beginning to be practised in some assemblies who are employing their own full-time workers but the principle is still very foreign (and I suspect too expensive!) for most assemblies. Although we regularly and willingly spend large sums to ensure our own comfort in the churches we attend we are quite content to give relatively small sums to commended workers, be they missionaries overseas or workers at home. We clearly need to be more realistic in how much we give to the Lord for disbursement among commended workers and those entrusted with the responsibility of the distribution of those funds must be realistic about living costs and expenses for itinerant workers.

Is it too unrealistic to suggest that an assembly which demonstrates sufficient confidence in a brother and/or sister to commend them to full-time work for the Lord should seriously consider their full-time support? Have we not too often sent forth workers, reminding them that 'God will provide', when we have been reluctant, or unwilling, to be the ones through whom God does provide?

Yours sincerely,

Phil Game

9 Pine Avenue, Parkstone, Poole,
Dorset. BH12 4AG

Church of Occult Science

From Mr. Stanley Linton

Dear Mr. Coad,

Some of your readers, particularly in the London area, may be aware of the 'Church of Occult Science' which is looking for opportunities to set up occult centres. These are shops which sell black magic items, ouija boards, etc. and also offer a counselling service.

Back in September our local newspaper carried a front page article announcing that within a month an occult shop was to be opened in Sidcup High Street — and you can imagine just how we all felt. Here was a devastating challenge to the very fundamentals of our faith and something which could bring untold damage to so many and in particular to

young people. We felt somehow that we had to do something and the following Sunday as we met around the Lord's Table we signed a petition which we sent to the Mayor and copied it to the local press and our MP — Mr. Ted Heath.

The following week we had a phone call from a local minister asking if the churches in the district could meet with us in Birkbeck Chapel to pray together that this evil might be restrained. We were delighted to do so and on two occasions we 'joined forces' in this way — and they were times of great blessing and a very real awareness of the Lord. The local press became very interested and a lot of comment and letters were printed — and we were even invited to put our point of view on the BBC TV.

The occult shop did not open in October or November and then it was announced that it would open on Christmas Day, as a direct affront to the very heart of the Christian message. We held our breath and wondered and our faith was very much put to the test. It did not! — and the explanation given was that Sidcup was not yet 'ready' — and there was a complaint about 'warring' Christians getting together!

This week (January 20th) we had yet another meeting in Birkbeck Chapel with the local churches to thank the Lord for the evidence of His Power and authority and to praise Him for His goodness to us. The threat remains, but we face the future with increased confidence in the effectiveness of prayer.

Why this letter? Perhaps just to encourage others that we live in days when our faith has to be seen to be real and that we all have a duty and privilege to fight against the forces of evil in our midst and to believe that in the Name of Jesus there is authority and power today — as there was when He was here on earth.

Yours sincerely,

Stanley Linton

27 Selborne Road, Sidcup, Kent. DA14 4QP

An Influence for the Bad?

From Mrs. A. M. Rendle-Short, MB, ChB, BAQ

Dear Sir,

I was interested to read the article entitled 'Tomorrow's Generation' by Dr. A. G. Newell. But what has happened to the young adult generation of today?

The name of D. H. Lawrence has been elevated to a very special place in English Literature of the Twentieth Century. Our young adults read him avidly, many of them professing Christians, and by

the social changes he has been ordained the apostle of human relationships. I am aware that a good case can be made for what would appear to be his honesty and frankness. It is argued that he has successfully exposed the false prudery of Victorian sexual mores. There is his undeniable literary skill, although I suspect he would number among those whose writing Professor Lewis describes as 'rustic, naïf, and unbuttoned' (C. S. Lewis in *Preface to Paradise Lost*).

As one who has raised a large family, and who in general medical practice has seen the social devastation wrought by the so-called liberation of situational ethics, I believe it is very important for mature Christians, especially those who are parents or teachers, to courageously come to terms with this author. It is necessary that his writing and his underlying philosophy be brought into the searchlight of Holy Scripture, the very Word of God. For Lawrence himself said, when writing on 'Why the Novel Matters' (published posthumously in Phoenix, 1936):

We should ask for no absolutes, or absolute. Once and for all and for ever, let us have done with the ugly imperialism of any absolute. There is no absolute good, there is nothing absolutely right.

There emerges the dark sadness of his inner anguish and despair which he relentlessly projects into the minds and lives of his readers. For unless reading teaches men how to live, it teaches them nothing.

John Middleton Murry was one of his early closest friends. Writing on 'The Fundamental Equivocation of Lawrence' he has this to say:

Mr. Lawrence is set apart from the novelists who are his contemporaries by the vehemence of his passion. In the time before the war (1914-1918) we should have distinguished him by other qualities; a sensitive and impassioned apprehension of natural beauty, for example, or an understanding of the strange blood bonds that unite human beings, or an exquisite discrimination in the use of language. All these things Mr. Lawrence once had, in a time when he thrilled us with his genius. Now they are dissolved in the acid of a burning and vehement passion. These qualities no longer delight us; they have been pressed into the service of another power; they walk in bondage and livery... He is an outlaw of

modern English Literature. He is the most interesting figure in it. But he must be shown no mercy.

And again, while Katherine Middleton Murry and her husband were staying with the Lawrences in Cornwall:

He seemed to Katherine and me like a man possessed, now by an angel, now by a devil. Both were beyond our comprehension; but to the angel we responded. The devil tortured us beyond endurance. It was pain to see him so transformed and transfigured by the paroxysms of murderous hatred of his wife, of us, of all mankind, that swept him. They would leave him white, bowed, spent, silent and shuddering.

Lawrence's book *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was completed in 1928. Thirty-two years were to pass before its publication. It was not until 1957 when the law relating to Obscene Publications was somewhat modified, that Penguin Books felt they could publish and take the risk of prosecution. The result was as anticipated. The Director of Public Prosecutions brought an indictment against Penguin Books, and the trial was heard before Mr. Justice Byrne at the Old Bailey in October 1960. It was a test case. The hearing was a travesty of justice, national morality, and literary scholarship. In the opening address for the prosecution the court was reminded of the words of Mr. Justice Devlin in a similar trial eight years earlier. This was **The Queen against Baxter and Others** concerning a book called **The Image and the Search**. Mr. Justice Devlin said:

Of course there is a right to express oneself either in politics or in literature. People who hold strong political views are often anxious to say exactly what they think, irrespective of any restraint, and so too a creative artist naturally desires a complete freedom within which to express his talents or his genius. But he is a member of a community, and like any other member of the community he is under the same obligation not to do harm, either mentally or physically or spiritually. If there is a conflict in an artist or a writer between his desire for self expression and the sense that morality is fundamental to the well-being of the community, then it is morality that must prevail.

Mr. Justice Byrne duly summed up in the case of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*,

and implicit in his direction to the jury was an earnest appeal for the exercising of the greatest discretion and wisdom. But the warning was not heeded. The hearing had lasted a full week and the jury, the most ordinary of men and women, were bemused. They had become spellbound and brainwashed by the erudition of the galaxy of academic and literary stars, outstanding figures in the political and publishing world, which made up the long line of expert witnesses — thirty-six in all — who were called for the defence. They, with Lawrence, rejected the sour severity of absolutes. Lady Chatterley was proclaimed 'not guilty' and given her freedom. The floodgates for erotic literature were flung open. Now, twenty years later, the nation suffers the consequences. Our high school students and young adults routinely read Lawrence and yield allegiance unawares.

Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind. The spectre of social change is all around us. A situational ethic is the norm. The institution of legally contracted marriage is being radically challenged. Disease ravishes our young women. Even our Christian homes are torn apart because the gap in values between parent and child has become a gulf. How can we stem the tide? What can we do? How have we failed? 'While men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.'

The same pattern of social change is emerging in other western cultures. Some fifteen years ago in Queensland, Australia, a Christian mother whom I knew, was diligent in reading her children's school books; set books, recommended books, and library source books. Her findings disturbed her deeply. The children in schools were encouraged to read a wide range of Twen-

tieth Century literature full of erotica, blasphemy and violence. A typical 'junior' book for children aged thirteen was Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*. For every Christian parent this piece of writing should be obligatory reading so that they may satisfy themselves of its fitness for their own children, and let them ask if it is on the reading lists and in the school libraries. But Lawrence is less gross than these others; less gross, more subtle, more deadly. His friend has called him an outlaw of modern English Literature, to be shown no mercy. He indeed is the most sad apostate angel of them all.

Yours faithfully,

Angel Rendle-Short

132 Lauderdale Mansions, Maida Vale, London, W9.

Source material:

Trial of Lady Chatterley Published Penguins 1961.

John Middleton Murry: A review of Women in Love and The Rainbow (The fundamental equivocation of Women in Love.)

Frank Kermode: Lawrence and the Apocalyptic Types.

C. S. Lewis: Preface to Paradise Lost. 20th Century Literary Criticism edited by David Lodge.

'Many pebbles on the beach'

From Mr. C. F. Fraser-Smith

Dear Mr. Editor,

May I thank you most warmly for your very interesting and thought provoking editorials?

This month's cover (February) has a photo by Stephen Coad of young life and is captioned 'Tomorrow's Generation'. In your editorial you deal with 'Tomorrow's Church'.

The young are 'Tomorrow's Church'. You emphasise the need to stop and think about the future, and stress the need to detach ourselves from the pressures of the time-consuming duties of running our churches and ask ourselves 'What are we seeking to accomplish and why?' Have we a continual and meaningful belief and progressive outreach, as the Master had?

Or, as the years go by, do we become humdrum and cosily settle down to making outward appearances increasingly important, determined to battle to maintain the form. If so, the local church becomes shallow and ceases to be an effective forum and vehicle for the spiritual quest in our time. The stand-still or decline of our present churches will not be halted or reversed unless we 'stop and detach ourselves', frequently re-assessing our structure and role in contemporary society.

'The Kingdom of God does not consist of talk, but of vital action' (1 Cor. 4:20). How we talk! We have a surplus of meetings and conferences. We produce endless solid, repetitive doctrinal articles. We fill a host of books with religious words. Truly 'What are we accomplishing and why?' The Master's commands are 'Go . . .'; 'Do . . .'; 'Live it . . .'. Vital outreach is the key — 'Go into the byways . . .'. Any form of monastic seclusion, through being wrapped up in church over-organisation, developing one's own religiosity or academic enjoyment, is either escapism or selfishness. It is not the life the Master lived. It is not the New Testament faith of Paul. It's our action now that produces 'Tomorrow's Church'.

Yours sincerely,

Chas. Fraser-Smith

Dale Cottage, Bratton Fleming, Barnstaple, Devon.

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NEWS PAGE



Bolivia

All that Bolivia means to most people is political instability, extreme poverty and authoritarian government. But news has arrived recently of a new Christian outreach there. An associate staff worker of the International Federation of Evangelical Students, Felicity Houghton, who pioneered student work in Chile, has arrived in La Paz, the capital of Bolivia, with a view to helping Christian students in their witness to Jesus Christ. Students are affected by the instability of the nation, studies are interrupted and uncertainty hangs over all their hopes. This university work in Bolivia calls for prayer as there are certainly spiritual battles to be fought there.

Holiday Activities

Gospel Literature Outreach have an extensive programme of Easter and summer crusades. Crusades will be held over Easter in Paris, Italy and at Folkestone, Kent. During July and August teams will be working with assemblies/missionaries in various locations of France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Holland, Eire and the UK. Team members are needed to help with literature distribution, open-air witness and special events (e.g. film evenings). If the team member speaks the relevant language then he/she will use it in door to door visiting. Daily Bible teaching is given on each Crusade, together with sessions of group prayer. For continental crusades there is a lower age-limit of 17. Team members need to be in good health and there is no upper age limit. Most crusades last for two weeks. Team

members are responsible for their travelling expenses as well as costs for food and accommodation (these are approximately £20.00 per week, depending on the location). For full programme and application form including the conditions governing the activity, contact the GLO Centre, 78 Muir Street, Motherwell, ML1 1BN, Scotland, or telephone Clive Govier at Folkestone (0303) 43363.

FEBA Radio is organising Operation Compass, an annual sailing cruise on the East Coast for young people aged 14 and over. The 6-berth sailing sloops, based at Maldon, are able to range from the Thames and Medway in the south to Orford Haven in the north. There are miles of sheltered water as well as open sea passages. Novices are welcome provided they can swim: more advanced tuition is available for those who have some experience. Opportunity is taken to relate Bible teaching to the practical everyday needs of the crew and FEBA Radio staff will also be present. Details are available from Operation Compass, FEBA Radio, 45 High Street, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey. KT15 1TJ.

Missions

Tradition dies hard and even many readers of *The Harvester* persist in thinking of missionaries as pinkish-grey. But a meeting of the *Missions Commission of the World Evangelical Fellowship* held early in 1982 was given some remarkable news about the number of missionaries from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania. Since 1972 this has grown 348% from 3404 cross-cultural workers to at least

15,249. The Conference was concerned with two major themes: training missionaries and partnership between western missions and non-western missions. Among other concerns expressed were the importance of stimulating spiritual development, prayer and holy boldness in facing human opposition and satanic forces and the importance of conserving present personnel for the purpose of producing an increased percentage of long-term missionaries.

The Gospel Fellowship Trust of India is now in the 28th year of its ministry. Over the years it has made a progressively increasing contribution to the spread of the Gospel and the planting of 'assemblies' in new areas, particularly in North India. It has also helped to strengthen the work in South India. Gifts sent to the Gospel Fellowship Trust of India (12 Second Avenue, Harrington Road, Chetput, Madras 600 031) may be passed on to about 220 commended workers serving full time in various parts of India.

New Zealand

Following our reference to Dr. Murray Harris in the November issue, we received a letter from Mr. Neville Taylor of Auckland pointing out that, far from being a member of 'the' assembly in Auckland, Dr. Harris was a member of Eden Chapel, Auckland, which is one of 38 assemblies in that city of 800,000 people. We are happy to publish this correction.

Papal Visit

The Evangelical Alliance has approved a statement concerning the Papal visit. The

statement affirms: 'That we believe in freedom of worship and therefore the right of the Pope to engage in a pastoral visit to those who belong to his communion. Historically, evangelical Christians of several traditions have fought to achieve liberty for the individual and for religion. We would in no way wish to diminish our commitment to freedom, but wish instead actively to maintain and safeguard it. That the Pope should be welcomed to the United Kingdom with appropriate protocol.' It recognises: 'The commendable personal qualities of the present Pope and his influence for peace in the world, particularly in his own country of Poland. The evidence of the renewing power of the Holy Spirit within some areas of the Roman Catholic Church.'

The Evangelical Alliance also identifies fundamental differences between biblical truth and Roman Catholic teaching which cannot be lightly dismissed. In particular these differences relate to the nature of authority, ascribed by the Roman Catholic Church not only to the Scriptures but to Church traditions and in particular to the Papal office. There is also important disagreement concerning the nature of salvation since evangelicals reject the significance given by Roman Catholicism to the external rite of baptism and church membership as a means of salvation. There is further cause for dissent regarding the practice of worship. While evangelicals welcome certain recent developments in Roman Catholic worship, they continue

to regret certain aspects that have not changed, such as the mediatorial role of Mary and the sacerdotal office of the priesthood in the service of the Mass.

The Evangelical Alliance statement urges evangelicals: not to engage in negative counter-demonstrations to the Papal visit. To treat those in the Roman Catholic Church with love, respect, and courtesy. To listen with genuine openness to those who speak of renewal and reformation within Roman Catholicism and to welcome the work of God wherever it is to be discerned. To engage in a positive proclamation of the fundamental truths of the Gospel of all people.

Release Publications have produced a special evangelistic leaflet with the Pope's visit in mind. Called 'Religion — is there anything in it?', it aims to comment not on the Pope himself but on the different kinds of religion which his visit will no doubt highlight. The 4 page format leaflet includes a section on responding to God in faith and is available from as little as 1p a copy. Free samples are available from Release Publications, 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester M4 4DN.

Poland

One of the encouraging things about the crisis in Poland has been the way in which Christians around the world have responded by sending medical and food shipments. The secretary of the *European Baptist Federation* led a team to Poland in January with food and medical supplies. Baptists had by then contributed one million Deutschmarks for aid. *Lutheran Churches* in Norway remembered Poland and her people at services at the end of 1981. In addition to sending food, Norwegian churches are raising money to print one million Bibles for distribution in Poland. The *Salvation Army*, early in December, sent a 20 ton truck with \$150,000 worth of essential food and supplies. *World Vision International* has responded to the emergency with an appeal for two million dollars, to be distributed through Poland's Protestant Church Council. The relief arm of the *National Council of Churches* in the USA appealed for \$750,000.

Radio

More news has now become available of the effect of the attempted coup in the Seychelles upon the work of FEBA. Following the shutdown on Wednesday, November 25, 1981, the return to full schedule was slow because FEBA broadcasts were interfering with Seychelles defence force communications. By December 14, permission had been given to recommence broadcasting during daylight hours — 42% of the usual schedule. By the end of the year broadcasting had been extended to 78% of schedule. On January 20, 1982, permission was given for broadcasts to extend to 94%, only Tamil and Sinhala to Sri Lanka and South India being affected. By Wednesday, January 27, all programmes had been restored.

Sadly and inevitably, there has been an effect on audiences — many listeners were saddened by the loss of programmes. But the budget has also suffered. Programme suppliers whose programmes could not be broadcast were as a result not liable to pay their share of the station's running costs. So FEBA lost thousands of pounds as a result of the attempted coup — an unexpected and largely unpublicised consequence.

Youth

February brought news of appalling damage to a Church of England school in Toxteth, Liverpool, an area of considerable urban deprivation. There were also reports of a disturbing increase in heroin addiction especially among unemployed adolescents. Meanwhile, thousands of Christian young people in twenty centres up and down the country were being challenged to Christian renewal and proclamation. Not 'space invaders' but 'earth invaders' is what Christians should be, preaching the Gospel with their lives and their love as well as their words. The eight-week discipleship programme — final meeting in the Westminster Central Hall, London, on April 3 — is sponsored by British Youth for Christ, Crusaders, CYFA and Scripture Union. Local churches reported great interest among young people and a new sense of commitment.

Home Calls

Ernest John Paintin, on November 2 1981, one week before his 95th birthday. Saved while young in Kilburn, he and his wife lived in Maidenhead from 1911 where they met with Christians at Parkside Hall. Besides being active in Sunday School and young people's work, he had a great interest in missionary work overseas, giving up his responsibility as treasurer of the assembly missionary fund only after reaching his 89th birthday. His first wife, Edith May, died in 1935 but in 1938 he married again; his second wife, Rose, had for some eleven years been matron at one of the Muller's Homes in Bristol. They both retained a keen interest in the work there until her death in 1976.

Military service in France, 1916-19, was the only break in a working life spent in the Chief Engineer's department of the Great Western Railway at Paddington. Retirement was followed by 35 years of preoccupation with the Lord's service. Lovingly cared for by his only daughter Ruth and her husband, it was only in his last few months that increasing weakness led to his entering hospital. Even in great old age he continued to proclaim his love for the Saviour and his complete assurance of Christ's soon coming again. Many former pupils from Sunday School and Bible Class, now themselves parents and grandparents, remember him with respect and affection.

Mrs. Winifred Proudfoot, on January 4, aged 76. Associated with believers in Hebron Hall, Carlisle for 58 years, she had

moved first into the Eventide Home at Southport and more recently into a home in the Manchester area. Faithful in attendance at church gatherings and (with her late husband) much given to hospitality. Prayer is requested for her two daughters.

George Ritchie Rice, CMG, OBE, on February 14, 1982, at Bexhill, aged 100. For many years Hon. Treasurer and Chairman of London Council of SIM. A fuller notice will appear in a later issue.

Mrs. Helen Russell, on January 26. She was associated with assemblies in Paisley, Blackburn, Glasgow (Summerfield Hall) and for the last 18 years in Dumbarton. Her advice, encouragement and example will be missed by a wide circle of friends and especially by her husband Tom and their family in Milngavie and Inverness.

Query

The notice of the death of Mr. Harold Wildish (February 1982) included the quotation: 'Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last.' Dr. A. G. Henderson of 31 Compton Avenue, Leagrave, Luton, LU4 9AX, Beds. will be grateful to anybody who can send him the rest of this poem, preferably with the name of the author and the place where it was originally published.

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Cartsbridge Evangelical Church, Busby:
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Mr. Robert A. MacPhie,
Greendales, 23 Humble Road,
Eaglesham, Glasgow, G76 0LX.
Tel: Eaglesham 2976.

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund
Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during February amounted to £627.03.

Missionaries' Children's Fund
29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund during December and January were £792.50 and £345.27 respectively.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies for the Fund received during February amounted to £14,496.13.

PRAYER LIST

Blackburn, A. G.:
Exmouth 3; Brixham 4;
Budleigh Salterton 6; Bristol 9;
Woodbury 18; Herne Bay Court
(Counties Conference) 26-30.

Campbell, B.:
Falmouth 1-14; Pembroke
17-27; Cardiff 28; Falmouth
29-30.

Clifford, D. L.:
Nassau, Bahamas 1-12; Marsh
Harbour, Bahamas 17-29.

Gillham, S. A.:
Clitheroe Crusade 1-4; Yeovil 6;
Stroud Chapel, Bournemouth
7; Thorncombe 9; West Moors
10-11; Charminster Chapel,
Bournemouth 13, 20; Winton
Holiday Club 13-17; Drummond
Hall, Boscombe 18-25; C.E.W.
Conference 26-30.

Grimsey, A. W.:
C.A.W.G. 'The Alliance',
Norwich 7; Mattishall, Norfolk
13.

Iliffe, D. J.:
Hong Kong 1-20, camps and
training programmes;
Littlehampton 22; Petworth 25;
Herne Bay Court 26-30.

Loader, G.:
Israel 12-26.

Lowther, G.K.:
Grimsby, Lincs. and S.
Humbly Grove 1, 2, 6-16, 27-30;
Barnsley 3, 4; Nuneaton 17-22;
Loughborough 20; Sheffield 24,
25.

Phillips, C.:
Chesham 1, 29; Hare Street,
Harlow 4, 20, 27; Hemel
Hempstead 8, 15; Folkestone
Road, Walthamstow 9;
Boreham Wood 11; Chingford
11, 18; High Wycombe 14, 21;
Southall 22; Woking 25.

Short, S.S.:
Bury St. Edmunds 3-5; Nailsea
6, 27; Gosforth 9; Stockton-on-
Tees 11, 14; Redcar area 17-22;
Sheffield 24-25; Weston-super-
Mare 29.

Stringer, D.:
Rugby 1-3; Bournemouth 4-27;
Warwick Area 28-30.

Tatford, F.A.:
Bournemouth 17-23; Bognor 24,
25.

Tryon, G. C.:
Saffron Waldon 4; Stalham 7;

Cambridge 11; Fleet 13-18;
Plumstead 14, 24, 28.

Whitern, R.:
Victoria, Courtney and Alberni,
British Columbia 1-30.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Ayr Bible Readings:
8-14 May 1982, Saint James
Church, 1 Prestwick Road, Ayr
(Near Tam's Brig.). Bible
Readings 4.00 p.m.; Ministry
7.15 p.m. Epistle to Romans.
Speakers: A. Leckie and A.
Gamble. (Full details from the
Secretary, T. H. Cooper, The
Knowe, 104 Midton Road, Ayr,
KA7 2TP).

Bournemouth:
Bournemouth & District Annual
Convention, Strouden Park
Chapel, Woodbury Avenue,
Strouden Park, Bournemouth.
May 3-6. Speakers: Clifford
Phillips and G. J. Polkinghorne.
Morning Bible Readings
10.45 a.m.-12 noon. Evening
Sessions 7.30-9.00 p.m.
Wednesday afternoon 3.30-4.30
p.m. Full details from V. G.
Joseph, 13 Banks Road,
West Way, Bournemouth BH9
3EF.



Alec Motyer
Bible readings
First week

Keswick Convention

Countries represented at Keswick in 1981: Afghanistan, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Burma, Canada, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Eire, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jersey, Kenya, Lebanon, Lesotho, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tanzania, Tobago, Uganda, Uruguay, USA, West Germany, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

10-17 July 17-24 July – Family Week

Details from: The Secretary, Keswick Convention, 25 Camden Road, London NW1 9LN.

Chesham:

The Gospel Hall, Station Road.
Ministry Meeting 7.00 p.m.
Theme: The Sermon on the
Mount (Matthew 6:16-34).
Speaker: H. R. Ruston (Croxley
Green).

Croxley Green:

Fuller Hall, Fuller Way.
Meetings, April 9 at 3.15 p.m.
Speakers: B. Osborne & S.
Downs; and April 24 at 7.00
p.m. Speaker: A. Carew.

Grimsby:

Wellowgate Chapel, 67
Wellowgate. Missionary Rally,
Saturday April 3 at 7.30 p.m.
Speaker: K. Andrewartha, MA.
Subject: 'The S.G.M. in Eastern
Europe'.

Kirkcaldy:

Hebron Evangelical Church,
Hayfield Road. Annual
Missionary Conference,
Saturday April 10 at 2.30 p.m.
Speakers: S. Brown,
Lesmahagow; J. Munro,
Dunfermline; L. Velez, Bolivia.

Largs:

Netherhall Bible Readings, 3-7
May 1982. Conducted by Albert
Leckie (Airdrie). Subject: 1st
Epistle to Timothy. Enquiries to:
The Manager, Netherhall,
Largs, Ayrshire, KA30 8RP.

Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall.
Meeting, April 17, 6.30-8.30
p.m. Speaker: M. Jones
(Luton). 'Saviour of the World'
(Genesis 41: 37-57).

Musselburgh:

Gospel Hall, 96 New Street.
Annual Conference, Saturday,
April 24 at 3.30 p.m. Speakers:
A. P. Foster, Gourrock; J.
Lightbody, Uddingston; J.
Murdoch, Ayr.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

St. James United Reformed
Church, Northumberland Road.

Annual Conference, April 9 at
2.30 and 6.00 p.m. April 10 at
6.30 p.m.; April 12 at 2.30 and
6.00 p.m. Speakers: A. J. Last;
D. Newell; J. Riddle (not
Friday).

Nuneaton:

Manor Court Rooms, Manor
Court Road. Ministry. Monday
through Thursday, April 19-22
at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: G. K.
Lowther.

Plymouth:

Ford Park Hall, Ford Park Road.
Annual Meetings, Friday, April
9 at 2.45 and 6.00 p.m.

Rockhampton:

Armstrong Hall, Chapel Street,
Thornbury. Annual May Day
Conference, Monday May 3 at
3.15 and 6.15 p.m. Speakers:
B. Osborne and E. Parmenter.

Sheffield:

Fitzwilliam Chapel, Fitzwilliam
Street. Annual Conference,
Saturday, April 24 at 3.00 and
6.00 p.m. Speakers: G. K.
Lowther and Dr. S. S. Short.

Southall, Middlesex:

Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Kingston
Road. Annual Conference,
Monday May 3. Ministry 3.00
p.m. Tea 4.45 p.m. Ministry
6.00 p.m. Speakers: J. B.
Hewitt (Chesterfield) and D.
Angell (Harrow). Mr. Hewitt will
continue in ministry on the
following three evenings May
4-6, at 8.00 p.m.

Southport, Merseyside:

Bethesda Chapel, 17 Aughton
Road. Weekend Conference,
Friday May 22-Monday May 24.
Speakers: John Riddle,
Cheshunt and Jim Last, Bridge
of Allan. Friday 7.45 p.m.,
Saturday 3.00 and 6.00 p.m.
(tea provided), Monday 7.45
p.m. John Riddle will be the
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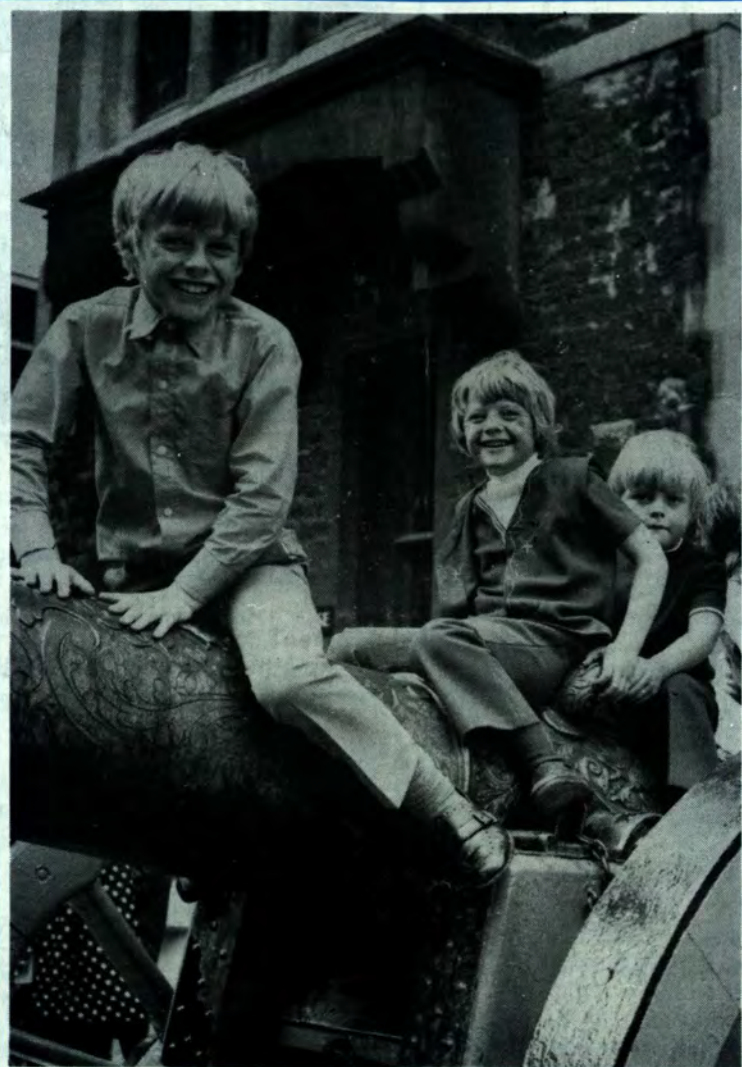
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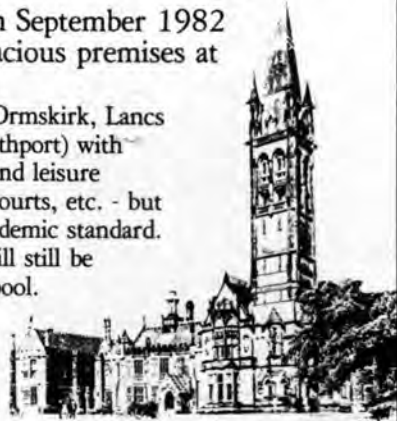
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INASMUCH . . .

'God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: . . . he went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.'

Somehow, despite all the failings of the Church, the example of its Lord and Head compels obedience. The Church has strayed in many by-paths, some of them bitterly at odds with all that her Master was. Hard and unloving in pursuit of what she understands as the truth: sometimes corrupted to seek merely worldly power and gain: yet always she remains ill at ease when she contemplates a world of sordid sin and suffering. Somewhere, somehow, there arise voices to call her back to what her Master was and did: to remind her of her place and her behaviour as His representative here on earth. In this issue we are reminded in several features that the Gospel is not just a message — that it is also a life to be lived. To care for others is never easy, for we are incurably selfish (most of us) by nature: and we are hedged about by circumstances and duties that allow most of us little freedom of action or objective once we are launched upon our lives. It is for that reason that our activities to help alleviate the sorrows of oppressed men and women must be in partnership with each other. It is for that reason too that churches that in their corporate activities and outlook have no concern for the poor and the suffering are failing in ways that *Mat. 25:31-46* suggests may be unforgivable.

There are myriad needs, and myriad channels to meet some of those needs. The little work — unsung and often scarcely noticed — sometimes is lost, and heroic effort totally unknown (except to God). One such little work known to the editor is that of Care for Refugees and Immigrants, a little charity based in East London that through its one worker Barbara Holden tries to meet and relieve by advice and modest financial help some of the tragic cases of deprivation among immigrants — particularly women — who have through personal tragedies found themselves alone and destitute in a strange land. If any reader would like in a modest way to 'adopt' one such case, Barbara would be glad to hear from him or her (c/o Bow Mission, Merchant Street, London E3 4LY).

MOVED WITH COMPASSION

Brian Mills

The Executive Secretary of Decade of Evangelism challenges us as to how our Lord sees our present social state.

'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy', said God to Moses (*Exodus 33:19*). This may seem to imply that God was partial as to whom He extended His mercy, or on whom He would have compassion, as if for some there could be no compassion. However, God is not partial as some of us are. We tend to choose to whom we show compassion and care. We prefer to invest our time and effort in those with whom we have most in common, particularly within the family of God. Those of a different social stratum, educational achievement, class upbringing, professional attainment, racial background, denominational affiliation or doctrinal appreciation too often seem not to be included in our thinking when it comes to 'showing mercy'. But God is not like us, so we cannot judge His character and action by our own standards.

Christ's Compassion

The word 'compassion' is perhaps better understood as a combination of pity, sympathy and tenderheartedness; as a state of being deeply moved. Thus Jesus was moved with pity and sympathy when He saw the crowds — dejected, harassed, helpless and confused — like sheep without a shepherd (*Mat. 9:36*); when He came to them on the shore and healed their sick (*Mat. 14:14*); when He realized they had been with Him for three days and were now hungry and without food (*Mat. 15:32*); when He was confronted by a funeral procession, the chief mourner having lost the two people who meant most to her — her husband and now her son (*Luke 7:13*); and when He was faced with two blind men who called on Him for mercy and restoration of sight (*Mat.*

20:34). There was an expression of Christ's emotion as well as of God's mercy as He was faced with human need — He was moved with compassion. There was more than just a predetermined resolve. In His action there was a blending of God's character of love and justice, of His purity and perfection with His concern for those who were victims of impurity and imperfection. But He was not indiscriminate as illustrated in His response to the dying thieves at His crucifixion. He somehow perceived those whose hearts were right, whose motives were not in question, as the ones to whom He would show mercy. It was stark need which provoked Him to action. He seemed to distinguish that they had no presumption of rights when approaching the Messiah, no insistence that He had to do something, no frenetic fear that sought to twist His arm. In that sense He seemed to pick those to whom He showed mercy. He owed them nothing, but He gave them everything.

We do not read of Christ showing compassion to the religious of His day, and yet we would expect Him to do so. For them instead He had words of condemnation, of complaint to counter their high opinion of their supposed acts of kindness: 'I give tithes of all that I possess', 'Woe to you . . . you pay tithe . . . and have omitted . . . mercy and faith.' They loved to pray on street corners to be seen of men. 'Woe to you . . . you devour widows' houses and for a pretence make long prayer.' They had failed to do what God wanted of them. They had tolerated and even contributed to the injustices of the day. They had by neglect allowed human need to accumulate — unchecked and unchallenged. What would Christ have to say of us today? How He would chastise us for allowing the ills of our day to accumu-

late, as by default we allow so much of the Christian heritage of this nation to be eroded away! And, I wonder, what would He say of our excuses for personal and corporate aloofness? What would He think of our criticisms of those who do have a 'social conscience', who get their coats off in the political, moral and charitable fields? Of course, we may find ourselves unready to show Christ's compassion to the unlovely because we have failed to show His compassion to those who are already spiritually 'lovely', even if naturally they still have faults. Peter says 'All of you have unity of spirit, sympathizing (lit. having compassion) with one another, loving each other as brethren . . .' (*1 Pet. 3:8*).

Lessons from History

When we look at the history of the Church in Britain during the last two centuries, we see that many of our forebears, who are almost household names today, were unafraid to respond to human need as they saw it, despite the critics of their day. Since the awakening of Wesley's day and those of the last century, men and women, moved with compassion as by the Spirit of Christ, responded to the need all around them. People like William Wilberforce and Lord Shaftesbury, two of the most famous members of the Clapham Sect (nearly all of whom personally initiated schemes to meet human as well as spiritual need); Dr. Barnardo and Robert Raikes who did something for the waifs and strays of their day in the form of orphanages and schools; George Müller whose Bristol children's homes are still in existence. In *The Call to Seriousness*, Ian Bradley describes and analyzes the impact of evangelicals on the Victorian era. The effect that a few famous people, and the spirit that provoked their action, had on our countrymen a century ago is shown to be overwhelmingly significant in

making Britain what it became — a Christian nation. Lord Shaftesbury said once, 'I am essentially and from deep-rooted conviction an evangelical of the Evangelicals. I have worked with them constantly and I am satisfied that most of the great philanthropic movements of the century have sprung from them.' Bradley, commenting on this, goes on:

It was a reasonable claim. Most of the famous humanitarian ventures of the nineteenth century had Evangelical inspiration and leadership: Elizabeth Fry's work in prisons; Josephine Butler's crusade on behalf of prostitutes; Dr. Barnardo's mission to deprived children; Edward Rudolf's establishment of the Church of England's Children's Society for Waifs and Strays; and the movements which Shaftesbury himself led to reform the factory system, humanize the laws relating to lunatics, and establish decent housing for the working classes. The work of these and other evangelical pioneers helped to make philanthropy a major 'industry' in Victorian England and established a tradition of voluntary charitable activity which remains in the country to this day. It also pointed the way for Government action and so laid the foundations of the Welfare State.

Why did they do what they did? Were they just 'do gooders' patronizing the lower classes? Had they been spiritually misguided, neglectful of 'biblical truth'? By no means.

But above all, the evangelicals devoted themselves to 'good works' because they were profoundly moved by human want and suffering. Their evangelizing interests took them naturally into those places where humanity was at its least regenerate, into the prisons and brothels, the factories and slums. The cruelty and misery which they saw there angered and appalled them and resolved them to devote themselves to fighting for reforms and improvements (p. 120).

Today we have a few counterpart groups, mostly on an undenominational basis, whose work is little known. 'Care and Counsel' provide training and help for people involved in some kind of caring ministry, as well as direct help. The 'Shaftesbury Project' brings together evangelicals who have a desire for social action and is a fitting memorial to a pioneer social reformer. 'The Lydia

Fellowship', started by wives of MPs, stimulates the formation of women's prayer groups specifically to pray for the nation, its needs and decisions. Some group medical practices, composed of Christian physicians, have developed a ministry of spiritual healing alongside the more conventional medical method. There are others who provide rehabilitation help for drug addicts, ex-offenders, homosexuals. But among assemblies there is little or no interest in, or knowledge of, such activities. We seem not to want to know — as if such services are irrelevant for enlightened Christians.

If Christ were here

Today there is a need for a new breed of bold evangelicalism, that will cut adrift from the constrictions that conventional Christian understanding places upon its adherents; who will show no denominational partiality but be willing to embrace all who are truly in Christ; who will begin once again to be moved with real compassion for the masses of people who have no shepherd, who are confused by the breakdown in our way of life, threatened by unemployment, fearful of increasing political strife and frightened by possible nuclear conflagration; Christians who will know nothing except the compelling love of Christ in their hearts for people in need in body, mind and spirit, and the compassion of Christ in meeting that need.

If Christ were here in person today what would be the areas of His concern? The three million people who are unemployed, a high proportion of whom have been without jobs for over a year. The emptiness, loss of self-respect, depression, boredom, apathy and feeling of rejection are aspects of life that Christ through His people wants to overcome. He would be concerned about the breakdown in family life. He would be compassionate for those forced into divorce, for their children, for those whose lives become permanently scarred by the emotional and physical hurts and beatings. He would bring such His healing and His love. He wants to show that a family bound together in His love is something which brings Him pleasure. And He wants His people to develop and share with other families what a Christian family is to be like.

He would be moved with compassion for those trapped in the concrete jungles of our urban sprawls. The deprivation of the inner-city dwellers moves Him and He must be hurt that Christians are not moved with compassion for them. Not only does the inner-city dweller grow up

in a racially mixed, educationally inferior, socially over-stretched, physically violent climate, but also he lives in the midst of noise, fumes, dirt. He has little to remind him that there is a God who cares — few trees, birds, flowers, animals — nothing of the green freshness of a quiet country walk, where everything reminds one of a loving Creator. And the church buildings there are relics of yesterday, sometimes in the guise of bingo halls, clubs, cinemas and warehouses. There are so few Christians around to show them the love of God. Those who are around find it hard to survive, let alone show compassion.

He would be moved with compassion for the down-and-outs who people our streets, stations, derelict buildings, parks; those who are the drop-outs of society, who have lost their way through family problems, drink, drugs, petty crime, gambling and who cannot find their way back to normality; those who are outcasts, unwanted by anyone — even the so-called Welfare State which sometimes makes it too hard for those in real need to find help, so that they prefer not to bother.

He would be concerned about lives that are broken mentally and physically, that because of a run-down health service, cannot find the care that they so desperately need, but have to wait so long to have. He would be concerned for those for whom modern medicine can find no solution, or hasn't the time or money to try. As with the woman with a flow of blood for twelve years, 'who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse', her touch of faith brought healing; so too would others find His healing.

If Christ were here . . . ! He is — in you and me. But it is only as you and I are so taken up with Him in a Christ-centred, Spirit empowered, Father-glorifying way of life that we shall begin to feel His love for what naturally we may see as the unlovable; to receive His burden for compassionate action in His Name; to feel as He feels when faced with so much human need — and to know where our true priorities lie. Dear God, please move us with your compassion.

The Social Implication of Mission

Wherever we look human need stares us in the face. People need people — to pick them up, to fetch and carry for them, to lend a sympathetic ear, to bind up their broken hearts, to teach, feed and heal and to minister in a thousand and one different ways.

'Our job is to preach the Gospel'; 'I don't believe in the social gospel'; 'Christians shouldn't get involved in . . .'; 'I haven't time'; 'I have enough to do looking after my own family . . .'; 'We live in a Welfare State'. Such comments are frequently heard to excuse the lack of involvement in any kind of social service. A recent survey revealed how seldom assemblies engage in any kind of humanitarian help in the society in which they are located. Our non-involvement as churches, in this country at any rate, is a blot on our many protestations of spiritual life. True we have a Welfare State which has assumed in many realms the ministry which the Church ought to be to the fore in fulfilling. But there are still many things that the State is not doing, or not doing well, that we as Christians should be doing in the name of Christ. The State helps materially, in the form of social benefits and services, but it cannot minister caring love, compassion. When need stares us in the face, we shy

away in embarrassment, like those who passed by on the other side when they saw the man who fell among thieves lying by the road side. Or if we do get involved, it is only to lend a hand in an emergency — and then not for too long. After all, we have too much to do to get too closely involved, we say. Of course, it can be argued, there is the danger of getting so much involved that we lose sight of the Saviour, in which case we have nothing to offer but help. However, on the present evidence, there is little risk of that happening — we've gone to the opposite extreme. When we send missionaries abroad, we inevitably expect that a good proportion of their time and effort and training will be used in providing services in the form of medical, educational and agricultural skills. They run orphanages, hospitals, schools, clinics, farms — sometimes alongside State-run institutions; but not in the name of the State — in the name of Christ. And because they are Christ's servants they have opportunities to

share their faith and His love. We should be doing the same — wherever we are! Of course, there are a lot of individual Christians involved in social and welfare services. The contribution they make to State-run services is commendable and necessary, but the insights they have gained could be made available to fellowships of Christians. They may well be able to identify areas of need that are yet to be met. The Church needs their help in spearheading action, **in the name of Christ**, where it is needed most. The trouble is that the Church is scarcely aware of its need and responsibility! If we continue to see Mission in terms of words only, we shall singularly fail to communicate Christ's love to modern man. Christ did not speak only — He sacrificed Himself. His actions spoke louder than words. Social action is not a substitute for mission — it should always be a part of mission. 'Show your faith by your works' (*James 2:18*).

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A Report from Australia Keith Walker

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(2) Preventing children going into institutions unnecessarily.

(3) Providing family support — physical, emotional, and spiritual — during and following the crisis.

As we are a non-regional service we do not qualify for any Government funding. Our part time Principal Officer and Social Worker and part time secretarial help are paid from the proceeds of two 'Opportunity Shops' (Ringwood and Oakleigh) interest from capital invested following the sale of a family group home, and donations from interested individuals and churches.

NUMBER OF REFERRALS

More than 200 children were referred to CBFC from July 1st, 1980 to June 30th, 1981. Of these referrals, 193 children were placed, representing 68 families. Twenty-five of these families were referred more than once, ten more than three times.

Sources of Referrals placed

Self referrals, clients,	
neighbour/friend/Church	8 families

Agencies providing counselling and family services

Copelen St. Family Centre (Uniting Church)	2 families
Doncare	1 family

Community Health Centres

Maroondah Social Health	3 families
Chadstone Community Health Centre	1 family
West Heidelberg Community Health Centre	1 family

Council Social Workers

Melbourne City Council (Sr. Brain)	28 families
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Hospitals & Psychiatric Clinics

Bouverie St. Clinic	2 families
Dandenong Psychiatric Centre	1 family
Box Hill Hospital	2 families
Camberwell Clinic	1 family

Government Agencies

ECDP Lilydale	1 family
ECDP Frankston	3 families
DCWS Ringwood	1 family
CG & CS Frankston	5 families
Carlton Primary School Social Worker	1 family

Half Way Houses

Ben Werren Women's Refuge	6 families
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Infant Welfare Centres

Ringwood	1 family
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These figures represent the number of individual fami-

lies that were placed from their respective referring agencies. However, one must keep in mind that 25 of these families were referred to us twice and ten of the families three times or more, which indicates a much heavier placement load than the actual number of families.

REASONS FOR THE REFERRALS

Individual assessments are done by the referring agency before the request is passed on to CBFC. Our social worker must be sure it is an emergency and that other sources of support have been looked into before we consider the care. The most common reason for referral is the inability of the custodian parent to cope. This is usually the mother, who reaches a point of breakdown caused by inadequate housing, finance, illness of herself or the children and lack of 'normal' community resources of family and neighbourhood to call on for support in such times of difficulty.

FOLLOW UP

The referring agencies assume the responsibility of working with the family while the children are in care, to ensure that the children return to a more 'stable' environment. However, in gross multi-problem situations, short term solutions are not possible and hence our services as a temporary emergency care agency may be needed many times in an ongoing way, while other family supports continue. In some instances where a family has developed a relationship with CBFC direct over a number of years, we assume a friendly visiting role. During 1980/81 we were keeping in touch with five families in this way.

There is a concentration of referrals from the inner urban region, which reflects several things. The high rise flats of North Melbourne, Kensington, Prahran and South Yarra are often the only low rental housing available to women on pensions supporting their children after family breakdown. These 'single mothers' then become a very vulnerable group in the community as they are remote from family and previous friends, flat living with small children is very difficult, finances are inadequate and there is a concentration of people with similar problems around them.

The intensive family support services provided by the Melbourne City Council (Sr. Brain) and Copelen St. Family Centre (Uniting Church) need to use Emergency Care Services as part of their support. Government funded resources at Copelen St. and Kensington (St. Joseph's emergency cottage) are always fully utilised, so intra regional services such as CBFC need to take up the excess.

LONGER TERM PLACEMENTS

During 1980/81 we have had responsibility for four longer term placements.

1. Twin baby boys placed in an emergency just before Christmas 1980 became pre-adoptive. With the consent

of the foster parents and the Government department concerned, these children will stay on with the foster family until suitable adoptive parents are found.

2. In co-operation with Counselling Guidance and the social services in Frankston a six year old boy was placed long term with one of our foster families. This child had many emotional problems and learning difficulties and was unable to be cared for by his natural mother. It was hoped that a stable foster home might produce changes in the boy's situation. The case is under review as to whether foster care is the best form of substitute care.

3. A teenage Turkish boy who had been in our care on an emergency basis was later found homeless by a school's Community Social Worker. He returned to the family who had previously cared for him, with the permission of his father, who keeps in touch with him.

OTHER PLACEMENTS

It has been our policy to sponsor children aged over ten years to the Way of Life Camps if that is seen as a more appropriate form of substitute care during the school holiday period. Fourteen children have been helped in this way and have found the camps an enjoyable experience. This year eleven of the camp sponsorships were at the request of the children themselves.

AGES OF THE CHILDREN PLACED IN CARE JULY 1980-JUNE 1981

0- 2	43
3- 4	48
5- 9	77
10-14	21
15 plus	4
Total	193

The tapering off in the age of the children represents two problems: first, the unwillingness of most families to take an older child, because they see this as causing a greater disruption to their own family and feel more confident handling younger children; and, second, the requests for children in the older age group are usually for longer term placements which are outside our guidelines.

COMMENTS

In spite of all difficulties, until adequate foster care facilities are provided in all regions, CBFC will continue to provide a very valuable service. We are extremely grateful to the many volunteers and supporters who continue to work hard for CBFC through manning the Opportunity Shops and donating to the work. As the demand for our service continues there will be an increasing need to use other volunteers in administration and clerical as well. Each contribution is very much appreciated, so that this valuable Community Service can be maintained.



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MUSICAL INTERLUDE — 7

Proficient Praise — A Plea for Musical Literacy

A. F. McIntosh

The final article in this appreciated series from Dr. McIntosh of Falkirk.

Reading at sight

Handel passed through Chester in 1741 on his way to Ireland. He applied to Mr. Baker the local organist to know whether there were any choirmen in the Cathedral who could sing at sight. A printer Janson was mentioned and was given a trial, upon which Handel cried out in broken English 'You scoundrel, did not you tell me that you could sing at sight?' 'Yes sir', said the unfortunate singer, 'and so I can: but not at first sight.'

'Reading at sight' may be difficult, but 'writing at sound', if I may coin a phrase, is more difficult still. We can hardly expect to attain to the heights of Mozart who in 1770 and at 14 years of age, heard Allegri's *Miserere* sung in the Sistine Chapel. After attending the service the young Mozart is credited with having written out, from memory, the whole work which till then had been the prerogative of the papal choir and a jealously preserved masterpiece.

When you hear a memorable address or a memorable phrase, how do you preserve it for future reference? You write it down. When you hear a memorable tune, how, in turn, do you preserve it? Here is a simple test. Recall a well-known hymn tune — 'Oh Lord of heaven and earth and sea', or any other. Suppose it to be a new tune which you have just heard and want to write down. Lay down your *Harvester*, take pen and paper and jot it down in any musical notation you care.

At this point we bid farewell to those of you who have provided full staff notation in the key of your local hymn book. Let me turn to those of you who have experienced genuine difficulty. Take heart. The facility I have described can be acquired by most with only a little application. There is more than one way of going about it.

Notation

The staff notation has a long history, the system having been developed by the Benedictine Guido of Arezzo around the time of the Carolingian Renaissance of the 9th-10th centuries. This period was also a starting time for the practice of polyphony. For those familiar with the staff system as it is today, it is a compendium of information, giving pitch, key, rhythm, emphasis, notation and harmony.

During most of the last 400 years, the musical framework has been the tonal system, although some modern composers have departed from it. Since church music usually lags behind secular music, the tonal system, the one with which we are most familiar, will be with us for a long time yet. In tonal music the intervals between the notes of a key are always the same, no matter on what note the scale begins.

This is a suitable point at which to mention the tonic sol-fah system. It too, in concept, is credited to the aforementioned Guido of Arezzo. The system as we know it was the work of an Englishman, Rev. John Curwen of London. The Esau-like English have, however, despised their sol-fah birthright and it has been purloined by the Jacobite Scots, for it is better known north of the border than south of it. It is easily taught, easily learned, and readily allows the sight reader to sing what is written. It is supremely useful as an aid to writing what is sung. As a method of capturing a simple melody in written form, it hits the staff notation for six. In time the facility can be developed of singing almost any hymn tune in sol-fah on the spot, or of transliterating from staff direct into sol-fah notation.

The sol-fah notation is not quite the preserve of the Celtic fringe. It is widely used in Gospel male voice music, but even that is probably largely due to the colourful James MacRoberts, who was until his death the genial presiding

genius over the Gospel male voice scene. He not only published staff and sol-fah editions of his books, but produced with them exercises to encourage 'scale pitch agility'. He thought the sol-fah system was almost too good, pointing out in his *Singing Salvation* that 'sol-fah men sight-read so easily that they do not take the trouble to memorise, whereas, in staff notation reading areas, men usually have to memorise their music — and this, of course, makes for book-free singing.'

The part of the audience

We have already noted that medieval music was written for and sung by the near-professionals of the day. An audience that was, through no fault of its own, illiterate, received its music as it received the interpretation of the word of God — at the hands of those who interpreted it for them.

The great revolution in hymnody came with the days of audience participation, although the music in the vernacular that resulted is not to every taste. In recent decades there has been a change in the skills of the participating audience. Older folks among us may once have sung in gospel choirs. In those heady days a woman coming to a five-barred gate could sing the spots on her veil. Christians would spend whole evenings around a piano, singing in harmony. Part-singing in public worship was the rule rather than the exception. In contrast, the younger generation will spend an evening chatting rather than singing. When singing is indulged in, it will be to the guitar and part-singing will not be common. As a substitute for it, items may be sung as a round, or tunes with an easily-sung descant will be chosen. Sometimes the harmony is provided by an instrument as in a tune like Brierley's 'Camberwell' where the congregation sings only the melody.

We have to ask ourselves whether in this generation we shall abandon polyphonic

singing by the audience and compensate by some of the techniques just mentioned. Musical appreciation is probably at a higher level than it has ever been, but it has been to the detriment of musical participation. Why should we have the former at the expense of the latter?

Instruction

Instruction played an important part in Bible song-making. Moses recited his song with a teaching function in mind (*Deut. 31:30-32:2 NIV*). We find those in the temple who were 'trained and skilled in music for the Lord . . . Young and old alike, teacher as well as student' (*1 Chron. 25:7-8*). Perhaps they were taught at home for they were 'under the supervision of their fathers for the music of the temple of the Lord' (*1 Chron. 25:6*).

From the middle of the 16th to the beginning of the 19th century, almost all the psalters of England and many of those of other countries had a theoretical instruction system, usually of some kind of sol-fah notation. Stainer has made a study of these introductions to singing at sight. American folk hymns of a century ago employed a staff notation with four kinds of character — diamond, square, round and quarter-diamond. In the 18th century there were travelling teachers of psalms whose help would be enlisted by the various local

communities who wished to improve their singing.

Why, with biblical and historical precedent for training in singing, has this role been largely abandoned by the church? Some congregations may need to appoint 'master-singers'. We have plenty of itinerant preachers; why not itinerant leaders of song praise? They could spend a weekend or a week with a congregation, give a few classes in sight-reading, teach some new hymns, and consider with the congregation the way in which their hymns were sung. A conference could be held on song in worship. Again, training might be done by a member of the congregation. For a do-it-yourself approach the 'Education in Action' book **Teaching Music-Reading in Class** by Dennis Todd (Evans Brothers Ltd., 1976) will help with rhythm and pitch, sight-reading, sol-fah and staff notations, part-singing, timing and simple harmonic work. A five-line staff can be made on flannel-graph and felt-backed notes made to go with it to help in teaching the staff notation.

Providing the music

Without the notes before it, we cannot blame an audience for inaccurate rendering of the tune or indeed for going off it altogether. Even the words can give problems. It is recorded that a certain precentor at Greenock, John

McQuisten, during the service one Sunday accidentally jumped from mid-Psalm 107 into the ballad of 'Sir Patrick Spens' without noticing the transition. Both texts are about shipwrecks and the whole congregation followed his lead. When a congregation rises to sing, we ask its members to match a particular set of words to a particular tune. Is it not remarkable that so often we provide the words but not the tune? Few follow the American practice of providing music copies for all and we do not follow the German practice of including a melody line with the words edition. A publisher who provided the latter arrangement could find a corresponding demand created. In its absence, could not the church announce a subsidy scheme which would allow its members to purchase music copies?

We are fortunate in the evangelical tradition to have members of our congregations who are there not simply to listen to and appreciate the music but, in a sense, are there to perform it. Congregations almost always have unrealised potential. We cannot take musical literacy for granted any longer and it follows that, in our generation, an educative function is thrust upon the church.

Thought: Is there an instructional element in the musical programme of my church?

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WORLD FOCUS '82

Arthur Henderson

A report by Arthur Henderson on a recent young peoples' congress in Ireland.

Was it a prison? Almost cut off from the outside world for five days — five, if we could arrange transport immediately after Christmas — we were incarcerated in a large complex of buildings with boundaries beyond our sight. Radios banned, TV and newspapers unavailable, car keys deposited — we were inmates of a total, if temporary, institution except that, with much effort and patience, we might get a telephone connection on one of the two poor callbox lines, join the convoy of buses on the site-to-site trip to an evangelical centre on the other side of Dublin, or speak to one of the short-term visitors if we could distinguish them from the inmates bearing similar identification. But the incarceration was voluntary, the sparsely furnished rooms unlocked and, in order to be served with one of the substantial meals, each inmate had to wear a plastic wrist-band with name and number for the duration of the stay. So perhaps it was not a prison but a hospital. In my 'ward' we prayed nightly that God would touch each of our lives according to need. No doubt the master Physician dealt with many sick persons behind the curtains, as it were, of privacy and counselling, but there can be no complete record on earth of the diagnostic revelations, the healing treatments, or the prescriptions to willing patients who were given hope for an active life of service — hope that the theme of the congress should come true, 'You take Jesus to the world'.

The 'patients' in my 'ward' were all young men, with one or two nearing middle age. Much older, I was there to help them, but I too received significant help to deal with practical problems which had become of greater concern in my retirement. With their permission let me tell you about these others. (Only the names are fictitious.)

Andy, having known the gospel in early years, had spent so much of his youth on tobacco and drink, leading to deep despondency before his conversion. Although he was coping with his technological studies, he felt the need for

systematic Bible study and training for Christian service.

Barry too had heard the gospel as a boy, but the seed had lain dormant until he had faced a personal crisis a year earlier. Although there was now added pressure from a disappointed mother, he nevertheless desired to live a useful life for Christ.

Chuck had come from a Christian home, but in adolescence had become involved in drug traffic and robbery. After conversion his confession had led to a moderated prison sentence, but since then he had taken up Christian work full time with a special interest in youth.

Dave, having served faithfully in his assembly as a single man for many years, had been wondering how his service could be made more effective. He went home with a renewed desire to serve the Lord first of all and to relinquish temporal things, keeping a spiritual diary to direct his thoughts accordingly.

Eric, though a member of a gifted Christian family and socially at ease with other young people, had never revealed to anyone his growing conviction that he should make systematic preparation for Christian service.

Fred, who liked to work manually as relief from sedentary occupation, had spent several weeks of last summer helping a missionary in another continent with a particular project, having read up the procedure before flying out.

Gary was in charge of a large exhibition of missionary information collected by a small group of volunteers to put others in touch with specific needs and opportunities. In taking leave from his secondary employment he had been caused to consider his personal situation and desire for Bible training.

Harry, having years ago given up a lucrative job for a full-time pastoral ministry with only a nominal salary, gladly received ministry and encouragement for himself and his wife.

If the purpose of the congress had merely been to acquire knowledge of the Bible and of missionary endeavour, most of us would have suffered from mental indigestion from surfeit of words to hear and read. On three days there

were nearly six hours of meetings daily, plus six and a half on the other two days together. Part of this time was spent in activity — music of a high standard, interviews of short-term or part-time workers, workshops in specialised fields of outreach but visits to the exhibitions and bookstall, chats with speakers or counsellors, and meetings of assembly leaders had to be fitted in the coffee breaks or meal times or recreation periods.

There were three series of talks, respectively given by Hedley Murphy (Northern Ireland) on missionary strategy, William MacDonald (USA) on discipleship, and Brian Tatford (France) on individual calling and response. Missionary speakers outlined current and prospective problems and opportunities in four continents and in Britain. Speakers were joined by some of the workshop leaders for the daily forum at which there was no shortage of questions. Finally, late in the old year and well into the new, there was an 'agape' love feast — a moving service of praise and worship in which, as believers, we shared the bread and wine in remembrance of our Saviour and Lord. I believe that there was a general recognition that what moved us then must motivate us, young or not so young, male or female, to serve him wisely, diligently, and enthusiastically until we meet him face to face.

The main impact of **World Focus '82** has yet to come as individual life-patterns change in response to the 'call from the heavens'. As planning starts for **World Focus '85** (to be held, God willing, around Christmas 1984) let us pray for an even greater impact on Irish Christian youth (from both sides of the border) and for greater interest across the waters.

Thirteen tapes of the talks given at the congress are available on a set of cassette tapes at £10 (UK) per set. Details from Ireland Outreach International, Charleville, Dalkey, Co. Dublin, which was the evangelical centre visited during the congress. The congress venue was in fact neither prison nor hospital, but Gormanston College, a Franciscan residential school for boys in County Meath.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

This question is put to those readers who are frequently approached, as I am, about 'biblical difficulties'. What line do they take when what appears to them to be a straight and satisfactory answer seems to raise greater problems in the questioner's mind than the original difficulty? For example, I was recently asked to reconcile the texts: 'the Glory of Israel . . . is not a man, that he should repent' (1 Sam. 15:29) and 'the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel' (1 Sam. 15:35). I tried to explain why I found no difficulty by saying that the latter statement was an anthropomorphism (I didn't use that word, but indicated in non-technical terms what it meant); but I felt that my explanation was less than convincing. Could others share their experience of this kind of situation?

*Correspondence, please, to the Editor,
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Proverbs 11:24

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Evening Breaking of Bread

Question 214

The holding of the Breaking of Bread service in the evening, Question 209, raises inquiry as to its desirability. The assembly concerned gained attendance through it, but two others known to me (though 250 miles apart) lost. One when three elderly sisters refused to break bread in the evening, and so now go nowhere. The other where the Supper had always been post meridiem, but a sister moving into the area with her family refused to attend on this account. In view of the undeniable fact that, the Lord himself instituted his Supper at evening (Matt. 26:20, Mark 14:17, 1 Cor. 11:23 c.p. John 13:30) what authority have Plymouth Brethren to enforce their 'Morning Meeting'? Is this not where tradition has taken the place of the Word, even in such an élite circle?

The answers to your questions are respectively: *None* and *Yes*. The examples you cite show how tragically possible it is for us to give our loyalty to tradition rather than to the Lord.

Praying to the Holy Spirit?

Question 215

In 'Father, we adore thee,' the last verse contains an invocation of the Holy Spirit in terms identical with those used in proceeding verses for the Father and the Son. Is it scriptural to address the Holy Spirit in such a way?

This issue has aroused a good deal of interest — one might even say controversy — in the past. Attempts to find biblical justification for hymns addressed to the Holy Spirit have reduced some people to citing *Numbers 17:18*. However, a better case could probably be based on *Ezekiel 37:9*, where the breath/wind is clearly related to the Spirit of God (v. 14).

Apart from this 'proof text', the tenor of biblical usage is against the invocation of the Holy Spirit. Yet, on the other hand, it is nowhere forbidden and if we worship God in three persons then there can be no objection in principle to addressing prayer to the Holy Spirit. This is sometimes done in Trinitarian hymns

such as 'Thou whose almighty word', in which attention is focused on the peculiar function and ministry of the Holy Spirit. The same is true of the occasional hymns that we sing, addressed to the Holy Spirit, e.g. 'Come Holy Ghost our hearts inspire/Let us thine influence prove' — than which there could scarcely be a better introduction to preaching. The example you cite, however, differs from these in that the adoration expressed to the Spirit is identical with that to the Father and the Son.

While I can see no way in which this usage is opposed to Scripture, and should not wish to oppose it in principle, nevertheless I judge that Christians do well to take account of the general pattern of New Testament worship which is addressed to the Father through the Son in the Spirit who seems (if one may put it this way) almost to seek anonymity as he ministers Christ to the Body.

Suffering as Punishment?

Question 216

I have recently seen it suggested in a magazine that the principal reason why Christians suffer from illness is that God is punishing them as individuals for their individual sins. What is your opinion?

This idea is as unbiblical as it is cruel. In the Old Testament, the Book of Job addresses itself to this precise issue. Here, it is Job's 'comforters' who take the view that the disasters he has experienced, including illness, are a punishment for sin. Chapter 42:7 clearly indicates the divine response to people who libel God in this way. The New Testament illustrates how slow God's people are to learn this lesson since in *John 9:2* the disciples ask a question that shows they were still influenced by the belief. The Lord's answer is perfectly straightforward. Verse 3 makes it clear that suffering and disease are not necessarily the result of an individual's sin. Certainly, when a believer is afflicted, in any way at all, he should ask what the Lord is saying to him in and through his affliction. *John 5:14* and *1 Corinthians 11:30* seem to indicate that there may be a direct link between sin and disease in some cases. But this is a completely different matter from ignoring the plain teaching of Scripture in the way you have indicated.

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'.

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G.J. Polkinghorne

PENTECOST – BEFORE AND AFTER A Challenge for Whitsun F. Nickels

Mr. Nickels is a retired Commercial Printer and has been in fellowship at Ebenezer Hall, Cardiff, since his conversion at seventeen.

Do we realize that the majority of us, as believers, are living the sort of life that the disciples were living before Pentecost? That we are in need of the experience they knew at Pentecost? It will not come in the dramatic way that it came to the disciples in Acts 2, for that was a once-and-for-all, never to be repeated happening. If we go on without it we are simply labouring in the flesh, and as one writer has put it 'All we shall know is a humanistic striving to be good'. This might sound rather sweeping and drastic, but it is nevertheless true, and this in spite of the well-attested scriptural evidence that we received the Holy Spirit at conversion. The Holy Spirit came into our lives when we trusted Christ (Eph. 1:13), but our subsequent low-level of Christian living has shown how little a place He has had in them. The early disciples' powerlessness before Pentecost exactly mirrors our present ineffectiveness, and we will go on lacking any spiritual power and freshness in our worship and service as long as the Holy Spirit is just a name to us and not a conscious indwelling Power.

Before Pentecost

What kind of life then, were the disciples living between the resurrection and Pentecost? The two stupendous events of Christ's resurrection and His ascension into heaven seemed to have made little impression on the disciples, and those with them. For forty days our Lord had been making Himself

known to them on different occasions until they were fully assured that He had truly risen from the dead. It was just like old times to have their Lord with them once again, and it was while He was eating and drinking with them during the forty days that 'he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence' (Acts 1:4 & 5).

This promise did not thrill the disciples with anticipation. It seems they had other things on their minds. They expected Christ to take up His pre-Calvary ministry, and this time bring in the Messianic kingdom; to throw off the Roman yoke and bring in Millennial blessings. This was evidently in their minds for, instead of following up the promise Christ had given them, they asked the question: 'Lord wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' It must have been with a patient sigh that our Lord assured them that the Father would bring in the future times of blessing and judgment when He saw fit. 'It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father hath put in His own power' (verse 7). He then comforted them with the fact that although they would not just now see the kingdom of Israel restored, they would soon be given power from on high. These were His last words spoken to the apostolic band while on earth, for 'when he had spoken these words while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight'.

Passing over the message of the

angels, we see the crowd of disciples who had witnessed the ascension, now dispersing and making their way back to Jerusalem. If we had gone amongst them with a roving microphone and asked for their comments on what they had seen and heard, what would they have said? We are in the realm of imagination now, of course, but it would be fair comment to say that feelings of disappointment and uncertainty would be voiced. Disappointment that Jesus had not used His great power for the nation's benefit, and uncertainty as to what form this 'power from on high' would take. Getting back to Scripture, to verse 13 of Acts 1, one gets the impression that in spite of what they had seen and heard, they were still apprehensive of the authorities (see also John 20:19). The resurrection seemed to do nothing for their morale.

In between the resurrection and the ascension we get another glimpse of them. This time we see them sitting on their boats wondering what to do with themselves. When Peter spoke up with: 'I go a fishing!' (John 21:3), they all jumped at the suggestion, and although they fished all night, they caught nothing. After the forty days in which they talked and walked with their Lord, they were privileged to see Him go back to heaven in ascension glory, and we see them waiting at Jerusalem as instructed. One would have expected them at this time to be out and about proclaiming the wonderful resurrection and ascension to heaven of their Lord. Instead they were more concerned about such mundane matters as bringing the apostolic band up to strength! (Acts

1:15-26). Their witnessing of these two mighty events did not give them any boldness or authority to preach these things to the world outside.

The Change

It was when Jerusalem was packed to overflowing for the celebration of the Feast of Pentecost, and the disciples were in their usual upper-room meeting place, that the great baptism of Holy Ghost power, promised by the risen Christ, suddenly came upon them. First a rushing mighty wind filled the room, following which tongues of fire appeared on each of them. Immediately they were each conscious of being endowed with heavenly power. They began speaking in tongues, and then — ? It was as though a heavenly volcano had erupted and its holy 'lava' was covering and baptizing them. Without excessive emotion or excitement they were out in the streets powerfully proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord! Each language group had its preacher, and from the places named there must have been a number of languages used. When Peter had completed his direct preaching as to the true identity of Him who the people knew as Jesus of Nazareth, great conviction of sin came upon his hearers, and three thousand were converted. It was not being convinced of Christ's resurrection, or seeing Him going back to heaven that gave the disciples this wonderful power. It was the coming into their lives of the Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, that made all the difference, and no spiritual experience we may lay claim to, apart from

an influx of God's Spirit into our lives, will make any difference to ours either. The position of the Holy Spirit in the majority of believers' lives today can be likened to what happened in World War II. The war had reached a stage when Europe was over-run and occupied by the enemy, and only the narrow strip of the English Channel kept us from being over-run too. The enemy turned back to fight on other fronts and gave the Allies time to build up secretly a strong invasion force which crossed the Channel and caught the enemy by surprise. A bridgehead was established on enemy-occupied Europe. Before the enemy could rush sufficient troops to throw the British and American troops out again, the bridgehead was made strong enough not only to maintain its hold on the mainland, but to bring in enough troops to open up a new front. Before long the Allies were occupying more and more of what used to be enemy-occupied territory and eventually Europe was freed and the war was over.

A little parable, if you like, of what must happen in our lives if we are to know the Holy Spirit giving us the freshness and power in our lives which they now lack. The Spirit's occupation of our lives can only be regarded as a bridgehead. Most of our lives is enemy-occupied territory. This has been going on for so long that we have ceased to hope for, or desire, anything better. Yet our Lord promised that the Christian life would be a 'bubbling-up' life — a life in which the Holy Spirit would be a well of water springing up

into everlasting life (*John 4:14*). Also that Christ's indwelling of our lives would be such a blessing to others as though rivers of living water were flowing from us (*John 7:38*). If we are persuaded that it is the Spirit's power and presence that is lacking in our lives, how can we remedy this deficiency? Do we need to arrange 'waiting' or 'tarrying' meetings as some do who seek an endowment of the Holy Spirit? We will find no support for such in the Scriptures. When Paul was dealing with the carnality of the Corinthian Church, he nowhere urges them to seek a new or further experience of the Spirit apart from what they had received at their conversion. He did not teach them that a second experience of the Holy Spirit was needed to solve all their problems. Instead, he made it clear that they had received the gift of the Holy Spirit, but they were not living in the good of it. Their carnality was not because they had failed to receive God's Spirit in full measure, but that they had allowed the flesh to push this great fact into the background of their lives. The great rallying cry of the apostle to his brethren and sisters in the Corinthian church was: 'Do ye not know that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?' (*1 Cor. 3:16*). This could very well be emphasized among us today. Ignorance and forgetfulness of this great fact is the cause of much of the present deadness in our churches, and this in spite of the clear teaching of the Word of God.

THE POWER OF GOD *continued from Page Forty*

us too (*1 Cor. 6:14*). It is at work within us even now, enabling us to live a victorious life (*2 Cor. 13:4; Phil. 3:10; Eph. 1:19-23*). In ourselves we are still utterly weak, for the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us (*2 Cor. 4:7*). Indeed, the Lord's power is made perfect in weakness, and it is when we most feel our weakness that Christ can display His power in us without the danger that we shall take the credit for it. This power is often linked with the Holy Spirit (e.g. *Acts 1:8; Rom. 15:13*), showing again that it is a Person at work, and its effects in the lives of Christians are described in the *Acts of the Apostles*. It gives us all we need for life and godliness (*2 Pet. 1:3*), guarding us from danger (*1 Pet. 1:5*) and enabling us to endure afflictions (*2 Tim. 1:8*). Its final achievements within us will far exceed our

own desires or expectations (*Eph. 3:20*). So God intends to demonstrate the greatness of His power in what He can make of such unlikely material as ourselves. Our faith rests in the power of God (*1 Cor. 2:5*), and we can be certain that He will accomplish His purposes for us. Although in the New Testament the power of God is not often linked with judgement, it is occasionally mentioned in this context. Pharaoh was raised up so that God could show His power, and similarly God's ways with the wicked will make His power known (*Rom. 9:17,22*). Perhaps God allows evil to develop so as to show that He is able to deal with it in a way consistent with His holy character. Furthermore the power of the Lord Jesus enables the church to deal with evil within its own ranks (*1 Cor. 5:4*).

The book of *Revelation* shows that God is always in control of events whether men recognize it or not. Power is ascribed to God in connexion with the creation of the universe (*4:11*), the preservation of His people (*7:12*), and the judgement of the wicked (*19:1*), and to the Lamb in connexion with His redeeming death (*5:12*). Ultimately God will show His power openly. He will take His great power and reign, judging the dead and rewarding His servants (*11:17,18*). All will acknowledge His power, which will display to the full His glory, His holiness and His love.

So the power of God is the means whereby He attains His objectives in creation, in blessing and in judgement, revealing His character in all His dealings with His people and His universe.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (59)

F. F. Bruce

The Upper Room Discourses (*John 13:31-16:33*)
i. DEPARTURE AND REUNION (*John 13:31-14:31*)

(d) The Father's house and the way there (*John 14:1-7*)

14:1 Do not go on being troubled at heart: believe in God, believe in me also.

It was not surprising that their hearts should be troubled. A short time before, as they reclined at table, Jesus himself had been 'troubled in spirit' as he spoke of the presence of a traitor in their midst (*John 13:21*). That was enough to fill them with unease, and there was also the distress which arose from his words about going away where they could not follow him (*13:33, 36*). Now he bids them be troubled no more: 'set your troubled hearts at rest' (NEB). Let them maintain their faith in God; let them maintain their faith in Jesus also. They had never known him to let them down; he would not do so now, whatever appearances might suggest. (It is impossible to be sure whether the first occurrence of *pisteuete* is indicative, 'you believe', or imperative 'believe'; but it is more likely to be imperative, as it certainly is in its second occurrence: 'believe in me also'.)

14:2-4 'In my Father's house there are many rooms; if there were not, would I have told you that I am going to get a place ready for you? And if I go and get a place ready for you, I am coming back again and will take you to myself, so that you also may be in the place where I am. And you know the way where I am going.'

The noun *monē* (allied to *menō*, 'stay', 'remain') occurs twice in the NT — here and in *verse 23*. It means 'a place to stay'; and when it is said that there are many places in a house, 'rooms' is the most natural rendering.

The Father's house has been mentioned by Jesus already in another sense: in *John 2:16* 'my Father's house' (*oikos*) is the Jerusalem temple. Here, however, 'my Father's house' (*oikia*) is plainly not on earth: it is the heavenly home to which Jesus is going and in which his people are also promised a place. Earlier during that week Jesus had said, 'where I am, there my servant will also be' (*John 12:26*); now he adds to that promise by saying that he will take his followers there personally. They had been dismayed when he spoke of going away; now they are assured that his going away is for their advantage. He is going to get a place ready for them and, having done that, he will come back and take them there.

John does not touch on the cosmic dimensions of the Lord's return; it is introduced here as the consummation of the personal fellowship between him

and his disciples. In the Pauline writings we may compare the personal note of *1 Thess. 4:13-18*, where believers are comforted with the assurance 'so we shall always be with the Lord', over against the 'world-historical' setting in which the great event is placed in *2 Thess. 2:3-8*. It would, indeed, be interesting to explore the relation between the 'word of the Lord' reported by Paul in *1 Thess. 4:15-17* and the word of the Lord here recorded by John.

Moreover, in these upper-room discourses quite similar language is used in connexion with (a) the coming of the Paraclete (*verse 18* below) and (b) Jesus' appearance to his disciples after his rising from the dead (*verse 19* below; *16:22*). The distinction between Jesus' predictions of his resurrection and his predictions of his coming again, which is quite clear in the Synoptic Gospels, 'is a vanishing distinction in John' (C. H. Dodd).

Jesus' words in *verse 4*, 'you know the way (to the place) where I am going', are amplified in many witnesses to 'you know where I am going, and you know the way' (cf. AV). The witnesses attesting this fuller reading (which may represent an attempt to pave the way more precisely for Thomas's reply in *verse 5*) include the majority of later manuscripts, but they also include the first hand in Papyrus 66 (a second hand in that papyrus has corrected it to the shorter reading).

14:5-7 Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me. If you have come to know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you know him; indeed, you have seen him.'

Thomas's bewildered question, like many questions in the Fourth Gospel, provides Jesus with the opportunity of expanding and elucidating what he has just said. Jesus is going to the Father, and his disciples are to follow him; for them he is himself the way to the Father. He is, in fact, the only way by which men and women may come to the Father; there is no other way. If this seems offensively exclusive, let it be borne in mind that the one who makes this claim is the incarnate Word, the revealer of the Father. If God has no avenue of communication with mankind apart from his Word (incarnate or otherwise), mankind has no avenue of approach to God apart from that same Word, who became flesh and dwelt among us in order to supply such an avenue of approach. Jesus' claim, understood in the light of the prologue to the Gospel, is inclusive, not exclusive.

It has been suggested that, in the Semitic language

which Jesus spoke, the nouns 'truth' and 'life' were governed by 'the way', as though he said, 'I am the way of truth and life' — 'I am the true and living way.' This is no doubt an attractive suggestion (cf. the mention in *Heb. 10:20* of 'the new and living way which he opened for us . . . through his flesh'); but that is not how our Evangelist understood the words. For him the three nouns are co-ordinate, and are best understood by us as they were by him: 'I am the way and the truth and the life.' Jesus is not only the way to God; he is the truth of God — how could he be otherwise, since he is the embodiment of God's self-revelation? — and he is the life of God, 'the true God and eternal life' (*1 John 5:20*), manifested on earth to give his flesh 'for the life of the world' (*John 6:51*). No further comment on Jesus' claim need be made than that of Thomas à Kempis:

Follow thou me. I am the way and the truth and the life. Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living. I am the way which thou must follow; the truth which thou must believe; the life for which thou must hope. I am the inviolable way; the infallible truth; the never-ending life. I am the straightest way; the sovereign truth; life true, life blessed, life uncreated. If thou remain in my way thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall make thee free, and thou shalt lay hold on eternal life.

To come to God by this way is to know him. The disciples have already begun to know the Father because they have come to know the Son; in fact (although they do not realize it yet) in the Son they have seen the Father.

(e) Seeing the Father in the Son (*John 14:8-11*)

14:8-11 Philip said to him, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we are satisfied.' Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all for such a long time and you, Philip, have not come to know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me? The words which I speak to you I do not speak on my own initiative; it is the Father who dwells within me who does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; otherwise, believe because of the works themselves.'

Philip's request betrays ignorance of the truth that the Son came into the world to reveal the Father, and has been doing so throughout his ministry. To know the Son is to know the Father; to see the Son is to see in him the otherwise invisible God. As the prologue to the Gospel has put it, 'No one has ever seen God; the only-begotten (himself) God, who has his being in the Father's bosom, is the one who has declared him' (*John 1:18*).

Jesus now emphasizes afresh the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son (cf. *John 10:38*); he claims that the words he speaks are those given him by the

Father to speak (cf. *John 12:49*) and that the works he does are those given him by the Father to do (cf. *John 5:19f*). The oscillation between the words and the works in *verse 10* is anticipated in *John 8:28*: 'I do nothing on my own initiative, but as the Father has taught me, so I speak.' The appeal to the testimony of the works themselves has been made in *John 5:36; 10:37f*. But whereas formerly these things were said to the incredulous 'world', now they are repeated to disciples who, however uncomprehending they may be, are most willing to believe.

(f) Work and prayer (*John 14:12-14*)

14:12 'Indeed and in truth I tell you: if any one believes in me, that person will do the works that I do and will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.'

When, after the healing at the pool of Bethesda, Jesus affirmed that the works he did were those which the Father showed him, he added, 'he will show him greater works than these, to give you cause for marvel' (*John 5:20*). Now he tells his disciples that they in turn would do the works that he did. That must have been surprising enough. But what were they to think when he went on to say that, because he was going to the Father, they would do even greater works than they had seen him do? His promise indeed came true: in the first few months after his death and resurrection many more men and women became his followers through their witness than had done so during his personal ministry in Galilee and Judaea. The disciples knew that in themselves they were quite incapable of any such achievement, but he went on to tell them of the coming of the Paraclete, who would empower them and make their witness effective. The 'greater works' of which he now spoke to them would still be his own works, accomplished no longer by his visible presence among them but by his Spirit within them. And it was only by his going to the Father that the Paraclete would come to them (*John 16:7*).

14:13, 14 'And whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, in order that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask (me) for anything in my name, I will do it.'

If something is asked for in Jesus' name, the request is probably viewed as addressed to the Father. The Father denies nothing to the Son, and a request made in the Son's name is treated as if the Son made it. The textual evidence in *verse 14* is fairly evenly divided between the omission and retention of 'me'; but the logic of the thought here favours its omission, which indeed seems to be demanded by the plain sense of *16:23a*. Such is the reality of the mutual indwelling between the Father and the Son, however, that a request addressed to either in the Son's name is assured of an answer in the Son's name (cf. *John 15:16; 16:23b*). This promise is a Johannine counterpart to the Synoptic promise of *Matt. 18:19*.

THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY (5)

Studies in 1 Samuel

D. J. Clark

(5) David at Court (1 Sam. 16-18) **David Anointed by Samuel** **(16:1-23)**

Samuel's grief over Saul's failure was an honourable sentiment, but it was not going to solve any problems. If Saul was not the right man for the throne, then it was necessary to find someone who was to be his eventual replacement. Samuel could see this, but he was human enough to be scared of the implications (16:2). If someone else were to be anointed as king, the anointing could be done only by Samuel. Yet if Saul heard about it, he would naturally treat it as an act of treason and execute Samuel.

However, Samuel was a true man of God and knew that he had to obey the Lord's command whatever the outcome (cf. 3:17), so he set off for Bethlehem. A public sacrifice was his excuse for the visit, and he made sure that Jesse's family were invited. It is not clear whether the selection and anointing of David in *verses 6-13* are part of the sacrificial ceremony or not, but it seems more likely that they are not. Samuel would hardly have performed such a politically inflammatory action in public!

The choice of the right member of Jesse's family is explicitly dissociated from outward appearances (16:7). The next king was not to depend at all on physique (cf. 10:23-24) but rather on having a heart right with God (cf. 13:14). David was no more than a youth (16:11) probably in his middle teens, though he already had a broad experience of life through his large family and pastoral duties (cf. 17:34-37). The phrase in 16:13 translated 'in the midst of his brothers' is taken by some scholars as 'from the midst of his

brothers', that is to say, secretly, just as Saul's initial anointing had been (10:1). However, even if David was anointed in the presence of his family, there was little risk of the news spreading. The family members would have enough wit to see that if David got into political trouble, they would all be implicated, so that it was in their mutual interest to preserve the secret. From that time on, the Spirit of the Lord controlled David's life, and also ordered his circumstances (16:15-20). Saul's sudden changes of mood were already giving evidence of his mental instability, for which the accepted palliative was music. David's musical skills were well known (16:18) and led to an invitation to enter court service (16:19). The mention of David's appointment as Saul's armour bearer (16:21) is perhaps an anticipation of a later promotion. For the time being, his main function was to provide musical therapy when Saul needed it. One can only assume that the popular music of their day was more restful than that of ours!

David Kills Goliath (17:1-54)

Once again there was war with the Philistines. This time their tactics were different. Rather than provoking a pitched battle, they were relying on the prowess of their champion, a man of exceptional height and strength called Goliath. In addition to being of such an impressive appearance, he seems to have been rather a showman, and to have enjoyed the daily parade with his shield-bearer and his ritual challenge to single combat. Of the Israelites, not even Saul, despite his own size (9:2, 10:23) was prepared to accept the challenge. Thus he was beginning to fail in the military side of his responsi-

bilities as king (8:20), something which could have serious political repercussions for him. Thus too, as David in his youthful enthusiasm was to articulate (17:26), Saul was allowing the name of the Lord to be impugned, for if the Lord's people would not accept a challenge to battle, then in Philistine eyes, the Lord himself was also cowed before their gods.

Matters thus rested in stalemate for six weeks (17:16), until one day David's father sent him off to the front. Not that Jesse had military adventures in mind for his youngest son. His task rather was to deliver a consignment of bread and cheese as his family's contribution to the Israelite commissariat, and to get news of his three eldest brothers.

David's arrival coincided with the daily muster and one can easily imagine how his pulse rate increased with the excitement. He hastily dumped his supplies with the quartermaster (17:22) and raced for the front line. There, he was stirred in two different ways by what he heard. First of all he was disgusted by the loud-mouthed boasting of Goliath, and the failure of Israel to respond to it. Second, his imagination was set on fire by the account of the promises Saul had made to anyone who could defeat Goliath.

Then he was brought down to earth with a bump by the rebuke of his eldest brother, Eliab. One may surmise that Eliab was embarrassed that his kid brother had witnessed the shame of the Israelite army in which, of course, Eliab had his part. At any rate, he was unnecessarily snappy with David. **The Good News Bible** catches well the interchange between the brothers with realistically lively language.

'You cheeky brat, you! You just came

to watch the fighting!' 'Now what have I done?' David asked. 'Can't I even ask a question?' (17:28-29).

After hearing the same details of Saul's promise from other soldiers, David finally offered to go and fight Goliath himself. Saul was incredulous at first, but there was something about David's recital of his experiences looking after sheep (17:34-37) that convinced him to let the young man have his way.

There follows a touch of humour in the incongruous incident in which David tried to accept Saul's well-intentioned but inept offer of his own armour. (We can readily imagine David in later years entertaining his grandchildren with a racy account of it.) Finally, armed only with his usual stick and catapult, David went to face the giant.

As was customary (and often still is among politicians), the encounter began with a ritual slanging match. This was intended not merely to insult the opponent, but also to ensure the help of one's own gods (17:43). David returned Goliath's compliments in kind, but with a difference. Rather than trying to display his own strength and skill with the assistance of a god, David was fighting as the Lord's representative to avenge the insults suffered by the Lord in the humiliation of his people's army.

How rapidly and completely the fight was over! With his first stone, David brought Goliath down, then cut off the giant's head with his own sword. On the unforeseen death of their champion, the Philistines panicked and fled, and the ensuing Israelite victory was as complete as it was unexpected.

The armour of Goliath became David's personal trophy of victory (17:54), and was yet to have a bloody role to play in the fortunes of the nation (21:9, 22:9-19).

David in Saul's Service (17:55-18:30)

David's victory must have been almost as big a shock for Saul as it was for Goliath. Saul suddenly found himself publicly committed to accept as his son-in-law a young man about whom he knew next to nothing. A capable musician and an unorthodox warrior David might be, but marriage is a serious affair and involves the linking of two families. So naturally Saul's first reaction was to want to know more about David's background. The text gives us tantalisingly little information (17:58), but the implication seems to be that Jesse was reasonably

well known and respected, and that David's ancestry would not be an impediment to a place in the royal household.

Within that household David certainly found a kindred spirit in the king's son Jonathan. We have already seen (14:1-15) something of Jonathan's daredevil nature and can easily picture how David's bravery in facing Goliath would have appealed to him. The rather extravagant gesture of the gift of personal clothing and armour perhaps betrays an element of hero-worship, though as later events were to prove the relationship between David and Jonathan was certainly not limited to such a superficial level. It is but the first example of David's remarkable ability to inspire loyalty in other people, even in people who had the most to lose by such loyalty.

It is ironic that just as music had first brought David to court, so it was music that first threatened his security there. In this case the words of a pop song! Saul chose to take literally the figurative words of the song composed to celebrate the victory over the Philistines. Forgetting that David had actually been the one to kill Goliath, he became jealous that the song ascribed to David successes in battle ten times as great as his own. Perhaps his jealousy was compounded by the guilty knowledge that he himself had failed to meet Goliath's challenge. At any rate, his obsession was so great that he twice attempted to kill David, but the nimble young man escaped. David was banished to the command of a battalion on active service, but conducted his troops so successfully that he became better known and loved than ever and so increased Saul's jealousy (18:15-16).

The whole incident might well give us cause to pause and consider the importance of taking figurative language figuratively, not least in the interpretation of prophecy. While those who fail to do so (or for that matter, those who do not so fail) may seldom try to spear the holders of other views, nevertheless attempts have sometimes been made to skewer opponents' reputations. Such things ought not to be among us.

The time came for Saul to carry out his promise and give David his daughter in marriage. It is hard to know exactly what to make of David's words of self-denigration in 18:18. In the light of verse 25, they may mean that David had been unable to raise a bride price fit for a king's daughter. At any rate,

his hopes were initially dashed when Saul's elder daughter Merab was given to another man.

But Saul could not so easily evade his obligations. Someone in the king's family beside Jonathan felt the magnetic appeal of David's personality, the younger daughter Michal. We might have expected Saul to be irritated by this, but in fact he was pleased. Not pleased that his daughter might find a husband she could love and respect, but pleased that in a devious and despicable way, he could use his daughter's emotions to get rid of David. Saul seems to have been troubled by no thought of the injustice of his dealings with David nor by any anxieties as to Michal's welfare. His concern was to cling at all costs to the position of royal privilege which his actions had shown him unfit to retain.

In pursuance of his machinations, Saul made a firm offer to David. The only bride price the king required was a hundred Philistine foreskins (18:25). The Philistines alone of Israel's neighbours did not practice circumcision, so a hundred foreskins meant a hundred dead Philistine warriors. Surely David would not be able to obtain this gruesome bride price before losing his own life!

But once more Saul was upstaged by David. When the trophy was presented, it contained not just one hundred foreskins but two hundred. Thus Saul's plan backfired, and he was forced to keep his promise and allow David to marry Michal. Far from getting rid of David, he now had him in closer proximity than before. Not that David used his position to avoid the front line. Indeed, he took more than his share of the battles, and became more successful and famous than any of Saul's other soldiers.

Wherein lies the explanation for all this? Not simply that David was a more adroit schemer than Saul, though that may not be wholly untrue. Not simply that Saul was losing his nerve though that may also have been a contributory factor. At bottom, the cause was that 'the Lord was with David' (18:28) but 'had departed from Saul' (18:12). Deprived of the Lord's strength, Saul could only blunder from one fiasco to another. Endued with the Lord's strength, David could confidently face intrigue, danger and treachery alike. David's exalted social destiny may not be ours, but the resources he enjoyed are the same as can enable us to meet all the exigencies of our own day.

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (5) *The Power of God* M. L. Burr

God's power is one of His most obvious attributes. His eternal power is clearly seen by everyone in the things that He has made (*Rom. 1:20*), in a way His moral attributes are not. People may of course deny that this power belongs to God, but they can hardly deny its existence. However clever we become at harnessing the forces of nature, we are continually reminded that those forces are immeasurably stronger than ourselves. For this reason there are some who say they believe in a supreme Power while hesitating to ascribe to that Power any personal qualities. Others may feel that a God of holiness and righteousness is a rather unattractive idea, but a God of power is someone they can readily worship.

This outlook seems to have been associated with many pagan religions, including those mentioned in the Old Testament. Nature-religions have always attempted to manipulate the forces of nature, which they treat as in some sense divine. In contrast, the Old Testament emphasizes God's personality as revealed by His power. This idea is expressed by terms like 'the arm of the LORD', conveying the impression of immense power directed by a Person towards definite objectives, and governed by moral principles and motives.

The Arm of the Lord

So it is that Jeremiah addresses God as 'thou who hast made the heavens and the earth by thy great power and by thy outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for thee' (*Jer. 32:17*). God's mighty arm is displayed not only in His original act of creation but continually within what He has made. Thus God asks Job 'Have you an arm like God?' (*Job 40:9*) before describing some of His mighty acts within His creation. Furthermore, His rights over His world

are asserted in the affairs of men whom He allows to exercise authority within it. 'It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the men and animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever it seems right to me' (*Jer. 27:5*). God goes on to describe how He has given the various lands to His servant Nebuchadnezzar, then a heathen ignorant of Himself. So God's power is seen in history as He raises up men for His own purposes, of which they may know nothing.

The arm of the LORD is often mentioned in connexion with the deliverance from Egypt. It was 'with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm' that God brought His people out (*Deut. 5:15; Ps. 136:12*; etc.). He revealed His power in great acts of judgement against Egypt, and Israel's helpless condition emphasized the fact that the power was entirely God's. It was His arm that redeemed His people (*Exod. 6:6; Ps. 77:15*), and if redemption means 'deliverance at cost' the element of cost is implied in the effort God exerted to set Israel free. His arm is a holy arm (*Ps. 98:1*) and a glorious arm (*Isa. 63:12*), since its mighty actions always serve to display God's character. The same strong right arm preserved them from their enemies, ruled them with justice and love, and strengthened them (*Ps. 89:10, 13, 21*). It could be relied on for ever, for 'underneath are the everlasting arms' (*Deut. 33:27*). And the fame of God's mighty hand and outstretched arm was such that foreigners might be expected to come from distant lands to pray to Him, until all the peoples of the earth know His name (i.e. His character) and fear Him (*2 Chron. 6:32, 33*). The power of God's arm is displayed in judgement against various nations (e.g. *Isa. 30:30; 48:14*). Most solemn of all, that same arm that had re-

deemed the people of Israel turned against them when they disobeyed. 'I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand and strong arm, in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath' (*Jer. 21:5*). Because God is holy He hates evil, whether in His own people or in others. He therefore opposes it in His power, which cannot be manipulated to serve human ends as though it were an impersonal force.

The apparently opposite actions of God's arm in redeeming and judging Israel come together strikingly in *Ezek. 20:33ff.*, where God addresses His rebellious people who prefer to worship idols. 'As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, I will be king over you.' The anger of God's love is shown as He asserts His claims over His people. His love is holy and jealous, and will not permit them to be like the idolatrous nations, nor tolerate any rivals to Himself in their allegiance. He will bring them out of the countries where they are scattered with His mighty hand and outstretched arm and wrath poured out, and enter into judgement with them. When He has purified them He will again accept them as His people and thus manifest His holiness among them. So His power will be revealed in restoring them despite themselves.

All this shows the personal character of divine power. A still more profound element appears in the latter chapters of Isaiah. The prophet considers the 'helpless state of Israel and recognizes that only God's arm can save them. 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake as in days of old' (*Isa. 51:9*). He envisages the Gentiles hoping for God's arm to save and rule them (*51:5*), a hope that will not

continued on Page Forty

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Swelling of Jordan

H. L. Ellison

We welcome Mr. Ellison back from his tour of Israel and are pleased that he is able to resume his ministry to The Harvester readers.

As a young man I used to help in an open-air held in a poorer part of North London, under the leadership of a retired member of the Open Air Mission. Normally, at some 'suitable' moment in the proceedings he would demand 'Quick Fire', which meant the bawling out of the first texts that might come to mind. His contribution was normally, 'What will you do in the swelling of Jordan?', cf. *Jer. 12:5*, AV. I was always left wondering what good the whole exercise was supposed to do, more particularly the verse from Jeremiah, which I did not pretend to understand, nor would the RV 'the pride of Jordan', cf. also *Jer. 49:19, 50:44*, have helped me. More understandable is RSV 'the jungle of Jordan'. NIV has hardly improved on it with 'the thickets by the Jordan', though the margin 'the flooding of Jordan' really gives the sense. It is

doubtful, however, whether the poor North Londoner would have understood this any better.

For a real understanding of Jeremiah's meaning, some knowledge of Palestine's geographical history is needed. At some date before man was created, for reasons that cannot now be established with certainty, the earth in the Near East cracked open, creating a 'rift valley' from northern Syria, near the site of the later city of Antioch, right down the Gulf of Aqaba and the Red Sea as far as Lake Rudolph in Africa. The deepest part of this valley, between a point south of Lake Huleh and the south end of the Dead Sea, lies below the level of the Mediterranean.

From a point a little to the south of where the Yarmuk joins the Jordan the river has for centuries been cutting a trench in the bottom of the rift valley. This trench, known as the Zor, is from 200 yards to a mile wide. It can be as much as 150 feet below the level of the rift valley, and in the spring, when the snows melt on Hermon, the flood

waters can fill it from side to side. When the floods subside the Zor is filled with rank vegetation, which fully justifies the RSV rendering of 'jungle'. It is the home of wild and dangerous animals.

Except at the time of flood, the Jordan itself was no very great barrier. The real obstacle was provided by the jungle of the Zor. 'The fords of Jordan', which play an important part in the time of the Judges, e.g. *7:24; 12:5*, were far rather places where there was an easy way through the jungle than shallow spots on the river itself. Clearly for anyone unacquainted with the terrain it was highly hazardous to try and cross the Zor. Even if he did not lose his footing, he was in danger from wild animals and venomous snakes and the possibility of being waylaid by enemies. So Jeremiah's question clearly points to the necessity of having to live in a hostile environment. This is a question which many should answer, but it should not be put to them in this form.

THE POWER OF GOD *continued from Page Thirty-Nine*

be disappointed: 'The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God' (*52:10*). But the story he has to tell of that salvation is indeed incredible. 'Who has believed what we have heard, and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?' (*53:1*). The arm of the LORD is revealed in the person of the Suffering Servant, despised and rejected by men, stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. His sufferings and death achieve a far greater deliverance than victory over external enemies, namely the liberation of his people from the guilt of their sins.

New Testament

The identification of the power of God with a Person is made explicit in the New Testament, where Christ is called 'the power of God' (*1 Cor. 1:24*). He upholds the universe by His word of power (*Heb. 1:3*), another expression suggesting a deliberate application of power by a Person in contrast with impersonal force. The incarnation was brought about by the power of the Most High and manifested the strength of God's arm (*Luke 1:35,51*). God's power was continually displayed in the words and works of Jesus (*Luke 4:14; 5:17; 6:19*). Yet most of those who saw His miracles failed to recog-

nize the arm of the Lord (*John 12:37,38*). Ultimately He was crucified in weakness (*2 Cor. 13:4*); yet the weakness of God is stronger than men, and it is specifically in this connexion that Christ is called 'the power of God' (*1 Cor. 1:24,25*), since He saves men from sin by His death. So the preaching of the cross, or the gospel, is the power of God (*1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 1:16*), for it alone offers salvation from the guilt and power of sin.

God's power is seen not only in what it saves us from but in what it gives to us. That mighty power which raised Christ from the dead will one day raise



LOOKING AT BOOKS

Hudson Taylor: the second volume of Dr. A. J. Broomhall's definitive biography of James Hudson Taylor has just been published: **Hudson Taylor and China's Open Century. Book Two: Over the Treaty Wall.** From Hodder and Stoughton in paperback at £3.95 it is of absorbing interest, and describes the harrowing trials of some early Protestant missionaries in China. The book also recounts in detail Hudson Taylor's early contacts with Brethren.

THOSE PEOPLE AGAIN!

The Brethren

Peter Cousins. The Christian Denominations Series, Religious Education Press. 64pp. £1.35

A young Christian, converted through his school Christian Union, arrives at the youth fellowship and quickly decides he would like to come to the assembly. He attends the Breaking of Bread and participates in the weekly Bible study, but he is full of questions — why do you worship in this way? Who decides what the church should do?

An elderly lady is contacted through the local visitation programme. She used to go to an Anglican church but, having moved house, no longer does so. She would like to attend the assembly but the building and the meetings are quite unlike what she had been used to. Not that she is suspicious, but she did read some strange things concerning an apparently similar group in one of the papers. A young couple have recently arrived at the assembly and, having come to faith, would like to be baptized. It is usual for candidates to meet with one or two elders but, coming from a non-Christian background, they have no idea what membership of a local church will involve.

In such circumstances as these, the booklet written by Peter Cousins will be an invaluable tool in introducing 'the Brethren'. There has long been a need for a

brief and informative book that presents, in an intelligible form, where the Brethren have come from and what they stand for. Here we have it. To tackle the subject in 64 pages of a small format paperback is, of course, quite a challenge. Yet the present diversity within the Brethren is neatly and accurately represented by Mr. Cousins' descriptive use of two imaginary, yet typical, assemblies.

Whilst several of the Brethren 'distinctives' (such as shared leadership, open worship, and the fellowship of all true believers) are now embraced by many other evangelicals, there is still an important role for a book which outlines, in simple terms, what an earlier generation referred to as 'assembly principles'. This is not because young people (in particular) are that keen on the idea of denominations. They are not. Rather, it is because they need help in understanding why we emphasise conversion, and what are the reasons behind our mode of worship, the structure of our leadership and our use of the sacraments. Mr. Cousins' book does this admirably.

There is also an illuminating historical sketch — a chapter that is necessary today, since answers to the question 'where have we come from?' are likely to contribute significantly to our thinking concerning the future.

Since it is designed for school use, there are helpful questions and suggestions at the end of each chapter. But it would be a mistake to leave this book in the classroom. The youth group could purchase half a dozen copies and use selected chapters as a basis for discussion. It could be used (perhaps alongside a basic book on the Christian life) for a short course of instruction for those to be baptised. Copies could be made available for visitors or for those contacted in the community near the assembly. And the concluding questions in the chapter entitled 'Looking ahead' could be profitably dis-

cussed by elders in assessing our task in the future.

The author does not set out to argue a case. That is not his purpose. But as a basic and informative description of the Brethren, written in a lively manner, this book would be hard to beat.

Review by Jonathan Lamb

A MISSIONARY PIONEER

African Footprints: The Story of John Alexander Clarke of Africa

Zelma Virgin

(Of the author, 22 Oakdene Crescent, Toronto, Canada, M4J 4H9). Price to be announced.)

This reviewer must admit to some bias stemming from adolescent hero worship of the subject and a rather more mature friendship with the author. However no review is completely unbiased.

Missionary biography presents peculiar problems. Most of us tend to view those who have left hearth and kin as a breed apart and our attitude to the biographer is 'Tread gently, you are talking about my hero'. On the other hand if their experience with God is to be meaningful, we must realise missionaries are common clay with us and their true greatness is only a measure of their reflection of their Lord.

John Alexander Clarke touched the lives of many Christians, not only in Africa, but in Great Britain, North America, Australia and New Zealand. Most of us saw only a brief segment of his life, others were his companions over many years, but no one saw the broad panorama of his 83 years that is here gathered together with loving care. There was nothing small about this servant of God, either in physical stature or in the breadth of his interests and the warmth of his love for his fellowman.

This is an unretouched portrait so you will expect to find some warts. One story was charming:

Mr. Clarke complained to the wife of one of the missionaries about something the man had done. The husband later went to Mr. Clarke and told him a story from his childhood.

'When I was a little boy', he said, 'I had a governess. When I was naughty, instead of whacking me, she took out her frustrations on my pussy-cat, and I hated her for it.'

'What a wicked woman!' said Mr. Clarke.

'Well, in future, when I'm at fault, please leave my 'kitten' alone — don't talk to my wife about it — tell me!'

Mr. Clarke threw his arms about his visitor and exclaimed, 'What a parable! I'll never forget this lesson!'

This missionary said, 'He was like that. If one went to see him about misunderstandings, he was reasonable and could see the other fellow's point of view.'

Why read Christian biography? Because it makes God real. As we see Him working in the lives of our contemporaries, our faith is strengthened and we are challenged. It is good medicine for spiritual anaemia and this story of John Alexander Clarke is a good example. Although published in Canada it should be available in Britain shortly.

Review by H. C. Innes

THE EVOLUTION QUESTION ONCE MORE

Two reviews by Dr. Maurice E. J. Packer

Ape-men — Fact or Fallacy?

M. Bowden. Sovereign Publications, Box 88, Bromley, Kent. 246pp. £3.80.

This most interesting book deals comprehensively with all the ape-men of consequence allegedly leading up to God's creation of man, though cave-painting Cro-Magnon receives only a passing mention. The author rehearses at length the pathetic stories of deliberate frauds perpetrated concerning

the Piltown skull and Haeckel's faked evidence for the now abandoned theory of an embryo development recapitulating its imaginary history.

The difficult problem of the relationship of the size of an animal's brain and intelligence is discussed. The reviewer's teacher, Professor Fawcett, FRS, maintained that the best gauge was the comparison of the weights of the brain and the spinal cord. Several pages are given to methods used to estimate geological periods, which are worth noting.

Referring back to the series of ape-men, we see that there is a lack of gradualism running through it. On the contrary, there are jumps from one kind of ape-man to another. This means that there was a succession of creations of types of mature apes, according to the planning of the divine mind. God found pleasure in the work of His hands, and declared that it was very good.

After the author's extensive studies he concludes 'I consider that the present day idea that man evolved from apes is based upon inadequate evidence, which has been wilfully misconstrued in order to support the theory, and all under the name of "science". If man has not come from apes, the only alternative is that he was created.'

God, Science and Evolution
Professor E. H. Andrews. Evangelical Press. £1.75

This is a fascinating book which has been written by an eminent scientist, who sees God as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He maintains that God created the world in six literal days. Further, that natural laws show the results of God's mind at work, as do also their suspensions and replacements, which latter two he defines as miracles. He regards evolution scientifically as a mere hypothesis, which is being rejected increasingly by intellectual thought today. His attack is informed and effectual.

With reference to creation, he believes in a 'young earth', and, as one on home territory, he gives detailed information about the unreliability of the three main radiometric techniques, and also other methods, of measuring time. All these indicate that the earth is a million to thousands of millions of years old. He postulates a 'mature creation' in which

composite parts are of apparent, though not real, ages, e.g. Adam was formed as a grown-up man and Eve as an adult woman. This principle applies to wave-trains of light corresponding to supernovae that have never existed. Thus we may wrongly infer that these heavenly bodies are real and that they are light-years away. Similarly, radioactive 'clocks' used for the dating of rocks could have been made which implied millions of years of expired time quite incorrectly. Thus, apparent creations plus real ones could account for the world being created in six days. There are Bible-loving non-evolutionists who believe absolutely in the mature creation of the first representatives of every living group in God's time, but they may hesitate to accept the many implications of the total Mature Creation in Six Days theory, e.g. that the apparent one hundred and more millions of years reign of the dinosaurs was actually only a few hours on day six, and that the types of large trees of the third day (which were almost totally unrelated to those that flourished when Adam lived, as per a British Museum leaflet) became extinct in three days, leaving behind the coal measures that pre-existed our first parents. Already one can hear Professor Andrews confidently proclaiming 'With God, all things are possible'.

THE CHRISTIAN AND FAMILY LIFE

Four reviews by Margaret Carrick

Hide and Sex

John Noble. Kingsway. 119pp. £1.35 (paperback).

My biggest problem while reading this book was to keep the title hidden from my nine-year-old daughter. It is taken from one chapter and in no way describes the book as a whole. I feel the book suffers from this rather stark title, but accept the author's appeal for openness between Christian couples in everything, especially the physical aspects of love. He also says much more. I found the whole book racy, humorous, yet practical, covering the whole subject of love, in courting, marriage and the family, obviously written by someone who has a great sense of humour and perspective, not to mention a living faith in Christ.

Could usefully be read by husbands and wives together.

Marriage in the Balance

Ann Warren. Kingsway. 63pp. 95p (paperback).

A helpful counselling aid for married people. Easily read, it illustrates the pitfalls into which a marriage can just as easily fall, even those of Christians who feel that such things should not happen to them.

Lack of communication emerges as a major contributing cause, so we are urged to 'keep the channels open and really learn to communicate'. Warnings and danger signs are identified, but there is more than analysis here. Biblical principles are stated for vital marriage relationships and practical advice offered to convert areas of twosomeness into onesomeness.

Bringing up the Family

Mary Batchelor. Lion. 80pp. £1.75 (paperback).

A very comprehensive and practical book, dealing with just about everything from changing nappies to coping with a handicapped child. Each stage from the birth of a first child to early puberty is carefully outlined and

information on helpful agencies and further reading is ample. Health care, family diet and budget provide a useful reference for looking after the family. Mary Batchelor also helps us sort out priorities and question our reasons for doing things, like why we demand certain standards from our children. Set in the context of a living Christian faith, it is a useful aid to parenthood.

Reflections

Katharine Short. Lion. 62pp. £1.95.

If you like brief stories, then this beautifully illustrated book, written by a mum for mums will appeal. It examines the joys and sorrows, frustrations and fears, which are a mother's lot. Each situation is easily recognisable, sometimes amusing, sometimes touching and followed in every case by a reflection (hence the title), a Bible verse and simple prayer. A reminder that 'in everything God works for good...'
Rom. 8:28.

A lovely book to pick up for a devotional moment in a hectic day and ideal for Mother's present.

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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The March Question

A busy Christian man remarked that he was able to halve his potential correspondence by consigning to the waste-paper basket all letters from perfect strangers which began with the words 'Dear Brother'. I could not go all the way with him because I know that when a letter from certain parts of the world (especially from east of the Iron Curtain) begins in this way, a genuine appeal is being made to the family bond that unites believers in Christ. But in our own culture it is too often a relic of religious convention. What do readers think?

Mr. C. J. Awcock replies:

Each person has to accept limitations in what can be attempted. In the light of his experience the Christian mentioned was able to halve potential replies in an arbitrary way by not accepting letters addressed 'dear brother'.

The question posed in my mind is — How should one address a stranger who is a Christian? I would be suspicious maybe of 'dear Tom or Harry or even Mr. X' while 'dear sir' might seem too formal now. Other terms are unlikely to be preferred to 'dear brother' which has the merit of being a proper mode of address by a complete stranger of any culture.

I suppose the problem lies in the insincere use of this form of address by other groups. A relic of religious convention maybe, but one in which there can be a wealth of affection when spoken but not evident when written.

Mr. H. L. Ellison replies:

I am afraid that no justification for the very busy man can be found. It is possible to be too busy. If a perfect stranger writes to me, claiming to be a brother in Christ, who am I to say that he is not? His request may well be unreasonable and impossible for me to meet, but that is no reason why I should begrudge him the courtesy of an answer, explaining why I am unable to meet his wish.

Why should he not address me as Dear Brother? True, it can become an empty formality, but so can Dear Sir, or Dear Mr. X. Recently I had a card from Siberia from a perfect stranger. He risked major trouble with the Soviet authorities for writing to me. Was I to

ignore a not altogether reasonable request and not to write explaining why I was unable to do what he asked, because we did not know one another and he called me Dear Brother? In fact I called him Dear Brother in my reply.

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

After the illustrative introduction the question seems to be: concerning the term 'dear brother' as used in our own culture, is it not too often a relic of religious convention?

For me the answer would be: if the salutation comes from a complete stranger, who is apparently merely a member of 'western' christendom (first world?), he is implying thereby that my spiritual beliefs are the same as his, and that if I knew him well I should regard him as a 'dear brother' whereas this is probably not the case at all. But not being so busy as 'the busy Christian man' I should probably read it and then perhaps dispose of it. In such a case the term is certainly a relic of the past — perhaps back to the monasteries. But if such a letter came from 'the third world' or even from 'the second world' — a strangely unused intermediate term — then I too should read it and treat it on its merits. And all this is why some correspondents ask that their address be withheld from magazines, etc., as the Editor well knows.

Today, more and more, people are referred to by their forenames. In an assembly convention the term 'brother' is usually used when the name is unknown, say, at a question and answer session. Brethren usually refer to one another by their forenames when they are approximately the same age, as do the sisters. But just as Paul was addressed as 'brother Saul' by Ananias (Acts 9:17) and as 'brother' by 'the elders' (Acts 21:20) so we might occasionally include the word 'brother' without having nice reasons for doing so, but just to remind ourselves that we really are all brothers and sisters in Christ. Lastly, if we are keen to be scriptural it is well to note that the term 'dear brother' does not appear in scripture.

Mr. G. E. M. Simmons replies:

I understand that the 'Plymouth Brethren' were so called because they refer-

red to one another as 'Brother' and came from Plymouth! The continuance of this custom seems to depend a little on the cultural background of assembly members and particularly its location. It seems to be that it is the suburban fellowships where speakers are given their full titles and the more urban ones where everyone is reduced to the (lowest) common denominator.

One secretary, who demanded such equality, referred to an (the) evangelist as 'Brother Graham will be preaching the Gospel at Harringay Hall! But it was possible to detect even in his notices a certain hierarchy ranging from plain 'brother', through 'dear brother', onto 'our friend and brother', to the superlatives of 'dearly beloved and longed for brother'!

I am sometimes surprised when a very young believer greets me with 'welcome dear brother' but I assume that he is a member of a local Trade Union and is honouring me with equality. His greeting is, of course, to be preferred to that shortened form 'Bro.' which sounds like a local gents' outfitters.

My own preference is to be called by my Christian name (if it was good enough for Paul it is good enough for me) and most of my friends do this. I have even more reasons to avoid nicknames with my initials (which, incidentally I can never put on the outside of my brief case!).

In case, dear Brother (editors obviously deserve a capital B), you fear that flippancy has overtaken me — may I add that I would consider it a very high honour to be known by Paul as 'Brother Geoffrey': see for example *Romans 16:23*. Incidentally, I recently received a letter from Nigeria which commenced 'Expensive Brother'!

Mr. Leslie James replies:

Concerning our esteemed brother Professor Bruce's friend. How extraordinary that a dear brother should object to being called dear brother by another dear brother. I wonder what dear brother Quartus thinks of it?

As I have had the audacity to call you Dear Brother, you have every right to consign this letter to the waste-paper basket.



READERS' FORUM

Readers' Forum is open to contributions from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or Christian living: doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

This month's contribution is from Mrs. Doreen Flanagan of Woking.

The Social Gospel

The 'Social Gospel' is a term used by non-evangelical organisations (such as Save the Children Fund, Christian Aid and Oxfam) to emphasise the need to

attend to the physical needs of our fellow-men, particularly in Third World countries. We must commend them for their concern, commitment, gruelling hard work and practical help to the needy millions in this world.

In our churches today the question posed is 'What are we doing about telling and practising the good news of Jesus Christ today — as a church and as individuals?' First of all, we must be aware of what is happening in this rapidly-changing micro-chip age and what effects those changes have on the people we meet every day. We cannot afford to be isolationists but need to be well-informed about the restless, discontented, fearful and morally corrupt society of 1982. 'In the world but not of it' should be our motto. Are we being influenced by the language, thought-forms, behaviour and standards of our

friends or are they watching our testimony and wondering, even envying, what makes us the happy, fulfilled and joyful people we are (well . . . sometimes!)? To communicate successfully with the people God has placed within each individual's orbit, we need to have thought through the Bible's teaching on matters of current concern. We must make the most of every opportunity the Holy Spirit provides for us to mix with people in need of Christ — at work, in our leisure activities and clubs and on the road where we live. By showing concern for a new widow, a handicapped child, an unmarried mum, an overwrought parent or a lonely Senior Citizen we are showing the love of God working through us. God has no other hands, feet, minds or tongues in this world today except ours.

Continued on page 18

THE BIBLE IN THE EIGHTIES

is the latest publication of the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship. Edited by John Polkinghorne: contributions and book reviews by John Baigent, David Brady, F. F. Bruce, David Clines, David J. Clark, E. W. Crabb, L. L. Fox, John Goldingay, J. Keir Howard, Walter Liefeld, Peter Lowman, Charles Martin, Alan Nute, Stephen Short and John Wood.

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CORRESPONDENCE



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Church Army Centenary

From Mr. Graham Goodwill
Sir,
The Church Army would welcome hearing from any organisation that is celebrating its Centenary Year in 1982 who have living descendants of the Founder of their Movement.

I would very much appreciate, through your columns, if you could draw attention to this request.

Yours, etc.,

Graham Goodwill

The Church Army, Independents Road, Blackheath, London SE3 9LG.

Mr. James Hodson

From Mr. Reginald Hodson PPVI, FSVA (Retd)

Dear Mr. Coad,

Referring to the Notice of the home call of Harold Wildish, in this month's *Harvester*, I should like to add my tribute to the life and work of this faithful preacher of the Gospel whom I have known through sixty years.

I well remember being taken by my parents to visit his father and mother with whom Harold and his brother Edward were living in Westcliff-on-Sea. To put the record straight, at no time did my father, James Hodson, 'live in a horse drawn caravan in Essex'. Furthermore, my father severed his connection with the Counties Evangelization Society during Mr. Grant's early days as Secretary of that organization.

My parents and I lived at Thornton Heath, South Croydon and Purley, in Surrey. They did not come to live in Essex until April, 1934.

Yours sincerely,

Reginald Hodson

118 High Street, Rayleigh, Essex.

Growth and Decline?

From Mr. A. J. Sheldrake

Dear Mr. Coad,

I was very interested to read in the February *Harvester* the two articles (presumably intentionally in juxtaposition), namely 'Growth and Decline' by Brian

Mills and 'High and Dry on a Rock Strewn Beach' reporting on the European Evangelical Alliance's Conference on Revival.

The problems highlighted in both articles (which are not confined to 'brethren' assemblies) seem easier to diagnose than to remedy. As Mr. Derham so rightly indicates, the tide is in God's control; it is of little use to try and play King Canute in reverse!

The one unfailing and effective resource therefore, must be prayer, and it is heartening that both writers recognised this. Are we, however, praying sufficiently fervently, specifically and deliberately regarding the present situation, both in our prayer meetings and privately? James 5:17-18 indicates the power of this resource.

There are five specific factors that, as I see it, militate against such prayer and perhaps I could set these out:-

1. **The make-up of assemblies.** Many assemblies are small and consist mainly of elderly brethren with a predominance of women. Such assemblies will undoubtedly have their hands full with the maintenance of the weekly routine. Our dear elderly brethren are often very devoted, but in the natural course of things they do not look very far ahead. Indeed they may tend to display the attitude of King Hezekiah in 2 Kings 20:19.

2. **Isolationism.** As Brian Mills so clearly explains, we have taken independence to a degree that leads to weakness. I believe a number of assemblies have closed that could have continued had they received more support from neighbouring brethren. However, I do not feel that satellite assemblies present the right answer. Would not a brotherly relationship on equal terms be more scriptural? Paul's epistles indicate an interest and concern between churches, often expressed in a practical way. Is not this how the Body of Christ should operate in practice?

3. **Commuting.** I have found from personal experience that with the best will in the world, it is not possible to be fully committed to an assembly when living several miles away. Apart from this it is difficult to invite neighbours to Gospel Meetings etc. if they have to be transported some distance. It seems to me to be quite wrong for brethren who live

close to one another to travel to distant assemblies in different directions, unless of course there is some particular reason that makes it necessary.

4. **The decline of Saturday Conferences.** Why have these declined? Brian Mills does not give any reason. Some assemblies hold these very successfully, together with Saturday evening lectures from Bible teachers, missionaries etc., and use them as an opportunity to get to know brethren from quite a wide area. The provision of refreshments after the meeting helps considerably in this regard and assists in overcoming the isolationism already referred to. My own assembly holds such meetings about once every two months or so and we have never had any difficulty in finding willing speakers — and gifted ones too!

5. **Reluctance to 'go out'.** This leads to a very narrow outlook on the Lord's work in the area where one lives. I believe we need not only to go out with the Gospel, but to go out and enjoy fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. House Groups are clearly an opportunity for this. Many of them may not be set up or conducted just in the way we might like, but they do provide an opportunity for sharing what we may have of Christ. About 18 months ago I was invited to join a House Group in the road in which I live. It was quite different from what I had expected, the hosts being a Roman Catholic couple. I very nearly left the group, but persevered and as I did so found that opportunities were arising when we could speak about the basic truths of Christianity to some who knew little of them. Should we not be using the truth the Lord may have committed to us in this manner? Is this not what the parable of the talents is about? No doubt a great deal more could be added to the current debate, but while we discuss these things, let us remember that the work is God's. Our place is to be in prayer and dependence upon Him, that He by His Holy Spirit may bring about a reviving. I believe it will come in His time — may we be ready for it.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A. J. Sheldrake

19 Northampton Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 7HB.

'Forget yourself?'

From Mr. H. L. Ellison

Dear Mr. Coad,

I regret that Mr. Cousins did not take a more forceful line, when answering the question about the modern chorus, '... Forget about yourself and worship him ...'

He is, of course, correct in saying that while it can be very difficult, it is sometimes possible. But when I am suffering from physical discomfort (toothache for instance), or deep grief, or even supreme joy, they can make it virtually impossible, nor is there any real reason why I should try.

There is a very real danger, if our hymns and choruses present a virtually unattainable ideal to the worshipper, especially if there is virtually no Scriptural authority for it. Those singing them are in many cases indulging in mass hypocrisy, or they may try artificially to create the feelings they claim.

Yours etc.

H. L. Ellison

Dawlish, Devon.

Worship and Service

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,

I recently enjoyed listening to tapes of the addresses given at Bloomsbury during the Saturday evenings of February '82 on the subject of worship, and would like to offer two comments.

The first concerns the use of musical instruments at a so-called 'worship meeting'.

Under the old covenant, the worship of God was evidenced by outward phenomena such as animal sacrifices and the playing of musical instruments. Under the new covenant, the emphasis is very much on the worship of God in the Spirit, and there is a minimum of outward phenomena. In relation to the change from the old to the new, believers are scarcely entitled to accept the cessation of animal sacrifices and yet seek to carry over the use of musical instruments. This statement is not made to deny our liberty in the Spirit; only to draw attention to the illogicality of seeking to defend or espouse the use of musical instruments today on the ground that they were used under the old covenant. Given that we have the liberty, let such instruments, if used, be a help; not be used as an occasion for a 'performance'.

The second comment concerns the substitution of 'spiritual worship' for 'reasonable service' in Rom. 12:1.

Quoting from Deut. 6:13 — 'Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him' — our Lord said to Satan 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve'. Is there here a distinction without a difference; did the Lord mean to say 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou worship', as the change in Rom. 12:1 might be thought to imply?

In the AV, the word 'worship' is in most cases the translation of a Greek word that means 'to make obeisance' (Vine); in fact it is sometimes translated as 'to

bow down', for example in Lev. 26:1. In scripture, prostration of the body often symbolizes worship. On the other hand, 'service' often relates to activity by the body — the doing of something. In Josh. 22:27 is an example of what constituted 'service': '... we might do the service of the Lord before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices ...' Thus, too, Heb. 9:6: '... the priests went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service of God'; and so Heb. 8:5 and 9:1.

We may recall how the writer of Romans viewed his life in relation to serving the Lord (Acts 27:23). He desired that Christ be magnified in his body whether by life or by death; he was always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus; and he did not count his life dear unto himself. I would therefore think that in Rom. 12:1, Paul could be saying that a sacrificial way of living, in which bodily discomforts and afflictions are accepted when necessary for the sake of the gospel, is owed to the Lord (Rom. 11:35) in view of God's mercies (Rom. 11:30-32); and so is a reasonable way for a believer to live and work for the Lord — is an 'intelligent service' (JND), no doubt springing from a worshipful heart. Those charismatic-type songs came over well!

Yours sincerely in the Master's service,
L. L. Fox

9 Warden Close, Maidstone, Kent,
ME16 0JL.

READERS' FORUM

Continued from page 16

If we believe God answered prayer in providing our homes, we must believe their location is the very place He would have us start. Our nearest neighbours know a lot about us, but do they know what makes us tick? It is difficult sometimes to strike the right balance between caring and seeming to be 'nosey' but God has the answer and He will direct our steps if we commit the problem to Him.

As Christians, we have a good recipe for what I like to call 'the alternative lifestyle'. It is amazing how people will discuss 'the good life' today and what an opportunity that gives us! Good recipes are worth passing on — and it is the very 'passing on' that frightens us. We may be afraid of losing face or being thought of as cranks, yet sometimes the very people we are scared of are those who are envying us our peace of mind and sense of fun (if we show such).

There is no point in promoting the 'Social Gospel' (or the 'Gospel for Society') in our own strength. Satan is very quick to confuse and dishearten us. If we are 'in business for God' we must be honest with ourselves and with Him. He will show us our strengths and weaknesses in communication. He is able to help us with problems of shyness, unwillingness and fear. The truth of the hymn 'How great Thou art' needs to be imprinted on our hearts to show us poor, miserable, frail creatures that all we do for Him is not done in our own strength but in the power of the Holy Spirit. Spring-cleaning time is upon us again and perhaps we are ready for a spiritual spring-clean. God's Holy Spirit can delve deep into our personalities and reveal a lot of rubbish we can get rid of; He can cleanse us and fill us and make us ready for the Master to use, if we are but willing. This must be the first step.

The rest will follow as we tell God that **because** we love Him we love our neighbours, friends, colleagues and relations — even those we don't particularly like! He will guide us as to which people we should witness to, perhaps not in word but in deed (offering to baby-sit, making a cake, sharing a lawnmower, offering a lift or even walking a dog!). People will wonder **why** we do such things and then we need a quick telephone call to the Master to show us how to explain.

The society we live in is composed of individuals, each different, each in need of the Saviour. As we meet these people every day — on the doorstep, in the supermarket queue, at the bus stop, in our homes or at work may our prayer be 'Lead me to some soul today, teach me, Lord, just what to say'. He will!

NEWS PAGE



Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission

March 31 saw publication of the final report of the ARCIC. Two previous reports having dealt with differences concerning the Eucharist and the priesthood, the third report considered four issues concerning the papacy. (1) Discussing the *Petrine texts*, the report admits that 'the New Testament contains no explicit record of the transmission of Peter's leadership' and that the passages were variously interpreted as early as the time of the Church Fathers. It recognises that words spoken to Peter cannot be applied to the Bishop of Rome with an identical meaning. The conclusion, however, is that 'a universal primacy will be needed in a reunited Church and should appropriately be the primacy of the Bishop of Rome'. (2) The 'divine right' claimed for the primacy of Rome has to be viewed in a different light since the Second Vatican Council 'rejected the position that the Church of God is co-extensive with the Roman Catholic Church'. But since the Church of England may apparently now be recognised as a Church, it is accepted that 'primacy of the Bishop of Rome can be affirmed as part of God's design' and the language of divine right 'need no longer be seen as a matter of disagreement between us'. (3) *The universal and immediate jurisdiction* of the Pope means that he has the right to exercise oversight at every level within the church. Archbishops as well as bishops are subject to him. The report emphasises that this ministry should be exercised in co-operation with other bishops and that this primacy is a service in and to the church and associated with 'the task of

safeguarding the faith and unity of the universal church'. Nevertheless, Anglicans, says the report, feel entitled to assurance that accepting the Pope's jurisdiction in this way would not lead to the end of distinctive Anglican traditions. (4) The discussion of *infallibility* shows signs of considerable tension. Recognising that a united church would mean a 'universal primate who . . . can speak with authority in the name of the church', the report acknowledges that on occasion the Bishop of Rome has preserved the church from error. But Anglican members of the Commission were plainly embarrassed by the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary and this section ends with the suggestion that 'some difficulties will not be wholly resolved until practical initiative has been taken in our two churches living together more visibly in the one *koinonia*'. The doubts expressed about some traditional Roman teaching have led to a cool reception in some Vatican circles. But the way in which basic biblical, doctrinal and historical issues are by-passed has confirmed the fears of many evangelicals within the Church of England. Of course, there is no question of any official response until 1988 or 1990. But if reunion were to take place along these lines, then the consequent departures from the Anglican Church would leave the balance within it. (*The Final Report*, CTS/SPCK, £1.95.)

Evangelism

The Fishers Fellowship have just registered their 50th Winning Another School. This is a new concept of lay training

in personal witness and it seems to be gaining acceptance and momentum within many denominations. It was just over a year ago that the first Winning Another School was held at South Park Chapel, Ilford, Essex.

The average number attending the Schools is 30, which means that 1,500 Christians will have completed the course. During the five weeks of instruction and practical assignments, every student will have been reminded of the basics of the Christian gospel and been given at least four different methods of making it clear and plain. The Schools are designed to encourage personal witness for Christ within the context of day to day Christian living. If request for the Schools, and leaders for them, continues to grow, it will be necessary to arrange for Leadership Training Classes. Enquiries regarding both the possibility of having a Winning Another School locally, or offering your services as a potential leader of the Schools may be addressed to the Fellowship at 96 Plaistow Lane, Bromley, Kent. BR1 3AS. The Fellowship also offers a course on Christian Counselling for £2, post paid.

From *Way to Life Ministry* comes news that despite the reported difficulties Dick Saunders is experiencing with his vocal cords he experienced great help in both the Belfast and the Whitstable Crusades. In future he will curtail some of his activities and concentrate his energies on main rallies during the Crusades. March saw 17 new radio programmes released in TWR Swaziland. In April a further 7 were planned from TWR Bonaire. Plans for the

summer include Crusades in Weston-Super-Mare, Fraserburgh, Southport and Portsmouth. For those living within driving distances of these towns it is possible to become involved as counsellors, choir members, stewards. Prayer partners and financial supporters are needed from everywhere! Further details are available from the WTL Crusade Director, 3a North Street, Hailsham, E. Sussex.

African Enterprise has arranged a series of concerts in Uganda from June 12-25. Garth Hewitt will be accompanied by Richard Bewes, vicar of Emmanuel parish church, Northwood.

The Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism has produced a brochure about its work. It recognises that each local church has different gifts and different opportunities. It helps local churches to find ways of evangelism which are right for them either alone or together with others. It introduces people with appropriate skills or experience to help the local church to become more effective in its evangelism. Its future plans include finding out what it can about methods of effective evangelism, drawing conclusions about these and sharing the conclusions with churches and other Christian organisations, and continuing to encourage the churches other Christian organisations to concentrate their resources upon these more effective ways. Among the encouraging stories of the work of the NIE is one of an assembly in Carshalton which reports that as a result of evangelistic visits to homes by the churches together, the assembly is now

so full that it has had to take on a full-time worker to help cope with the extra pressures!

Latin America

An information sheet from the International Federation of Evangelical Students tells a remarkable story of progress in Latin America. The challenges here are great. A continually growing population; ideological battles with forces such as Marxism; spiritism; the attraction of Eastern mysticism; secularised despair in the form of fascism. In addition, it is a young continent of rising expectations. Birth-rate figures are among the highest in the world. The average age of some countries is 18 and of others only 14. The main university of Mexico is probably the largest in the world. When IFES student work began to be organised in 1958, 17 groups existed all over the continent. Twenty-two years later, there were national movements active in 14 countries and a local staff force of 50 ministering to 350 groups of university or secondary students. In spite of difficulties, the work continues to expand.

Holiday Activities

From *All-Age Christian Ministries* comes a report on the first year of Glanmor Christian Hotel at Tywyn. The first summer season was so overwhelmingly successful that a very full programme has been planned for 1982. Quite a number of people extended their stay during 1981 and some returned for second visits within a matter of a few months. Senior citizens holidays have been arranged for May, June and September, including two-way coach fare from South Wales, Bristol, Manchester and Birmingham. Party bookings are available. And there is an offer of a free holiday to all who can arrange a party of 20 adults (or equivalent including children). Details from Glanmor Christian Hotel, 3-5 Marine Parade, Tywyn, Gwynedd, LL36 0DE.

Tell a Tourist 1982 will be functioning at York, Bath, London, Cambridge, Chester and Exeter in July and August. Team members will be trained in personal evangelism, use of the sketchboard in the open air, coffee bar work and street theatre. Details are available

from the central office at 24 Elm Grove, London N8 9AL.

Hymns

Subscribers to the Scripture Union's 'In Touch' — family service ideas, linked to the SU teaching manuals — already receive the new publication 'Words and Music'. Others may obtain it (four issues a year) if they send a cheque for £1.50 requesting 'Words and Music' to the Scripture Union. It is a 'gallery' for new music, published and unpublished with ideas for the church's use of music, etc. **Harvester** readers looking for new material of this sort will think that ten songs are good value at the price.

George MacDonald

George MacDonald was a prolific 19th century writer. Many people first heard of him through references in C. S. Lewis's writings. Some of his fantasy stories have been published by Scripture Union and by Lion. Further indication of current interest in MacDonald is shown by the fact that a George MacDonald evening was held during February at Church House, Westminster. The speakers were Dr. Stephen Prickett and Dr. Stuart Blanch, Archbishop of York. Interested readers may care to know that the address of the George MacDonald Society is 122 Warwick Way, London SW1

Radio

HCJB reports one church in Russia that claims to have made 18,000 converts during 1981. A survey of the converts shows that 80% had their first contact with the gospel through listening to missionary radio broadcasts from abroad. Meanwhile, the Russian government is said to be spending six times as much money on equipment to jam Christian radio broadcasts as the Christian broadcasters spend on their own transmissions!

Relief

Tear Fund has provided two grants to flood affected areas in South America. 400 miles north-west of Lima, the capital, floods have cut a 30 mile swathe of destruction. Around the provincial town of Uchiza some 700 people were killed as a lake overflowed and the

Chontayacu river burst its banks. 16 villages have been completely destroyed and 6,000 people were made homeless. £500 has been provided by Tear Fund to the National Evangelical Council of Peru (CONEP) for its relief work in the area.

In a second flood situation, the river Parana in Brazil has once again flooded, causing widespread hardship to the village communities situated on its banks. Along 30 miles of river banks, near the town of Nova Londrina, Baptist Missionary, the Rev. Gerry Myhill is undertaking relief work. 65 families have been identified as those most in need of assistance. Food distribution for a three month period is now taking place, as well as the distribution of rice, maize, and vegetable seed. Tear Fund has provided £5,000 for this relief project.

Roman Catholicism

The appalling demonstrations against the Archbishop of Canterbury in Liverpool parish church on March 11 may nevertheless have served a useful purpose if they alerted Dr. Runcie to the fact that a significant number of people do not view the prospect of reunion between the Church of England and the Church of Rome with as much equanimity as he appears to feel.

On the other hand, it now appears that the Foreign Office was not giving special treatment to the Vatican when it allowed the announcement of the upgrading of the diplomatic status of the Church of Rome to come from the Vatican rather than from London. For it was only a few weeks later that the procedure was repeated when Washington behaved in the same way by being first with an announcement that President Reagan was not only going to visit the United Kingdom but (according to the spokesman) was to address members of both Houses of Parliament in Westminster Hall.

Stewardship

The Wallington Missionary Auction continues to make good use of 'treasures' which Christians send to be sold for missionary activity. Gifts can be earmarked for any missionary society and reserves can be placed on more valuable items.

No expense is deducted unless transport is used because all the helpers are volunteers. During 1980 the team in Wallington raised £90,000 at ten auctions. In the most recent sale, an antique music box raised £1,250, but lead soldiers and 1920 vintage toys also fetched high prices — £19,000 was raised in two evenings, because about 150 Christians had been willing to part with some of their treasures. Wallington Missionary Auctions can be contacted at 01-647 8437.

Youth

George Verwer of Operation Mobilisation was the speaker on the fourth and last Earth Invaders tour visiting 20 centres and closing in the Westminster Central Hall on April 3. At the half-way stage, total attendances at the Earth Invaders presentation had passed the 20,000 mark and substantial numbers of young people had been personally counselled.

Press Day, Mon. May 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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DENOMINATION



PEOPLE AND PLACES

NEW ASSEMBLY

Bridlington:

An assembly is now meeting at North Street Gospel Hall, 49 North Street, Bridlington. Breaking of Bread 10.45 a.m. Gospel Service 6.30 p.m. every Lord's Day (D.V.) Visitors will be warmly welcomed. Correspondence to: Mr. W. H. Boyd, 'Berachah', 11a Chestnut Close, Bridlington, YO16 5YT.

NEW PREMISES

The 'opening' date of the reconstructed Welling Gospel Chapel, Kent, is May 15, God willing. Fuller information from G. F. Cole, 127 Welling Way, Welling, Kent. DA16 2RW.

NEW ADDRESS

Mr. & Mrs. W. E. Davies will be returning from the Bahamas in early May. Enquiries should be sent to Mr. L. O. Davies, 3 Berry Mead Road, Cyncoed, Cardiff, S. Glam.

Derek Stringer:

Now at 47 Spicer Place, Bilton, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV22 7EA.

STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund: Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund during March amounted to £276.00.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund: 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during March amounted to £5,717.70.

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.: Puddington 2; Tavistock 6; Swanwick (Crusade) Southampton 9-16; Beer 19; Clayhidon 23; Exeter 25, 30.

Campbell, B.: Falmouth 1-7; Helston 8; Plymouth 9; Falmouth 12, 21; Allerbridge 22; Glasgow 24-31.

Clifford, D.: Nassau, Bahamas; Haven School of Evangelism, Pembroke; West Moors, Fareham; Lille, France.

Gillham, S.: Martock 2; Poole 4; West Moors 5, 6; Chickerell 7; Dorset/Somerset CEW Preparation Meeting 8; Merriot/Wimborne 9; Swanage 11; Wallisdown 12; Chickerell 13; West Moors 15; Wokingham 16; West Moors 18; Bethany Hall, Weymouth 21; Poole 23; Christchurch 24; Schools Tour 24-28; Heatherlands Church, Parkstone 27; Wallisdown 30; Wiltshire Family Day 31.

Grimsey, A. W.: Park Chapel, Norwich 2; Storrington, Sussex 9; Yapton, Sussex 15; Briston, Norfolk 25; Harlesden 30.

Iliffe, D. J.: Walthamstow Children's Mission 2-12; St. Albans 13; Selsey 15; Barking 16; Angmering 17-21; Birmingham 22-25; Bognor Regis 26.

Loader, G.: Abingdon Campaign — Bristol 1-9.

Lowther, G. K.: Rochester 2, 11; Bow, E.5 3;

Sydenham, S.E. 26 4, 11; St. Mary Cray, Kent 5; Fleet, Hants. 6, 13, 20; Dagenham 9; Edmonton, N.9, 10; Barnet 12; Hopton, Nr. Diss 15, 16; Forest Gate, E.7 17; London Colney 18; Gillingham, Kent 19, 26; Seven Kings, Ex. 20; Rainham 23; Leytonstone, E.11 24; Plaistow, E.13 25, 26; Hampstead, N.W.3 27; Grimsby 28-31.
Pierce, D. H.: Bideford TM 2; Paignton, Gerston 9, 16, 23, 30; Eastacombe 10, 24; Rest of May at Barnstaple.

Short, S. S.: Hereford 2; Weston-super-Mare 4, 6; Quenington, Glos. 5; Matlock 8, 9, 13; Chesterfield 12; Nottingham 14-18, 22, 23; Stapleford 19; Hutton, Avon 24; Bognor Regis 28-30.

Stringer, D.: Rugby 1-3 & 7-31; Dorchester 4-6.

Thurston, A.: Dartmoor (Prison) 1; Dawlish School 3; St. Thomas Moore School/Kingsbridge 4; Forde Park School/Chillington 5; Dartmoor (P) 7; Cardiff 8; Bishopswood/Blackdown 9; Balsall Common 10-14; Kingsbridge/Strete 16; Kingsbridge 18; Lynmouth 19; Dartmoor (P) 20-21; Kingsbridge 23-25; Chillington 26; Dartmoor (P) 28; Kingsbridge 30.

Tatford, F. A.: Alresford 1, 2; Pontypridd 8, 9; Bexhill 22; Guildford 29-31.

Tryon, G. C.: Eastbourne 2; Peckham 5, 12; Cambridge 9; Welling 15; Fetcham 16; Ewell, Kingston 23; Eltham Park 26; Reigate 27; Loampits, Lewisham 30.

Whitern, R. J.: British Colombia, Victoria 1-5; Orillia, Ontario 6-12; Herts Regional Rally, Potters Bar 15; Weymouth 16; North Devon

17-20; High Wycombe 23; Herts Agricultural Show, Redbourn 29-30.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Boscombe: Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, by kind permission. Conversational Bible Readings, Saturday, 5 June. Subject: The Epistles to Timothy (1 Tim. ch. 4). Speaker: J. Riddle (Cheshunt).

Cambridge: Panton Hall, 14 Panton Street. 50th Anniversary Conference, Saturday, June 12 at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Speakers: Dr. F. A. Tatford and Prof. D. W. Gooding.

Croxley Green: Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Meeting, Saturday 22 May at 7 p.m. Speaker: A. C. Gooding.

Dumbarton: Lennox Evangelical Church, Risk Street, Dumbarton. West Dunbartonshire Missionary Weekend, May 14-16. Friday, 14 at 7.30 p.m. Welcome Meeting; Saturday, 15 at 3.30 p.m. Women's Meeting and Men's Discussion Meeting; 6.30 p.m. Missionary Rally; Sunday, 16 at 8.00 p.m. After Church Rally. Speakers: Mr. & Mrs. Velez (Bolivia), Mr. & Mrs. Rowberry (India); David Gool (France).

Ealing: Annual Conference in Grove Hall, The Grove on June 5 at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Speakers: F. Epps and D. West.

Eastbourne: Christian Convention, Cavendish Place Chapel on May 28 at 3.15 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. Speakers: M. K. Hall, J. Jackson, A. Leckie, G. Waugh.

Frinton:

The Annual Thanksgiving Meeting of the Ernest Luff Homes will be held (DV) at 3.00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 16, in the Frinton Parish Church. The guest speaker will be Comdr. S. E. Sharpe, DSO.

Grimsby:

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. May 31 at 3.00 and 6.00 p.m. Annual Convention. Speakers: Prof. F. F. Bruce and C. G. Collins (Doncaster).

Lingfield, Surrey:

The Mission Hall, High Street. Annual Conference, May 8 at 6.00 p.m. Speaker: Rev. Geoffrey R. King. Subject: Where are we now in Prophecy? Refreshments.

Littleport, Cambs.:

Gospel Hall, City Road. June 5 at 7.30 p.m. Ministry. Speaker: G. K. Lowther (Grimsby).

Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Vincent Road, Leagrave, Luton. May 15, Conversational Bible Readings 6.30-8.00 p.m. Subject: Seen but unrecognised (Gen. 42:1-38). Speaker: J. Sage (Bexleyheath).

Southampton:

Southern Counties Ladies' Bible Conference, Portwood Chapel, Portwood, Southampton. May 8, 3.00-7.30 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. M. Timmins, Miss M. Atkinson.

Swanage:

Gospel Hall. Annual Conference, Saturday May 22 at 4.00 and 6.15 p.m. Speaker: Dr. A. Linton (Bristol).

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John Peters, John Polkinghorne, Patrick Soohdeo

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GREEK TRAGEDY

This editorial is being written rather later in the production schedule than is usual; and still, as I write, that unrelenting Greek tragedy being played in the South Atlantic awaits its dénouement. There is an atmosphere of almost inevitability about this march of two great nations to the appalling horrors of modern warfare: and all in a conflict that should never have happened. The Christian — appalled, as he believes still that nothing happens outside the divine purpose — cries out for some meaning to it all. It is a cry that re-echoes down history. But for readers of *The Harvester* and for Brethren churches in general the tragedy is particularly poignant. For 1982 is the centenary year of Brethren work in Argentina: a work that has been one of the most flourishing in any part of the world. Churches have taken a firm root in that country, and today rival in vigour and devotion those in Britain. Their magazine *Campo Misionero* published a special centenary issue in January: and on its cover was a picture of some of the pioneers of that work. The point of the tragedy is that so many of those pioneers came from Britain.

To those who are conscious of their common redemption by the blood of Christ, there are ties that are rooted deeper than those of even the strongest natural obligations. At this time, the prayers and the affections of Christians in this country must go out to our brothers and sisters in Argentina, as we hope and pray that theirs go out to us: and particularly must that be so among those who share common traditions and ways of worship.

Meanwhile we look for a deeper message from God to us both. As one great nation which has in recent years so tragically betrayed, in its materialism and search for pleasure, so much of its mighty heritage under God; and as another which has stained its own history with so much violence and cruelty to its own people and among its own people; as these two nations confront each other with bitterness and anger in their hearts, we ask 'Our God, what do You wish to teach us both?' May our nations learn to ask that question with humility!

We welcome too the fact that the work in Argentina is not dependent on Britain, any more than we depend on them: that our brethren in Germany and Italy are also closely involved — as well as from North America. We rejoice that God's work is based more soundly than on national loyalties.

THE ESSENCE OF FAITH

A. G. Newell

Another of Dr. Tony Newell's stimulating occasional papers.

To my shame, I know people whose kindness is more consistent, whose temperaments are more equable and whose commitment to their deepest convictions puts my Christian life in the shade. I remember the Communist who, despite advanced age and ill-health, literally killed himself by struggling through the snow when public transport had been taken off, in order to attend a Party meeting. Again, I know a remarkable man whose demeanour is positively Christlike, but whose confessed religious position is agnostic. When other people can witness such admirable examples in professed unbelievers, they are not going to look at my poor lukewarm, inconsistent and irritable Christianity and envy my faith or covet my Saviour. It was thinking partly about this kind of problem that encouraged more liberal Christians in the past to deny the concept of eternal punishment for unbelievers and to extend the benefits of salvation conditionally or even unconsciously to all. One particularly intelligent and articulate Baptist, John Foster (1770 - 1843), evangelical that he was, found himself, in replying to a younger minister, compelled to question the orthodox doctrine of hell. (Non-evangelicals seized upon his letter as support for their campaign to modify the 'hell-fire' character of popular preaching and publications, and the great Thomas Chalmers noted his disappointment that Foster had not been able to restrain his speculation in this direction). Serious, prolonged consideration of traditional Christian teaching about the everlasting fate of unbelievers proved too much for this shy intellectual's sensitive spirit. We believe that God's holiness must be vindicated, that our sin demanded the atonement to satisfy pure divine justice: have we ever dared to dwell on the eter-

nal dereliction of those moral Christ-rejecters whom we knew?

Another, related, difficulty is the spiritual insight into Scripture shown by intelligent unbelievers who cannot accept it as anything more than a collection of human religious documents. I have read wonderfully helpful comments about Old Testament incidents, for example, from the pens of literary critics whose ideological stance is one of vague liberal humanism. They recognize the absurdities of some theological scholars whose basic antisupernaturalism makes them adopt outrageous devices in order to dispense with anything recorded in Scripture which is outside their own experience. But they don't believe, either — or certainly not in any distinguishably evangelical way. They seem to resemble the American psychiatrist who, interviewed just before Christmas, declared that belief in Santa Claus made for better-adjusted children and adults, because it enabled them to think that 'somebody out there' cared for them! Why, one wonders, did Bishop Robinson bother to publish *Honest to God* in 1963? Here is a non-religious source repeating exactly what he was decrying, the old Christian view of an objective supernatural realm. Literary critics are more likely to agree with Robinson, although the best of them are (like him) always deeply concerned with moral health. One of them wrote recently, 'Protestantism is based on Bible study and therefore upon literacy; to save one's soul, one needs to read'.

Obviously it isn't true, strictly speaking. To begin with, the essence of Protestantism, surely, is that it is God who saves by His grace through faith on the basis of the perfect self-sacrifice of Christ, and that all human effort to deserve or attain to salvation is simply irrelevant — indeed, is worse than useless. We claim, in fact, that this is true Christianity. God's conditions for salva-

tion (from the human viewpoint, repentance and faith) don't include a demand for literacy. He must have saved multitudes of people during the centuries which preceded the achievement of general literacy. Both the Old and New Testaments are the products of societies where many could not read, when there was an oral culture. Even mid-Victorian rural communities here in Britain were much the same, survivals of hard-working agricultural societies where precious leisure was spent in largely communal activities, and the more private occupation of reading to study was the privilege of a few, although Bibles were plentiful. This situation did not prevent God from saving His elect from among those non-readers. In earlier times, personal access to the Bible was limited by illiteracy, expense and ecclesiastical policy. Yet there were true believers, souls saved by the grace of God, in the Middle Ages. Chaucer's 'poor parson' seems to have been one, for, however idealized a figure he is, his type was presumably familiar to the great poet:

*This noble example
to his sheep he gave,
First following the word
before he taught it,
And it was from the gospel
he had caught it.*

*Christ and His Twelve Apostles
and their lore
He taught,
but followed it himself before.*

(This is Coghill's translation: the original Middle English is much more natural, graceful and euphonious). Going back further still, if the crucified thief could read, he was in no position to do so when he humbly accepted the justice of his own death sentence and called upon Jesus for mercy — mercy which was immediately and graciously granted.

Yet there is a sense in which our literary critic was suggesting an important truth. While God could arbitrarily bestow salvation according to His sovereign will, He doesn't — so far as we can understand — because to be saved involves a measure of intelligent appropriation of certain information. Something needs to be grasped so that our will can act to commit us to what we now know. The thief on the cross must have recognized Jesus as more than a mere man ('Lord', he called Him) as well as knowing himself to need forgiveness from God, Whose existence and righteousness he accepted as facts. The much later rider who, fatally thrown from his horse,

*'Twixt the saddle and the ground
Mercy sought, and mercy found,*

must also have been in possession of the essential doctrines of Christianity. Thus, although we don't have to teach remote tribesmen or illiterate peasantry or preliterate children or our present-day neighbours to read before they can become Christians, we do have to communicate the Gospel to them before they can be saved. The discipling and baptizing which logically precede the teaching in our Lord's Great Commission still entail the transference of information. In preliterate societies the spoken word, through conversation or in preaching or by radio, effects conversion under God, as it continues to do also in affluent industrialized countries. That spoken word conveys the necessary information.

What is the essential core of information without which conversion cannot take place? What does the absolutely irreducible minimum of Christian doctrine consist of? No doubt many have speculated about this. It seems reasonable to suggest that such a core includes an acceptance of the existence of an interested Supreme Being Whose standards are those built into the universe, together with a genuine desire to be at one with Him. Perhaps more appealing to evangelical Christians is the proposition that God deals with each person individually. The minimum saving information for, say, a Chapel-going middle-class Londoner a century ago would differ from that required for a Bristol miner listening to Wesley in 1739 or for a Lancashire farm labourer in 1580 or for a Peruvian Indian four hundred years later. Each has his own special circumstances and is subjected to unique influences. Where the granting of forgiveness and new life is to be followed by a sufficient period of learning, it seems possible that what is

actually understood at the point of conversion need be only very little. Our human inquisitiveness, however, won't be satisfied this side of eternity, and perhaps not even then, for God's transactions with His creatures are private, and may well not be for ultimate disclosure to His other children.

Whatever the essence of Christian knowledge consists of, history shows that it has been successfully transmitted by word of mouth. Our critic was perfectly correct, though, in emphasizing the centrality, indeed, the crucial significance of the Bible, because all saving communication rests on Scripture. Oral — or, for that matter, written — presentation of the Gospel simply condenses, repeats, amplifies, explains and applies what the Bible says. It can scarcely be otherwise when Christians have traditionally believed the Scriptures to be the faithfully recorded revelation of God. Those brought up in Christendom, including the illiterate, have typically experienced a certain exposure to the Bible. The present generation, on the other hand, living in our post-Christian multicultural pluralistic society with its 'liberal' agnostic consensus, has cut itself off from this heritage.

The particular ecclesiastical tradition perhaps best known to many readers distinguishes between 'preaching the Gospel' to unbelievers and 'ministering the Word' to Christians. A 'gathered' church is theoretically in a position to divide its evangelism from its edification. In practice, of course, the matter is not so clear-cut, since Christians also attend the 'Gospel' services; many preachers act accordingly, not only challenging the unconverted, but also teaching the believers. One of the products of Christian faith is the desire to be able to read the Bible for oneself, with the consequent encouragement of education and self-improvement (seen historically, for example, in the Puritans' drive for a learned ministry), so a literate church doesn't depend solely on preaching. Its members in addition read both Bible and commentaries for themselves.

There really is a sense, then, in which it is true to say that 'one needs to read'. The major necessity today, it seems to me, is for us literate Christians to apply ourselves to Bible study in order to retrieve the reputation we have lost. Evangelicals now know very little of their Bible, far less than the average educated Victorian man of the world knew (biblical allusions in political speeches of last century are lost on us today). There is real ignorance of the Old Testament. One contributory factor may be the pro-

liferating shelvesful of popular Christian paperbacks containing personal experience and devotional thoughts which are not firmly related to the Bible. I see an unfortunate, if inevitable, relationship between secular and Christian publishing here. There is an expanding market for books for people who don't read, i.e., who habitually scan mainly pictorial material with a brief text. (The trend has been discernible for years in higher education, where many students are unprepared to read passages of exposition or argument longer than article- or chapter-length.) The only long text many people willingly read is the standard Americanized bestselling blockbuster novel, written to formula. As Christians necessarily remain members of their culture, they read mainly short paperbacks on fashionable topics. There are many valuable exceptions, of course, I am glad to admit; while Christian publishers who provide ideal printed matter for the evangelization of 'non-readers' deserve our warmest thanks and encouragement. I believe, however, that a comparison of the stock (not their presentation of what they stock — that's improved immensely) of Christian bookshops nowadays with what they held, say, twenty-five years ago, would support my opinion. The difference can naturally be accounted for in terms of economic, social, educational and religious changes — nevertheless, in preference to an exclusive diet of popular little devotional and experiential paperbacks, I would love to see modern evangelicals reading the Bible and the various aids to Bible study. By all means let us warm our hearts by acquainting ourselves with Joni's story or Cliff's witness, but we ought never to imagine that sharing other people's experience is a substitute for studying God's Word for ourselves. Only through the deliberate allocation of time to regular study of the Bible shall we grow as God wants us to. Six times in his Gospel Matthew records Jesus replying to criticisms or questions with 'Have you not read . . . ?' We may even make the mistake of expecting God to reveal His will in some special way to us when, in fact, He has already done so in the Bible. John Robinson was right when he declared during his farewell sermon to the Pilgrim Fathers (as remembered by Edward Winslow), 'He was very confident the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy Word'. We can no longer rely upon our fellow-citizens knowing even the outline of the Gospel story, let alone the basic teachings of Christianity. Glancing in passing

the other day at a 1934 local authority's Religious Instruction syllabus, I was struck by its total adherence to the Bible; nearly fifty years later things are quite different. So modern evangelism involves first telling the unchurched Christian essentials. As for ourselves, we are guilty of failing to achieve and

improve upon that close knowledge of the Bible that characterized our forefathers. By trying through the grace of God to remedy our deficiency we shall be better equipped to explain and to contend for our Faith in an increasingly antichristian age. Were I to get to know God's Word better and so remove my

consciousness of blameworthy inadequacy in this respect, the standard of my Christianity should also improve and help partially to eradicate my feelings of guilt about that. May the Lord encourage us all to return to His Word so that it may permeate mind, memory, heart and life, for His glory.

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BY LIVERPOOL BAY

R. A. Sinclair

Quite recently the deputy head teacher of a hospital special school for disturbed children asked a member of staff resident in Hoylake if she knew who was responsible for running the sands services there. He remarked that he and his wife thought them marvellous and found the young people very enthusiastic. His question had been well directed, for his colleague was also a member of the executive committee of Hoylake Beach Mission, and she was able to tell him about her church and its annual 16-day event on the sands of Hoylake. What follows is an attempt to give some information about the church which promotes this outreach.

Our chapel building is no architectural monument of distinction. Its polished red-brick exterior and blackened sandstone window ledges do not make it particularly prepossessing and it is sited off the Market Street among rows of small terraced houses. It was the last year of the 19th century when a local Christian builder, with a prescient eye for a business risk, erected the premises with a style of construction that would permit a conversion into two dwelling houses if at any time the congregation dropped below a self-supporting level. Sufficient to say that in its 84th year the 'purpose' of the building has remained constant and today his great grand-daughter is a member of the church which meets there, while seven of her children are also in regular attendance. Over the period its name has evolved from Gospel Hall to today's title of Hoylake Chapel; the message of the gospel preached there, however, has continued unchanged.

In the years between the Wars (and even later), when Hoylake — originally a fishing village — was very popular as an annual resort for North West manufacturing towns, it was not uncommon for the majority of the summer congrega-

tion to be made up of visitors from other assemblies. The gentle gibe was frequently heard then, from members of more inland assemblies, that Hoylake was not a proper church but 'a visitors' Gospel Hall'. There is no similar suggestion today, for while we give an eager welcome to all comers, we form a well-established congregation, and we nearly all live, at least by motoring standards, in the immediate vicinity of the chapel. We have about 50 families in fellowship, and our membership can be roughly analysed by age as follows: under 20, 14; 20-39, 21; 40-59, 22; 60+, 19. In addition there are 19 children. One might regard this as a providentially ideal balance. We publish a prayer list containing the names, addresses and telephone numbers of our members, and find that this promotes a nearness as we are mindful of others on a daily basis. It is also a practical measure when so many church members leave us for long periods at a time for educational or business reasons. Our two-monthly newsletter, which is distributed to both present and former members, similarly helps to draw us together.

While the exterior of the building has remained unaltered, the inside is now a far cry from the former scrolled texts, institutional brown paint and hard pew seating which is still found in some places to this day. Pastel colours and an adequate central heating system provide a setting for individual well-upholstered chairs which are particularly appreciated by older folk. We try to add to this the warmth of true Christian fellowship.

Our Bible-based doctrines and practices are clearly laid down with scriptural references in each case. We observe the ordinance of believers' baptism by immersion and we receive to the Lord's table all those who wish to remember Him. Our body of elders meets monthly, or more frequently when required, none

seeking pre-eminence and each acting as chairman in rotation. A Trust (many of its members are also elders) acts in a supervisory capacity in matters concerning the fabric of the building. It is also responsible for the faithful discharge of the congregation's obligations on the use of the premises, and so receives annually a report from the elders on the conduct of the affairs of the church. The Trust provided the status to register with the Inland Revenue as a charity eligible for tax refund on covenanted gifts; this procedure has enabled us, along with many churches, to maximize the giving of those members who are paying income tax.

We regard our giving and our disbursements as a matter of great importance and the church is kept well informed of all receipts and outgoings. We hold Fellowship Teas twice a year, when the business section allows a special scrutiny of our accounts. Two broad principles govern our practice: (1) Our spending on evangelistic activities should always exceed the combined total of all other normal expenditure of the church; (2) Support for our two missionary families should if possible reflect any factor of inflation. When the question of commending a second family to the mission field was set before the church the verdict of the members on the additional financial commitment involved was unanimous: 'Go in faith'. The subsequent response has been gratifying in the extreme, especially when it is remembered that a rewiring programme for all the chapel's electrical circuits, at a cost in excess of £3,000, was concurrently subscribed by special collections within the same year.

As we are sure that the original New Testament churches erected no stumbling blocks of minimum standards of sartorial excellence (many of their members were slaves) we, in turn, have



avoided setting up any such barriers. There is no vying with Ascot fashions by the ladies, no noticeable dressing up on Sundays and no strictures on young people whose appearance gives 'Just as I am' an additional meaning. We count as more valuable their hearts and their demeanour, and their entry into the chapel to be the unspoken request, 'Sirs, we would see Jesus'.

Across five continents believers in the Lord Jesus meet to break bread and drink wine in remembrance of Him. They are all kinds and conditions of men and women, yet in one way they are all the same. Their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. This is the wonder of the power of Jesus Christ. He is the one true Catalyst, bringing change in others, while He Himself is without change, the same yesterday, today and for ever. In this context it is salutary for a believer to remember, by casting his eye around, that our Lord has built each local church, the 'spiritual house' of *1 Pet. 2:5*, from a wide variety of living stones. It is His love which has welded, in one place and for one purpose, those whose

everyday activities are so diverse yet who fully understand that all in His sight are equal. Our membership includes housewives, senior citizens, business executives, social service personnel, teachers, policepersons of both sexes, medical men and women, a sea captain, ex-missionaries, academics and students. All these are endowed with a special gift of God ('one after this manner and another after that, *1 Cor. 7:7*) in such a way that the whole church is enriched by their individual and collective contributions.

Our communion service is held at 11 a.m. each Lord's Day, except on the first Sunday in the month when a Family Service takes place at that time and we break bread an hour earlier. After the usually well-attended Family Service we serve coffee and biscuits to give an opportunity of chatting with those not in regular fellowship in the church. Following the Lord's Supper (once a month before it) we have prepared consecutive ministry. There is an element of this sequential approach in our Gospel pro-

gramme where the invited speakers are usually asked to preach on a particular theme and portion of scripture. Our prayer and ministry meetings or Bible discussions take place on Wednesday evenings; once a month the occasion is devoted to missionary reports and prayer.

In common with most assemblies the ladies operate a veritable power-house of activities, which range from a Women's Hour each Thursday afternoon, through a Bible study group, to a missionary sewing group, whose products are much admired by church members and appreciated by all ages in many families overseas. Our sisters are energetic supporters of Liverpool City Mission and the Bible Society, both of which bodies have held their AGMs in the chapel. In the immediate locality the invaluable work of the sisters is exemplified by the teas they provide for senior citizens and by their individual service at a home for the elderly where they take their turn to wait on the diners and wash up after the meal.

Our teens and twenties group meets on Friday and Sunday evenings. On the last Friday in the month they hold a coffee bar, a feature of which is the presence of various Christian bands who communicate the Gospel in the modern rock idiom. The young people participate in the distribution to local homes of **Challenge** and take the initiative in the promotion of such church activities as watchnight and carol services. The Adventurers (our Sunday School) meet each Sunday (except the first in the month) and Juco classes are held each Tuesday evening.

When President Reagan took his first budget address to Congress he outlined the daunting task of correcting the national financial situation. He coined a memorable phrase: 'If not us — who? If not now — when?' Perhaps the same questions passed through the minds of two brothers, members of the church, immediately after the Second World War. Having just returned from the Forces in 1946, they walked along Hoylake promenade looking at the holiday crowds on the beach; they considered their spiritual state, and wondered who would bring all these people, from so many places, the message of the Gospel. The following year the church arranged a beach service each Sunday between Whitsun and the end of the summer. In 1949 an approach was made to Stan Ford (who was later to reside in Hoylake) to run a campaign in a tent and on the beach. By 1950 this had graduated into a mission of two weeks and three weekends.

So commenced a virtually unbroken run of summer services on the beach up to the present. In its first 20 years the Beach Mission was characterized by the personalities of Mr. Ford and his very able assistants Harold Smethurst and Bert Boyd. A great debt is owed them by the Lord's people who found the Saviour through their testimony. Hoylake converts are to be found all over the world: there are many thrilling tales of how a whole family has had the pattern of life changed by hearing the message presented on Hoylake sands. In subsequent years faithful servants of the Lord, outstanding among them Hugh Williamson of Cambridge, have taken the services on an annual basis. The response has proved that it is the message, not the messenger, which is effective.

The Beach Mission has now evolved into a complex programme over sixteen days at the end of July and the beginning of August. While we must always be careful to eschew pride (*Mk. 7:20-23*), we have to say, however, that

this is an activity which is cherished (held in our hearts) by the church at Hoylake Chapel as especially our own. Today the evangelist is closely supported by up to a score of members of the team, enthusiastic volunteers who wear T-shirts emblazoned with the beach footprint motif which is the sign of the Mission. The range of activities is now impressive, with provision made for every age group and for the most vigorous participant to the passive listener. The team provides facilities for games, while teenagers and older people hold their camp fires and sausage sizzles on each of the three Saturday evenings. With over 200 persons attending these functions, the commissariat arrangements to serve that number of rolls, sausages and sauce need to be well organized. All ages come to the Sunday night rallies to hear testimonies and listen to the Gospel and ministry messages.

The mornings of the Mission's second week are spent on the fairly recently established Holiday Club. This caters for a minimum of 60 children daily who are engaged in creative activities such as collage, drama, painting and cookery. A spiritual theme runs through the week; last year it was the life of Joseph. At the end of the week the parents are invited to an exhibition of their children's work and to hear them sing, watch them act in brief plays and sample their cooking. Every day of the 16 there is a service on the sands at 3.00 p.m., when the children settle on the beach and older persons stand at the promenade railings to listen to Bible stories and to sing choruses which are remembered from year to year. It is a great joy to know that there are on the beach mothers who themselves as small children sat 'at the fount' and now bring their own little ones to hear the same message.

At the other end of the age scale we hold a senior citizens' tea, usually for about 100 persons, and afterwards tell them the Gospel story. In 1981 this event took place on the day after the Royal Wedding. Our invitations had included the Christian Publicity Organization's tract on Prince Charles and Lady Diana and the marriage at Cana. The evangelist made this the theme of his address. We found that our guests particularly appreciated this topical approach and commented favourably on the chapel's having been loyally decorated for the occasion.

Our favourite text for Hoylake Beach Mission is Elisha's question to the Shunammite woman: 'Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it

well with the child?' (*2 Kings 4:26*). These questions will be posed once more on the beach at Hoylake between 24 July and 8 August this year, when every day will again begin with an early morning prayer meeting and the assembly's efforts will be focussed on this major outreach.

The church has sometimes been accused of sinking into complacent torpor after the frenetic evangelistic activity associated with the annual Beach Mission. We readily admit that this all-out effort demands much from our limited membership and, together with other Christian summer commitments such as youth camps, leaves us comparatively exhausted for a little time, but we cannot accept that the Beach Mission is the church's sole worthwhile initiative. Our plans for 1982 include the mounting of the first phase of more intensive Bible teaching (on the Atonement) designed to secure a deeper foundation for the faith of all of us. We hope it will prove particularly helpful to our several members who come from a Roman Catholic background. A Fellowship Weekend has been arranged at Cloverley Hall (a Christian conference centre in Shropshire) where the majority of the church will migrate for its annual all-too-short time of Bible study and companionship. We have formed a working party to examine, evaluate and recommend change (if necessary) in the hymn books we use. Finally, we are considering the possibility of turning the chapel balcony, long ago levelled and walled off as a separate room for young people's activities, into a dual-purpose area with removable partitions. On many occasions, especially during the Beach Mission, we find that our accommodation in the main hall is too limited. Sardine packing is not always the best situation in which to be edified by an address, while the double task of bringing down and taking back upstairs a seemingly endless number of chairs is enervating in the extreme. All churches — the living souls — are organic bodies in the real sense that parts wear away and are replaced. In a world of change we must keep a true course. Like Tyre in *Ezek. 27* we are 'situate at the entry of the sea'. On most days we can scent the keen salty air which reminds us that we should not 'be carried about with every wind of doctrine' (*Eph. 4:14*), but heed only the great Pilot of the scriptures. We pray that we may faithfully follow Him in the 'narrow way which leadeth unto life', and that the church which now uses Hoylake Chapel may continue to worship, pray, develop and evangelize until He comes again.

TRANSLATING THE BIBLE INTO ENGLISH

3— Who are the Translators?

A. S. Duthie

The third of this series on English Bible translations.

After our introduction to language and translation, we now being applying various criteria to existing English translations of the Bible. Most of the criteria are inevitably linguistic; but we start with a preliminary question: who are the translators? If we answer this question for each translation, we get some advance indication of whether the translation itself is likely to be good or not. Admittedly, it is not a perfectly fair criterion, because the translation may not in fact be as expected.

A typical Bible translation project nowadays, whether into English or another language, goes through several stages, such as the following: first draft translation of each book of the Bible by one translator; discussion of draft by a few co-translators (each of whom drafts another book first), and revision; review by a small panel of experts in specific fields and revision; review by a small panel of English stylists, and revision; general review by a hundred or more church and other interested people, perhaps including actual use of the translation by Bible study groups, and revision; final review by publishing body before publication. The Bible Societies normally organise projects in stages like these (eg. for **GNB Old Testament**); while the prefaces of other translations often tell us of similar procedures (eg. **NIV**).

It is immediately obvious that no one individual could possibly carry through all these stages. So, in principle, translations by individuals are likely to be inferior to those produced by groups. The individual's strengths and weaknesses, including pet theories, all remain, uncompensated by interaction with fellow-translators. Admittedly, a single translator might be very talented

in several fields (though hardly in all); while a whole group of translators may be lacking in any skill and just follow each other like the blind leading the blind. But both these possibilities are unlikely; and we expect all the one-man translations to be inferior to the others. The best in respect of sheer number of translators is **NIV**.

It is very rare for any woman to produce a translation of the Bible (only Julia Smith 1876) or of the Old Testament (except Spurrell 1885); or even to participate in a translation (except Mrs. Hooke in **BBE** and Montgomery in **Centenary NT**). Therefore, virtually all translations have a built-in bias towards men and against women (e.g. 'men' — literally 'flesh' — in *Isa. 40:6*; 'men' — literally 'people' — in *Matt. 5:16*, both **NIV**).

Some translations reveal their country of origin more or less clearly; whether Scotland (e.g. 'factor' (Moffatt) in *Lk. 16:7*); or England (e.g. 'Whitsuntide' (**NEB**) in *1 Cor. 16:8*); or the United States of America (e.g. 'twenty dollar bills' (**LB**) in *Lk. 10:35*). Though some translations explicitly claim to be 'American' (Goodspeed, **ASV**, **NASB**, **NAB**), none of these actually strike a non-American as strange (except in the minor matter of spellings, as also in **RSV**, etc.). Such translations may indeed suit those who live in its country of origin; but they also tend to put off those who do not. But it seems to me to be an unnecessary ground of division among Christians that each country advocates its own product; it is also a considerable waste of scarce resources. The most desirable translation is surely one which is suitable for the whole English-speaking world: Britain, North America, Australia, etc. where English is the mother tongue; as well as Africa, India, etc. where English is well-known as a second language. So the best trans-

lations in respect of geographical coverage are **NIV** and **GNB**.

Some translations are the products of a particular denomination; that is, all the translators belong to one denomination and so see things in the same way so that a bias towards that denomination is apparent. Obviously every one-man translation team belongs to only one denomination; but so do some other teams (e.g. Jehovah's Witnesses team producing **NWT**, where 'Jehovah' appears 237 times in the **New Testament** without warrant). Translations produced by Roman Catholics (e.g. Challoner, Knox, and other older ones) put off Protestants because of the spelling of proper names (e.g. 'Sophonias' for 'Zephaniah'), the inclusion of the Apocrypha, and the numbering of verses and of the Psalms; and presumably this was a barrier in the opposite direction too. The Geneva Bible put off all non-Calvinists by the intemperate tone of its copious footnotes. Even a mixed translation may reveal bias towards some denomination (e.g. 'church' and 'bishop' (**KJV**), chosen as good ecclesiastical (episcopal) terms, in place of 'congregation' and 'overseer'). In the same way, an evangelical bias is evident in other translations (e.g. 'pastor' *Tit. 1:5*; 'way to heaven' — literally 'righteousness'; — 'if we trust Jesus Christ to take away our sins, by coming to Christ' — literally 'faith, believing' — *Rom. 3:21-2*; all in **LB**). Presumably, all the above translations are preferred by those who belong to the same group as the translators. But if we as 'evangelicals' find an 'evangelical' doctrine clearly put in an 'evangelical' translation, (just as a Jehovah's Witness finds his doctrine clear in **NWT**), the doctrine may turn out to belong more to the translation than to the original Bible. If, however, we find an 'evangelical' doctrine in a 'non-evangelical' trans-



(photo courtesy of Bible Society)

lation, then we can be sure that it really belongs to the Bible itself. Although we would certainly expect evangelical scholars to have the fullest empathy with the Biblical message, and so to be most likely to understand it and translate it well, they should avoid expressing the truth in current evangelical jargon. Again, the best situation is one of balance among the translators' denominations, so that their translation can be used as a real touchstone by which continually to judge the beliefs and practices of any one denomination. All Bible translations should be 'common', shared by Protestants, Catholics, etc. It is not helpful to point fingers at members of translation committees, because one is a Unitarian (RV), or a Jew (RSV), or a Catholic, etc., as if that somehow invalidated the work of the majority of the translators; and the vaguer label of 'liberal' or 'modernist' is no more helpful

applied to some translators. Denominational balance among translators is the best safeguard against translating according to one's denominational background; and the NIV probably comes out best in this respect.

As we conclude this consideration of who the translators are with emphasis on their number and their geographical and denominational spread, we find that NIV comes out best, and LB, Fenton, Purver come out worst. But I again stress that this is a preliminary criterion which should be subservient to all the other criteria which will apply to the translation directly.

However, our consideration has so far neglected the three most important of all qualifications of a translator. This is because they will be taken up separately in later sections. One is the translator's ability in the original languages and cultures and in the Bible text; this has

usually been a prerequisite for appointment to a translation committee, while one-man 'teams' have varied greatly in ability. Second is the translator's ability in English expression; only more modern translation committees have taken much account of this requirement by means of literary consultants, though other translations, even one-man efforts, have excelled (e.g. Knox) in their English. Third is the translator's ability in linguistics and the theory and practice of translation; unfortunately, though such training is the most important single qualification of all, it has only rarely been officially recognized (e.g. in the UBS team which produced GNB), though again individual translators and committees have shown intuitive awareness and ability of a very high order (e.g. Moffatt, Goodspeed, KJV).

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GEORGE RITCHIE RICE — A TRIBUTE

On 14th February last a noted servant of God was called by God into his presence at the age of 100. George Ritchie Rice was born on 31st July 1881, and had an eventful and notable life in Government service, being appointed CMG and OBE. But above all he will be remembered for his service to God in many countries, and in particular for his devoted service to the Sudan Interior Mission. He died at Bexhill, where he had served God since retirement.

We are indebted to Mr. Charles Fraser-Smith, who tells of his wartime meeting with Mr. Ritchie Rice and its interesting consequences in his fascinating book **The Secret War of Charles Fraser-Smith** (a meeting which is also referred to by Professor Bruce in his **In Retrospect**), for sending us a charming account of Mr. Rice's life written by himself shortly after his hundredth birthday. He tells of early attempts to enter the Civil Service, and 'behind-the-scenes' work during the Boer War; then of work in the War Office Accounts Department which took him to Singapore and happy Christian Fellowship there before the First World War. He was encouraged to preach by a friend in Singapore, at the age of 25, and writes — 'I have had the privilege of preaching the Good News of the Gospel ever since, until 100 years old. I thank God for this enabling'. During that time he developed a deep interest in missionary work and a close personal friendship with many missionaries, visiting China and Japan.

During the First World War Mr. Rice was with the Army Audit Staff, and some years after the War was appointed Financial Adviser to GOC Shanghai. After his return to Britain he began his association with the Sudan Interior Mission, as a result of friendship with its founder Dr. Roland Bingham, later becoming Hon. Treasurer and Chairman of the London Council. It was to the SIM



(now SIM International) that (as Council Member Emeritus) he wrote in one of his last letters:

'We think the end of the earthly pathway is not far off — and we would not have it otherwise. Our citizenship is in heaven. May the Lord continue to use and bless you all in the SIM. The Lord is good.'

Mr. Rice passed through many high posts in the Ministry of Supply during and after the Second World War, after the War visiting the USA in connection with 'Lend-Lease' supplies under that generous scheme by which America helped a war-torn Europe. Christian friends with whom he had fellowship presented him with a pair of gold cufflinks on his leaving, of which he writes

'they are now still in use 40 years later, as I write these notes. "Thank you dear friends".' Still later he was posted to Egypt, South and West Africa, Ceylon, and finally was Director of Sales, Ministry of Supply, in Hamburg. In all these places he made full use of his contacts with local Christians.

Mr. Rice's first wife Elvira died in 1955, and he is survived by his second wife Helen, for whom, in her loss, special prayer is requested. Our sympathies are also extended to his daughter Esmé, Mrs. Ernest Uren.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

I have a good deal of correspondence from people in many parts of the world who have engaged in private Bible study and, as a result, have come to hold minority views (the minority sometimes being a minority of one). But several of them, instead of submitting their conclusions tentatively to the judgment of other Bible students, are so sure they are right that they regard those who take another line (especially a 'traditional' line) as being in serious error. Could there be some psychological reason for this tendency?

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

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

The Water at Lourdes

Question 216

I have heard it said that the water at Lourdes is free from contamination in spite of the diseased people who bathe in it. Are you in a position to confirm this?

The following is the answer I received from the Medical Bureau at Lourdes when I passed the question to them: 'At the present time it would be incorrect to say that the water at Lourdes is free from infection if one were speaking about the water in the baths. However, the statement would be true if applied to the water from the spring which may be regarded as uncontaminated. The water from the baths is naturally contaminated like other water that has been used for washing. This statement is based on several analyses made on water taken from the baths while it was used or at the end of the utilisation period. (Nowadays the water in the baths is not changed more frequently than twice daily.)

So far as the baths are concerned, the water is thus as a rule bacteriologically contaminated. However, it is important to remember (1) that we are speaking in relative terms, (2) that water used for bathing in the home is quite certainly not sterile, (3) that when a person bathes outside the home, whether in a swimming pool or on a beach, there is also a chance of contamination, possibly less but possibly more than that which obtains at Lourdes.'

'Long hair . . . a covering'

Question 217

Would you please comment on the NIV alternative rendering of 1 Corinthians 11:4-7?

The translation offered in this alternative rendering corresponds very closely to the interpretation suggested by the late Dr. W. J. Martin in **Apostolic**

History and the Gospel (Exeter, 1970), pp.231-241.

In the light of v.15b, it seems not unreasonable to suggest that the 'uncovered head' of v.5 is thus because the hair has been cut short. But if this is the case, then one has to explain v.6, where two different imperatives are used in the Greek. The first ('she should have her hair cut off') is an aorist imperative, implying an action which is not repeated over a period of time. The second, however (she should cover her head), is a present imperative which implies a continued action. Martin's suggestion, which underlies the suggested alternative rendering of v.6, is that it was regarded as shameful in the Corinthian church for a woman to have short hair but that some women who had cut their hair were converted. In such a case, Paul is seen as deciding that the women should be accepted into Christian fellowship with short hair (aorist imperative — 'let her have short hair'). But in such a case she should let herself become 'covered' again ('she should grow it again' — present imperative for a continuous action. Martin argues forcefully on p.233 that 'covered' here refers to long hair and not to the wearing of a head covering. His interpretation is certainly a possible one. What its relevance might be to the twentieth century is another matter!

'Preparing a place'

Question 218

What activity do you associate with the fact that the Lord has gone to 'prepare a place' for his people (John 14:2,3)?

In so far as the words are taken from a normal human activity, they express the Lord's loving concern for each of his people. But if we ask in what way he prepares a place for us, then the answer is (as Westcott points out in his Commentary) that it is the fact of Christ's ascension to the Father that in itself means there is a place in the Father's presence for us. He prepares for us by ascending.

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'.

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

BE STILL AND KNOW

G. J. Polkinghorne

Every birdwatcher knows that stillness is a prerequisite for the effective pursuit of his hobby. The observer who keeps moving or making noises scares away his quarry, while 'twitchers' disturb nesting birds by their intrusions. Is not this a parable about our relations with God — and one that will appeal to the many readers who declared their interest in birds in our recent Questionnaire? Our busy-ness — our concern to be up and doing — prevent our sensing God's presence. We must be still and silent to know that He is God. Even in our times of prayer, we break this basic rule, destroying communion by pressing our requests.

In a little book bearing our title (Hodder and Stoughton, £1.25, 127pp., paperback) Michael Ramsey, onetime Archbishop of Canterbury, makes 'a recurring plea . . . that stillness and silence are of supreme importance and that neglect of them is damaging to the Christian life.' The book is in two parts, the first biblical, the second practical, with digression into Mystical teaching. In the latter, there are some unacceptable ideas which can be ignored.

Prayer is not a procedure for getting 'answers' out of God. Rather, it is the exposure of the soul to God. A major privilege of the Christian as a child of God is the right of access into his Father's presence and the same liberty as Jesus to use the intimate 'Abba' in speaking to Him. From this flows not only inner peace, but also an insight into God's heart of love which will make the person praying start caring for others in a new way. Unhappily, what should be our

most spiritual activity degenerates into a self-centred battering on the doors of Heaven to make God act our way. Instead, pleads Ramsey, let us think of prayer as 'being for a while consciously with the Father, no more and no less than that.' He suggests that the verb used in *Heb. 7:25* and *Rom. 8:34* 'does not properly mean to speak or plead or to make petitions or entreaties: it means rather to be with someone, to meet or encounter someone in relation to others.' So 'what is called the intercession of Jesus means His ceaseless presence with the Father.' As we spend time with God, transformations take place. Our circumstances and problems are not abolished, but lifted into the orbit of the crucified and risen Jesus. Christians gazing on the glory of God in Christ are changed into His likeness because the Holy Spirit as Lord works within them. They are given a new mind, the mind of Christ, and radically break with the world. Thus in a very real way they receive the first instalment of their heavenly treasure. And they enter into a fellowship with the entire Trinity. Ideally, prayer is not so much 'the medium which God has given us to induce Him to desire what we desire; but . . . the medium by which we ask Him to induce us to desire what He desires.' Thus through the centuries, for all the failures and scandals, Christianity has had an impact by creating not a few Christlike lives. And God and the world both alike continue to need such transformed people. Let us 'be still and know that He is God.'

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (60)

F. F. Bruce

The Upper Room Discourses (John 13:31-16:33)

i. Departure and Reunion (John 13:31-14:31)

(g) The First Paraclete Saying (John 14:15-17)

14:15 'If you love me you will keep my commandments.'

Hitherto Jesus has spoken of his love for his disciples and of their obligation to love one another; now for the first time in this Gospel he speaks of their love for him. The vital link between their love for him and their obedience to him (cf. *verses 21,23; 15:14*) is a recurring theme in the Johannine writings. 'This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments' (1 John 5:3), and chief among these is the commandment that the followers of Jesus should love one another; indeed, 'we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments' (1 John 5:2). To love the Father is to love his children; to love the Son is to love his followers; for them to love one another is to love the Father and the Son. In such love the keeping of the divine commandments realizes its perfection. And in such a setting of love the first promise of the Paraclete is made.

14:16, 17 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, to be with you for ever — the Spirit of truth. The world cannot receive him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he dwells with you and will be in you.

The word **paraklētos** is best understood as a verbal adjective with passive force, denoting one who is called alongside as a helper or defender, a friend at court. Jesus' mention of 'another' Paraclete implies that they already have one, and this can only be himself. In 1 John 2:1, indeed, Jesus is called 'our "Paraclete" with the Father'; the word is there aptly rendered 'Advocate', from Latin **advocatus**, which is the exact equivalent of Greek **paraklētos**. But in 1 John 2:1 Jesus' advocacy is exercised in the heavenly court; in our present passage it is implied that he had been his disciples' advocate or paraclete on earth. So indeed he had been while he was with them; he had been their champion and helper, the one on whose guidance and support they could rely; but now he was about to leave them. He had been with them for a short time, but the 'other paraclete',

his **alter ego**, would be with them permanently, and not only with them but in them.

What is involved in the Paraclete's being called 'the Spirit of truth' will appear clearly in later sayings about him (especially in 16:12-15). His help as Jesus' **alter ego** will be available specifically to the disciples, to compensate them for the loss of Jesus' visible presence. In this capacity he will have nothing to offer the 'world' — the sum-total of unbelievers, who are incapable of appreciating or recognizing him. He will indeed have a ministry to the 'world', as appears from 16:8-11, but a ministry of quite a different kind.

(h) Jesus' reappearance to the disciples (John 14:18-24)

14:18, 19 I will not leave you orphans; I am coming to you. Only a little while now, and the world sees me no more, but you see me. Because I live, you also will live.

'Orphans' (**orphanoi**) are bereft of their natural supporter. That is how the disciples would feel when Jesus was no longer with them in the form to which they had grown accustomed. But they need not feel like that: he would come back to them.

But which aspect of his coming is signified here? If the reference is to his resurrection appearances, they were brief and temporary — although they did bring the glad assurance that he was no longer dead but alive for evermore. If the reference is to their realization of his presence through the Spirit, that would fit well with his promise that they would not be bereft of support, for the Spirit would be their supporter, their **paraklētos**. But we must see a reference also to his words in *verse 3*: 'I am coming back again and will take you to myself.' Indeed, his present words illustrate what was said in the comment on *verse 3*, that in this Gospel the distinction between various phases of Jesus' promised coming to his disciples is a 'vanishing distinction'. Every phase of his promised coming is embraced in this assurance: 'I am coming to you.'

As for 'the world', it had seen him during his public ministry and it would see him again for a short time during his trial and crucifixion, but not after that. After that he would be visible to faith alone. His disciples would go on seeing him by faith (the present

tense 'you see me' implies continuity stretching indefinitely into the future); more than that, his resurrection life guaranteed unending life to them, because by faith they were united to the Living One, and would draw their life from him. Although the Spirit is not explicitly mentioned here, it is through him, as the Lord and life-giver, that they will draw their life from the ever-living Christ.

14:20,21 In that day you will know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you. The one who loves me is the one who holds my commandments and keeps them. Yes, and the one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him.

'That day' is the day when Jesus will have returned to the Father and sent the Spirit to be with and in his disciples. Then they will learn in a new way the truth of his mutual oneness with the Father of which they had so often heard him speak. They will know in their own experience that as he is in the Father they are in their living Lord and their living Lord in them. This threefold coinherence is a coinherence of love; those who are admitted to it are those who love their living Lord, showing their love by their obedience. The Father who loves the Son (*John 3:35; 5:20*) loves those who are united to the Son, and they, thus loved by the Father, have the assurance that the Son loves them and will reveal himself to them.

14:22-24 Judas (the other Judas, not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, what has happened that you will manifest yourself to us and not to the world?' Jesus said to him in reply, 'If any one loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word which you hear is not mine; it is the word of the Father who sent me.'

This Judas is probably identical with Judas the son of James, listed as the eleventh apostle in *Luke 6:16* and *Acts 1:13*. But the question which he asks (as spokesman, no doubt, for his fellow-disciples) is one which must have occurred to many who heard or read these words of Jesus as recorded by the Evangelist. If 'all the tribes of the earth . . . will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory' (*Matt. 24:30*), what kind of private revelation is this of which Jesus speaks?

It is not a revelation from outside which strikes terror into the beholders; it is a revelation within the family of love. Where love and obedience are shown, the presence of God and of Christ is realized; Father and Son together make their home with each of the children. (The word rendered 'home', *monē*, is that rendered 'room' in *verse 2*.) No such revelation is possible where love and obedience are absent. (There is a remarkable similarity between the promise here and that to the obedient Laodicean in *Rev. 3:20*.)

(i) The Second Paraclete Saying (*John 14:25,26*)

14:25,26 I have said these things to you while I remained with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you everything and remind you of everything that I said to you.

It is repeatedly indicated in this Gospel (and not only in this Gospel) that the disciples failed to understand much that Jesus said and did during his earthly ministry (cf. *John 2:22; 12:16*). Now they are told that when the Paraclete comes, he will enable them to recall and understand what Jesus taught: he will serve them, in other words, as remembrancer and interpreter. The Father's sending him in Jesus' name is another way of saying that the Father will send him in response to Jesus' request (*verse 16*; see further the comment on *John 15:26*).

(j) Jesus' bequest of peace (*John 14:27-31*)

14:27 Peace I leave you; my peace I give you. What I give you is not the kind the world gives. Do not go on being troubled at heart; do not be fearful.

'Peace (*shalom*) be with you' was (and is) the usual Jewish greeting when friends met and parted. Jesus' farewell word of peace was different from that which was current in the world. What he called 'my peace' was something deeper and more lasting, peace at heart which would banish anxiety and fear. Paul speaks to the same effect of the 'peace of Christ' which arbitrates in the hearts of his people, maintaining harmony among them (*Col. 3:15*), and of the 'peace of God' which stands sentry over their hearts and minds, preventing anxiety from gaining an entrance (*Phil. 4:7*). In these farewell discourses Jesus not only imparts to the disciples 'my peace' but also 'my love' (*15:9,10*) and 'my joy' (*15:11*). When we recall that love, joy and peace are the first three graces in the fruit of the Spirit in *Gal. 5:22*, we may wonder if these three did not form a triad in primitive Christian thought comparable to faith, hope and love.

14:28,29 You have heard what I said to you: "I am going, and I am coming to you." If you loved me, you would have rejoiced because I am on my way to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it happens, in order that, when it happens, you may believe.

When Jesus first spoke about his impending departure (*13:33ff.*), their hearts were troubled, and not even his words about coming back to them (*14:3*) relieved their anxiety. Now he tells them that he is going to the Father, and that they would be glad rather than sorrowful if they knew what that meant. The words 'if you loved me' in this context imply that love involves some insight into the heart and mind of the person loved and some sympathy with him in hope and purpose. That the Father's authority is greater than the Son's, even if the Son is one with the Father (*10:30*), is plain: the one who is sent is not

SIDELIGHTS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

A Grain of Wheat or a Pebble?

H. L. Ellison

In *Amos 9:1-10* we have description of the judgment, complete and inescapable, that was to come on Israel, the kingdom of the northern tribes. It comes to an end with a picture of God's sifting of the population, in which he is compared to a woman sifting grain in a sieve. In Bible times, as indeed in less 'developed' parts of the Near East today, threshing was done by spreading out the sheaves on the threshing floor, an open space on top of a hill that would catch any wind that was blowing. Oxen were driven over them to force the grain out of the ears (*Deut. 25:4; 1 Cor. 9:9*). Under some circumstances a heavy, wooden sledge, with stones ('iron') fixed underneath (*Amos 1:3*) might be used. When this had been done, the owner, using a winnowing fork (*Luke 3:17*), would throw the mixture of chaff, straw and grain into the air. The wind would blow the chaff away while the straw and grain would fall into two separate heaps. Obviously a thorough separation by such a method would be difficult to obtain, the more so, as pebbles from the threshing floor would become mixed with the grain. So before the housewife could grind her grain to make flour she had to sieve it, using a small mesh sieve. Skilful manipulation would separate out grain, pebbles and straw. Amos' description ended with the statement, 'yet shall not the least grain (*tseror*) fall upon the earth' (AV). For

the Reformation translators it was clear that the prophet was picturing whatever good might be left in Israel being sorted out, so that it might not perish with the sinners.

This interpretation was continued by RV. But by then a deeper study of Hebrew made it plain that *tseror* in fact meant a pebble, and so this is the translation found in RSV, NEB, JB. TEV paraphrases, but returns to the old interpretation, as does NIV, by rendering, 'but not an ear will fall to the ground'. Unless this represents American usage, it is impossible, for while one could argue that *tseror*, the pebble, refers to the hard grain of corn, it cannot possibly mean an ear of corn.

Since there is no reason for doubting that *tseror* means a pebble, it is best to understand the prophecy in that sense. There is a widespread belief that the man on whom God has laid His hand can turn his back on Him and go his own way without any further thought of God. What Amos is saying to the contrary is that God has chosen and known Israel as His people, even if He punishes it (*3:1,2*), and so the stony-hearted sinner, who refuses to hear God's word, will certainly know God's judgment, but will not be allowed to perish by chance, but since God's hand remains over him, there will always be the possibility of repentance and final salvation.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN *(continued from page forty-three)*

greater than the one who sent him (*13:16*). But now the purpose for which the Son was sent is about to be accomplished. The disciples are told about its imminent accomplishment in order that, when it takes place, they may recognize in it the fulfilment of Jesus' words and believe that he is the person that he claims to be (cf. *13:19*).

14:30,31 I will not talk much with you any longer, for the ruler of the world is coming. He has nothing (to lay hold of) in me; but the world must know that I love the Father and that I do as the Father has commanded me. Rise up; let us be on our way from here.'

The 'ruler of the world' is about to meet his downfall, as Jesus said a few days earlier (*12:31*). He does not

know this: his plan is to overthrow the Sent One of God; but there is nothing in Jesus that he can lay hold of so as to gain an advantage over him. The outcome of the impending spiritual conflict will be Jesus' vindication, as the one whose love for the Father is exhibited in perfect obedience to his will. The Son's vindication in the sight of the universe is in accordance with the Father's purpose; the whole course of events is overruled to this end. To the Father's good pleasure, then, Jesus confidently commits himself.

It would be easy to believe that the words, 'Rise up; let us be on our way from here', marked the end of the upper-room discourses (as they do in Moffatt's rearrangement), if any textual support for this were forthcoming.

THE PERMANENT BASIS OF CHRISTIAN REJOICING

R. Y. K. Fung

Dr. Fung, of the Christian Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong, furnished two papers for us in April and May last year on 'Spiritual Gifts or Organized Ministry?' He now provides an important study in Luke's Gospel.

The Joy of the Seventy

It was a glowing report that the seventy (or seventy-two: NEB, NIV) disciples gave when they returned from a mission on which they had been sent by Jesus: 'Lord,' they said, 'even the demons submit to us in your name' (v. 17, NIV). The word 'even' probably does not imply that their success in casting out demons was something more than they had expected or been promised; the more likely view that authority over evil spirits had been included in the terms of their commission is borne out by two considerations: (a) it is unlikely that without having received authority from the Lord the disciples would have tried to cast out demons or, at least, would have succeeded in doing so (cf. *Luke 9:40; Matt. 17:16, 19; Mark 9:18, 28*); (b) since in the account of the sending of the Twelve (*Luke 9:1-6*) 'to heal' or 'healing' (v. 2, 6) stands for the fuller expression '(to have) power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases' (v. 1), the command 'heal the sick' in *Luke 10:9* may be similarly understood as including exorcisms. That the disciples did perform exorcisms implies that they had been received and had also preached the kingdom of God (vv. 8, 9); but, understandably, it was the most spectacular aspect of their evangelistic work — their experience of the amazing power of Jesus' name as demonstrated in the subjugation of demons — that generated their great excitement and joy. Even before this experience, the disciples might have found cause for rejoicing in their having been chosen as Jesus' envoys on this mission, as Paul

was to exult in his appointment as an ambassador for Christ (*2 Cor. 5:20*) with the privilege 'of proclaiming to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ' (*Eph. 3:8*, NEB). As heralds of His coming (v. 1), and within the terms of their commission, the disciples were invested with the authority of the Lord Himself: this truth, implied in vv. 12-15 (any town which rejected the disciples would incur judgment comparable to the judgment incurred by those towns which had rejected Jesus Himself), is made explicit in v. 16, where the word 'hear' (AV, RV, RSV) has the sense of 'listen to' (NEB, NASB, NIV) (cf. *John 13:20*, couched in the form of a general principle; *Matt. 10:40*, addressed to the Twelve). The authority which the envoys of Jesus thus enjoyed was matched by the solemnity of the message committed to them. They were to proclaim the near approach of the kingly rule of God in the person and ministry of Jesus. This was a message calling for personal response from its hearers: the significant omission of the words 'to you' in the message to those who would reject the preachers (v. 11b), as compared with the message to those who would receive them (v. 9b; cf. v. 9a), indicates that realization of the blessings proclaimed in the message depended on personal appropriation. And the response was to have far-reaching, eternal consequences: acceptance of the rule of God would bring peace and all the other blessings afforded by membership in His kingdom (vv. 5, 9), whereas rejection would entail intolerable judgment on the day of final reckoning (v. 12; cf. v. 14). To be thus invested with dignity and authority as Jesus' representatives and entrusted with the good news of God's kingly rule, power and blessing coming close in the person and ministry of Jesus (even though there was also a sombre aspect to the message) should be ground enough for rejoicing on the part of His disciples.

The Response of Jesus

Whether the Seventy did rejoice in their mission and message or not, Luke does not say; what he does make clear is that their jubilation was directly caused by their victory over the demons. Jesus made a threefold response:

(a) He explained, in metaphorical language, the meaning of their recent experience: the submission of the demons was a sign that the power of the prince of demons had been broken; in the disciples' exorcisms, Jesus saw 'constantly or repeatedly' (M. Zerwick, in explaining the imperfect tense of the Greek verb, *ethēōroun*) the fact of Satan's fall (v. 18). Could it be that Jesus was also led to think of the whole process of the defeat of Satan — commenced at the Temptation with the Adversary being decisively routed (*Luke 4:1-13*), now continued in the course of Jesus' earthly ministry (*Luke 11:17-22*, and here), soon to be confirmed at the Crucifixion (cf. *John 12:31*) and finally to be consummated at the end of this age (cf. *Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10*)?

(b) In view of the fact of Satan's defeat, Jesus assured his disciples of continued victory over all their spiritual enemies, as well as complete protection, in the future (v. 19). From this standpoint, the disciples' victory over the demons was but a logical consequence and manifestation of their Lord's victory over the prince of demons; the followers were given a share in the Master's victory (as also in His sufferings, cf. *John 15:20*).

(c) Jesus then gave an injunction (v. 20) which *prima facie* appears to forbid the disciples to rejoice over the defeat of the demons; His words have to be interpreted, however, in the light of one or two stylistic and grammatical considerations. The saying 'do not rejoice . . . but rejoice' here is an example of that Semitic peculiarity of expression which puts the comparative sense 'not so much A as B' or 'B rather

than A' in the form of an emphatic contrast, 'not A but B' (for other examples, see *Hos. 6:6*, where the sense of the idiom in *v.6a* is explained by the parallel *v.6b*; *Matt. 10:20*; *Mark 9:37*; *John 7:16*; *1 Cor. 1:17*), while the form of the prohibition and exhortation in the Greek (present imperative with, and without, the negative particle, respectively) carries the sense: 'Do not go on rejoicing . . . but go on rejoicing . . .' Thus interpreted, Jesus' injunction means that the disciples might indeed rejoice over their subjugation of the demons, but that they were to rejoice even more in the fact of their eternal redemption by God's grace, here figuratively expressed in terms of their names being inscribed in heaven — in God's family register, we might add (cf. *Heb. 12:23*; *Phil. 4:3*; *Rev. 3:5*). More closely defined, Jesus' meaning probably was that the disciples were not to make their victory over the demons the permanent basis of their rejoicing, but that they were to find this basis in the fact of the redemption which their Lord was yet to accomplish for them through His death and resurrection, which nevertheless could be spoken of as **already accomplished** in view of the certainty of the Cross and the glories to follow (cf. *1 Pet. 1:11*).

This contrast in *Luke 10:20* between the disciples' subjugation of the evil spirits and the inscription of their own names in heaven readily recalls *Matt. 7:21-23*, where Jesus lays down the conditions for admission into the kingdom of heaven as being, not lip-service, but obedience to God's will (cf. *Luke 6:46*). The people in this passage whom the Lord, on the day of final judgment, will deny having ever recognized as His own (*v.23a*) are people who have taken part in such Christian activities as preaching, exorcisms and mighty works (*v.22*), but they have remained 'evildoers' (*v.23b*, RSV) because they have not yielded themselves in inward obedience to God's will. Clearly, even to have cast out demons in Jesus' name is no indication that a person has gained or will gain admission into God's kingdom; it is more blessed to have one's name inscribed in heaven (as the Seventy's were), which signifies admission, than to have the power of exorcism. Whether or not these earlier remarks were specifically in mind when Jesus spoke to the Seventy, they serve to throw into relief the lesson which He was apparently seeking to impress upon them on this later occasion:

namely, that the permanent basis of their rejoicing was to be found in the fact of their redemption by God's grace.

The Exultation of Jesus

This lesson, it would seem, is confirmed and further emphasized by the last pericope of our passage (*Luke 10:21-24*; cf. *Matt. 11:25-27*, which, however, is put in a different setting). In a burst of exultation inspired by the Holy Spirit (*v.21a*), Jesus gave thanks to the Father for His sovereign ordering of affairs (*v.21c*) whereby the kingdom-truths taught by Jesus and preached by His disciples ('these things', *v.21b*) were hidden from the learned and wise and revealed to the simple (*v.21b*, NEB); alternatively, Jesus may be understood as thanking God for the fact that **though** He had hidden those truths from the first group He had revealed them to the second. The contrast here is 'not between educated and uneducated but between people with the wrong and self-sufficient attitude and those with the right and childlike attitude' (N. Geldenhuys): the former are confirmed in their spiritual blindness; the latter are enabled to perceive and receive God's revelation. Jesus went on to speak of Himself as the Son to whom 'all things' (*v.22a*, a more comprehensive term than 'these things' in *v.21b*) had been committed, who alone therefore could reveal the Father (*v.22c*; cf. *John 1:18*), and 'whose person and commission (were) known in fullness to the Father only' (F. F. Bruce) (*v.22b*; hence Jesus' Messiahship could be known only by revelation, *Matt. 16:17*).

And then (*vv.23,24*), turning to His disciples Jesus privately congratulated them for seeing what they did see and hearing what they did hear — a privilege desired by, yet denied to, many prophets and kings (cf. *1 Pet. 1:10-12*) but now vouchsafed to the disciples. The privilege here being referred to is that of seeing Jesus — the long-promised Messiah, the Son and Revealer of the Father, and listening to Him — the prophet of the end-time long foretold by God through Moses (cf. *Deut. 18:18*; *Luke 9:35*; *Matt. 17:5*; *Mark 9:7*). In seeing Him, listening to Him and following Him, the disciples were being ushered into a personal knowledge of God, whom to know (in the sense of having a right relationship with Him) is life eternal (*John 14:7-9*; *17:3*); and by the ministry of the Holy Spirit to be poured

forth after Jesus' death and exaltation, they would eventually be led into a full-orbed knowledge of the Father through the Son.

The present pericope shows, in other words, that Jesus greatly rejoiced because of the Father's saving will to reveal Himself through the Son, and thus to impart eternal life to those who would receive the revelation; and He warmly commended the disciples for the privilege which had been granted them of receiving this revelation, and hence of receiving eternal life and having their names inscribed in heaven. In this way Jesus' rejoicing in the Spirit and blessing of the disciples not only harmonizes with, but also strengthens, the conclusion already reached from *v.20* that the Christian disciple's permanent basis of rejoicing is the fact of his eternal redemption by God's grace.

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THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY (6)

Studies in 1 Samuel

D. J. Clark

(6) David in Exile (1 Sam. 19-23)

David's Escape (19:1-24)

As David's success and fame increased so did Saul's jealousy and hatred. Eventually Saul became quite open about his intention to kill David (19:1). Jonathan, however, was the absolute opposite of his father, and not only warned David of the impending danger (19:2-3) but also advocated his cause before Saul (19:4-5). Thus a reconciliation was effected, though it was to prove short-lived. A further war with the Philistines, and a further triumph for David (19:8) seems to have sparked off the further attempt by Saul to spear him (19:10). Unlike the previous attempts (18:11), this one was made in violation of a solemn vow taken in the Lord's name not to harm David (19:6). Thus Saul added blasphemy to attempted murder, and revealed his total unreliability.

David was placed under surveillance in his own house, and it became clear to his wife Michal that an immediate escape was necessary. David agreed and Michal evidently had no compunction about tricking her father and lying to him on behalf of her husband. Here is another example of the remarkable way in which Saul managed to alienate even his own family to such an extent that they gave their full loyalty to David.

David took refuge with Samuel, perhaps hoping thereby to detach some of Saul's supporters, and perhaps making some kind of tacit declaration of his own claim to the throne. At any rate both Jonathan (20:13b; 23:17) and Saul (20:31) seem to know after this that David is marked out to be king. Saul three times sent men to arrest David, but each time, the Spirit of God came upon them. They were constrained to join the prophetic activities of Samuel's band and could not carry out their task of apprehending David (19:19-21). Finally Saul himself decided to lead the group, but even he

was overcome by the Spirit of God and compelled to join with the prophets, apparently leaving David unmolested (19:22-24). We cannot help comparing this incident with the similar one in 10:10-13. The outward manifestations are very similar, yet there seems to be a difference in the purpose. On the earlier occasion, Saul was given a taste of the divine inspiration and power that could be his in his divinely appointed task. Here, the same Saul who had become hardened in disobedience to the Lord was given a reminder of the power he was now resisting, but which no human being could overcome. There is no evidence that Saul learnt anything from the experience. We are reminded by the solemn words of warning in Heb. 6:4-6 that true spiritual experience can never be ignored with impunity.

David and Jonathan (20:1-42)

David meanwhile left the protection of Samuel's company and sought out his friend Jonathan in an attempt to ascertain Saul's intentions. On Jonathan's offer of full co-operation (20:4), the two friends concocted an elaborate plan both to determine Saul's frame of mind and to convey the necessary intelligence to David.

It seems strange that Saul could expect the same David he had just been trying to arrest to present himself for an official dinner in the king's presence (20:5) but this may be a measure of the degree to which Saul's unpredictability had advanced. Jonathan was under no illusions about his father's condition, and promised to keep David accurately informed.

Jonathan seems to have a premonition of his own early death, and the demise of his father's family (20:14-16). Yet he shows not the slightest trace of the jealousy that so blighted his father's life. So total is the contrast between Saul and Jonathan that one must wonder what sort of person Saul's wife was. We know nothing of her be-

yond her name, Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz (14:50), but it would surely have required an outstanding woman, not only to put up with such a difficult husband as Saul, but also to raise a son like Jonathan who was so free from his father's faults. Saul's description of her as 'a perverse, rebellious woman' (20:30) was spoken in anger and can hardly be considered a sober estimate of her character. However it may perhaps be taken as a back-handed testimony to her influence on Jonathan.

Be that as it may, David's deliberate absence from the official dinner served its purpose of revealing Saul's frame of mind. Jonathan's attempted defence of his friend (20:28-29) provoked an open breach between father and son (20:30-32) and even an attempt on Jonathan's life (20:33). Jonathan himself left the table in a rage, finally convinced of Saul's settled ill-will towards David. The two friends met as planned next day and in a very emotional scene, renewed their pledges of loyalty (20:41-42). David and Jonathan probably saw little of each other after this (23:16-18), but the vows of friendship were not forgotten. David's lament over the deaths of Jonathan and Saul is recorded in 2 Sam. 1:19-27, and David's kindness to Jonathan's son in 2 Sam. 9.

David in Flight (21:1-14)

The news that Jonathan had brought left David no choice but self-imposed exile. How much he told his men we do not know, but at least some of those under his command chose to share his lot. The departure was so sudden that the party was not even armed (21:8). David fled at first a short distance north-east to Nob. There he deceived the priest Ahimelech, one of Eli's descendants, into giving him some supplies, and the sword of Goliath which was laid up there. The supplies were meagre, consisting only of the holy bread, and the priest had

first to ascertain that David's party were in a state of ritual purity. (This incident is referred to by Jesus in *Mark 2:25-26* and parallels.)

The whole transaction was observed by one Doeg, an Edomite servant of Saul's (21:7), and in due course was reported to Saul with tragic consequences.

Meanwhile David and his band veered round to the south-west and made for the Philistine town of Gath, the home of Goliath, and presumably the last place Saul would expect David to hide (21:10). There is no indication why David could hope to find sanctuary there. Certainly his reputation had preceded him, and he was even referred to as a king (21:11). The implication seems to be that Achish had been given an unforeseen opportunity to dispose of a notable enemy. Yet he did not take it, and we can only guess why. Perhaps he considered that it would be to the Philistine advantage to keep safe a rival of Saul, and thus to keep Israel weakened by internal division. Perhaps he thought that if David eventually overcame Saul, it would be good to be owed a political favour by the new king. Perhaps he was deceived by David's pretended madness, or was observing some customary taboo on the treatment of the insane.

Whatever the reasons, David was unharmed, but certainly had a fright (21:12). He chose not to wear out his welcome in Gath, but retreated again into the Judean foothills (22:1).

It is hard to understand David's motives in going to Gath, and even harder to see that the incidents of chapter 21 reflect anything but discredit upon him. It is a sorry spectacle indeed to see the Lord's anointed deceiving the Lord's priest, and then humiliating himself before Gentiles. Perhaps we should assume some temporary failure of nerve or faith, which would be thoroughly human and comprehensible. We are not above such temptations ourselves, but we can at least learn from David's experience that succumbing to them never solves the problems that created them. Just as David had to return to Judah, so we must face up to our difficulties, and this can never be easier once we have fled from them.

The Massacre of the Priests (22:1-23)

On his return to Israel, David was in effect an outlaw. He took refuge in the cave of Adullam, and his band was

soon augmented by the arrival of his family. No doubt they realized that if David was overtly out of favour with Saul, they too would be obvious candidates for harassment, and so once again family solidarity was encouraged by political prudence. Soon an assortment of other malcontents came to join David, and his group grew to 400 men, with presumably women and children in addition. No doubt the new recruits contained a proportion of desperadoes and anti-social elements, and it speaks highly for David's leadership abilities that he welded this motley crew into a disciplined and efficient force.

The outlaw lifestyle proved too much for David's aged parents, and relying on the family's Moabite connections through Jesse's grandmother Ruth (*Ruth 4:17*), David sent them to the king of Moab for protection (22:4), and in obedience to a prophetic warning, moved his own headquarters to 'the forest of Hereth,' an unknown location.

The scene is next shifted to Gibeah, where Saul was holding a council meeting. Saul seemed to be in the grip of a persecution complex. Even in council, Saul kept his spear in his hand, perhaps a sign of his irrational fears. He accused his officers of plotting against him (22:8), and asserted not only that David was trying to kill him, but that Jonathan was encouraging him. His allegations were bolstered not by facts but by self pity. His diatribe was against fellow Benjaminites, those least likely to be disloyal to him. If he treated even his friends in this way, one can hardly wonder that the number of David's supporters grew rapidly! The picture we have here is of a man whose condition is no less pathetic than David's before Achish. The difference is that Saul has gone beyond the fateful point where he can recognize that there is anything wrong.

As in our own day, so in Saul's there was always someone ready to pander to a tyrant's whim. Doeg reported David's visit to Nob, and Saul immediately drew the conclusion that the priest Ahimelech was in league with David. He and his family were summoned, charged, judged guilty with no regard for evidence, and condemned to death so summarily that even Saul's own guards would not carry out the execution. The sycophantic Doeg was at hand to oblige, and 85 priests were murdered. Saul followed up this infamous deed by slaughtering all the

other unfortunate inhabitants of Nob. Thus was the curse on Eli's family fulfilled.

Only one priest, Abiathar, escaped with his life, and he naturally went to join David, who welcomed him and recognized with horror the part he had unintentionally played in bringing about the tragedy (22:22).

David on the Run (23:1-29)

David had plenty of problems of his own, but still he could not stand by and see others suffer injustice without trying to help. News of Philistine raids on the harvest at Keilah spurred him to action. His men advised against falling out with the Philistines as well as with Saul, but as Abiathar had brought an ephod with him when he fled (23:6), David had access to the Lord's guidance in a direct manner. The guidance was a clear promise of victory, and David's troops accepted it without further demur. Keilah was relieved, and it appears that for a while, David's forces took up residence there.

Saul heard about this and planned to besiege the town. Once more David sought the Lord's guidance, and on learning that the people of Keilah would hand him over to Saul, decided to leave of his own accord. Before we condemn the people of Keilah for ingratitude, we might pause to consider that the stay of David's company, now increased to 600 men, probably imposed a greater burden on their economic resources than the raids of the Philistines had!

David was now without a permanent base and his fortunes were at a low ebb. At this time Jonathan went to visit him, encourage his faith, and reassure him of his ultimate triumph (23:17). This gesture, coming when it did, must have meant much to David. It was probably the last time he saw Jonathan.

The people of Ziph tried to betray David to Saul, and if Saul had been less dilatory in mounting his expedition, he would probably have succeeded in capturing David. As it was, the Philistines were on this occasion the unwitting agents of David's escape. A Philistine raid distracted Saul at the crucial moment and David once again eluded him.

If their titles are to be relied on, a number of psalms date from David's experiences while in flight from Saul (*Pss. 34, 52, 54, 56, 57, 59, 142*). At this time, he learnt the hard way the truth that 'God is my helper; the Lord is the upholder of my life' (*Ps. 54:4*).

LOOKING AT BOOKS



Paul's Idea of Community.
The Early House Churches in their Historical Setting.
Robert Banks. Paternoster Press. 208p. £4.40 (paperback).

This is an important book which merits a wide readership, and careful study. Happy the church which uses it as the basis for a series of Bible studies. It will serve to reinforce many of the fundamental principles for which Brethren stand, giving them new force and cutting edge in some cases. It should also counteract the bastard clericalism that is beginning to appear in some quarters, and it might even remove some of the blind spots in traditional Brethren vision. Of particular importance as far as this last is concerned are the careful and persuasive treatments of charismatic gifts and the contribution of women in the church. (The book is worth all of its price for these two things alone!)

Almost everything touched by this remarkable book is adorned by the author. Paul's teaching on the church, his view of fellowship, leadership, baptism and the common meal, and participation in corporate activities are examples chosen almost at random. Striking statements abound. For example, 'Wherever Christians are in relationship there is the body of Christ in its entirety'. An unusual feature of the treatment is the comparison between Paul's views and those of his Jewish and Gentile contemporaries. For the general reader, this is something of a luxury, though it does bring out very clearly the many distinctive elements in Pauline teaching. The present reviewer has only two regrets. First, the book, which is avowedly intended to be neither technical nor popular, is so packed with material that it makes considerable demands upon the reader. Second, the Pastoral Epistles are brushed to one side with almost indecent haste.
Review by Dr. Harold H. Rowdon, London Bible College.

I Believe in Preaching John R. W. Stott. Hodder and Stoughton. 351p. £5.95 (paperback).

Michael Green, as editor of this series, must have been overjoyed when John Stott agreed to contribute the volume on **Preaching**. As he rightly states in the Editor's Preface, 'John Stott is one of the few great preachers in Britain today'. In addition, John Stott combines with his preaching gift, outstanding skills as an author. The combination is rare. The result is a first-class treatment of this subject. This is no mere handbook for preachers on the art of preaching, though it includes a valuable section on this important matter. It ranges much more widely. The opening section is devoted to an apologia for preaching. John Stott confesses to being 'an impenitent believer in the indispensable necessity of preaching, both for evangelism and the healthy growth of the Church'. But he is no obscurantist. He argues his case, historically, as he surveys the distinctive role preaching has played in Christianity from Jesus and the apostles to the present day. Then in an eminently fair manner he weighs and answers the 'Contemporary Objections to Preaching'. This is followed by a positive and powerful presentation of the 'Theological Foundations for Preaching'. His reasoning is clear and convincing — not only because it is logical but, above all, because it is biblical. Having established this as a basis, the author next deals with the nature of preaching under the analogy of bridge-building — 'between the revealed Word and the contemporary world'. In the succeeding pages he addresses himself to the preacher. The chapter headings — **The Call to Study, Preparing Sermons, Sincerity and Earnestness, Courage and Humility** indicate the subject-matter, yet cannot,

of themselves, convey the excellence of their content. Of such a book a 250-word review (already exceeded) is an impertinence. Let it be redeemed with a 25-word entreaty: buy it, read it, ponder and pray over it, respond to it — and then urge others (especially intending preachers) to go and do the same.
Review by Alan Nute

Say Something Simple — The Local Church's Communications Handbook.
Release Nationwide, Bethel Publications, 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 4DN. £6.50/£8.00

This important — some might say indispensable — publication consists of 104 A4 sheets indexed and offered in a ring binder. (You can save £1.50 by providing your own binder.) What it offers is a complete guide to how the local church can use the media. The 13 sections are the work of professionals. They were originally published quarterly and an updated version of each section is issued with each new issue of Release Nationwide. The 13 sections cover such topics as using print, reporting news, using advertising, art and design, public relations, radio and audio-visuals, film, TV... The layout is simple but varied and attractive — just the sort of thing which a small local church could easily produce. At a time when many churches are concerned about their failure to make any sort of impact in the local media, this practical manual, dealing with every aspect from designing and layout to interviewing a missionary or making a tape recording, deserves a large circulation. However, a word of warning is required. This must not be purchased and appropriated by some elder or deacon and then left to gather dust. It is important to identify the individual(s) within the fellowship who will make use of the information and advice

provided. Placed in the right hands, this material could revolutionise the way in which churches communicate with the 'outside world'.
Review by E. Chetwynd

The Forgotten Father Thomas A. Smail. Hodder & Stoughton. 189pp. £4.95 (paperback).
God Our Father Alan P. F. Sell. Saint Andrew Press. viii + 144pp. £2.50 (paperback).

The fatherhood of God is the basic affirmation of the Christian faith. That does not mean, however, that all Christians either understand its implications or live in the conscious enjoyment of its reality. Mr. Smail, formerly Director of the Fountain Trust and now a lecturer at St. John's College, Nottingham, is concerned that Christians involved in the charismatic movement have forgotten the Father in their rediscovery of the Spirit. He therefore sets out to expound the NT teaching about the fatherhood of God; and that requires him to look also at the theology of the trinity, the incarnation, the atonement and the purpose of God in the church and in the world. The book contains plenty of solid biblical exposition with some references to contemporary theology; but it is not simply addressed to the intellect: the relevance of doctrine for Christian experience and practice is continually stressed. The overriding concern of the author is that Christians should see that obedience is the implication of sonship — and it is not only charismatic Christians who forget that! Dr. Sell, a URC minister and a college lecturer in Walsall, has embarked on a series of books which aims to treat the major Christian doctrines in a spirit of enquiry and devotion. Each chapter of this first volume deals with an aspect of the nature of God in a way which is biblical, thought-provoking and

heart-warming. A particularly attractive feature is the extensive use of quotations from hymns. Each chapter also ends with a hymn and a prayer. This is a helpful book which will not only stimulate worship but provide the preacher with a pattern for doctrinal sermons. *Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.*

The Case for Christianity

Colin Chapman
Lion. 313pp. £7.95.
What is Christianity?
Michael Green
Lion. 61pp. £4.95.

Lion have developed a remarkable talent for spotting gaps in the Christian publishing market which no-one else has ever noticed before . . . and then filling them, in style. These two books are evidence of their alertness. Take Michael Green's **What is Christianity?**, for example; there is no shortage of cheap, popular evangelistic paperbacks (not a few of them produced by Green himself!) but when before have we had that kind of content in a large-format, glossy, 'coffee-table' style of presentation, with superb photography to enhance the impact of the forceful text? This is the kind of book any non-believer would receive as a present with delight — the standard of production is immaculate; and yet from the forthright title through to the very last sentence ('... the answer lies in our response to Jesus Christ') not a punch is pulled, not an apology is made for the uncompromising, unblushing recommendation of the faith. Ideas for its use come to mind as soon as you look at it. Leaving it around the house for visitors to pick up and dip into? Putting it with the tatty magazines in the doctor's waiting room? It would be an instant hit on the 'new books' shelf in the local library. This could be one of the most versatile literary tools for evangelism we have seen for years. It is ten years now since Colin Chapman embarked on an ambitious three-part series for Lion entitled **Christianity on Trial**. The three books consisted of a carefully-managed mosaic of quotations from a bewildering variety of

sources (everything from Hal Lindsey to Jean-Paul Sartre), arranged to demonstrate typical answers to the key questions of existence from just about every conceivable philosophical viewpoint. Organised by a system of 'road signs' in the text, the various arguments led straight in to a consideration of the validity of historic Christian belief.

Christianity on Trial was an unparalleled source-book of striking quotations, and a useful summary of apologetic arguments, but for me it had two drawbacks: the approach was fairly abstract and academic which limited the situations in which it could be used. and because of its ambitious range it inevitably cut a few corners in argument. Now, by recasting the material completely and adding much more besides, Chapman has put together one attractive volume which remedies both of these defects. This time, the approach is based on ten important 'human rather than abstract questions' — 'some of the most basic human questions which men have always been asking' — and the range is less ambitious ('Ten Key Thinkers', 'Ten "Isms"') though paradoxically much more inclusive. Apologetics must be the weakest area in Christian writing today, and this is a **tour de force**. Again, ideas for its use multiply fast: a sixth-form text book? A resource book for the church library? A basis for youth club discussions? An education to the world of thought for the general Christian reader? A book which manages to include both Kant and creationism, Rousseau and sex before marriage, is a rare, rich, rewarding experience. But surely there must be **something** I disliked? Well, yes. I can't understand why **What is Christianity?**, for all its variety of graphics, uses exactly the same, wearying type-style for headlining on every single page. And I'd have liked more apologetics; the quick, easy treatment of the problem of suffering left me uncomfortable. Chapman's book, for all its range, is still 'A-level and beyond' in its applicability, and some of the quotations are weak enough to make me wonder why Chapman didn't simply make

the point himself. But these are minor quibbles. Lion has triumphed again. And we all stand to benefit.

Review by John Allan, British Youth for Christ

Exploring Inner Space David Hay. Pelican. 256pp. £2.95 (paperback).

David Hay is a zoologist who 'became a little sceptical about the disappearance of the sacred', began asking a number of his students about religious experience, and passed on the data to Sir Alister Hardy's Religious Experience Research Unit at Oxford. As a result, David Hay was given a research assistant and set off on his own research in Nottingham in 1975. This book is the report. To the question 'Have you ever been aware of or influenced by a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?' 62% said 'Yes' (compared with 36% of an earlier NOP survey). Hay analyses these

responses (his own and NOP) in many ways, age, education, social class, denomination, company, state of mind, all with perceptive and stimulating comment. After a chapter of 'doubts about the despisers' (Marx, Freud and the others who have 'explained away' religious experience) he concludes that religious experience is a normal part of humanity, and not a morbid trait or fanatical freak. You may think you knew this all along. Read the book, however, especially before you preach your next sermon on religious decay in Britain. You may well think of Paul at Athens talking of 'him whom you worship as unknown'. If we studied this book it might help us to realise that 'there be more that are with us than are with them' and also suggest ways in which we could modify our communication strategies. And if you have an 'explain-away' friend, this might make him think again.

Review by Charles Martin



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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.

THE VIDEO REVOLUTION

This month's Forum is contributed by Michael Byrne; with a postscript by the Editor.

Home video is here to stay — and, because of it, TV will never be the same again. But, you may ask, what does video mean? To steal a title from someone who was once in the entertainment business, 'It is television as you like it'. Record what you like when you like on a machine about the size of a small suitcase, which costs about five hundred pounds to buy or eighteen pounds a month to hire.

Video is a kind of miniature studio which you can plug in to your TV set and which lets you select, record and store programmes of your choice for comfortable viewing at your leisure once or many times. The programmes are recorded on a cassette about the size of a paperback book, which can easily be inserted.

One could perhaps think of video tapes as being 'sound-cassettes with pictures'. Though more expensive than sound cassettes, video tapes, costing only ten pounds for three hours of colour viewing, are much cheaper than cine film and do not require developing but can be played back instantly.

Most people using video for the first time are content to record favourite TV programmes, which they can do while watching another channel or even in their absence. After a time, however,

they may begin to look round for pre-recorded material, at about thirty-five pounds a programme — or, if they decide to buy or hire a video camera, they can make their own programmes. It is believed in some quarters that video will eventually kill off the 8mm home movies.

Over the past two years there has been a great increase in the number of video recorders hired and sold in the British Isles. It is estimated that there are between 800,000 and one million machines in circulation, with over two million people having access to video viewing. By the end of 1985 perhaps one in five homes with TV in this part of the world will have a video tape-recorder. The market for pre-recorded tapes for the machines is already a multi-million-pound business, about a third of the tapes being of the 'adult' variety featuring pornography and violence.

One can truly call the current boom in this field of consumer electronics a 'video revolution'; the biggest thing that has happened to manufacturers, retailers and renters since colour TV. The cost to hire or buy a video recorder is moving downwards, in the pattern of the coming of colour TV.

Except for a small number of organisations in the communications field and individuals who see modern mission in mass-media terms, the Churches are still not alert to the future use of video recorders. Also, many of the Christian video tapes available are aimed at the converted, making it difficult to reach the unchurched 'man in the street' with this medium. Generally Christian video tapes in this country feature preachers and ministers speaking to an audience of Christians. There is sometimes a musical accompaniment, choir or solo singer, though some tapes consist of choirs and nothing else.

Among the preachers can be found Billy Graham, Trevor Dearing, Alan Redpath, David Watson, David du Plessis and Fred Lemon. The Churches TV Centre in Bushey, Hertfordshire, has produced a series of six subjects dealing with retirement, divorce, road safety, the rehabili-

tation of drug-addicts, the Shroud of Turin, and the beliefs and music of the Spinners.

There is a great need, I feel, for much more Christian video material which presents the Gospel message in terms intelligible to modern man, relating it to his everyday problems and struggles. Many today are despairing of the current mood of gloom and doom and fearful of life lived under the nuclear threat. They must be given encouragement and hope, uplift and inspiration; and video technology offers a means of getting Christ's message to many such people who might initially have inhibitions about entering a place of worship.

The much-maligned 'Electronic Church' in America may have something to teach us concerning the format of Christian video programmes. Though U.S. television preachers sometimes come under fire because of their style, some of the programmes which I have seen were both inspiring and entertaining without debasing the Gospel message or resorting to cheap gimmickry. Centred on a powerful sermon were sketches featuring choirs, solo singers, outside broadcast reports from the mission field and interviews with famous Christian personalities.

The American experience also seems to indicate that most people eventually tire of video-porn and start looking round for better material. Pornography, according to Malcolm Muggeridge, is the religion of materialism; and Christian video producers must be ready to step in when viewers turn away from that false religion.

The biggest producer of Christian video tapes in the British Isles is Keith Gerner of Audio-Visual Ministries, Hollywood, Co. Down, Northern Ireland. He has produced over two hundred titles.

Like all great technological advances, video can be put to both good and evil uses. At present the peddlers of porn and violence are way ahead, doing much harm and earning a great deal of money. The Churches must now show the same kind of single-mindedness, *continued on page 16*

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The April question

What precisely is 'the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus' for the sake of gaining which Paul pressed on toward the goal (Phil. 3:14)?

Mr. W. McKenzie replies:

In this section of the epistle Paul seems to be thinking in terms of the Olympic Games. He divests himself of the garments of personal righteousness (vv.4-6) and the sin of pride in self-righteousness (v6) and rests in the righteousness of Christ. His one aim now is to please Christ, who has laid hold of him and made him an ambassador to the Gentiles (v12 with Acts. 9:15-16). This requires an intensity of effort and singleness of mind analogous to that required in a marathon runner (cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-27). The reward for success will be commendation at the judgement seat of Christ. This he describes as the crown of righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8) which I take to mean the evidence that he has been successful in appropriating the righteousness of God in Christ, not merely as a doctrine but as a practical code of practice.

Mr. Tony Dean replies:

I was interested by Professor Bruce's April Question in *The Harvester* about Phil. 3:14, which is the culmination of a passage that begins, I would think, at Phil. 3:4.

Might 'the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus' perhaps be the knowledge of the Lord Jesus? In v.7, Paul says that he regards all his religious 'qualifications' as 'loss for Christ'. In vv.8 and 9 he says he counts 'all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord' and that nothing is of any value to him compared with winning Christ and being 'found in him'. In v.10 he again expresses his intense desire to know Christ. It would seem that, as he wrote this passage, Paul felt an intense desire to experience the closest possible union with the Lord Jesus. Such a union, involving knowledge in the fullest sense, is surely the prize which Paul most wants to receive? Of course, both the prize and the means of attaining it are one; the Lord Jesus, just as He is both the Way, and seated at

the right hand of the Father to whom the Way leads.

I feel that the supreme good is to be in the immediate presence of the Lord Jesus. Is it not true that we shall always know the Father through the Son, who died for us?

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

From this third chapter to the Philippians it is obvious that Paul was determined to live on the highest possible spiritual plane; and this state he counted as the prize in itself. It is an anticipation on earth of being as like Christ as it is possible to be, even before our 'lowly body' is changed 'to be like his glorious body' (v.21 RSV). This seems to be what Paul means when he speaks of 'attaining to the resurrection of the dead' (v.11); the spiritual experience before the physical change. Hence Paul writes as he does from verse 7 to the verse in question. His thoughts reach a crescendo in verses 8 and 9 when he prefers the knowledge of Christ Jesus even if it means the loss of all things — such as mentioned in verses 4 and 6 — and so gain Christ's fellowship in all things. He is aware that he has not yet succeeded, and that is why he presses on (v.12). And in verse 15 he encourages his readers who are mature to emulate him, and speaks graciously to those who are not yet ready for this demanding 'upward call'. How do we react?

Mr. H. L. Ellison writes:

It would indubitably have been better if Professor Bruce, instead of asking the question, had answered it himself. He was doubtless deterred from so doing by the thought that a book would have been necessary for the purpose, as well as by the memory of a mutual friend of ours, who had to suffer for the answer. The New Testament contains many indications of 'rewards', 'crowns', etc., which await some Christians. Valiant attempts are made by many contemporaries to prove that 'some' in this context means 'all'. Lack of space prevents a listing of these rewards. To me it is clear that if they were all put into one

pan of the divine scales and 'Christ-likeness' (1 Jn. 3:3) in the other, I would not hesitate for a moment as to which I would choose. To those who would argue that Christ-likeness is not a reward or a 'prize', I would answer that he who does not wish to be like Christ will not be forced to be like Him. We meet all too many who by their lives clearly show that they have little active wish for such a change. Unless we subscribe to the virtual denial of free will involved in hyper-Calvinism, why should we assume that Christ-likeness will be forced on them? We would do well to remember that it is much easier to pontificate on 'assembly principles' than to consider the Sermon on the Mount humbly and seriously, for there surely we have a picture of what Christ-likeness means in practice.

READER'S FORUM

continued from page 15

zeal and professionalism in presenting the eternal message of Christ through this new medium, and help to inject new life into a jaded, cynical world.

(The Editor adds: Fast behind the home-video industry, there is another electronic home revolution also using the domestic TV set — the home micro-computer. Devoted at present largely to puerile games, a splendid educational tool is grossly maligned by popular fashion — though the porno-violence people are appearing here also. I should be interested to hear of Christians who might be planning the production of software for use in the cause of Christ: self-instruction programs, children's 'discovery' material, material for house-group studies, graphics, and countless other developments might be possible. Already a 64K RAM is being advertised to fit the tiny Sinclair machine, and potential developments of this medium are incalculable. What better use it is of a TV set by a child, than is supine absorption in front of the average output of the medium!)

CORRESPONDENCE



Letters should be sent to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

Evangelism and Pastoring

From Mr. W. Dickson

Dear Mr. Coad,

Will you allow me to comment on Mr. A. H. Michael's article in the Readers' Forum in the March *Harvester*?

He does right to underline the importance of evangelism. He does right, too, to condemn the complacency of some assemblies who fail to make adequate evangelical outreach. He does wrong, however, to denigrate the work of the pastor.

Dr. Billy Graham was always at pains to emphasize that his work as an evangelist lay in a narrow specialized sector of the field of Christian activity. When decisions for Christ were made he had to leave the new converts in the care of local churches while he moved on to continue his specialized work elsewhere. So it is within our own fellowships. When an evangelist has won a soul for Christ his work is done. He must then pass over the new-born lamb to the care of the shepherd, the teacher and the pastor. Each of those persons is every bit as much a gift to the church as the evangelist (*Eph. 4:11*). The evangelist's effort may be quite brief, but the care of the convert is sometimes a continuing responsibility for the rest of his earthly life.

It is true to say that if there are no converts there can be no additions to the church. It is equally true to say that if pastoring work is not properly done there may be no church to which converts can be added.

In more than fifty years of Christian experience I have had my full share of both evangelistic and pastoral work. I am in no doubt as to which task is the more onerous and demanding.

Yours sincerely,

W. Dickson

18, Raith Hill, Ayr, KA7 4UF

Growth and Decline

From Mr. Arthur G. Lear

Dear brother in Christ,

In October 1978 my wife and I retired

from the city to the country, some 50 miles from our former Chapel, but maintain our membership there by a monthly visit. In this valley there are many Christian camping sites including one owned by Scripture Union. There is a most happy Christian Fellowship. The Village of Hekpoort has an Anglican building, but they use it only on the 2nd Sunday of each month. The Methodists use it on the 3rd and on other Lord's days we use it for undenominational worship, the final one being a breaking of bread gathering. A dear friend introducing this said 'We meet today in an Anglican church, using Methodist hymn books and have a Baptist minister to speak to us, but we shall be breaking bread in the brethren tradition!' We have a midweek Ladies' Meeting which has so prospered that 2 others have been formed at opposite ends of the Valley. We also have a Men's Fellowship on a Wednesday evening attended by ten to a dozen men for prayer and Bible study. This meeting is occasionally thrown open to wives and other ladies. There is a Sunday school for white children held in the local primary school and for Africans in a Chapel specially erected on a camping site, in which also adult African services are held. It has been my privilege to baptise a couple in their swimming pool and see them grow in grace and knowledge of their Lord. So much for a contribution to your 'Growth and Decline' article.

Regarding the article on 'Tomorrow's Generation'. Why do assemblies seem to fight shy of the Narnia series of books for children? I was interested to see a reference to one as I read on in your magazine. Yet C. S. Lewis has a wonderful way of bringing truth home. I know of no better picture of folk going forward after an appeal than that of an egg which either breaks its shell to let a chick hatch into new life requiring tender care and feeding or it goes bad and stinks. I'm sure I got this from one of his books, and it often reminds me to pray as much or more for the counsellors as for the counselled at such meetings.

Trusting that you may find the above of interest,

I remain, Yours sincerely,

Arthur G. Lear

P.O. Box 115, Hekpoort, 2800, Republic of South Africa.

Action in Worship

From Mr. E. L. Lovering

Dear Mr. Coad,

Mime, Drama and Dance, together with other 'bodily expressions', appear to play an increasingly central role in services of worship.

In a recent BBC broadcast of family worship, the story of 'the feast to which nobody wanted to come', (*Luke 14:15-24*) was read with simplicity and clarity and later the story was again narrated accompanied by 'mime'. In general does this trend in Christian worship indicate an inability to concentrate and comprehend a simple reading with verbal explanation or is there something deeper implied?

When the majority of the population was illiterate the Mystery and Miracle plays obviously served a useful purpose in communication, and 'words with actions' have long been a significant feature in 'children's meetings'.

Paul reflects that when he was a child he behaved as a child but when he reached maturity 'childish speech and feeling and thought had no further significance for him' (*1 Cor. 13:11*).

Would readers like to comment?

Yours sincerely in Christ,

E. L. Lovering

'Style Close', Marlborough Road, Ilfracombe, Devon EX34 8JP.

Modernising Hymns

From Miss A. B. H. Mullen

Dear Mr. Coad,

May I make a plea that no-one attempts to update present hymns? Any work of art whether it be poetry, literature, painting or sculpture is the child of its creator, and should not be meddled with. Forbid it that Rembrandt should be clothed in modern dress or Beethoven's fifth sonata be jazzed up. If modern hymns are required, then modern people should write them in modern language. However it is essential in any music or words used for the purpose of worship that they be inspired of God, and not just catchy words with a catchy tune. What a travesty, for instance, to say that Our Lord danced to the cross, as stated in that catchy modern hymn, 'Lord of the dance'.

How hard it will be to match the cadence, and beauty of such hymns as 'When I survey', 'There is a green hill' and 'O Love that wilt not let me go'. There are so many sing-able hymns, that surely one can pick out enough suitable ones, and leave the others unsung. In some places, nowadays, it is the practice to put words of scripture to music, and this is a very good exercise, especially as we know that God's word will not return to Him void, but will accomplish His purpose.

Yours sincerely,

A. B. H. Mullen

Bethany, 5, Northover Drive, Chard, Somerset. TA20 1LQ.

(The word 'dance' in the song referred to is said to be figurative of death — Ed.)

'Many pebbles on the beach'

From Mr. J. W. Forrest

Dear Mr. Coad,

As much as one might sympathize with the objects of Mr. Chas. Fraser-Smith;

the verse he quotes from 1 Cor. 20 condemning mere talk as the main ingredient of the Kingdom of God seems to me to relate to the arrogant people mentioned in the previous verse. But we must combine our talk with faith and actions as set forth in that very practical epistle of James.

There is probably a surplus of literature not only of 'solid, repetitive doctrinal articles', but of well-written evangelical material. The trouble is to get people to read both kinds, in fact. And so many of the 'meetings and conferences' are not well attended. Perhaps if they were, there might be more results of the kind Mr. Fraser-Smith desires.

Even 'The Seven Feasts' and the 'Second Coming', in particular, mentioned in John Carrick's article, can be applied to 'today's issues' by those who know how. And I am all for taking up 'those books of the Bible from which we seldom read in public' — both for believers and unbelievers; again by those who know how. And like the Lord's gifted leaders, these preachers will show themselves sooner or later.

Sincerely yours,

J. W. Forrest

7 Blandy Avenue, Southmoor, Abingdon, Oxon OX13 5DA.

North Arbury Chapel, Cambridge

From Dr. H. G. M. Williamson

Dear Mr. Coad,

Some time ago I wrote to you to let you know that building work was beginning on the new North Arbury Chapel here in Cambridge. It is good to be able to report steady progress so that now it has been possible to fix Saturday 26 June for the official opening. There is to be a service at 3.00 p.m. with the Mayor of Cambridge present at which the speaker will be Sir Fred Catherwood. Tea will be served in a school opposite the new building, and at an evening rally (6.00-7.30 p.m.) the speakers will be two close friends of the Chapel — Mr. Archie Hall of Kings Lynn and Dr. David Hart of Hopton. If any readers of **The Harvester** are planning to be present, we would appreciate it if they could let us know so that we can plan the catering accordingly.

During the following week we would value prayer as a wide variety of special gatherings have been planned for all age groups in order to capitalize on the attractions of the new building.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Williamson

51 Roseford Road, Cambridge, CB4 2HA.

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NEWS PAGE



Africa

Mozambique has until recently been regarded as a closed door to the Gospel. Since the exit of Christian missionaries shortly after the advent of independence, and the take-over of a socialist regime, many Christians have suffered for their faith and churches have gone through hard times. Direct contact with Christians has been almost impossible. During the past year the government's attitude has been softening and religious liberty has been assured on a number of occasions so that local believers have been encouraged and reassured. Representatives of parent organizations are now being permitted to make yearly visits for the purpose of encouragement, instruction and edification of local churches. Two Christian doctors are now working with the Ministry of Health, serving at a former mission hospital, and they have enjoyed full liberty for a spiritual ministry. Government officials are open to consider applications from Christian doctors, agriculturalists, foresters etc, who would be 'tent-making' missionaries.

A group of Reformed Churches tells a story of growth in spite of severe restrictions. After missionaries were driven out, the church was subjected to great persecution and was guided by groups of elders. Today the church not only survives but flourishes despite severe restrictions. Of the five congregations one now has 1500 members and each of the congregations has about 40 elders. Total membership of the five congregations is about 7000. Yet no new churches may be built nor dilapidated ones

rebuilt. Services in the open air are not allowed; inviting people to church is forbidden; children under 18 may not be baptized nor receive any religious instruction; no collection may be taken up in the services. Although the members of the church are poor and the pastors do not receive fixed salaries, yet the church is spiritually strong. It feels that its greatest need is for Bibles. Asked about the secret of victory in their lives, the members attribute it to God's grace.

Argentina

A letter from veteran missionary Jim Taylor, who has served in the Argentine since January 1934, carries a reminder of the stresses that the Falkland Islands dispute must inevitably bring. Writing in January, he looks forward to a large missionary conference in August in Buenos Aires celebrating the centenary of the assemblies in Argentina. Prayer is needed not only for the conference but also for evangelicals in the Argentine who will inevitably be associated by many people with Britain.

Australia

At the end of March evangelist Luis Palau concluded a 17-day crusade in Newcastle, New South Wales. The crusade was hampered from the beginning by unseasonable rain and high winds. Despite the weather over 52,000 people attended the open-air meetings. Inquirers were referred by the follow-up committee to one of the 180 supporting churches. The Argentine evangelist believes Australia is ready for a spiritual awakening. Palau claims, 'Australia more resembles Latin

America, where a spiritual revival is taking place, than Europe where there is spiritual indifference. In Australia there is freedom to proclaim Christian events and the Christian faith, and the population is less intellectually arrogant than other parts of the West.'

A high percentage of those making a first-time Christian commitment were elderly which, said the counselling chairman, is unusual because 'the older people get, the more hardened they become to the Christian message'. (Luis Palau is due in Leeds from October 22 to 31.)

Bible

The Good News Bible has to date sold more than 3.5 million copies in its UK edition alone. But this is only a part of the £4 million plus enterprise of the Bible Society in this country. As well as this publishing turnover the Society contributes more than £1.5 million to the work of Bible Societies in over a hundred countries, mainly in the Third World. This is channelled through the international fellowship known as United Bible Societies.

The new Swindon Bible Centre expects to handle 2,000 tonnes of Scripture annually fulfilling 25,000 orders, in 224 different languages, and distributes to customers in 156 countries. The Bible Societies issue between them around 10 million Bibles, 14 million New Testaments and more than 400 million smaller items of Scripture a year. The original aims are still part and parcel of the Society's policies — that the Bible is produced in languages people can understand at prices they can afford. This may mean a wide variety of languages in

some countries where the official language is very much a second language to many of the people. And in many languages it means new translations using 'common language' and 'dynamic equivalence' principles, ensuring that not only the words but also their meaning is clearly understood.

Bible Societies do not see their job as direct distribution of the Bible. They are committed to supplying the national churches with the Scriptures they request, without doctrinal note or comment.

The Lion Concise Book of Bible Quotations contains over 5,000 quotations, some of them at considerable length. The first part of the book arranges the verses under nearly 300 themes in alphabetical order. This is useful for people who want to know what the Bible says about a particular subject and can also be useful for finding specific quotations. In this section the 'golden verses' are printed in a second colour so that they stand out. The format is convenient (220 x 110mm), it is stylishly bound and costs £4.95.

The Christian Counsellor's Pocket Guide is by Selwyn Hughes. It is in three sections. A. deals with the most common problems that trouble Christians, B. with objections raised by many unbelievers and C. with the most frequent intellectual excuses given as barriers to personal commitment. At each double opening one page features a question or problem with the author's comment on the counselling situation. Facing this is a series of six or seven relevant Bible passages, usually

though not always from the King James Version (Kingsway, £1.50).

Evangelism

The South West London Evangelistic Mobile Unit will remember Saturday, April 24 as a milestone. It was the date not only of their thirty-fifth Annual Report, but also of the dedication of a new vehicle — their fourth. A short service took place outside Victoria Hall Evangelical Church, Wandsworth Common, before a report meeting inside the Hall. The total cost of the new Unit was between £6-7,000, which had all been obtained by gifts from various companies of the Lord's people. The prayer now is for a garage within the S.W. London area, for the risk of leaving a brand new Gospel vehicle on the streets of London is obvious. The reports were enlightening and encouraging. The S.W. Unit is still an effective outreach in London, and farther afield. Its wide influence is reflected in the **Uncle Will Children's Ministry**. This began in 1962 and since that time has contacted thousands of children all over the South of England, and through them, no doubt, many parents. During 1981 296 competition papers/letters were received from children. Another feature of the work is its interdenominational character. Although still very much assembly based (and probably one of our most prolific outreaches), other members of the Lord's family are joining in. Included among the very small cross-section of the workers on the platform were a Church Army captain and a member of Westminster Chapel. After thirty-five years many of the founder members have passed on, and those who are still with us show signs of grey hairs. Young people are coming forward, but not in the numbers required. Our prayer is that the new Unit will be adequately manned, and that the Lord will 'bless all who sail in her'. Any evangelical Christian who is interested in the work might contact Mr. R. Reed, 8 Stratton Road, London SW19 3JG.

A soundstrip in *Hindustani* has been produced by SU and BMMF International. Mohinder is the testimony of a former

Sikh who was converted to Christ, and the soundstrip is available in two versions — with the soundtrack in Hindustani (a mixture of Hindi and Urdu) or in English.

This soundstrip, which has been designed for evangelism with Asian adults and young people, tells the story of Mohinder Singh Kundhal, who was brought up as a high-caste Sikh and has a master's degree in fine arts. He came to Britain from India because of an arranged marriage. But this marriage soon broke down and he became acutely depressed. One day he met a Christian Pakistani, Pastor Samuel Gill of Plaistow Elim Pentecostal Church, where Asians worship. He was introduced to this caring community and noticed that regardless of each other's caste, they were worshipping together as people of one family. Mohinder's depression was healed and he was then led to personal faith in Christ. Mohinder has since returned to the Punjab, where he is involved in evangelism with the Elim Pentecostal Church there. Mohinder can be bought or hired from SU's bookshops; the selling price is £10.60, and the hiring fee is £4.00 for forty-eight hours. It can also be bought or hired through SU's Mail Order Department, PO Box 38, Bristol, BS99 7NA. 60p should be added for postage and packing.

Chinese Christian Churches in North America and South East Asia will be assuming increased responsibilities in world evangelization, according to Dr. J. Hudson Taylor, III, general director of Overseas Missionary Fellowship. During an April visit, he said that he was impressed with the virility of Chinese churches in North America. In Toronto, for instance, the number of Chinese churches has increased since 1968 from about four to over thirty. The Overseas Missionary Fellowship (formerly the China Inland Mission) and the other agencies are recruiting Chinese Christian workers to evangelize and minister to their countrymen in Taiwan and South East Asia. Taylor contended that Chinese Christians from North American churches would be especially effective in cross-cultural

evangelization because they had experienced cultural adjustment themselves. He fully expected those churches would become a major source of missionaries. Chinese churches are also assuming financial responsibility in support of their own and other missionaries. 'We are witnessing a major breakthrough in world evangelization,' Taylor maintained. 'We sense that we are only scratching the surface.'

Individual influence is crucial in conversion according to research conducted by the Institute for American Church Growth. Evangelistic meetings are obviously of importance but of the 15,000 people surveyed by the Institute, 70 to 90% indicated that they traced their 'spiritual roots' to a prior relationship with a member of the church.

Evolution

One of the expert witnesses called to testify on behalf of the plaintiff in the 'creation-science' in Arkansas has written an article in **Christianity Today** contending that creationists are fighting the right battle but on the wrong front. Professor George Marsden had reservations about the challenged law because it favoured only one kind of creationism, the type advocated by those associated with the Institute for Creation Research in San Diego. 'These "creation scientists" defend the most conservative of the literal interpretations of Genesis I, insisting that the "days" of that chapter refer to the 24-hour periods, that the earth is likely no more than about 10,000 years old, and that most of the apparent geological data is explained by the worldwide flood.' The law ignores the views of many strong advocates of creationism with different views on Genesis. Many Christians believe that 'the scientific evidence presented by the so-called creation scientists is both bad science and a bad interpretation of Scripture'.

Keswick Convention

Once again this year, July will see thousands flocking to Keswick (D.V.) for a Bible convention which demands no registration and no 'booking deposit'. The first week (July 10-17) is the traditional Keswick

Convention: speakers this year include Alec Motyer, Eric Alexander, Donald Bridge, Gordon Bridger, Ronald Dunn, Tom Houston, Billy Strachan and Keith Weston. For the Holiday Convention (July 17-24), which has a slightly less demanding programme and is designed for families with children of all ages, the speakers are Phillip Hacking, Ronald Dunn, Harry Kilbride, Gilbert Kirby, George Duncan, Roger Mayor, and Hugh Palmer. Information about accommodation can be obtained from the Registrar, 12 Skiddaw Street, Keswick, Cumbria. Don't forget to enclose a stamped addressed envelope!

Librarians' Christian Fellowship

From April 24, 1982, the Librarians' Christian Fellowship has had a new President, Dr. John S. Andrews, Sub-Librarian of the University of Lancaster. Dr. Andrews is an active member of the Christian Brethren and attends Moorlands Evangelical Church in Lancaster. He contributed a chapter on church music to the *Lion Handbook History of Christianity* and is the editor of *Education in Germany: a Union List of Stock in Institute and School of Education Libraries* which is published by the University of Lancaster. He succeeds Mr. Philip H. Sewell, who has served as President since 1976, and who has agreed to become the Fellowship's first life Vice-President.

Relief

Tear Fund reports help given to relief work in various parts of the world. In the Pacific island of Tonga, Hurricane Isaac destroyed 95% of buildings in the worst affected areas. Virtually the total export crop of coconuts, bananas, and bread fruit was destroyed. The Tear Fund grant to the Tonga Christian Relief Committee will go towards the part purchase of 100 carpentry kits and further help will be given later. There has been serious flooding in large areas of South America, including Northern Argentina and Eastern Bolivia. Money here has been allocated to the Bolivian Commission for Evangelical Social Action and to the Church of England.

In the Ethiopian district of Woleyta, 200,000 people are short of food — one in four of the district's population. Here the need is for food grains and church agencies are providing this, also staff to oversee the distribution of food in conjunction with local government officials.

Youth

The 'Earth Invaders' presentations were attended by 41,000 people. This means that about 10,000 young people took part in this eight-week discipleship course, which ended on April 3. And, despite gloomy predictions in one Christian paper, 'Earth Invaders', which was jointly sponsored by British Youth for Christ, Crusaders, CYFA and Scripture Union, is likely to cover its costs. Local group leaders have been enthusiastic about the 'Earth Invaders' unique combination of major events with materials for teaching at local level, and are asking for similar ventures in the future. At the closing event in the Westminster Central Hall, George Verwer of Operation Mobilisation spoke on Enemy tactics. Amongst these were 'the failure syndrome' — and bitterness. 'Quite a few we've counselled on this tour have been bitter and resentful,' he said. Speaking of the steps to victory, he challenged his audience, 'Is Christ the Lord of your life? Many Christians have never experienced the lordship of Jesus Christ'. 'There are thousands of young people in London tonight,' said presenter and BYFC evangelist Phil Rowlands, 'who are on their way to hell. Next week, at

school, at college or at work, you'll be surrounded by people who are bound for a lost eternity. Help us to push back the frontiers of Satan's kingdom,' prayed Phil Rowlands in his closing prayer, 'You sort our lives out and send us over the top.'

The Midland Easter Young People's Conference was held at Llanfairfechan from April 9 to 12. About 80 members between 16 and 30 united for the occasion although not all of these were prepared to attempt the ascent of Penmaenmawr. The talks were given by Peter Cousins of Exeter. He used material from the Gospels to show what is different about the life to which Jesus calls his followers. The Conference ended with a time of worship which included items that had been produced in workshop sessions in drama, choral speaking, music and art. Thanks for a very happy conference should be given not only to the organizing committee but also to the staff at Plas Menai who obviously enjoy catering for young people.

The Greenbelt Festival is to be held in 1982 at Knebworth Park from August 27 to 30. During the last seven years the attendance has risen from less than 5,000 to over 20,000, so a move is obviously necessary. Since the park covers a total area of 600 acres (six times larger than the previous venue at Odell) space is no problem. Included in the ticket price will be unlimited use of the park's permanent attractions: a lake, woodland walks, deer, skate

park, miniature railway and crazy golf. As usual there will be a packed programme comprising not only music and drama but seminars and teaching. This will cover three major themes: the local church, sharing the Gospel, living in the world. Among the speakers will be Jim Wallis, Chris Sugden, Vinay Samuel, Calvin Seerveld, Paul Marshall, Roger Forster, Graham Cray, Jim Panton, John Peck and many others.

Home Call

W. H. Clare on March 30, aged 96. Converted at the age of 12, he was for some time in fellowship at Camden Hall, Birkenhead. During the First World War he gave up his business and ministered to troops in Shropshire — indeed, he was for many years associated with Clive in Shropshire. Subsequently he began to travel the country preaching in the open air as well as indoors. This ministry was extended to various countries in Europe, also North Africa and Palestine. He was also active in promoting

broadcasting from assemblies. Prayer for his widow and sister will be valued.

Leslie William Moscrop on Easter Sunday, April 11, 1982, aged 78. He had been at both morning and evening services at The Gospel Hall, Leighton Road, Bush Hill Park, the assembly in which he had been brought up and where he spent his whole life. As a chartered accountant, he was widely known in the business world, and was highly respected on all sides for his wisdom and strong personality, gifts which he placed freely at the disposal of many Christian works. Although 78 years of age, he was fully in harness until the end, having recovered remarkably well from serious surgery in the autumn of 1981. Our prayers are with his widow, sister and brothers in their loss.

We apologize for the late delivery of the May issue which was due to a breakdown at the Printers.

Press Day, Thurs. 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

Missionaries' Children's Fund
29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund during March and April amounted to £448.00 and £613.24 respectively.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received for the Fund during April amounted to £4,319.46.

ASSEMBLY CLOSURE

Glasgow
Assembly Hall, 564 Castlemilk Road, Glasgow, G44, announce with regret that Assembly Hall, Kings Park, where a witness has been maintained for 50 years, has now been closed, due to declining numbers. The final service took place on Sunday, May 9.

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.:
Manchester 3-10; Plymouth 13 & 15; Beer 20; Stoke Canon 27; Exmouth 29.

Clifford, D. L.:
Lille, France 1-2; East Kilbride 6-11; Romand Rd, Motherwell 12-13; St. Leonards 15; Weymouth 20, 23-30; Poulner 27.

Galyer, W. S.:
Epsom Races 4/5; Bush Hill Park 6; South Ruislip 8; St. Albans 9; Reigate 10 & 17; Bermondsey 11; Trafalgar Square 12; High Wycombe 13; Norbiton 14; Claygate & Guildford 15; Morden 16; Croxley Green 20; Kingston 22; Cambridge Fair 23/24; Staines 27; Walthamstow 29.

Gillham, S.:
Strouden Chapel, Bournemouth Holiday Club 1-6; Summer Dorset Schools Tour 7-21; Sturminster Newton 8 & 15; Shaftesbury 12; Three Legged Cross 13; Blandford 17; West Moors 19; Preston/Wyke Regis, Weymouth 20; Charminster Bournemouth Tent Crusade 24-July 16.

Greenaway, G. H.:
Fornham All Saints 6; Wapenham, Northants 7-11; Denston 13; Mickfield 20; Dereham 22; Haugley Green 27; also visitation work.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Sunbury Court Conference 1-3; Fittleworth, Sussex 6; Guildford 13; Briston, Norfolk 20.

Iliffe, D. J.:
Littlehampton 2; Horsham Children's Mission 6-13; School W. Sussex 14-18; Haywards Heath 20; Preparation 21-25; Chislehurst 27; Greenland Camps Work 28-July 26.

Lambert, P. A.:
Bath & West Show 1-4; Liphook 5-6; Schools Work 7-11; Steepel Aston Tent Mission 12-July 4.

Loader, G.:
Hill House with Bethesda Chapel 4-6; Swindon 13; Dawlish 26-28.

Lowther, G. K.:
Bromley 2; Hornchurch 3, 10, 17, 24 & 27; Littleport 5 & 6; Chelmsford 7, 9, 14, 16, 21 & 23; Haldon, Essex 8 & 15; Nuneaton 11-13; Walthamstow

16; St. Mary Cray, Kent 20; Sydenham 21; Rainham 22; Ilford 28; Downham, Kent 29, 30; Beckenham 30.

Pierce, D. H.:
North Devon including Tent Crusade at Chilsworthy June 20 to July 4.

Phillips, C.:
Bury Street, Edmonton 22, 29; Oakleigh Chapel 27; Wadham Hall, Walthamstow 23-30; South Ruislip 27.

Short, S. S.:
Yatton 6, 13; Gloucester 7, 14; Ross-on-Wye 8, 15; Hucclecote 9, 16; Chippenham 10, 17; Newport, Gwent 20; Fort William 22, 27.

Stringer, D.:
North London 1 & 2; Warwickshire area 3-30.

Tatford, F. A.:
Worthing 2; Cambridge 12, 13; France 15-30.

Thurston, A.:
Kingsbridge 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Chillington 2, 6, 16, 29; W. Alvington 3, 10, 17, 24; Dartmoor Prison 4, 11, 18, 25; Hebron, Torquay 9 & 30; Bristol, ACTS Rally 12; Plymstock, Plymouth (Wolesley) 13; Lockleale Houseparty 18/20; Silverton 20; Dawlish School 22; Truro 27.

Tryon, G. C.:
Holiday 1-19; Welling 20, 27; Kingston 22, 29; Fetcham 23, 30; Tolworth 24.

Donington

The 15th Annual Bible Convention will be held in the Rectory Grounds, Donington, Albrighton, Salop on Friday, Saturday and Sunday 11-13 June. Speakers: Leith Samuel and Keith Weston. Subject: 'Living in the light of Christ's return'. Studies in the 2nd Epistle of Peter.

Ealing, W.5

Grove Hall, The Grove, Annual Conference on Saturday, June 5 at 3.30 and 6.30 p.m. Tea 5.15 p.m. Speakers: F. Epps and D. West.

Littleport, Cambs.

Gospel Hall, City Road. Ministry. Saturday, June 5 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: G. K. Lowther

London Convention

Westminster Chapel, Buckingham Gate, SW1 on July 10 at 10.30 a.m., 3.00 p.m. and 6.15 p.m. Speakers: M. Jones, A. Leckie, A. Naismith, D. J. Newell.

Luton

Onslow Road Gospel Hall. Monthly Bible Readings. Saturday, June 19 at 6.30 p.m. Studies in the Life and Times of Joseph. 'Grace to the Guilty' (Genesis 43:1-34). Speaker: P. Brind (Cardiff).

Nuneaton

Lindley Lodge, Watling Street (A5). Saturday, June 12 at 9.30, 11.30 and 4.30. Kingsley Melling (Horwich) 7.30 p.m., K. Andrewartha (S.G.M.)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Cambridge
Panton Hall, 14 Panton Street, 50th Anniversary Conference, Saturday June 12 at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. Speakers: Dr. F. A. Tatford and Professor D. W. Gooding.

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Psalm 1:3

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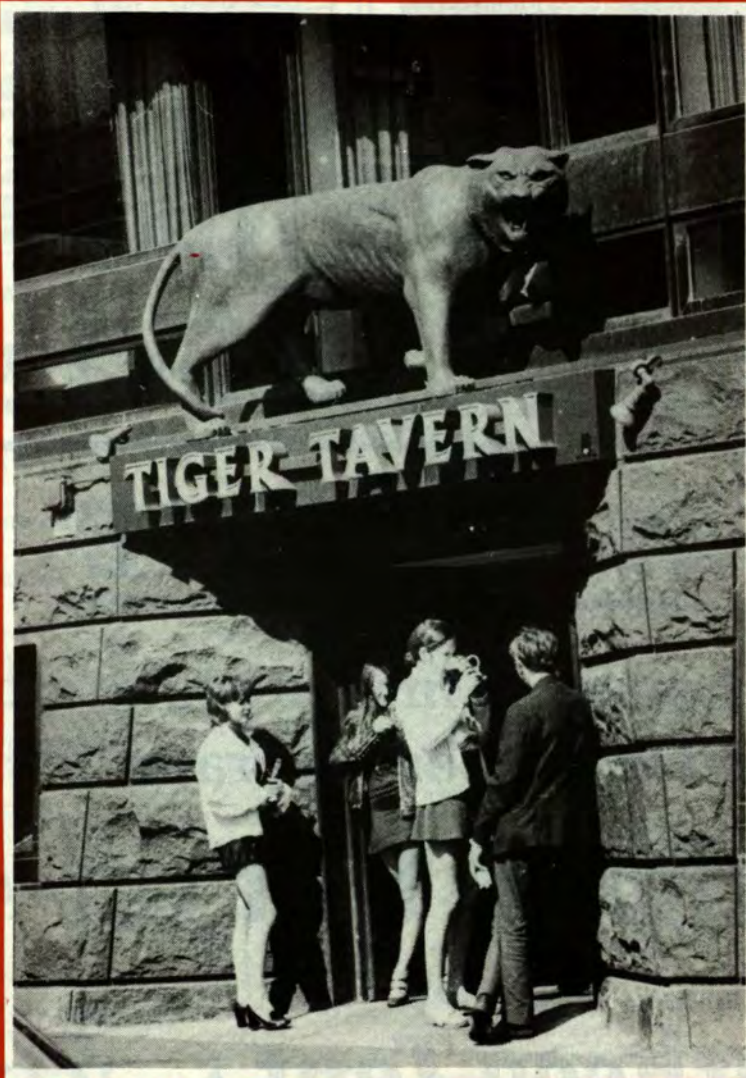
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INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'



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Editor: Roy Coad

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The HARVESTER

INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'



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Consulting Editors: Peter Cousins, Brian Mills,
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**We regret that because of late despatch of the May issue, it has been necessary to hold over these items.*

Cover picture: Peter Trainer

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A THOUSAND SHADES OF GREY?

As this editorial is written, the much-heralded visit of the Pope to these Protestant islands is at its height. We have deliberately avoided earlier comment on the visit: in principle it was a personal visit to his own community, and to exaggerate it by insinuations of sinister undertones or by pointing up the deep doctrinal differences that divide us would have been both inappropriate and discourteous. As the visit has progressed to this point, there has been little to alarm the most ardent opponent of catholicism. True, those doctrinal differences have been apparent, if muted: so have many points of agreement. The man himself has appeared in the most attractive light: and one has reflected that the Christian faith is not so beloved by the media that one should regret some favourable publicity: nor, in days of bloodshed, some pageantry full of colour and music, accompanying a voice urging to peace and reconciliation. For ourselves, the best advantage to be taken of the visit is to use it positively, seeing that the simple Gospel message is emphasised through the opportunities it gives.

But another aspect of Italian religious life than the ornate splendour surrounding the Pontiff has been brought interestingly to mind by receipt of several issues of *Credere e Comprendere*, a little duplicated magazine issued by some younger members of Italian Brethren churches, and an interesting publication to set aside the more official and very competent journal *Il Cristiano*, which has already been mentioned in our pages. The February issue contains some outspoken articles, that show a rigorous questioning of traditions and attitudes is alive and well there: and it is well that it should be so, for (however uncomfortable) such questioning is essential to healthy spiritual life. 'Christianity in Carpet Slippers' one article is entitled: and a challenging exposure of some of our too-comfortable attitudes it is. (Another article, in passing, makes a distinctly tart reference to the Pope: 'why is he like the parsley?' it asks — a delightful Italian saying, meaning 'why does he get in everywhere?').

An article which awakened a deep chord in my mind, however, spoke of the 'schizophrenia' experienced by so many of us, in the contradictions we suffered (and 'suffered' is a true word) between 'the Sunday certainties and the edginess of our Mondays'. 'On Sunday all goes smoothly: here is good, there evil, here God and there the world, and so on. On Monday to work, at home, to spend, watch the newsreels; and theory begins to falter, black and white to lose themselves in a thousand shades'. And for us . . . ?

PLANTING AND GROWING

Theo Cracknell

Continuing our series of activities connected with local testimonies, we tell the story of one church that is now three congregations.

In the summer of 1931, a tent mission was held in the small village of Cliffords Mesne, 2½ miles from Newent in Gloucestershire. This mission, conducted by an itinerant evangelist, the late Mr. Luther Rees, resulted in a number of people being converted and baptized, and regular meetings commencing in a local farmhouse. This humble beginning 50 years ago was the start of a work which has gradually grown and made an increasing contribution to the spiritual needs of quite a wide area.

In 1932, a little Gospel Hall was erected in Cliffords Mesne on a piece of land donated for that purpose and the work continued from there. During the war years, a Bible study group was started in a house just outside Newent by Mr. George Harpur, and in 1945 this was transferred to the Women's Institute Hall in Newent. It was a great help to have gifted visiting speakers from time to time, and over a period of two years from 1945 there was an average attendance of twenty-five at this weeknight meeting. In 1948 a rented room became available on business premises in the town and the mid week meeting and most of the services at Cliffords Mesne were transferred to this new venue because it was much more central. A Sunday School and afternoon Service for adults was still maintained at Cliffords Mesne.

It was a major step forward for the assembly to be based in Newent, with its much greater opportunities for outreach, and efforts to evangelize increased amongst children and adults. However, as the years went by, it became increasingly clear that it would be a tremendous asset to evangelism in the

area if there was a building which was both more central and more obviously like a place of worship to which people could be invited. After much prayer, a piece of land, in a much more central position, was purchased in 1961 for the sum of £450 — a very reasonable price, even for those days, for a quarter of an acre of building land. The new building, Glebe Gospel Chapel, with a seating capacity of 150-200, was erected and opened in March 1962. Although there were only about twenty five members in the fellowship at the opening, God had wonderfully answered prayer and the finance for the new building was all provided either in gifts or loans — much of which had been given very sacrificially. A Christian architect had given his services freely, and one of the elders of the church, a retired builder, was a great help in a supervisory capacity. It was decided to call the new building a Chapel, because it was felt that this most accurately conveyed to the general public what indeed it was — a non-conformist place of worship. The special opening services on Sunday and Monday, March 4th and 5th, were attended by about 150 people and proved to be a real stimulus.

Two major events took place in that first year after the opening of the Chapel. The first was the commendation of one of the young men in the assembly, Mr. Charles Lawrence, to missionary work in Japan. Charles had previously trained at Cliff College and Glasgow Bible Training Institute, and after a memorable farewell service with a full chapel in June 1962, he sailed for Japan. Nearly 20 years later he is still on Echoes of Service prayer list, but now married with 3 boys rapidly growing up; he is working in Fukushima seeking to establish an assembly in that large city. The other major event in that year was an evangelistic campaign in November for three weeks with

'Counties' workers Reg and Gladys Whittern. One local helper during that campaign, although not given to pessimism but used to about twenty coming to Sunday School, remembers his surprise at Reg's optimism as together they put the chairs ready for the first children's meeting — especially when Reg thought at least 100 would be needed! Sure enough his faith was rewarded, and over 100 came — in fact, on one evening later in the week 178 children came! On at least one family service night there were over 200 adults and children packed into the Chapel. The last Sunday Service of the campaign was also a memorable occasion, because this was the first time a baptism by immersion had ever taken place in Newent, as far as it is known. Previously baptisms had to be arranged elsewhere in nearby towns, but a baptistery had been built into the new chapel and this was the first time it was used. Since then it has been needed on many occasions. Although there were only a very small number of conversions during the campaign, it undoubtedly made a big impact on the town, and in particular it gave the assembly a much greater and clearer vision of what could be achieved with sanctified imagination, enthusiasm and the willingness to work.

During the next five years the Sunday School grew from an attendance of eighteen on the opening Sunday in 1962 to over one hundred by 1966, and it became necessary to build additional accommodation at the rear of the Chapel, which included a spacious new hall. This extension was opened in September 1966 and as well as its use for Sunday School, it has provided opportunities for weeknight youth activities and a host of other more informal events. Over the years, a great deal of helpful publicity has been obtained by sending reports of special events to the

local press and encouraging them to take photographs on suitable occasions. It was good to see, for example, a picture of the new extension in one of the local papers with a sympathetic report under the heading 'Popular Sunday School is being enlarged'. On another occasion, an opportunity was taken to write a long front page article on the history of Glebe Gospel Chapel as part of a series on local churches.

For a number of years a small number in the fellowship who lived in the Dymock area (a village four miles north of Newent) had been helping in a regular outreach work at Dymock which took the form of a Sunday School and afternoon adult service. In 1973 a new building was erected there and named Western Way Chapel, as it was built on the site of an engine shed on the old Great Western Railway. This meant, of course, that when it was opened these good folk left Glebe Chapel to help form a new independent small assembly there. This evangelistic outreach at Dymock was first started away back in 1921 by an enthusiastic gospel preacher from Ross on Wye, Mr. Coates, who conducted a tent mission there (as well as many other places in the area). Regular meetings were started in a public hall in the village and a few years later a little Mission Hall was erected. Brethren from Ross on Wye helped to maintain the work over the years and in later years considerable help came from Newent, too. Mr. George Harpur held a tent mission in 1937, which was a real encouragement, and other missions have been held since. It was a great day for the small band of about a dozen Christians who formed the new church, when the new building was opened with the finance for the £17,000 project having been found. Mr. Harpur rather appropriately was the speaker at the opening services.

Since then, whilst there have been difficult periods, there have been some encouraging times too. Special family services have been well attended by local villages and last year (1980) they had the great joy of using the baptistery for the first time when a young married couple and two young fellows made a public declaration of their faith. Another special event in 1980 was the commendation of one of the Covenanter leaders, Mr. Mike Wilson, to work with TEAR fund in Africa.

In September 1971, two families who were members of Glebe Gospel Chapel, but lived in Mitcheldean (seven miles south west of Newent) were feeling a concern for the needs of their own



locality. They started children's meetings in one of their homes, and by February the following year, numbers had grown to the extent that both homes were needed. They were greatly encouraged also to find a few local elderly Christians who had been praying for years about the spiritual needs of the rapidly increasing population of Mitcheldean. In 1973, a tent campaign was held under the auspices of the Herefordshire assemblies and led by evangelist Ron Spillards, and also Bible Studies were commenced for adults on a weeknight. The following year an opportunity was taken to start monthly services in Townsend House, an elderly people's home in the village. A major step was taken in March of that year when they accepted an invitation to run the Sunday School in the Mitcheldean United Reformed Church, where things were at a very low ebb and there was a likelihood that the church might have to close. Previously they had transported children to Glebe Chapel Sunday School. By June permission had been given for the use of the premises for other services and it was felt right to start as an independent group — the first communion service being held with fourteen people present, including children.

In 1975, Counties evangelist for Gloucestershire, Roger Chilvers, was invited to lead an indoor mission and then the following year Roger brought his

tent for a summer crusade with Charles Price also helping. By this time, the United Reformed Church was for sale and after much prayer and consideration it was agreed to purchase the building and to call themselves the Mitcheldean Christian Fellowship. Quite a lot of time and money has since been spent in renovating the building and making it more attractive and suitable for present needs. The Lord has prospered the work and now there are about forty five in the fellowship with a group of elders and deacons taking responsibility. Many local people come in to special services from time to time.

One of the thrilling things at Glebe Chapel Newent following this period, when about a dozen of its members left to help at either Dymock or Mitcheldean, was to realize that the Lord was replenishing the gaps. Within little less than a year, numbers were back to where they were — partly through conversions and partly through new arrivals. 1976 heralded the start of two more outreach ventures in the area. First, as a result of some concern being felt about the need for evangelism in the growing village of Huntley, five miles south of Newent, Roger Chilvers was invited to hold a tent campaign in the summer of that year. This resulted in a regular children's meeting being commenced in the village and also a number of occasional evangelistic film evenings being held in

various homes. It was a tremendous joy to see a number of adults converted through this means. Roger brought his marquee to Huntley again in 1979 and this was a helpful time of consolidation. The other venture in 1976 was the opening for six months of a shop in Newent to sell Christian literature and to provide a centre where Christians and non-Christians could meet freely and give opportunity for people in need to find help. This proved so encouraging that a property in the main street was later purchased where this work could be enlarged and continued on a permanent basis. A charitable company was formed to own the property and run the business, with seven local directors. A great deal of renovation was done on the building, mainly through voluntary labour and it was eventually opened in March 1980 at a total cost of about £22,000. This seemed an impossible sum to find in a fairly small community with no apparent source of finance, but one of the objectives was to demonstrate that God still answered prayer, and He did. Gifts always seemed to come in as the needs arose.

The Centre, incorporating a bookshop, a coffeehouse and a display of Third World crafts, is a registered charity. It is staffed by over thirty part time Christian volunteers and a full time manager who, with the directors, all work on a non-salaried basis. It was a great encouragement to be placed on the Egon Ronay 'Just a Bite' guide within a year of the opening of the Centre. An even greater encouragement has been to see so many people coming inside. A large proportion of these are not Christians and from time to time opportunities occur for helpful conversations. Already the business in expanding to the extent that plans are being drawn up to extend the premises.

One of the features at Glebe Chapel, which has developed more in recent years, has been visits from gifted brethren to give series of consecutive Bible teaching at the midweek meetings. Another important development has been the help of a full time evangelist, Mike Hencher, in outreach from Glebe Chapel. For a number of years Mike came from Bristol regularly to help, and as a result quite a number of adults became Christians. In April 1980, he moved with his family to Newent at the invitation of the assembly and spends half of his time helping in various ways, mainly in evangelistic work connected to the Chapel. One of the encouraging new ventures Mike has helped to start is a monthly outreach to men called 'Men's

Forum'. This usually takes the form of a evening meal followed by a film or some other thought-provoking programme. Within the last two years, two more members of the fellowship have been commended to full time missionary work. In August 1980, Paul Davis, a young man who had just graduated from Cardiff University, joined the Operation Mobilisation ship **Doulos** for a period of two years. It was especially thrilling to hear his father give a brief testimony at the farewell service, having only become a Christian a few weeks earlier. In March 1981, Miss Helen Page went to Mali with the Red Sea Mission Team to help pioneer a new work there. Previously she had worked for a number of years from 1964 as a missionary in Ethiopia. She then returned to this country and qualified as a nurse before going to Mali.

Over the years there have, of course, been plenty of 'downs' and well as 'ups', and recently, we have perhaps been in one of the 'down' periods. Numbers have decreased substantially, partly through several families moving away from the area, and partly because some have decided to leave and form a house group. There are now about seventy in the fellowship at Glebe Chapel and although recent events have caused problems and heartaches, there is still much for which to praise the Lord and the future is faced in the confidence that in

every situation 'our God is able'.

Looking back over the past in an attempt to summarize, some of the contributing factors which stand out are the family services held most months on Sunday evenings, the link up of these with an active Sunday School and youth work, the regular visitation of most of the houses in the town, publicity in the press and in other ways, the basic church structure of elders and deacons with clearly defined responsibilities, an elders' day of planning and prayer twice a year and the help of a full time evangelist. Probably, however, the two most important features have been on the one hand a **concern** to reach out to the many who need God's salvation, and on the other hand a recognition that it is only God who can really change lives — therefore there is a great need for **prayer**. Times of particular blessing seem always to be preceded by extra concern and extra prayer. In addition to the weekly assembly prayer meeting there have been special days of prayer, a weekly early morning prayer meeting and prayer cells in homes. The present elders of the church do not in any way feel complacent about the past or the present, but are deeply conscious that every blessing has come from the Lord and that it is only as we continue to wait upon Him that we can expect to continue to see His mighty power at work.



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KIDS AND ALCOHOL

David Hughes

This is a further article in a series on family and related matters that is being collected by Barbara Baigent.

David Hughes is co-leader with Ian Mayow of the well-known and long-established youth work based on Oak Hall, Caterham, Surrey, and writes from considerable personal experience.

'Sorry, can't make it to the meeting tonight, I've arranged to meet the others down the pub . . . 'Just off for a pint with the lads . . . 'It's somewhere to go and anyway I enjoy a drink.' Such comments highlight the great problem facing churches across our land today. The influence of alcohol and the pull of the pub seems to have magnetic attraction in the lives of so many young people. Some will maintain their link with church life; others will no longer see the weekly gatherings as relevant or necessary and will often quietly disappear from the scene. Almost without exception the increasing involvement in going to the pub will lead to lessening involvement in the life of the church. The change is subtle; sometimes it occurs before older Christians have even realised it . . . attitudes have changed, new priorities take precedent and the first round of the battle is lost! Caught in the dragnet are those who have not yet considered becoming a Christian, others who are young in the faith and have not as yet learnt God's standards, and still others are emmeshed before their bright young Christian lives had a chance to be involved in God's service. For so many young people drawn into the swing of pub life there is a loss of any sense of the need for involvement and commitment as Christians, and new standards are adopted which to them may seem reasonable and acceptable, but fall far short of God's biblical standards. Young Christians openly admit to feeling guilty in this respect, for being unable to pray

for themselves and to a degeneration in their use of money and time. It may be true to say that today the effect of alcohol and the draw of the pubs, will be the greatest way in which young people are rendered ineffective in their Christian lives. The pub is now the in-scene!

So, What's the Attraction?

The answer to this all-important question provides a key insight to church leaders as to why we are facing a crisis today. In order to try and get to the real heart of the issue I have avoided stating my own opinions, rather have carried out discussions and surveys amongst a cross-section of young people who have honestly aired their feelings and opinions as they form part of the pub scene.

Alcohol was openly agreed to be a common attraction . . . 'Yes, I enjoy a drink . . . 'I like a beer . . . 'A drink brings relaxation, doesn't it?' There was quite a variance as to the types of alcohol enjoyed and also the levels at which different people set their limits. Almost without exception it was felt that a drink on one's own would not be an attraction, but that the main appeal was the opportunity to share company with others in a common meeting place. In all my conversations the appeal of the pub was a common sentiment; here was a place where friends gathered together, information was exchanged and fresh contacts and acquaintances were made. The atmosphere was great! It was relaxed; you were made to feel really welcome and there was someone there to greet you at the bar. In many senses the pub has become a communal shelter for young people. In this friendly, easy going environment they are able to relax from the external problems and pressures which are so acutely felt in their lives today. This is their place for unwinding . . . no responsibility . . . no discipline within these four walls! It was in-

teresting to note that young people seemed keen to bridge the gaps created by generation and authority, and certainly for many the pub became a place where first name terms were used and communication was achieved on entirely new levels. Yes, the pub scene has much to offer young people today, and one cannot dismiss it out of hand, as so many find much that they would strongly feel is good in this magnetically attractive situation.

Is There a Cost Involved?

Yes, of course there are two sides to every story, and those who I spent time with were ready to agree that even though spending time in pubs was an attraction to them, yet there was a price to be paid. You don't have a great budget if you are still at school, unemployed or just an apprentice and for most who are involved in the pub round, their expenditure on alcohol would be number one priority after purchasing the essentials of life. The difficulty in making ends meet was universal when a single drink would cost between 50p — 70p, a round could easily eat up £6; and when on average at least a couple of nights a week are spent in the pub, one can begin to see the subtle pressures which take their toll on the lives of so many young people today. I felt in my discussions that many were anaesthetised to the dangers of addiction to alcohol. Yes, they felt you had to know your limits and watch yourself but also sentiments such as, 'got to let yourself go sometimes . . . 'gives a nice feeling . . . 'it's really good when you're over the top — you get on well with anybody', were sentiments which were openly expressed in relation to drunkenness. It wasn't particularly their aim to get drunk as with their non-Christian friends, but if it happened they simply shrug their shoulders and anticipated a hangover! There was generally a strong feeling of self-reliance; they

knew their limits and they could cope.

How About Your Christian Life?

The young Christians I spoke to felt that pub life and involvement and Christian living were compatible. They could still move on in their Christian lives and yet they admitted that energies and time expended in the pub did take the place of church activities. There was some appreciation of Christian standards, and it was generally felt that it was good not to go to excess in the realm of drink. They saw time spent in relating and talking to others in a pub environment as an opportunity of sharing their faith with those they were rubbing shoulders with. It was generally felt that those who were not Christians were more prepared to listen to their opinions without feeling captured, or put upon, as they were on their own home territory. The cry came forth 'if only the churches could be a little more like the pub we would want to go again!'

The Church's Dilemma

The church is facing a crisis! Without a shadow of doubt if the church in which you are involved has young people then this problem will have arisen. You will have already experienced the heartache of seeing the lives of young people drawn in to a downhill spiral of changing attitudes and interests. The casualty rate is high!

So what is the church to do? Maybe it's an issue we don't know how to cope with . . . let's bury our heads in the sand and forget about it! No, having highlighted a problem we need to find the antidote and to seek to effectively administer it to turn the tide of young lives that are degenerating under the influence of pub involvement. The pub life does have an appeal; it does have an attraction; it is profoundly influencing the lives of so many young people. It may seem a provocative statement, but I feel that we do well to consider how we can bring the attractive aspects of pub life into our churches. Let me take you for a moment back to the opinions of our discussion groups concerning what they feel is lacking in our churches . . . 'We don't feel at ease, we don't want to have to dress up . . . 'It seems stiff and too formal . . . 'You don't feel welcome — people don't speak to you . . . 'Of course our hackles rise at such comments and we write them off as coming from those who are 'away from the Lord'. I wonder if we were to carefully consider these comments and take a searching look at our own churches, whether we might perceive a note of truth in some of these

statements. I sincerely believe that if we are to apply an antidote in this situation of crisis that we need to prayerfully ask God to give us open hearts to see the needs within our church life and the improvements that can be made.

May I suggest three areas where I feel effective action in the lives of our churches would go a long way to alleviating the problem we face:

1. Increasing Interest

The pub is a place where young people are finding a common meeting ground, a place where they feel accepted, and can share and communicate without fear of their opinions being derided. If that is the basis on which young people are attracted by pubs where they feel an interest is taken in them in a non-Christian environment, how much greater will be the contrast and effect if real Christian caring interest is taken within the bounds of our churches. That sort of interest will go the extra mile; it will be an interest which truly cares; an interest which finds common ground and an on-going communication; an interest where the young people feel accepted and able to voice their opinions; and of course it will be interest which reflects the love of Christ and is supported and fuelled through prayer. When this genuine Christ-like interest is extended to the individual I have no doubt that the effect will be to increase and strengthen the links in church life.

2. Increasing Involvement

So often one hears the comments 'I'd like to get more involved . . . there doesn't seem to be anything particular for me to do . . . I don't have any real gifts . . . 'For a young person to have reached this stage it is almost too late and certainly unless quick action is taken the pub scene will gain another recruit! The responsibility of involving young Christians in church life falls fair and square on the shoulders of Christian leaders. It is our responsibility to take up Christ's commission 'Feed my sheep' and to lead those entrusted to us on into fresh pastures. Unless we are the ones who are encouraging and developing the lives of young people within our care and seeing their strengths and gifts nurtured and directed into some area of Christian work, then I believe we shall have failed in one of the greatest opportunities that God has presented to us. How important to prayerfully consider how to integrate the younger element within our churches that through involvement in Christian service they may develop and grow in their Christian

lives. If there isn't a job there already for them, how about creating one! Of course the effect of increasing involvement will be nullified unless through doing things together as a church the young people are made to feel part of the whole body and this whole question is worth careful examination and also as they are involved there will be the need to bring relevant Christian teaching on a level which is meaningful to them.

3. Increasing Informality

The danger of being complacent in the church of today, is that there may be no church for tomorrow! Our young people are our tomorrow's church and at times the attitude of older Christians can be 'that they can do things their way when their turn comes'. Unfortunately their turn will never come, because they won't be there. I don't suggest for a minute that the church leaders throw to the wind long standing and precious frameworks of church life and worship, but rather to consider prayerfully how to increase aspects of informality which will not only serve to deepen fellowship but to accommodate the young people, the church of tomorrow.

In the end it all comes back to me. To what extent do I really care for those God has entrusted to me? Am I praying for them? Am I taking a deep interest in them? Am I involving them? Am I prepared to adapt that there might result blessing in their lives? As so many young people seek to find the answers in alcohol and the pubs, may God so bless our churches that the tide will be changed and young people will truly find the answer to life and the fulfilment for which they are searching in Him, the Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

Sometimes one hears an appeal made to the 'law of first mention', according to which the first occurrence of a word or concept in Scripture has a significance specially determinant for its meaning throughout Scripture as a whole. I suspect that this 'law' is invoked only where it seems to work, and that occasions when it does not work are overlooked. What do readers think?

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

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LOCAL CHURCH FULL-TIME WORKERS

Brian Mills

In series with recent articles by Ray Anderson, John Carrick and others, Brian Mills discusses a subject which is attracting increasing interest in Brethren churches.

In the past five years the attitude of many elderships has changed radically. Opinions on the oral participation of women in prayer and worship; on co-operation with other churches with an evangelical outlook, and participation in local evangelical fellowships or mission activities; on the pulpit being open by invitation to gifted ministers of the Word irrespective of denomination; on the value of charismatic gifts and 'practices'; are reflected in the changing practices adopted by many fellowships. But perhaps nowhere is the change more noticeable than in appointments to full time ministry. Five years ago it was a rarity to find a 'Brethren' church with a full time worker attached, even though there had always been some instances of such since the commencement of the 'Brethren Movement', 150 years ago. Any that did have such workers were generally regarded as being 'no longer an assembly' by those whose attitudes were opposed to the prospect of a full time ministry in local churches. The 'dangers' of a 'one-man' ministry of the style more commonly known in other denominations, or the fear of introduction of a 'clerical system' from which some claim to have been glad to have escaped, were among the reasons given for such opposition. Even though we seemed to be prepared to allow liberty to our missionary brethren to stay in one location or area in order to fulfil their call and ministry, many were adamantly opposed to allowing similar liberty to those whose work was in their home country. However, that is changing quickly — and as with all change that is quick, it poses some problems.

In the 1978 survey of assemblies, summarized in **The Brethren Today** twenty of the fellowships completing the survey said they had a part time or full time worker, and thirty four per cent of the total sample said they agreed that it was good idea to have a full time pastor or evangelist. To my knowledge there are about seventy to eighty Brethren assemblies in England and Wales who **now** have full time workers — a four-fold increase in three years.

As more and more churches began to think constructively about the possibility of having a full time worker serving the Lord among them, it became clear that some help was needed. On the one hand there were churches looking for men, but not knowing where to find them; and on the other hand there were men looking for opportunities for service, but not knowing where these existed.

In the past those exercised about a full time ministry at home either had to contemplate an itinerant ministry as an evangelist, or seek for an opening in another denomination. As long as twenty-five years ago I remember visiting an Anglican theological college for a weekend with a friend. I was amazed to discover even then that fifty per cent of the students were from Brethren assemblies — alas never to return, except perhaps for an occasional visit. That has been confirmed to me again and again over the years as I meet people exercising a full time ministry — sometimes very successfully — who tell me, 'Oh, I used to belong to a Brethren assembly'.

So, over the past five years, those that have access to either personnel or opportunities have become a reference point for those seeking help and guidance. Dr. Derek Copley, Principal of Moorlands Bible College, and Dr. Harold Rowdon, Senior Lecturer at London Bible College, are frequently

approached by churches, since they have access to a constant flow of students from Brethren churches (amongst others) who attend such colleges for training. A number of full time workers in assemblies have also become informal advisers, since they have experience which others find helpful to draw on. Among these I would particularly mention the Bristol-based workers, such as Robert Scott-Cook, Graham Loader and Ray Anderson. Because of my own extensive travelling and knowledge of Brethren churches in the south through my former association with Counties Evangelistic Work, I too became a reference point. Frequently I had been approached by individuals — some already in full time ministry (such as returning missionaries) or students referred to me by colleges — for advice and introduction. In addition, elders began to write to ask for help, sometimes necessitating a visit to talk through with them some of their concerns. At first it was manageable to advise on a personal and informal basis, but as the interest of many other churches and individuals turned in the direction of full time ministry, it became increasingly clear that some form of introduction service was needed.

Three years ago I introduced such a service — which hitherto had only been available on an informal basis and on request. Because of my awareness of the increasing demand, and the absence of any ready-made vehicle for reference purposes, I have undertaken this service privately. But it now seems appropriate for its availability to be made more public, and for an appeal for help to maintain it also to be made.

When a church approaches me, they are sent a simple form to complete, which provides for basic information to be given about the church and its need. Similarly, when an individual is put in

touch, he (or she) is sent a short questionnaire about his past experience, gifts and inclinations. On receipt of either of these, photocopies are made. I then send to the church copies of the personal details from individuals on my files whose gifts and experience approximate towards what the church is looking for. At the same time, I send to the individual copies of the churches' proforma for those places where the kind of opening exists that he might be looking for. It is then left to one party or the other to make contact, after prayerful consideration, if either feels the introduction should be pursued. Although this may seem somewhat impersonal and mechanical, there seems little alternative to the very time-consuming task of personal interview with church and worker and the writing of endless personal letters.

It is already clear that a number of lessons have been learned by those who have been involved in 'hunting' for people or places, or who have had experience of full time ministry in a local church situation. Some might be persuaded to write of their experiences for the benefit of others! However, for the time being, I have been persuaded to identify some of the areas of tension for further consideration.

First, a full time worker is not a panacea for all ills! Because Brethren churches have no recent experience of a full time ministry to draw on, and because most of the individuals concerned have not been in a single-church situation before, a lot of teething problems have emerged. For some the initial experience has not been an altogether happy one. There are important reasons for this. The main one, I suggest, is that the initial expectations of the church and worker are different, and may not even have been talked through in sufficient depth to begin with.

Second, there may not always be a whole-hearted commitment by the church (as opposed to the eldership) to the potential worker, or the idea in principle. Years of history have to be unpacked in relation to people's attitudes. Third, thinking on practical, financial, housing and other matters may have been inconclusive or even nebulous. Little thought may have been given to what the needs of the fellowship are, community relations, job responsibility, accountability and authority, to name a few.

As a consequence a few basic questions might be asked to enable churches, and particularly leadership, to think through the implications of having a full-time

minister of some kind.

1. What needs do you feel exist to be served by the appointment of a full time worker, both in the membership of your church and in the community among whom you seek to witness for Christ? Is there any way in which your existing membership could be channelled to meet those needs through right motivation and some local church training?
2. Is there someone in your fellowship who could take an early retirement, or withdraw from secular work to concentrate on your perceived needs? Or is there someone in other full time ministry in whom the church already has confidence (e.g. a missionary) who could be given a Macedonian call?
3. Is your church, as a body of Christians, **committed** to the concept of having a full time worker? Are they prepared for the sacrifice involved, the changes that will most surely be needed in activities and structure to contain the growth that should occur as a direct outcome of a successful appointment?
4. Have you clearly perceived the work that you anticipate a potential full time worker is needed for? Those seeking for an opening do want to know from the elders what they are concerned to see done in specific terms — even down to percentages of time to be spent on different aspects of the work. In short, a form of job description would be helpful.
5. Do you envisage the incoming worker being on the eldership — either from the start or subsequently? If not, in what way is his leadership to be recognized by the fellowship in a way that will not be viewed as a threat to yours? How will his ideas and initiatives have an opportunity to be implemented harmoniously?
6. Have you worked out realistically the church's ability to support the worker? Have you computed the amount of extra finance that will be needed in order to meet the needs of the potential worker adequately? If this cannot be guaranteed **in toto** by the fellowship, are there specific proposals that you can make to such a worker to help him 'make up the balance' financially? Is there, for example, any prospect of your co-operating with a nearby fellowship(s) so that a man's time and gifts are shared?

Questions, of course, also need to be asked of the full time worker. Many of them being fresh from college are keen to serve the Lord, have been exposed to all kinds of fresh thinking about the church in all its facets and function, and may as a result have developed a clear understanding of what they need to do in order to advance the kingdom of God and usher in an era of church growth. They need to realise that it may take some time for relationships to be built and trust to grow before they will be able to implement those ideas. My guess is that it will probably take about two years before a fresh full time worker will really begin, under the leading of the Spirit of God, to see things happen. Two years in a church and probably four years in an area (like a county). However, in order that the eldership and the worker are under no illusions, they should, from the first encounter, talk through honestly and frankly what their hopes and aspirations are. Doubts and uncertainties need to be brought out into the open straight away and then talked and prayed through. Unfortunately, too often a 'cover-up' job is done through fear of offending the other party. As a consequence the doubts can fester into a sore.

Those seeking an opening into a full time ministry might be advised to be tolerant of the church to which God may call them. As there are so many different kinds of Brethren churches today, there will almost inevitably be some practices that he might find hard to accept as being necessary, or even biblical! He should also be aware that having him will be a learning experience for them, so both he and they need to have a teachable spirit. Some have asked if there is any prospect of a period of 'in-service training'. So far a kind of 'curacy' has not developed. But there are some full time workers who are prepared to have a team working with them (e.g. Roger Forster in his Ichthus Fellowship, and Patrick Sookhdeo in his multi-racial ministry). It would be good if other full timers could contemplate some means of taking a 'fledgling full timer' under their wing for a short period. It certainly is possible to link individuals up with others in the vicinity, where such exist, so that, as in the case of the Bristol workers and more recently in North London, the full-time workers can encourage each other, share burdens and vision, pray with and help each other.

It would be good, too, if elders could encourage the young men in their fellowships who do show promise and who

have a level of commitment that might find expression in full time work. Even better, could they take such a person into their confidence in eldership discussions and decision-making, even before he embarks on a period of training? One thing most trained students lack is practical understanding of how assembly affairs are conducted. I was thankful that, as a young man in my mid-twenties engaged in leadership of the youth work in an assembly in which I had been for only about two years, the elders frequently brought me into their fortnightly meetings for long discussions, particularly where these related to youth affairs, young people or their families. I owed much to their encouragement and their confidence in me.

So where are we in relation to full time ministry? Well it needs to be recognized that in only a few cases is a 'full timer' being regarded in any way as 'the pastor'. Most are seen as 'a full time elder among other elders'. Pastoral and/or evangelistic ministry seem to be the main emphasis. Some are appointed primarily for personal visiting or to cater for the youth work (one assembly has three full time youth workers!). The variation in function is therefore a problematical factor in providing a link-up service. So too is the variation in financial arrangements. Some have done their homework well, whilst others are unbelievably unrealistic about what is needful.

These and other concerns are being

shared now, and a small working group within the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship are seeking to keep developments under review in order that they can provide advice in the future. Particularly are they concerned that an adequate support base should exist so that both assemblies who need help, and workers who need support, are not left in the lurch.

(It would, perhaps, be helpful to have letters to the editor, or short articles from churches or individuals who have had experience of a full time ministry. Contributions please? . . . Ed.)

LAST SUPPER . . .

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

'Like a lamb . . . as a sheep . . .'

Question 219

In Isaiah 53:7 we read: 'He was led like a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep (ewe) before her shearers is silent . . .'. But in Acts 2:32 we have: 'He was led like a sheep . . . and as a lamb before the shearer . . .'. Why should Isaiah use the feminine when referring to the sheep when immediately afterwards he uses the masculine ('He did not open his mouth')? And why does Luke alter the words of Isaiah?

You are correct in pointing out that two words are used for lamb and sheep in Isaiah 53:7. The word translated 'lamb' is *seh*. In the Old Testament (King James Version) this is translated 16 times as 'lamb', 17 times as 'sheep' and 10 times as 'cattle/smaller cattle'. The more unusual word here rendered 'sheep' is *rachel* which appears twice in the KJV as 'sheep' and twice as 'ewe'.

There is no particular significance in the use of these two different words. Hebrew poetry simply happens to work like this (although some people have seen in the phenomenon an example of divine providence). What is technically called synonymous parallelism is a device whereby the same idea is twice expressed without change of meaning but in different words. For example we may cite *Psalms 27:3* and *Isaiah 1:3a* where the statement that the ass (knows) its master's crib adds nothing, in the writer's intention, to the statement that the ox knows its owner: Hebrew poetry simply works this way. In *Isaiah 53:7* the double comparison is intended to emphasise the remarkable conduct of the Servant in his affliction. While its duality reinforces the point being made, the writer nevertheless finally repeats the statement: 'He does not open his mouth'.

It was possibly during the third century BC that the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew to Greek. The translation was made by various scholars. In places (including the Book of Isaiah) it is very free and sometimes represents a misunderstanding of the Hebrew. It is this Greek translation, usually referred to as the Septuagint (LXX) which is cited in *Acts 8:32*. As you point out, it speaks of a sheep (*probaton*) being taken for killing and a lamb (*amnos*) for shearing. The original translators no doubt had their reasons for using these words. But from a historical point of view, this is precisely the translation that the eunuch would have used since, we may presume, he was not Hebrew-speaking. However, neither Philip nor

the eunuch nor the author of Acts bases any teaching on the use of these different words. Neither should we.

Should we always give a 'soft' answer?

Question 220

We are often reminded that 'a soft answer turns away wrath'. But I must confess that sometimes I 'speak my mind' to people in a way that is abrasive rather than soft. Is it always wrong to do this? After all, some of the things that the Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees and his description of Herod as 'that fox' are certainly not 'soft'.

The point you make is a fair one. And to the example of Jesus you might have added that of Paul. He was in general willing to become all things to all men (1 *Corinthians 9:22*). But when Peter began to practice a sort of apartheid, Paul confronted him publicly (*Galatians 2:11-14*). While Paul may not have regarded this as a matter of exposing the unfruitful works of darkness (*Ephesians 5:11*) he may well have seen it in terms of speaking the truth in love (*Ephesians 4:15*).

As for the 'soft answer' saying in Proverbs, this has to be balanced against other passages such as *Proverbs 26:5* ('answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes'). *Proverbs 27:6* ('faithful are the wounds of a friend') stands as a reminder that love may sometimes require us to give pain. *Proverbs 15:28*, however, contains a warning against the universal tendency to speak without thinking. 'The mind of the righteous ponders how to answer'. By contrast, 'the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.' This is a reminder that the reason for speaking in an 'abrasive' manner must be positive. It simply is not good enough for a Christian to give pain in order to vent personal feelings of frustration, let alone of bitterness. The chief consideration must be a loving concern for the good of the person addressed. What effect are the words likely to have on him? Sometimes, confrontation may be necessary. But a great deal depends on the manner in which this takes place and on the motives of the person doing the confronting.

The questioner ought to know (if he does not then he probably has friends able to tell him) whether he is a Timothy who needs to be encouraged in the ministry of confrontation or whether like John and James at an early stage in their discipleship, he needs the Holy Spirit's help in restraining this natural tendency.

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'.

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

Our esteemed contributor, Mr. H. L. Ellison, is in hospital and unable to supply his usual article. We commend him and his family to our readers' prayers.

WHICH VERSION?

Because the Scriptures were written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, every English version is a translation. Which one is the best? On this point, experts differ, while many non-experts, wholly without knowledge of the original tongues, are nevertheless dogmatic in their support of their favourite version. The situation is not altogether improved by the recent spate of English translations. Some people enthuse over the latest to appear; others entrench themselves more firmly in their original choice. But in the main, both groups are following non-rational prejudices. Most books which evaluate translations suffer from the defect of being too long or too technical for the majority of readers.

Both these pitfalls are avoided by a small book just issued: **Which Version Now?** (Bob Sheehan, Carey Publications, 32pp. 80p). It guides us through seven important English translations: KJV, NASV, RSV, NEB, LB, GNB, and NIV, awarding the highest marks to the last mentioned. It ignores the Jerusalem Bible and is rather scathing about the GNB, saying (through an unidentified quote) that it is suited to twelve-year-olds or people speaking English as a second language, without discussing its somewhat questionable linguistic principles.

As to text, only the NT is treated. The shortcomings of the so-called Received Text and of a Majority Text are exposed, and an eclectic text is preferred. Only three per cent of the readings are disputed and no major doctrine is challenged by any variant, so that more space might profitably have been given to translation. Here it is tantalizingly brief. The older concept of a word-for-word translation is regarded as obsolete. How far, however, should a translator interpret the text? Some interpretation is inescapable, but the translator's theological preferences must be kept out of sight. And what kind of English should be used — colloquial or cultured? Quoting — of all people! — the pop music star, Cliff Richard, it rejects the idea that the Scriptures must be made to read 'like today's newspaper'. (Even so, we would have to ask 'Which newspaper?') The NIV, incidentally, is criticized for occasionally 'bordering on the over-modern'.

This slim volume will not answer all the questions, but it is worth commending to those English readers who are irrationally wedded to a particular version or equally irrationally opposed to another. It should make the brain tick rather than the adrenalin flow and guide them to a more balanced view.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (61)

F. F. Bruce

The Upper Room Discourses

(John 13:31-16:33)

ii. THE LORD AND HIS PEOPLE

(John 15:1-16:33)

(a) The Vine and the Branches

(John 15:1-11)

15:1-3 I am the true vine and my Father is the vinedresser. He removes every branch in me that does not produce fruit, and he prunes every branch that does produce fruit, to make it produce more fruit. You are clean already because of the word that I have spoken to you.

The vine is one of the OT figures used to illustrate the people of Israel. In Ps. 80:8-19 Israel is the vine which God brought out of Egypt and planted in the ground which he had cleared to make room for it. The psalmist bewails the fact that it flourishes no longer, that its defences are demolished and it is ravaged by marauders; he prays:

*Look down from heaven, and see;
have regard for this vine,
the stock which thy right hand
planted . . .
let thy hand be upon the man of thy
right hand,
the son of man whom thou hast
made strong for thyself!*

Jesus is here presented as the true Israel, the genuine vine, the man of God's right hand. As in the psalm, God is both the planter and cultivator of the vine. The noun translated 'vinedresser' is the ordinary Greek word for 'farmer' (*geōrgos*), but in English 'farmer' is not used in connexion with the vine. The thought of the mutual indwelling, the coinherence, of Christ and his people has found repeated expression in chapter 14; here it is conveyed in the parable of the vine and the branches. If

Jesus is the vine, his disciples are the branches, deriving their life and fruit-producing strength from him. The Father tends the vine with loving care, making it as fruitful as possible: he removes unfruitful branches and prunes those that are fruitful, clearing away superfluous wood so that they may be even more fruitful. There are plays on words in the Greek that cannot easily be reproduced in English: 'he removes' is *airei* and 'he prunes' is *kathairei*. Moreover, *kathairei* can also mean 'he cleanses' and is linked with 'clean' in verse 3: 'you are *katharoi*'. Here is an echo of John 13:10, 'you are clean (*katharoi*), but not all'. Judas was the exception then; in terms of the present parable, he is an unfruitful branch that has to be removed. The disciples who keep Jesus' word (cf. John 14:23), in whom his word has found a lodging place (cf. verse 7 below), are 'clean' on that account; it may be implied that his word is the means used by the Father to perform his work of pruning.

15:4-6 Remain in me, as I remain in you. As the branch cannot produce fruit on its own account, unless it remains in the vine, so you also cannot produce fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who produces fruit is the one who remains in me, as I remain in him; for apart from me you cannot do anything. If any one does not remain in me, he is thrown out like a branch and withers away; then people gather them and throw them into the fire and they are burned.

A vine-branch is lifeless and useless unless it remains attached to the vine. The living sap from the stock flowing into it enables it to produce grapes; otherwise it is fruitless. So with Jesus'

disciples: only as they remain in union with him and derive their life from him can they produce the fruit of the Spirit. Paul does not use Johannine idiom but he expresses the same truth when he says, 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me' (Gal. 2:20), and 'I can do all things in him who strengthens me' (Phil. 4:13).

In another OT passage where Israel is compared to a vine, it is stressed that the wood of the vine is useless except for the fulfilling of the vine's proper function — the production of grapes. The wood of a dead vine branch cannot be used to make a piece of furniture or a utensil of any kind: it will not even serve as a peg to hang something on. A vine branch that does not produce grapes is good only for fuel (Ezek. 15:1-8). The moral of the parable should have spoken for itself in Ezekiel's day; it speaks for itself in the new setting and application given to it by Jesus.

15:7,8 If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, ask what you will, and it shall be done for you. My Father is glorified in this, that you should produce abundant fruit and so be (truly) disciples of mine.

There is no practical difference between Jesus' personal indwelling in his disciples and his words' remaining in them. The 'words' (plural) here are *rhēmata*; the 'word' (singular) of verse 3 is *logos*. The *logos* is his teaching in its entirety; the *rhēmata* are the individual utterances which make it up. He himself is the living embodiment of all his teaching. In John 14:13f. the promise of answered prayer is made to the one who believes in Jesus; the same promise is made here to the one who remains in him and in whose heart his words have a permanent residence.

Faith in Jesus, acceptance of his words, inaugurates a union with him through which his eternal life and power become for ever available to the believer.

Receiving an answer to the prayer of faith appears to be one form of spiritual fruitbearing. In *John 14:13* the Father is glorified in the answering of such a prayer; here he is glorified in the producing of abundant fruit in the life of the true disciple. As the Father is supremely glorified in the obedience of Jesus (*John 13:31f.; 17:1,4*), so he is glorified in those whose lives reproduce the obedient life of Jesus. The 'fruit' of which this parable speaks is, in effect, likeness to Jesus (the same may be said of the ninefold 'fruit of the Spirit' in *Gal. 5:22f.*). Those who manifest such likeness show conclusively that they are truly disciples of his. The same truth has been set forth already, without the explicit emphasis on fruitbearing, in *John 8:31f.*, 'If you remain in my word (*logos*), you will truly be my disciples, and you will come to know the truth, and the truth will set you free.' Those words were addressed to people whose faith and discipleship were doubtful; the faith that leads to union with Christ is the faith that manifests itself in true discipleship, a discipleship of obedience, love and joy.

15:9,10 As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

As we have seen in *John 14:20-24*, the mutual indwelling of the Father and the Son, and of Jesus and his disciples, and of the disciples with their heavenly Father as his children, is a mutuality of love, a love in which obedience is a spontaneous joy and not a painful duty. 'My love' in which Jesus bids his disciples remain is, in the context, the love with which (as he says) 'I have loved you' — although it goes without saying that it evokes a responsive love from them. The Father's love for the Son has been declared in *John 3:35; 5:20* (see also *17:23,24* below). Jesus' love for the Father was shown in his obedience to him, and was requited in his constant awareness of the Father's loving approval: 'he has not left me alone', he said, 'because I always do the things that are pleasing to him' (*John 8:29*). So the disciples' love for their Master should be shown in their obedience to him, and their

requital will be the constant awareness of their Master's loving approval; thus they will remain in the love of him who remains in the Father's love.

15:11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be fulfilled.

In *verses 10 and 11* Jesus adds 'my love' and 'my joy' to 'my peace' which he has already bequeathed to the disciples (*John 14:27*). The assurance of an eternal relationship of mutual love with the Father and himself was well calculated to banish the misgivings which had filled their hearts at the thought of his departure, and to fill them with his own joy. There is an echo of these words in *1 John 1:4*.

(b) The friends of Jesus (*John 15:12-17*)

15:12-14 This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.

This paragraph (*verses 12-17*) is an expansion of the new commandment of *John 13:34f.*; it begins and ends with the injunction to love one another. The measure of the love enjoined by Jesus — 'as I have loved you' — is beyond measuring. 'In this we come to know love, in that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers' (*1 John 3:16*). The greatest love that any one can show for friends is to die for them. To try to set these words over against *Rom. 5:8-10*, where Paul speaks of *enemies* as reconciled to God by the death of his Son, is to risk missing the point of both passages. Jesus is speaking to his friends, for whom he is about to give his life, thus showing that they are truly his *philoi*, the objects of his love. (In this context the words for 'love' are the noun *agape* and the verb *agapao*, while the word for 'friend' is *philos*: in John's vocabulary there is no difference in meaning between the two roots.) The interpenetration between love and obedience appears again in the statement that Jesus' friends are those who do whatever he commands them.

15:15 I no longer call you slaves, because the slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have made known to you all that I have heard from my Father.

We should not infer from 'no longer'

that Jesus had formerly called his disciples 'slaves' (*douloi*), or treated them as such. The point is rather that now, in the upper room, he is admitting them to the inner motives of his ministry and impending sacrifice. It is not for the slave to know why his master issues his commands. When the master says, 'Do this', it is for the slave to do it; his not to reason why. But with a friend one shares one's hopes and plans. The contrast between the slave and the friend here is not unlike the contrast between the slave and the son in *Gal. 4:7*. John Wesley, looking back on his conversion in later years, described it as the time when he exchanged the faith of a servant for the faith of a son. Had he expressed himself in Johannine rather than Pauline language, he might have said that he then exchanged the obedience of a slave for the obedience of a friend.

To his friends, then, Jesus has disclosed all that he himself has learned from the Father. True, there is much that they are not yet able to grasp (*John 16:12*), but the limitation lies with their capacity for comprehension, not with his willingness to impart the full truth.

15:16,17 It was not you who chose me, it was I who chose you and appointed you to go and produce fruit. Your fruit is destined to remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you. This is my commandment to you: love one another.

Jesus now harks back for a moment to the figure of the vine and its fruit. On the day that he first met his disciples and conscripted them into his service with the command 'Follow me!' he chose them that they might share his ministry. The fruit produced by the branches is the fruit of the vine itself. This is no Dead Sea fruit, which turns to dust and ashes at a touch; this is the enduring fruit of lives in union with the ever-living Christ, bearing witness to his abiding grace. Again (as in *verse 7*) the promise of answered prayer is made to the disciple who remains united to Jesus as the fruit-bearing branch is united to the vine. United to Jesus, that disciple can plead his prevailing name with confidence in the Father's presence. Jesus lives in his disciples' lives and prays with their hearts and through their lips.

With the repetition of the command to love one another the paragraph ends.

THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY (7)

David J. Clark

David Protected (1 Sam. 24:26) David Spares Saul (24:1-22)

The respite which the Philistines gained for David (23:27-28) was short lived, and Saul was soon on his trail again. David had removed himself to En-gedi, the only place on the western side of the Dead Sea with a permanent supply of fresh water. The possibilities of flight in this very rugged and inhospitable area were limited. A pitched battle was not an attractive prospect to a group outnumbered five times (24:2; cf. 23:13), and in any case David had other reasons for wanting to avoid bloodshed. The only remaining hope was to go to ground, and this they did, in a large and deep cave.

From this point, despite its seriousness, the story has a humorous aspect which can hardly have escaped its original readers. For modern readers, the humour of the incident is certainly not lessened by the ludicrously inept rendering in the earlier editions of the Living Bible, that 'Saul went into a cave to go to the bathroom' (24:3). Despite the lack of mod cons, Saul was able to relieve himself, but in so doing, he unknowingly placed himself entirely at David's mercy.

David's men were not slow to see the possibilities of the situation, and urged David to take what they considered to be a God-given opportunity to kill Saul (24:4). David must indeed have been sorely tempted, but he above all others had reason to encourage respect for 'the Lord's anointed' (24:6). If he did not show respect for Saul, how could

he hope that others would show respect for himself?

David stealthily cut off part of the unsuspecting Saul's robe, then after Saul had left the cave, called out to the king and made himself known. With deep reverence in both word and action, David pointed out the falsehood of any allegations against him, and used the piece of cloth to prove his loyalty to Saul, and his refusal to harm him even when he could have done so with impunity.

He went on to urge Saul not to waste his energies seeking to catch someone who would do him no more harm than a dead dog or a flea (24:14). Finally David appealed to the justice of the Lord himself to settle the matter.

David's arguments certainly went home to Saul, who could not fail to recognise the danger he had been in, not to mention the potential for ridicule involved in the situation. As ever, Saul over-reacted, with tears and confessions, and blessings upon David. The high point of the whole incident, however, lies in verse 20, where even the egocentric Saul blurts out a public acknowledgement of David's right both to succeed him, and to found a dynasty.

Thus while David was still an exile and a fugitive, his right to rule had been accepted not only by the one who would normally have been heir to the throne, his friend Jonathan (23:17), but also by the ruling king, Saul himself. In this way, David's reluctance to kill Saul more than paid off in long-term political rewards.

Finally, Saul even put himself in the position of suppliant, asking David's mercy upon his descendents. As David had already made this promise to Jonathan (20:14-15) he was more than willing to do the same for Saul.

There was no suggestion, however, that David should be restored to a position at court. David was by now too canny to have accepted such a suggestion anyway, as later events were to show. He preferred to remain in the relative obscurity, but relative safety of his own stronghold (24:22), whose exact location is not stated.

David and Nabal (25:1-44)

At this point a brief note (25:1) reports the death of Samuel. His loss was felt by the whole nation, though it is not clear whether David was able to attend the funeral ceremonies. The recording of Samuel's death at this particular point may not be without significance. Saul had acknowledged David's claim to the throne (24:20). Should he have wished to go back on this, and legitimate his rule once more, then one way to do so would have been to coerce Samuel into a joint public appearance, as he had done before (15:27-31). The death of Samuel removed any further possibility of this. For David, however, Saul's acknowledgement removed the need for any further political support that Samuel could have given. The old seer's role in the national life was played out, though not finally ended even by death (cf. 28:3-25).

David now chose to put himself effectively out of Saul's reach by withdraw-

ing to the desert of Paran, in the far south, to the west of the Gulf of Aqaba. There he set himself up as a kind of unofficial law-enforcement agency (25:15-16), though Saul would no doubt have called it a protection racket. David was dependent for supplies on the goodwill of local landowners, but presumably the majority of them had the sense to see on which side their bread was buttered, and co-operated with him more or less willingly.

One, however, did not. Nabal (25:2-3) was both rich and churlish, and had no intention of sharing his wealth with David, even at a feast time (25:8). The courteous approach of David's representatives was brusquely rejected (25:10-11). (We may note in passing that Abigail's detailed knowledge of David (25:28-30) gives the lie to Nabal's claim (25:10) to know nothing about him.) When word of this reached David, he not unnaturally took umbrage, and planned to mount a punitive expedition.

Meanwhile, this possibility had been clearly foreseen by Nabal's own servants. Since he was so unapproachable, they decided to bring the matter urgently to the attention of his wife Abigail, who was both beautiful and intelligent. She quickly grasped the seriousness of the situation, and on her own initiative, assembled a sizeable contribution to David's larder. Not only so, but she herself accompanied the party that set out to present it. No doubt this was partly tact, but it is hard to avoid the impression that she also wanted to see for herself what a man with David's swashbuckling image was really like. An understandable curiosity in a woman yoked to such an unpleasant husband!

When the two parties met, David was still breathing fire and slaughter, but he was rapidly and completely disarmed by Abigail's plea which was both diplomatic and sensible. If her closing remarks are any guide (25:31), she was not above reinforcing her arguments with a more or less discreet flutter of the eyelashes! As later events were to prove so disastrously, David was by no means impervious to fluttering eyelashes, but on this occasion the logic of Abigail's case was sufficiently powerful on its own. The gift was accepted, and the crisis resolved.

Nabal meanwhile was indulging in a drunken revel, and Abigail waited until he had sobered up before telling him what she had done. His anger brought on a severe stroke, and within ten days

he was dead. David lost no time in making overtures to Abigail, which were accepted with alacrity. Quite apart from an evident mutual attraction, the marriage suited both their interests. Abigail gained a more congenial husband, and David gained permanent access to Nabal's considerable economic resources.

Saul, fickle as ever, had taken Michal away from the absent David and given her to someone else (25:44). But David had now acquired two other wives, not only Abigail but also Ahinoam from Jezreel, a small town in Judah. In this way he extended his political connections as well as enlarging his family.

Why is the story of Nabal and Abigail included in Scripture at such length and at this particular point in the narrative? At this point, perhaps, as a literary device to give an interlude of an entirely different nature between the account of David's fortunes at their lowest ebb (23-24) and the swiftly mounting climax that reversed his position completely (27-31). At such length, we may suggest, because it reflects in microcosm the broad sweep of David's relations with Saul.

David was unjustly treated by Nabal, and was about to take vengeance into his own hands when Abigail intervened. The kernel of her argument (25:24-31) had nothing to do with David's claim to have protected Nabal's flocks. Rather she points out that avoidable bloodshed would bring only grief and trouble later on. This was exactly the argument David had used to Saul (24:12) and was to use again (26:10-11).

In Nabal's case, the Lord's vengeance was swift and visible — a foretaste of the fate that would in due course befall Saul. David perhaps needed Nabal as an example of the Lord's justice to sustain him through the vicissitudes and temptations of the much longer struggle with Saul.

The name of Nabal meant 'Fool' (25:25) and Saul himself underlined the similarity between their attitudes to life when he confessed (26:21) 'I have played the fool'. In the Lord's time, David's faithfulness and patience were rewarded, and Saul encompassed his own destruction, leaving David as free of blood-guilt as in the case of Nabal. The lesson is clear for any Christians who are tempted to resort to scheming and struggling in order to gain promotion or to assert their rights at the expense of others.

David spares Saul again (26:1-25)

The relative dating of this story is unstated. Placed where it is, however, right after the example of Nabal, it can be seen as a test of David's determination to await the Lord's action in regard to Saul.

Once more the people of Ziph (cf. 23:19) although in David's own home territory of Judah, betrayed him to Saul. This time, instead of hiding, David took an initiative and himself led a secret nocturnal patrol into Saul's camp. Even in sleep, Saul was not far separated from his spear (cf. 22:6), and this was too much for David's companion, his nephew Abishai. Perhaps foreseeing that David would not be willing to kill Saul himself, Abishai presented a more subtle temptation to his uncle — an offer to do the deed himself. This would technically have left David free of guilt, but the man who could see clearly even his oblique responsibility for the slaughter of the priests at Nob (22:22) was not to be deceived by such a specious suggestion. Even if the stroke that killed Saul came from Abishai, the onus for it would lie immovably upon David. It was more vital to his future interests that the head of the Lord's anointed should remain sacrosanct. David therefore contented himself with removing Saul's spear and water jar, and then crossed the valley to a safe distance.

From there, he roused Saul's troops with his shouting, and ridiculed Abner for dereliction of duty. When Saul was awake, David once more harangued him for his suspicious-mindedness and injustice and asserted his own loyalty as evidenced by his possession of Saul's spear. Why should Saul squander his time hunting one who was as harmless as a partridge (26:20)?

Saul was again touched by David's impassioned language. He confessed his own folly, and David's deserved success. He made a half-hearted attempt to entice David back to the court (26:21), which David tactfully ignored. The spear was returned to Saul and he and David went their separate ways. This was the last recorded encounter between them. Saul could only wallow in remorse. His verdict on himself, 'I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly' (26:21) stands as the sad epitaph to his entire tenure of the kingship.

David departed firm in his determination to trust the Lord until he should 'deliver me out of all tribulation' (26:24).

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (6) *The Wisdom of God* M. L. Burr

'O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all' (*Ps. 104:24*). So the Psalmist responds to the order which he sees in God's creation. He describes the various ways in which God provides for wild animals and mankind as evidence of His wise design within the world. The various creatures are born, live and die in accordance with God's will for them. The creation as a whole has the overall purpose that God may rejoice in His works (*v.31*). Thus the created order does not explain itself; it exists for God's purposes, which are not further enlarged upon here.

In the Bible, Wisdom means 'the power to see, and the inclination to choose, the best and highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it' (J. I. Packer, **Knowing God**). Of course, God is the only one who knows what is the best and highest goal, and He alone understands how it will be attained. But He has given us the ability to appreciate His wisdom in some degree, so that we have good reasons for trusting Him beyond the point where we understand His ways.

Job and Proverbs

The mysterious nature of God's wisdom is dealt with in the book of *Job*, especially in relation to human suffering. Job was sure that God had some purpose behind his afflictions and was greatly distressed as he tried to imagine what that purpose might be. He pondered the wonderful works of Him who 'is wise in heart . . . who does great things beyond understanding' and who gives no explanation of His actions to anyone (*Job 9:4-12*). He

considered God's ways with nations and their leaders whom He raises up and casts down at will. Again he commented that 'with God are wisdom and might; He has counsel and understanding' (*12:13-25*). In *ch. 28* wisdom is likened to precious gems and metals hidden in the earth, undetectable to the casual observer, but which can be found by those who know where to look for them. Wisdom is similarly concealed in creation, and God alone perceives it there. To men He gives, not an understanding of His purposes within the created order, but the wisdom which suits man's need — to fear God and depart from evil. At the end of the book Job acknowledges that God's purposes cannot be thwarted, and that he has spoken of things which he did not understand, too wonderful for him to know (*42:2,3*). But he does now know God in a far deeper way than before as a result of his experiences (*42:5*). The reader of the book also knows that God has other wise purposes in Job's sufferings (the confuting of Satan), which Job could not know.

All this illustrates the point made by Packer (see his chapter 'God's Wisdom and Ours' in **Knowing God**) that we neither need nor can expect to know why things are as they are; the wisdom God gives to man is knowing how to act in the various circumstances of life. So when the wisdom of God was in Solomon it enabled him to make wise decisions and render justice to his subjects (*1 Kgs. 3:28*). Similarly the wisdom of God in Ezra's hand (*Ezra 7:25*) fitted him to administer the Israelites and arrange for them to be

taught the law of God.

Perhaps the most profound study of God's wisdom in the Old Testament is in the book of *Proverbs*. Again, wisdom is connected with the creation of the world — 'the LORD by wisdom founded the earth' (*3:19*). To man it is like a tree of life (*3:18*); it is to be sought like hidden treasures, and conveys the knowledge of God (*2:4,5*). God's wisdom is so great and complex that it is described (*ch.8*) as though it had a personality of its own. It was present with God at the very beginning, before He started to create the world. Wisdom was His constant companion; 'I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always'. It was involved in every stage of creation, but had a special interest in humanity, 'delighting in the sons of men'. It is more valuable than anything else and can be found by those who seek it. Again it is made abundantly clear that Wisdom, as imparted to men, is not knowing why God had made things as they are, still less an abstract philosophy, but a guide to action. Wisdom teaches a man to hate pride, arrogance and other evils (*v.13*). It promotes righteousness and justice (*v.20*), and is especially important for those in authority (*vv.15,16*). To find wisdom is to find life and obtain favour from the LORD (*v.35*).

In Christ

When we turn to the New Testament we find that the Wisdom of God is in fact a Person (*1 Cor. 1:24*), the Word who in the beginning was with God and was God, through whom everything was made (*John 1:1-3*). It would

no doubt be an over-simplification to regard *Prov. 8:22-36* as a straightforward description of the pre-incarnate Christ; in its original context this passage was apparently a poetic account of divine wisdom portrayed as a person. But now it turns out that divine Wisdom actually is a Person, and the various resemblances between what *Proverbs* says about Wisdom and what the New Testament says about Christ show that the connection is a real one.

In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (*Col. 2:3*; cf. *Prov. 2:4,5*). God has been completely revealed in Him so that all that can be known of God is expressed in a form suited to our understanding. God's holiness, kindness and love are shown to us in human terms that we can recognize. To know God in Christ is truly the greatest treasure anyone could have. Yet God in His wisdom has so ordered things that He is not discoverable by the unaided human intellect. 'In the wisdom of God the world did not know God through wisdom' (*1 Cor. 1:21*). Indeed, to fallen man God's revelation seems foolish, until His Spirit grants the ability to recognize the truth (*1 Cor. 2:11-14*).

The Lord Jesus is called the Wisdom of God specifically in connection with His death (*1 Cor. 1:24*). This revealed God's wisdom in the way in which He dealt with the whole problem of sin. Satan over-reached himself and brought about his own ruin. Man was shown to be thoroughly corrupt and in Satan's power, his need being most clearly demonstrated at the point where that need was eternally met. There can never be any suggestion that man contributed to his own salvation, for when it was accomplished he was at the height of rebellion, crucifying God's Son. This all magnifies the grace and mercy of God, and gives us supreme confidence in His love.

Twice in the New Testament the Wisdom of God is personified as in *Proverbs*. In *Luke 7:35* (= *Matt. 11:19*) 'Wisdom is justified by all her children' (or her deeds). God's ways are incomprehensible to the sceptic; but will be vindicated by their effects in those who respond. In *Luke 11:49* the Wisdom of God decides to send prophets and apostles, knowing that they will be killed or persecuted, so that human rebellion may reach its climax in that generation. Thus God's wisdom ordains the circumstances which led to the acceptance and to the rejection of His overtures to men. Furthermore, a

comparison between *Luke 11:49* and *Matt. 23:34* shows again the close connection between the Wisdom of God and the Lord Jesus.

The People of God

If wisdom means the ability to choose the best and highest goals, God's wisdom is worthily displayed in His wonderful purposes for His people. His secret and hidden wisdom was decreed before the ages (echoes of *Job 28* and *Prov. 8*) for our glorification (*1 Cor. 2:7ff*). For those who love Him He has prepared things that eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, yet which His Spirit reveals already to us. Not only in blessings to individuals but in the church corporately is God's wisdom made known. All kinds of people, Jews and Gentiles, together form in Christ one body which will display God's perfect workmanship. Through the church the manifold wisdom of God is made known to heavenly beings according to His eternal purpose (*Eph. 3:10*). Like a body, the church has an organic unity, each part being needed for the proper health of the whole. Like the stones of a temple its members make up a structure suited for God to dwell in. Maybe some of the experiences which seem pointless now are designed to fit us for our particular niches in the grand design.

We may therefore understand Paul's response to God's wisdom as revealed in His merciful ways towards Jews and Gentiles. 'O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! . . . For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory for ever. Amen.' (*Rom. 11:33-36*). No one could have foreseen the way God would deal with the problem of human sin, but looking back over His dealings we are struck by their perfect wisdom. All things are 'from Him' — the plan was entirely His; all things are 'through Him' — He alone brought them about; and all things are 'to Him' — they will ultimately conform to His will and show His glory. So the angels ascribe wisdom to God and the Lamb as they contemplate the great results of salvation (*Rev. 5:12; 7:12*).

But it is not only the angels who are meant to appreciate the wisdom of God. He intends us to understand something of His purposes so that our lives may be rightly directed. Paul prayed that the Ephesians might be given a spirit of Wisdom to know three

things. Firstly, they should know what is the hope to which God had called them. Obviously it is desirable that Christians should know the goal God has in mind for them. Secondly, they were to know 'the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints'. God values His people enormously and looks forward to possessing them fully and dwelling among them. Thirdly, this goal will certainly be achieved because that immeasurably great power which raised Christ from the grave to the throne is at work in those who believe (*Eph. 1:16-20*).

Understanding these things should have a profound effect upon our lives. We know that we have been called to be God's children, to enjoy His fellowship and to be like His Son. This life is a period of training necessary to our calling, preparing us to be God's inheritance. Our wisdom is to recognize the supreme value of this goal and order our priorities accordingly. The result will be that we are neither absorbed in, nor careless of, material things, but able to see them in perspective and use them rightly. The joys and trials of life come from our heavenly Father and are opportunities to learn more about His generosity and sustaining power. We do not expect to know the reasons for everything that happens, but we do know the broad purpose God has in view and can trust Him about the details.

Finally, God's wisdom is active in the believer, helping him to make the right decisions. James considers the contrast between earthly and heavenly wisdom. Worldly wisdom is governed by selfish ambition. It consists of seeing how to get my own way, and how to use other people for my purposes while disguising my real intentions. Since it is essentially selfish, it brings me into conflict with others and inevitably leads to discord. 'But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity' (*Jas. 3:13-17*). Divine wisdom enables us to see the true value of things, showing us the attractiveness of holiness, the repulsiveness of sin, and the supreme importance of knowing God. It therefore guides us in our decisions so as to promote peace, since it is God's will not ours that we seek. Like Jesus Himself, as we grow in wisdom we shall also grow in favour with God and man (*Luke 2:52*).

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE (10)

J. E. Todd

Mr. Todd has recently been made redundant, which he sees as a 'golden opportunity' to serve the Lord. He will be writing on this subject in an article shortly to appear in The Harvester.

... of Burden-sharing (Gal. 6:2)

'Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ' (Gal. 6:2, RSV). Here we are exhorted to share the problems of our fellow Christians. 'A problem shared is a problem halved' is a true proverb. But the Scripture says that this is according to the 'law of Christ'. What does this mean? It does not seem to refer to the Lord's teaching, for we do not find instruction on burden-sharing, not in so many words, not even in the Sermon on the Mount, although it is often implied (e.g. *John 13:34*). May we suggest that 'the law of Christ' is the rule by which he lived?

By death

But supremely it was the law by which he died. In his death the Lord Jesus Christ bore the burden of the sin of the repentant and believing sinner, and thus removed it. 'He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree' (1 *Pet. 2:24*). This truth is the very heart of the good news of the Gospel. The truth is that Christ died as a substitute for the believer, bearing and exhausting all the consequences of sin and setting the guilty sinner free, justified! Thus was given to the Father, who gave his Son to bear our burden, his supreme title of grace, 'Him who justifies the ungodly' (Rom. 4:5).

In some theological circles, even some calling themselves evangelical, the idea of substitution is rejected. But it is the consistent teaching of Scripture, both prophetically in the Old Testament, 'The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all' (Isa. 53:6); and doctrinally in the New Testament, 'For Christ also died for sins once for all,

the righteous for (huper, instead of) the unrighteous' (1 *Pet. 3:18*). For us, in the light of *Galatians 6:2*, it is the supreme example of 'the law of Christ', bearing the burdens of others. Or as John puts it, 'He laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren' (1 *John 3:16*). He laid down his life in death to bear the burden of our sins, we should lay down our lives in living to bear the burdens of others.

And by life

But although his substitutionary death upon the cross was the climax of our Lord's burden-bearing, yet his whole life, from the incarnation onwards, was an example of burden-sharing. 'Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor' (2 *Cor. 8:9*). In the incarnation he gave up the riches of heavenly glory to share with us the poverty of earthly experience with all its burdens. But sharing the burden of our earthly experience was not an end in itself, but a means to bring us blessing, 'So that by his poverty you might become rich' (v.9). 'Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people' (Heb. 2:17).

During his life the Lord's burden-sharing was of the most practical nature, it was indeed the law by which he lived, 'he went about doing good' (Acts 10:38). The secret of his ability to share others' burdens was his willingness to give time to listen to individuals. Despite the pressures of the public life of a popular figure, our Lord gave much of his time to speaking with individuals. The amount of space given over in the Gospels to recording his private conversations bears testimony to this fact. In these personal interviews he listened as much as he spoke. Are we approachable and good lis-

teners? This is the key to the ministry of burden-sharing.

But when we approach the cross we come to the supreme act of the Lord's burden-bearing ministry. 'For Christ did not please himself' (Rom. 15:3), as we see in Gethsemane, 'Not as I will, but as thou wilt' (Matt. 26:39). Selfishness is the great barrier to burden-sharing, it is only when the well-being of others becomes as important to us as our own well-being, that we can enter this ministry, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself' (Matt. 22:39).

The Royal Law

The talents and resources which God has given to us are not to be used only for our own pleasure and profit, but to help others also. This will certainly cost us time, such as visiting the sick and sympathizing with the bereaved. Sometimes it will cost us effort, such as clearing snow for the elderly or shopping for the sick. It may even cost us money to help the needy. But such burden-sharing is pleasing to the Lord. 'As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me' (Matt. 25:34-40).

The ultimate example is set before us. Christ used his eternal Sonship and perfect manhood, not for his own glory, but to bear the burden of guilt on behalf of sinners. Is not this 'law of Christ' also 'the royal law' of James? 'If you really fulfil the royal law, according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself", you do well. But if you show partiality, you commit sin' (James 2:8-9). But our Lord not only sets us the standard, he supplies the means to achieve it by the gift of the Holy Spirit. 'In order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit' (Rom. 8:4).

LOOKING AT BOOKS



The Christian Life Sinclair Ferguson. Hodder & Stoughton. xii + 179pp. £3.75 (paperback).

An Introduction to Christian Faith Walter Kasper. Burns & Oates. x + 210pp. £8.95.

Subtitled 'a doctrinal introduction', Dr. Ferguson's book aims to present Christians with a solid foundation for their experience and practice. The author, a minister of St. George's Church, Tron, Glasgow, believes that 'The conviction that Christian doctrine matters for Christian living is one of the most important growth points of the Christian life'. He has therefore provided an extremely helpful set of studies on the doctrines which relate to the Christian life: doctrines such as election, regeneration, justification, adoption, sanctification, perseverance and glorification. The book does not claim to be a manual of systematic theology which covers every conceivable biblical doctrine, but it is surprising that a treatment of the Christian life has next to nothing to say about the Church or the sacraments. The theology is both biblical and reformed; the expression is clear, fresh and forceful, with some good verbal and literary illustrations. Above all, a devotional tone pervades the book and encourages the reader to respond to what he is reading. This is the product of a first class teacher and is strongly recommended for Christians of all stages of spiritual growth.

Walter Kasper's book is of a different kind. It contains a series of lectures given by the Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Tübingen to a mixed audience of priests, teachers and students. The result is a scholarly and contemporary reflection upon the nature of Christian faith from the pen of one of today's outstanding Roman Catholic scholars.

Review by John W. Baigent, West London Institute of Higher Education.

Stewards of God's Grace S. Grossmann (translated by Michael Freeman). Paternoster Press. 192pp. £4.20 (paperback).
The Charismatic Movement in the Church of England Author — a working group chaired by Rev. Canon Colin Graston. Publisher — CIO for the General Synod of the Church of England. 65pp. £1.95 (paperback).

The first book is a general account of the Charismatic Movement. The writer treats the 'charismata' neither as 'magic' on the one hand nor a 'deception' on the other. His aim is not primarily to decide whether we are for the charismata or against them, but to decide how they may be constructively exercised (p.14).

Part I is historical, tracing the use or non-use of certain gifts over the past 2000 years. He focuses attention on the emergence of classical Pentecostalism in 1901 together with an examination of its particular emphasis on 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' as 'a separate stage along the way of salvation, and that it is always evidenced by speaking in tongues' (p.51). While he disagrees with this particular doctrine he is happy with the explanation of the term 'baptism in the Spirit' when it 'refers not to an independent stage in the way of salvation, but rather to a realisation of the Holy Spirit's indwelling and to an awakening of the charismatic powers given to the Christian when he was born again' (p.53).

Part II is largely doctrinal. Having briefly dismissed dispensationalism as unbiblical, he proceeds to describe each of a comprehensive list of spiritual gifts, including marriage, celibacy and even martyrdom. He pays special and detailed attention to the gifts of prophecy, revelation, discernment, wisdom, knowledge, glossolalia and interpretation, miracles and healing. He warmly commends these gifts and gives down to earth advice on their use, as well as explaining their meaning.

Part III is entitled 'Living under the control of the Holy Spirit.' He states that there must be a dynamic balance between the prophetic gifts and the serving gifts and that the secret of a church's power 'lies in the working together of the various gifts of grace' (p.134). He sees the charismata as being given spontaneously and directly whereas the fruit of the Spirit is the result of growth — 'the fruit builds the vessel and the charisma fills the vessel' (p.137). The writer is well aware of the dangers accompanying the misuse of spiritual gifts and devotes seven pages to a discussion of six such dangers. In the chapter called 'Charismatic practice' he suggests various ways in which the gifts could be used in church services as well as in everyday life. The book finally deals with the need to be aware of one's gifts and how to develop them.

I commend the book to all Christians, but especially to those in the following categories — 1. Those interested in the history and doctrines of the Charismatic Movement. 2. Christians who are already warmly disposed to the charismata and who want to know more. 3. Because the book is balanced it should be of help to those who have genuine fears about the charismata. 4. Church leaders who sense that God is leading their churches towards the use of hitherto unused spiritual gifts in public and who want to avoid excuses without stifling the Spirit.

The second book is 'a report on the significance of this movement within the Church of England, called for by resolution of the General Synod in November 1978.' Because of the limited size of the book and its broad scope it is necessarily sketchy in places. I personally found it rather 'bitty,' yet I realise that it is a report rather than a systematic or theological study of the Charismatic Movement. The history of the movement from the first century onwards (with emphasis on the recent developments in the Church of England) together

with reasons for those developments, occupy only twelve pages in total. The description of Baptism in the Spirit and Gifts of the Spirit (dealt with in the main text and separately in the appendices) are somewhat superficial theologically, and a number of questions are raised (albeit for discussion purposes) but not really answered.

However, there is a most useful series of 'vignettes' in which the rise of the movement in a selection of parishes and institutions has been described and systematically evaluated. They are examples of where the movement has brought real benefits, yet the tensions and difficulties have been described with honesty. This book positively commends the movement as having value in the Church of England, while at the same time it leaves 'some hesitations about certain features of the way the movement has exhibited itself.'

Review by Dr. Derek Copley, Moorlands Bible College

The Bible — Myth or Message?

Michael Penny. Triangle/S.P.C.K. ix + 132pp. £1.95. Paperback.

Mathematician turned theologian Michael Penny writes breezily for sixth formers and the like in defence of the Bible as a book worth reading, believing and studying. There are many useful things — a demonstration of the strength of the manuscript support of both Testaments, an explanation of several problem texts (marred, it may be, by the citation of older literature) and a development of the mathematics of probability related to biblical forecasts about Jesus and other matters. So, when *Lev. 26:31-33* was fulfilled, the odds against were 20,000-1. (Incidentally, the remark about Nehemiah on p.14 has two inaccuracies: a cup-bearer was a very influential official, not a 'humble' one; and Nehemiah built the walls of Jerusalem, not the Temple.) All this is very fascinating.

However, our commendation of the book must be tempered by two considerations. One is our inability to swallow the theory of numerics on pp.97ff. Following E. W. Bullinger, Penny gives 'meanings' to various numbers and works out the significance of selected words based on the numerical equivalent of the constituent Hebrew or Greek letters, sometimes divided by a factor he deems relevant. This, of course, is not original, but in our judgment highly subjective and of dubious validity. (Thus, Satan in both Hebrew and Greek will not divide by thirteen, as might be expected, and is accordingly not mentioned!) The second point is more serious. Mr. Penny quotes frequently C. H. Welch, whose extreme form of dispensationalism we would be loath either to accept or publicize.

Reviewed by G. J. Polkinghorne

Sure Foundation Donald Coggan. Hodder & Stoughton. 319pp. £5.95. (paperback).

None but an ardent admirer of the retired Archbishop of Canterbury is likely to invest nearly £6 in an anthology of his addresses over his five or so years in office. No one who does so, however, will regret his investment. Not that non-conformists will agree with everything he says — he would not want them to! — but they will see that the Christian gospel informs and inspires Anglican minds and hearts as surely as their own. The quality is, of course, patchy, varying from short and snappy Broadcast Talks to serious lectures of some length, with all sorts of sermons and special addresses in between. The common feature is the vibrant and biblical Christian faith throughout. Selection for special mention is invidious, but 'On Dying and Dying Well' is an excellent treatment of its theme and merits careful attention. The Reinicker Lectures for 1979, entitled 'Grace, Grind and Glory', will reward and encourage all ministers of the Word. The paper on 'The Nature of the Episcopate' should be compulsory reading at all consultations and conferences, even for those who think that bishops are 'bunchy knobs of papist flesh.' Incidentally, we are told that Bishop Lancelot Andrewes prayed for five hours daily and the Rev.

Charles Simeon for four — who among us can beat that? An admirable companion to his earlier book, **Convictions**, this volume cannot but benefit all who dip into it. We trust that Lord Coggan will enjoy many years of active retirement, punctuated by a series of similar books.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne.

Last Supper and Lord's Supper I Howard Marshall. Paternoster Press. 191pp. £7.20 (cased), £4.20 (paperback).

'Unashamedly academic' is Prof. Marshall's own, fully justified, assessment of this survey of the biblical teaching on the Lord's Supper. A brief treatment of religious meals in the ancient world includes a useful outline of pass-over ritual. Luke's longer account is accepted in the examination of the NT records of the Last Supper, wherein it is noted that 'difficulties in establishing the original wording (leave) the essential content . . . remarkably unaffected.' The Last Supper is accepted as a passover and problems of reconciling the Synoptic and Johannine timings are attributed to the use of differing calendars. Further chapters treat the significance of the Last Supper and the Lord's Supper in the early church.

One hesitates to accept even Dr. Marshall's verdict that Jeremias's translation of *Mark 14:2* ('in the presence of the festal crowd') is 'undoubtedly correct.' That *Mark 14:25* points to the Lord's Supper as the fulfilment of the prophecy by Jesus to eat with His disciples in the kingdom of God, is fascinating. Throughout the NT period, 'breaking of bread' was associated with a fuller meal, and wine was not invariably available. 'Blessing' in such texts as *1 Cor. 10:16* means 'thanksgiving' rather than anything mystical, while 'communion' is the sharing with other people of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice. The 'real presence' of the Lord is thus not due to any metamorphosis of the bread and wine, nor is there a repetition (as opposed to a recalling) of the sacrifice of Calvary. The ashamedly unacademic will be glad of the chapter of conclusions, while most readers of these remarks will find themselves very much in agreement with the twelve considerations regarding the Lord's Supper to-

day. This is a useful handbook for those who are ready to apply their minds to close argument (though one sentence on p.132 will probably beat them). An index of subjects and of Scripture references would enhance the usefulness of the book.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

An Introduction to Old Testament Study John H. Hayes. SCM Press. 400pp. £5.95 (paperback).

Critical approaches to the study of the OT do not appeal to many evangelical Christians. They prefer to read these ancient scriptures in the light of the NT as God's Word to them. Some, however, realise the importance of a historical understanding of the OT. John Hayes' latest book aims to introduce us to the issues and approaches involved in the contemporary critical study of the OT. He deals with matters

like the formation of the canon, textual criticism, the historical-critical approach and form criticism, before he surveys the modern approaches to various sections of the OT. Each chapter is prefaced by a useful bibliography. Dr. Hayes writes clearly, straightforwardly and fairly, taking some notice of the contribution of conservative scholars; but this is a book for the student or serious reader. The Christian who wants to begin studying the OT for himself must look elsewhere.

Review by John W. Baigent

The Divine Inspiration of Holy Scripture William J. Abraham. Oxford University Press. 126pp. £9.50.

Dr. Abraham, Assistant Professor of Theology at Seattle Pacific University, is perhaps not the only evangelical who feels uncomfortable about 'inerrancy' as applied to Holy Scripture. How-

Correction

Ape-Men

Michael Bowden, whose book, *Ape-Men, Fact or Fallacy?* reviewed in the May issue, writes to correct a possible misunderstanding. He does not believe in the existence of 'ape-men', whether as products of evolution or of jumps from one kind to another. He writes, 'there are no "jumps", only apes or men'.

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ever, many evangelicals will feel decidedly less happy about his attempt to state what is involved in inspiration. Warfield, he claims, departed from orthodoxy, as propounded by Gausson, by denying divine dictation and by insisting that only the original autographs were inspired. Abrahams distinguishes between divine inspiration and divine speaking. While God spoke to prophets and apostles, explaining His actions, He merely inspired them to write what is now Scripture. Hence, while there are degrees of inspiration, we have a reliable account of revelation, though not free from error. The paradigm for divine inspiration is the way a human teacher inspires his pupils, with widely variant results. Only eighteen pages are devoted to biblical exegesis, which is rather skated over. *2 Tim. 3:16* and *2 Pet. 1:21*, it seems, do not require us to believe in verbal inspiration; Jesus' attitude to O.T. passages merely conformed to contemporary Judaism, about which we know too little to draw reliable conclusions; and where the NT cites the OT, it is very free in use of versions, though — and here Abrahams virtually concedes his opponents' case — they 'quite naturally quote them as being spoken by God.' From his post-script one judges that he has not seen Article 13 of the Chicago Statement on the standard of truth by which biblical authors must be judged.

If Abrahams regards Sanday as being vague in his conclusions, the same must be said about his own work. Maybe the book he is said to be preparing on revelation will take us further. Meantime, anyone with £9.50 to spare should lay out just £1.50 on Jim Packer's *Under God's Word* and get much better financial and theological value.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

Calvin on Scripture and Divine Sovereignty John Murray. Evangelical Press. 71pp. £1.00 (paperback).

The Foundation of Biblical Authority Edited by James Montgomery Boice. Pickering & Inglis. 172pp. £1.95 (paperback).
My Friend the Bible John Sherrill. Hodder & Stoughton. 155pp. £3.95.

Here are three recently published books, all of which have to do

with the Bible. The first, by the late Professor John Murray, who was a renowned Scottish theologian and for many years Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary, U.S.A., consists in a reproduction in print of three lectures which were delivered twenty years ago to a large and distinguished audience of theologians and ministers on the occasion of the four hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the birth of John Calvin. The respective subjects of the lectures are the teaching of Calvin on the Bible's inspiration, its authority, and Divine Sovereignty. The author quotes extensively from Calvin's own writings, and establishes from them the high doctrine of Scripture which the great reformer held. It is valuable to read in the final chapter of the case which can be made for God's sovereignty in reprobation as well as his sovereignty in election.

Calvin's belief in the inerrancy of Scripture is exhaustively examined in the second of the books. Non-evangelicals ridicule the idea of the Bible's inerrancy; and during the post-war years there has been a drift from this tenet on the part of many who, in most respects, may be called Evangelicals. Others, however, have retained the position of John Calvin, contending that Biblical inerrancy is taught in the Scriptures themselves, was taught also by the early church fathers, and is a necessary article of faith for a well-founded, vigorous Christian life. So as to assist in upholding this viewpoint there was established in 1977 'The International Council on Biblical Inerrancy' which aimed to establish that the Bible was true, not only in matters of faith and practice, but in statements also relating to history and science. To this end the Council decided to produce a symposium on the subject consisting in essays written by prominent evangelical scholars; and that is the nature of this book before us. There are seven authors, most of whom are American, but including Dr. James Packer from England. The Foreword is contributed by Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer.

The last of these three books is a 'light-weight' compared with the others, but it is by no means without value. The author is well-known through writing, in conjunction with his wife Elizabeth, such widely-read publications as *The Cross and the*

Switchblade, The Hiding Place, God's Smuggler, etc. He relates that it was only after he had been a Christian for quite a number of years that the Bible became a living book in his experience, and relevant to his needs and circumstances. He has produced, therefore, this volume in order to try to show how the Bible can come alive for others who may be finding it rather dull and remote. He strongly advocates the memorization of Biblical verses, and he has provided an interesting classification of the particular situations under which various Scriptures may, with profit, be quoted to oneself. He suggests, for instance, a verse which could appropriately be recited: 'before reading a newspaper', 'when I don't seem to be getting anywhere', and 'when on a road subject to the 30 m.p.h. speed limit'.

Review by Dr. Stephen S. Short

Holiness and the Will of God: Perspectives on the Theology of Tertullian Gerald Lewis Bray. (Marshall's Theological Library). Marshall, Morgan & Scott. 1979. xii, 179pp. £6.95.

Very few evangelicals know anything of church history between the completion of the New Testament and the Reformation. We can therefore welcome this contribution to our knowledge of the second and third centuries and reiterate the author's assertion that 'The way to the future lies not in the rejection of the past, but in its rediscovery and representation to each new generation of believers' (p.156). If we think of the Church Fathers as incipient Roman Catholics and of Tertullian himself as an heretical proto-Puritan whose sayings ('The blood of the martyrs is seed', 'What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?') express his rigorous asceticism and opposition to flight from persecution, we shall find a sympathetic exposition of his thought in Dr. Bray's handsomely produced volume.

We are gently introduced to the current state of Tertullian scholarship before Dr. Bray embarks on a description of his life and times. The Carthaginian Tertullian, the first major Christian to write in Latin, lived in a critical era for the church when, the author suggests happily, 'a Calvinist would have been more at home than a modern Catholic'

(p.41). The fashionable view that the theology of the first Christians was undogmatic is trenchantly dismissed as an attempt 'to remake the Early Church in the image of a typical modern denomination' (p.48). Indeed, Tertullian believed that wrong behaviour sprang from erroneous doctrine. He himself is supposed to have joined the Montanist movement of ascetic, apocalyptic, charismatic sectarians, but Dr. Bray argues that while Tertullian defended the Montanists for their emphasis on sanctification and discipline, he never actually became one.

Tertullian's main concern was holiness. His understanding of sanctification unfortunately involved his belief that post-baptismal sin could be expunged only by martyrdom. Dr. Bray documents the pressures which drove Tertullian to adopt perfectionism in the conviction that his age was one during which the Holy Spirit applied God's law through ascetic discipline. In line with traditional Roman religion, Tertullian identified holiness with chastity: he never really approved of marriage and forbade remarriage. Yet his colossal achievement was 'to perceive clearly and attempt to put into practice the fact that Christianity was a complete intellectual system independent of pagan philosophy' (p.153). 'He captured the world of Latin letters for the faith of Christ' (p.2).

Specialized linguistic argument makes only an occasional appearance and then Dr. Bray's classical training is demonstrated to advantage. He writes with clarity, decision and with an eye to contemporary relevance, and his study is most satisfyingly presented both stylistically and structurally. Despite his aberrations, Tertullian is well worth getting acquainted with through Dr. Bray's work.

Review by Dr. A. G. Newell, Liverpool University

Availability

African Footsteps

The story of John Alexander Clarke of Africa by Velma Virgin reviewed in the May issue will shortly be available from Echoes of Service, 1 Widcombe Crescent, Bath, Somerset BA2 6AH. Price £2.00



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 from a regular contributor to The Harvester, who has recently been made redundant from his secular employment. We are grateful to Mr. J. E. Todd for his contribution.

REDUNDANCY AN OPPORTUNITY

'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation' (Mark 16:15, RSV).

It is said that the greatest problem of redundancy and unemployment is boredom. But can the redundant and unemployed Christian be bored, with his Lord's unfinished commission ringing in his ears? Redundancy gives to the Christian the most precious gift of all, which is time. The most precious gift given by the magi to the Lord Jesus Christ was not the gold or the frankincense or the myrrh, but time, time to make the journey. We unemployed Christians have time to fulfil the Lord's great commission. 'Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee', so we sing, but let us remember that our life consists of time.

How did the early church seek to fulfil the Lord's commission? 'In every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ' (Acts 5:42, AV). The Jehovah's Witnesses do not have a scriptural message, but for too long

they have monopolised a scriptural method.

The greatest advantage for thorough evangelism (i.e. to tell everyone) is that virtually everyone in this country can read. They will not come to the Gospel meeting, they will not switch on the radio to hear the Gospel broadcast, but a piece of Gospel literature can be placed in every home with the good possibility, if attractive, of being read. Here is a suggested plan of action. Obtain X copies of the monthly magazine **Emergency Post** from The Paternoster Press, printed with the address of the Gospel Hall and an invitation to the Gospel meeting and the Sunday School.

Knock on the doors, beginning in the streets nearest the Gospel Hall. Say, 'Good afternoon, we would like to leave with you our magazine from Such-and-such Gospel Hall, with an invitation to our Sunday evening service'. Not 'Gospel meeting'; use their language not ours. Also add an invitation to the Sunday School if you see toys or kiddies' clothes on the line.

The purpose of this first visit is not to give a doorstep discourse on justification by faith, much less to 'shake them over hellfire'. It is to create an impression of courtesy, cheerfulness and friendliness. Even a smile would not come amiss! If conversation naturally develops on this first visit, so much the better, but the aim is to create a favourable and attractive impression. You hook a fish before you can land it! Have a pencil and paper to note down any information for future use, e.g. a promise to send children to the Sunday School. Also note refusals, unusual interest and people out. This information to be transferred to a permanent note-book later for future use.

Return on another day at a different time to those who were out. Do not slip the magazine through the letter-

box, it is the face to face, person to person encounter which really matters. On this first visit it is helpful to put in a duplicated folder, C.P.O. of Worthing have a selection of folders for duplication work. State who you are, what you believe and a full list of assembly activities.

Call again the second month and ask, 'Last month we left you one of our magazines, we have called again to ask if you would like to have it each month? It is free and we are happy to deliver it if you would like to read it.' You will be surprised at the number of people who will accept, perhaps up to one third.

This means you now have a personal monthly contact with this household. Invitations can now be given to special Gospel efforts, in addition to the regular Sunday evening Gospel meeting. Such efforts as Sunday School anniversaries and prize-givings, parents' evenings, harvest teas and thanksgiving services, carol services etc.

Now others from the assembly can be brought into the work. First, to pray in the assembly prayer meeting about the work. Then in an afternoon or evening once a month to help distribute the magazines personally to the regular readers.

Whenever possible the delivery should be face to face, not via the letter-box, it is the personal contact which brings a person into the meetings.

There is no end to this form of evangelism, the only limits are time, workers and finance. If you are an unemployed Christian you have the time and therefore can become an evangelist of this type. Surely the assembly has the finance for such 'front-line' evangelism as this.

Address for the **Emergency Post**: The Paternoster Press, 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4JW. For the duplicating folders, Christian Publicity Organisation, Ivy Arch Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 8BU.

LETTER FROM JERUSALEM

N. Beck

Arise and have pity on Zion

(Ps. 102:13)

All is not well with the earthly city of God. Its parks are bright with the 100,000 bulbs donated by Holland last year, her leaders speak proud words: but her people, instead of enjoying their food, eat it mixed with dust and ashes. It is like grit in their teeth. Why is Israel so hated by her neighbours, who have vowed to compass her destruction? Is Israel to be no more than a source of trouble in the Middle East?

Apart from aberrations like the Falklands crisis, Israel is today the third most newsworthy people in the world. She follows closely behind the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. Other nations are far behind on the ladder of newsworthiness. Since her population is not much more than 1/80th of the population of the first two peoples, we can conclude that the average Israeli is 80 times more newsworthy than his counterpart elsewhere in the world. We shuddered at the pinpoint accuracy of her bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor a year ago, in a daylight raid which passed undetected over hundreds of miles of enemy territory, its ruthless efficiency matched by the remarkably small loss of life at the plant. Recently Russian generals hurried to Syria to discover how Israeli planes flew unscathed in the face of Sam 9 Missiles launched at them over Lebanon. One week Israel signs a defence memorandum with the U.S.A. and she heralds it as a new strategic alliance, and in the next offends friend and foe alike by annexing the Golan Heights, and has the world by the ears when she bombs the P.L.O. offices in Beirut. Is she just a nation determined to preserve her existence against surrounding nations by military muscle and power? Does she not want peace? Surely she has paid a great price for it? Before you read this letter she will have withdrawn from the Sinai in her effort to secure a lasting peace with Egypt. The cost to her of losing a secure and almost sufficient

local supply of oil is immeasurable, in a market dominated by oil sheikhs. They have sworn to destroy Israel and in difficult days can blackmail Israel's other suppliers.

The answer lies deep in the spiritual history of the Middle East. Three great religions have arisen here. Each has its claim to world dominion. First came Israel, with her majestic vision of the Great Creator God who committed Himself to her. She was to be a blessing to the nations of the earth and to possess the gates of her enemies. These promises had little but local fulfilment before Israel passed into long centuries of subjection. Then suddenly Christianity burst on the scene and in a few years spread the message that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour of all. Six hundred years later came Mohammed with his revelation drawn partly from the past, but demanding that all men must now submit to his final revelation or pay the price. Islam, his religion, grew up in just those heartlands of Judaism and Christianity. It has virtually destroyed the testimony of Jesus in Arabia, in Turkey, in Libya; and today the percentage of Christians in the population is less in the Middle East than in the world's periphery.

To have Israel arise, a pinhead in size on the map of the world, and take hold of Jerusalem, Islam's second most holy city, and declare it is the eternal and indivisible capital of Israel, is an affront demanding unceasing warfare, using all the religious zeal that Islam can muster. It is more offensive than the little 'christian' state of Lebanon, which has now been destroyed at the cost of 60,000 defenders' lives. What unites Saddam Hussein of Iraq, Khomeini of Iran and Muammar Gaddafi of Libya in their hatred of Israel? They do not border on Israel and are not physically threatened by her, unless they remember that Ishmael had to give way to Isaac in his father's house, and Ishmael is the favoured son of Abraham for Moslems.

Their Moslem fundamentalism unites them. Shall Israel thwart Islam and raise an unbeliever's standard right under its very nose? So they cry 'Holy War', and press the battle against her in every way they can, sure that Israel must fall, for has not their Allah given them all the oil and not to Israel?

So are we just watching the politico-religious battle between two religions? Have the balances been so tilted against Israel by God's allowing all the oil to drain away into the atmosphere even before Isaac and Ishmael were born (*Gen. 14:10*)? Shall the giants defeat David? Or is our heavenly Father working out His great purpose with more than a touch of divine humour, He stacks the cards so one sidedly? Should we not be asking other questions about his favoured son Israel? How shall we see God using history to press Israel to take up his rightful place? We remember that God has said through Paul 'that all Israel shall be saved' (*Rom. 11:25*) and that is linked with the fulness of the Gentiles, and bringing the redeemer from Zion.

Much that we hear through the media gives no encouragement to the quiet revolution taking place in Jewish minds, since the arising of the State of Israel. We hear nothing of the 50,000 young American Jews who have come to faith in Jesus and have formed a new Messianic movement in the U.S.A. Even in Israel where we hear of anti-Mission Laws and the prevention of Jews who believe in Jesus from becoming Israeli citizens, Messianic Jews get a very fair hearing in the news media. But the most important change has taken place quietly. About a month ago the Prime Minister declared to a group of tourists that Israel is not without friends. Millions of evangelical Christians throughout the world, he said, are her friends. This statement was taken up and repeated at least twice on Kol Israel

Continued on bottom half of Page 18

CBRF SEMINAR: 'Small is Beautiful'

On May 1st between 30 and 40 people met at London Bible College to discuss small groups in the church.

Derek Copley, Principal of Moorlands Bible College, spoke on the potential of small groups, and pointed out that our churches are made up of such groups: 'management groups' of elders, deacons, committees; and 'care groups' such as housegroups, womens groups and Sunday School classes. He saw the need for elders to fit into the life and structure of the church, being chosen for their appropriate gift; and for the various 'management groups' to relate to each other, rather than operating independently. He pointed out the dangers of 'care groups' developing haphazardly. Each group should ideally study the same passage, and the group leaders should meet.

There is room for the development of new 'management groups', e.g. for pastoral care, evangelism, pulpit planning and discipling. Such groups may need times of retreat together to meet each others personal needs. The idea of 'care groups' could also be developed, so that a church has baptismal classes, basic

teaching for young converts (discipling), group bible studies and even (if remaining in the church building) the prayer meeting could divide into groups for prayer.

The second speaker, David Burnett, of the Missionary Orientation Centre, W.E.C., talked about church growth, the size and purpose of cell groups, and division. Ideally a church should be about 200 members and a cell group should have about 12 members. Division should be a creative, not a mechanical experience. In biological life the nucleus divides first, then the cell. Leadership should emerge and divide first, then the cell group or the church. Cell groups are not a magical answer to church growth, which depends on many factors, but they are essential in a growing church. In a group of 6 people there are 30 relationships; with 12 people there are 132 relationships; for 20 people there are 380 relationships. In a larger group, newcomers may therefore feel unable to be fitted in, and a strong newcomer may push in, causing a weaker member (who needs the support of the group) to leave.

The rest of the day, between the two talks, was given over to the discussion of five case studies in five seminar groups. Each group had a leader and someone to report back, but also an observer. The observers reported back on the 'dynamics' of each group — that is, how they approached the task, and how they related to each other. Dr. John Boyes had organised the case studies which involved group bible studies in the church; group prayer meetings in the church; leadership of 'management groups' in the church; relationships between 'management groups' such as elders and deacons; and pastoral 'care groups' in the home. The discussion and the feed-back was very valuable. We were indebted to Brian Mills who held the day together and gave us a fitting epilogue, citing Priscilla and Aquila who, among other things, 'took Apollos home with them and explained to him . . . (Acts 17:26). A husband and wife team using their home to equip a future leader of the church!

Report by Barbara Baigent

Letter from Jerusalem *continued from Page 17*

Radio Broadcasts. This public statement illustrates the private impression that Israelis are much more partial to Evangelical Christians. A Christian friend who does regular Home Guard duty in Jerusalem seldom receives adverse reactions when he speaks of his faith in Jesus, and those with whom he may do duty a second time either appear warmer in their reaction, or initiate the conversation from the point where it finished. The establishment of the International Christian Embassy has encouraged this warmth. In a world of practical politics, where most countries are oil hungry but short of money, friendship with the oil producers is essential, and that excludes practical sympathy with Israel. Christians are beginning to show that practical sympathy in many forms. It heartens Israel in her battle for existence. Until this date the U.S.A. has underwritten

Israel's security but she may not always, and God may call upon Christians to shoulder it. We still have a very great debt to pay to Israel for all her pioneer gifts to us in our faith.

It is of considerable interest that there are real signs of renewal in both Arabic and Jewish churches. Among Arabic speaking believers new churches have been opened in recent years. A Bible school has sent out its first graduates to teach in local schools. An Arabic pastor has returned with his adult sons to work here. Among Hebrew speaking believers meetings are gaining in strength throughout the land. At this moment all are preparing for the arrival of a team from Africa led by Bishop Festo Kivenegere of Uganda. They arrive in the last days of April and will be involved in at least 80 meetings.

If we read the signs aright, God has been weakening the strength of Israel

(Ps. 102:23) through the power he has given to the Moslem nations about her, and the enmity He has allowed them to feel against her. But correspondingly He has said that 'the right time to comfort Zion, the Set time has come' (Ps. 102:13) God has not cast off His people upon whom His honour still rests. He is not concerned just with survival and technical skills. God is stripping away every support that his people may find Him and his glorious Son as their Messiah. Some years ago at about the time of her death there was a rumour that Golda Meir, the former Prime Minister of Israel, had put her faith in Jesus as Saviour and Messiah. Today we are nearer to that happening to many Israelis. It is right for Brethren with their deep roots in the Bible to play their part in this. May be Ken Burnett of Prayer for Israel, 1 Sherman Road, Bromley, Kent is the best person to contact.

NEWS PAGE



Books

Post-A-Book is a new scheme that will interest *Harvester* readers. It is now possible to send books as presents simply and conveniently. Post-A-Book does for books what Interflora does for flowers. To send a book to a friend or relative all the customer needs do is to send a bookshop that operates the Post-A-Book scheme and request, along with the book, the Post-A-Book pack. These come in three sizes at 65p, £1.00 and £1.70, with postage pre-paid. Once the customer has written the name and address on the pack, the bookseller does the rest. The slogan used to promote the scheme is 'Post a little happiness'. Christian booksellers might consider varying this to 'Post a big blessing'!



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Conference Centres

Two very different conference centres have opened recently. Severals House at Newmarket is the headquarters of the Christian Radio Course. But it is also available for use as a conference centre for business conferences and also at preferential rates for Christian churches and organisations. The residential 24 hour delegate rate for churches is £12.50 per person using twin-bedded accommodation. Further details from Chris Wright, Bursar, Severals House, Bury Road,

Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7BS. A good deal more spartan is a self-catering hostel at Knock in Cumbria. Great Dun Fell Hostel has 22 bedrooms, most of them with accommodation for three people. Details and rates from Mr. R. H. Dickinson, 16 Belvoir Avenue, Hazel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire SK7 6DL.

Cults

The Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism has produced a video course on the cults. It was felt that one of the greatest needs was to help Christians overcome their fear of cults by giving them more information and helpful suggestions about how to approach cult members. The result is a 10-session course.

The first session describes the great variety of cults of different sorts which exist in the country today and the six main categories into which they divide. The next session gives the teaching of the Bible about cults showing that we should not be surprised at their abundance or at their apparent success. It gives some guidance on how we should treat them. Then follow six sessions each treating one of the main cults in rather greater detail and giving guidelines on approaching cult members. Finally there are two sessions with practical tips and also some thoughts about rehabilitation after cult membership. In some parts of the country there will be available 'presenters' who will show this video course and will head discussions stemming from each session. In other parts of the country this will be done by local interested people to whom guidelines will be provided when they hire the video-cassettes. Inquiries from

Mr. David Taylor on 01-248-4616 or (09237) 74937.

Evangelism

Luis Palau preached in a 4,000-seat tent at Bellingham, Washington, USA. His television counselling ministry, a regular feature of the South American crusades, appeared to be effective also in the USA. Palau does not anticipate that the Argentinian conflict will affect his scheduled visit to the UK later this year. Meanwhile, the messages he gave during the 1980 Crusades in Strathclyde Park, Motherwell, Scotland, are now in print. *Our God Reigns*, a casebound book with 16 pages of photographs, is available from Regal Books at £3.50.

Vietnamese families are among the large number of people who have come to London looking for work. Over 500 families have been settled by the government there and these have been joined by others. Many are very lonely, many out of work, and most came to Britain with no understanding of Christian things though many have responded to Christ while in refugee camps. Jimmy Kendal of In Contact Ministries has been led to work among Vietnamese in London. There is a great need to form Vietnamese fellowships where people can use their own language and one has just started in Clapham, linked to a local church. Prayer is requested for a native speaker to become available to teach him to speak Vietnamese.

A family centre has been opened by the London City Mission in Vauxhall. The Caine Hall Centre provides facilities

for the whole family from toddlers to senior citizens. The Day Care Centre provides facilities for the whole family from toddlers to senior citizens. The Day Care Centre provides a meeting point for the elderly and operates from 10.30 a.m. through to 3.30 p.m. with a mid-day meal. An ambulance enables the disabled to attend the Centre, and there will be facilities for hairdressing and instruction in various crafts. A pre-school playgroup is being considered as also is a special training scheme for the unemployed. The new coffee bar/lounge and large recreation rooms now give ample accommodation for the four Youth Clubs held throughout the week. The total membership at the moment is around 150 but with the new facilities this number is expected to expand considerably. In addition to these activities the Centre will also be opened throughout the day and provide residents of the community with the use of the lounge and coffee bar. Roger Bagge, the City Missionary involved in this, believes that the essential elements in his ministry of personal evangelism in Vauxhall today must be — a concern for the individual, the establishing of relationships and the promoting of the 'togetherness' of the family unit. To this end the new Caine Hall Family Centre is directed.

Dr. Billy Graham

Billy Graham's visit to the USSR in early May included speaking engagements at Moscow's Central Baptist Church and the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of the

Epiphany. Scores of listeners expressed their desire to receive Christ. At the American Embassy he spoke and prayed with the six Pentecostals who have taken refuge there. But while the evangelist expressed satisfaction with his Soviet visit, some Christians felt that he had allowed himself to be 'used' by the Russians. Graham denied, however, that representations by him on behalf of the Siberian Six or of persecuted Christians would have been productive. Preparations have now begun for Billy Graham's visit to England in the summer of 1984. He will spend two months in the country and preach in five regions, the North-East, the North-West, Midlands, South-West (if you can call Bristol South-West!) and East Anglia. There are plans for an extensive two to three year period of preparation in the five regions leading up to and beyond his projected visit which will occur from late May until the end of July.

Middle East

Martin Higginbottom has visited the Lebanon where he was impressed by how fearless some Christians are for the Gospel and for Christ. 'Daily they literally risk their lives in the spreading of the Gospel and their intense desire is to reach their nation for Christ.' He plans to hold a month of training sessions there during 1982. 'Communicate Youth Faith Outreach' was prepared in Britain but Martin Higginbottom thinks that it may be needed for the Middle East and especially the Lebanon.

Hebrew and Arab believers united in praising the Lord during April 1982 in the course of an African Evangelistic Enterprise visit. In 12 days of active ministry, Michael Cassidy, Festo Kivengere and a team of speakers from South Africa, East Africa and the United States travelled throughout the country and a ministry sponsored by the United Christian Council in Israel (UCCI). Bishop Kivengere described the Holy Land tour as 'a real eye-opener. I knew the Messianic believers in Israel were in the minority and suffering under many burdens which are rooted deep in their history. Yet I was

not aware of what God is beginning to do in Israel until I saw it for myself. Our coming was timely and we were able to speak out of African situations very similar to those in the Holy Land. We were able to share the word which the Lord has been rubbing into us in the context of East, Central and Southern Africa for the past 20 years, where situations of antagonism, hostility, political ideologies, race segregation and bloody upheaval have taught us the crucial nature of the message of reconciling love. We therefore came to Israel with no other approach than this.'

The Team was encouraged. AE co-ordinator, John Wilson, said 'I have seen attitudes change as Hebrew and Arab believers found space to accommodate their brothers with the different backgrounds. Many are now expressing a "God first, Israel/Palestine second" attitude. Our coming has brought new dimensions to the old message of love.' With the AE visit now history, leaders in the Messianic assemblies of Israel and the Christian Arab congregations of the West Bank are seeking clear leading from the Lord and an answer to a common question: 'Where do we go from here?'. 'These days have given us a spring board to the future,' summarised David Price of UCCI. Kivengere and Cassidy, leaders of AE's East and South African teams respectively, were in accord. 'We have to see this experience as a platform for new initiatives of God's Spirit in the Holy Land specifically and in the Middle East generally', they said. 'We must be ready for what God will bring forth.'

Radio

FEBA India were greatly privileged last Easter. Their Good Friday and Easter programmes in Kannada, Tamil and English were broadcast over All India Radio, Bangalore.

Relief

Poland has continued to benefit from Christian relief provision. Tear Fund has made a grant of £5,000 to the World Relief Office in Holland with a view to the purchase of clothing and food. World Vision International has shipped from North America 1.6 million pounds of

wheat flour, 27 bales of wool blankets, and large quantities of baby food and canned meat. These shipments, worth an estimated £225,000, are part of World Vision's current £1 million ongoing relief effort in Poland.

Scripture Union

Among recent audio-visual material from Scripture Union is a set of seven stories from John's Gospel told by Roy Castle. 'Signposts' is intended for the 7-11 age group and can be used at children's missions and holiday clubs in conjunction with publicity specially prepared by Christian Publicity Organization of Ivy Arch Road, Worthing, West Sussex. 'Signposts' costs £29.67 and may be hired for £7 per month.

Race and community relations are the theme of 'Kaleidoscope', a major new audio-visual pack of two sound strips and three cassettes recently launched by Scripture Union and designed as a discussion starter for the 14-18 age group in schools and youth groups. The cost of the pack is £32.09 and the hiring fee £7 a month.

Tear Fund

From September 1, 1982, John Capton, who formerly edited the Church of England Newspaper and has more recently been editor of Crusade magazine, is to join Tear Fund as the Press and Media Officer.

Update

Update is a new monthly Christian audio magazine produced by Trans World Radio London. Twelve cassettes (1 per month) are available for £13.00 up to the end of July. After that they cost £15.00. The mix includes a testimony, some Christian pop music, prayer topics, book and record reviews and an inspirational or evangelistic thought for the month. It is easy listening and will be welcomed by the Christian Radio 2 audience.

Youth

Operation Mobilisation Crusades will be under way by the time this magazine is read. But young people who apply by July 21 may not be too late to help with the Crusade from July 30 to August 27.

Greenbelt has sometimes — and wrongly — been thought of as a great festival for mindless youth. But the list of speakers at this year's Greenbelt (postal applications to arrive not later than 10.8.82 at Greenbelt Festival, 15 Eynham Road, Wood Lane, London W12 0HD) is formidable. From the USA come Jim Wallis and Howard Snyder, from India Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden. UK residents include Roger Forster, John Peck, Graham Cray, Jim Punton, Alan Kreider and Patrick Sookhdeo. In fact there will be a choice of nearly 100 hours of teaching seminars and workshops.

As an evangelist, Graham Loader is concerned that young people have an opportunity to learn and practise evangelism. In conjunction with the trustees of Hill House and working with Alan Singleton, an outreach programme has been arranged for July 24 to August 1 centred upon the assembly at Chard. Various activities will be included in the week, e.g. Bible teaching, children's holiday clubs, open air preaching, door-to-door visitation, evangelistic services, work in old people's homes, late night coffee bars . . . Training would be given and this would include a certain amount of reading and listening to tapes before the week of mission. A group of young people is needed to commit themselves to the programme. 16 years is the minimum age although the upper age is open and a few more mature leaders would be welcome. The cost will be around £15 per person and accommodation will be indoors, not under canvas. Application should be made to Graham Loader, 39 Harrowdene Road, Knowle, Bristol BS24 2JL. Tel: 0272-770298.

Homecalls

Miss M. Gardiner, on March 19, 1982, aged 86 years. She was in assembly fellowship for some 60 years, spending most of that time in Hebron Hall, Carlisle with a short period at Penrith. A gracious Christian lady and faithful to her Lord, poor health had kept her from assembly gatherings in recent years and she was longing to go to be with her Lord.

William Heddle on March 1, 1982, aged 84 years. He was

the youngest son of Bishop Heddle of the Peculiar People and was saved in early life. He served as overseer and Missionary Secretary at the Gospel Hall, Coleman Street, Southend-on-Sea, for 34 years until 1971. Co-founder of the 'Scripture Herald', for the display of large gospel posters and a member of the Council of the Scripture Gift Mission, he was a man of great generosity and took a keen and lifelong interest in missionary affairs at home and abroad. A brother of sound counsel and advice, his mind stored with the Holy Scriptures, and an able preacher of the gospel, he was greatly loved and is very much missed.

Johnston Sandlan, on April 11, after 4 years of an incapacitating illness, during which he was devotedly looked after by his wife. Their

partnership in the service of the Lord and their joint ministry in word and song was a blessing to many over a wide area. A member of the assembly meeting in Bethany Hall, Paisley, our late brother was greatly respected not only as an elder and Bible Class leader, but because of his wise counsel, his kindly manner, and his practical ministry. In earlier years he was associated with the Glasgow Young Peoples' Rallies. The large number who paid their respects at the service in the Hall and at the graveside demonstrated the esteem in which he was held.

Press Day, Friday, July 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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STEWARDSHIP

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts received by the Fund for May amounted to £2,855.10.

Missionaries' Children's Fund:
29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. Gifts received for the Fund during May amounted to £10,740.41.

PRAYER LIST

Blackburn, A. G.:
Wellington 4; Seaton 11;
Coleford 18; Exmouth Beach
25-31; Tiverton 25.

Campbell, A.:
Falmouth 1-3; St. Austell 4;
Falmouth 5-16; Bodmin 18;
Redruth 25; Fowey 26;
Falmouth 27-31.

Clifford, D. L.:
Bridlington, Scarborough, Hull,
St. Leonards, Chichester,
Gosport, Poulner, Hamworthy.

Galyer, W. S.:
Reigate 4; Walthamstow 6;
Cambridge 18; Woking 20 & 27;
Kenton 21 & 28; Wandsworth
22; Egham 25; Tolworth Tower
C.U. 26.

Gillham, S.:
Charminster, Bournemouth
Tent Crusade 1-15; Bethany
Hall, Weymouth 18; Wareham
19; Dorset Adventure Time
Camps 21-31.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Poringland, Norfolk 4;
Hurstpierpoint, Sussex 11;
Costessey, Norfolk 25.

Iliffe, D. J.:
Greenland, Camps work and
training programmes 1-27;
Lausanne, Switzerland, lectures
in child evangelism 30 & 31.

Lambert, P. A.:
Steeple Ashton Tent Mission
1-4; Trowbridge 10-17; Devizes
18; Purton Tent Mission
24-August 20.

Leighton, D.:
Chesterfield Tent Crusade June
26-July 18.

Lowther, G. K.:
Singlewell Road, Gravesend 1;
Grimsby, Lincolnshire and
Humberside 3-21; Meadowcroft,
Windermere 24-31; Bowness-
on-Windermere 25, 27.

Phillips, C.:
Ewell, 1, 8; Chesham 4;
Rosmore Marylebone 4; Crouch
End 6, 13, 20; Berkhamstead
11; Croxley Green 15, 22; Bush

Hill Park, Enfield 18; Carshalton
21, 28; Enfield Highway 25;
South Ealing 29.

Pierce, D. H.:
Chilsworthy 1-5; Barnstaple,
GLO Crusade 10-24; Boys
Camp, Strete 24-31.

Short, S. S.:
Leominster 4; Bath 5, 12;
Bristol 7, 14, 21; Stafford 10,
11; Coleford 13; Burnham-on-
Sea 15; Seaton 18-20;
Minehead 25-27.

Stringer, D.:
Greenford 1-11; Rugby 12-23;
Capernwray, Carnforth 24-31.

Tryon, G. C.:
Kingston 4, 6; Beckenham 4;
Fetcham 7; Cambridge 11;
Woodford 12-16; Seven Kings
18; Guildford 20, 25, 27.

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London Convention
Westminster Chapel,
Buckingham Gate, SW1 on
July 10 at 10.30 a.m., 3.00 p.m.
and 6.15 p.m. Speakers: M.
Jones, A. Leckie, A. Naismith,
D. J. Newell.

Scarborough
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p.m. Speaker: Hugh Scott
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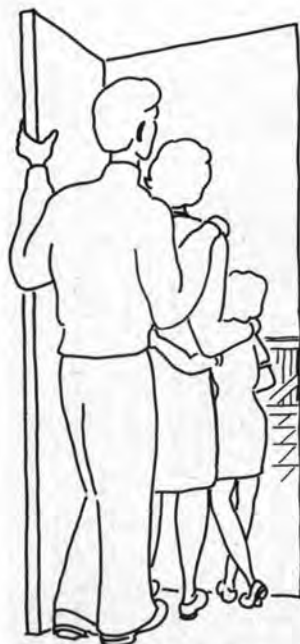
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INSIDE:
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August 1982 Volume LXI No. 8 Price 45p
Editor: Roy Coad

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Editorial

IN A LARGE PLACE

One of the great disadvantages of membership of a smaller section of the Christian church is that it makes it more difficult to achieve a proper perspective of oneself and one's own place in the whole scheme of things. I suppose that few of us are very good at that anyway. By nature, we form the centre of our own universe: and if Grace should modify that fact of life, it remains sadly true that the work of Grace runs none too deep in most of us. A smaller community, by its very nature, is likely to be keener in its views, more intense in its loyalties (it would not have survived otherwise). The pressures it places on its members are greater, because it can afford its losses less easily than a larger group.

It is well that we should at least hold these facts in the forefront of our minds. Because, if we do, we shall perhaps retain a measure of humility and a measure of ability to see the other man's point of view. How easy it is to imagine that we, and we only, hold the truth, the correct interpretation, the right way of shaping our personal and church lives: until we take the trouble to move outside our own circle for a while, and to find out why others think as they do.

But, of course, that action is 'dangerous'. By the standards of the small group, it might mean a loosening of hold of some of those things that bind us to it. And too often we identify those things with the Truth itself.

It is in this way that we wind the cords of bondage around ourselves: and think that we are by that way honouring our Lord — when the whole of His call to us would cause us to enlarge our horizons and our sympathies, and awaken to the immensity of the world He has made and of the largeness of His love and yearning for all men. Because — like every man or woman — we have no special claim on God: as He loves us, He loves all: and the sole claim of any of us on His mercy is through His infinite grace in Christ.

EVANGELISM AND THE WHOLE MAN

L. K. Tarr

Recent issues have carried articles reminding us that the Gospel message only becomes credible to many of our fellow human beings when we demonstrate that we are concerned with all their needs. Here we reprint an article released some time ago by World Evangelisation News describing an outstanding example of that precept being put into practice in Brazil. The scope of such action may be far beyond the opportunities or resources available to most of us, but the story provides both inspiration and ideas. The author is professor of communications at the Central Baptist Seminary, Toronto.

Some Latin American churchmen — Catholic and Protestant — advocate a radical 'liberation' theology for the churches of that region. Critics have charged that some expressions of that theology are simply baptized versions of Marxism.

Nilson Fanini, pastor of First Baptist Church of Niteroi and a leading Brazilian evangelical, agrees that the glaring social problems of that area of the Third World demand a radical response from Christians. The radical response which he advocates, however, is nearly 2000 years old.

The 48-year-old Brazilian-born minister became pastor of Niteroi's First Baptist Church in 1964. Located across Guanabara Bay from Rio de Janeiro, Niteroi could be regarded as an extension of that larger city which, it is estimated, will have a population of about 16 million by the year 2000.

Fanini contends that evangelical churches cannot be satisfied with conducting a narrowly-defined 'spiritual' ministry. He maintains that if the church is to have credibility, it must demonstrate the relevance of the gospel in meeting the needs of modern man. In

the Third World context, he points out, that means meeting the needs of the poor and the oppressed.

With that in mind, the pastor of First Baptist Church in Niteroi says that his congregation's programme is based on *Matthew 9:35*: 'Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and sickness.' If the church is to be credible, Fanini stresses, it must minister to the whole person — mind, body, and soul.

'The poor are not disembodied spirits whom we approach with a spiritual message that has no relationship to daily life', he adds.

Fanini maintains that the church must discharge its responsibility to the sprawling slums where hundreds of thousands merely exist. His congregation has devoted special attention to the forgotten urban poor and dispossessed. Its initiatives involve both evangelism and social services.

A church-operated medical clinic provides free treatment for the needy. Housed in a large centre adjacent to the church plant, the clinic includes a medical laboratory. Fifteen doctors — thirteen of them members of the congregation — give at least two hours weekly to the church clinic.

A legal clinic offers counsel and assistance to those who need but cannot afford conventional legal services.

The church has moved out into the slums to initiate an 'adoption' programme through which it provides support for 600 children who live there. Each 'adopted' child is provided with food, immunization shots, clothes, and medical care.

In addition, the congregation has erected 200 housing units and provided 1,000 water filter units to needy people. The church, in 1979, distributed 35 tons

of food to the needy. It sponsors classes to assist people in developing crafts and home-making skills.

A major project now underway is the erection of a building where 300 children of working mothers will receive care during the day.

The extremes of wealth and poverty found in Third World cities and the sprawling slums with their grinding poverty pose a challenge to Christians in that part of the world, says Fanini. He is concerned that many caught in the poverty trap are deluded into thinking that Marxists are the only people concerned with their welfare.

'The church must move to meet the real needs of the people', he says with conviction. 'Poverty is a major problem in our area, and we feel that, as Christians, we must share with the needy.'

Those who profess to believe the Bible, he says, are under special obligation to embrace a full-orbed faith. He adds that the Bible itself provides one test of the validity of that faith: 'If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us' (1 John 3:17-19, NIV).

Hundreds of church members are involved in all phases of that outreach to the needy. Some have taken early retirement in order to devote their full time to the work.

Fanini and his Brazilian congregation are involved in an intensive media ministry that touches millions of people. He speaks weekly on a television programme that is carried by one hundred stations to all corners of Brazil and to adjoining countries.

His radio programme is heard daily on 28 stations, and the church's Sunday evening services are broadcast nation-wide over short wave radio. The tireless minister writes a weekly newspaper column for 35 Brazilian dailies.

That media outreach has had a phenomenal evangelistic impact. Fifty thousand people last year indicated that they had received Christ through the broadcasts. Fanini refers them to local churches for follow-up. He has no desire to build an independent electronic church, but is deeply persuaded that a live local church is fundamental in evangelistic strategy.

Each week the Niteroi church office receives thousands of requests for free New Testaments offered on the broadcast. They are supplied by the World Home Bible League and are mailed to all who request them. In addition, 125,000 listeners and viewers have been enrolled in Bible correspondence courses offered by the church.

That exposure through the media has made Fanini a familiar figure to many Brazilians where he is regarded as 'the Billy Graham of Brazil'. His church releases him to conduct one city-wide crusade monthly in other centres. Those crusades pack stadiums and have resulted in thousands of decisions.

The base for that far-flung outreach, however, is the Niteroi congregation

which, next year, will celebrate its ninetyeth anniversary. Fanini and his five associate pastors supervise there an extensive congregational programme that reaches all segments of the community. Four Sunday church services get underway with a 7 o'clock service which is followed by a breakfast for the needy. The church auditorium that seats 3,000 is full for the two morning and two evening services, and all church facilities are taxed to accommodate the Sunday School. During the Sunday School hour about 200 attend a 'seminary class' to train for a ministry in the church.

Evangelism, prayer, worship, and Bible teaching are not confined, however, to church facilities. The congregation has about 75 preaching points in homes around the community. The church also conducts a daily outdoor meeting at the ferry where about 300,000 people pass on the way to and from work across the Bay in Rio.

Judged by conventional North American measurements of 'successful' church programmes, the Niteroi church would rank high. Membership has increased in the past seventeen years from 500 to 3,500; over 2,200 have been baptised; Sunday School attendance is over 3,000; ten church members are involved in overseas missionary service; and 78 young people from the congregation are training in seminary. Those statistics,

however, are obviously only a part of the incredible story of this Brazilian church. The congregation has reached out to establish local church testimonies in other communities. It has been instrumental in initiating 20 such churches.

Fanini is active in other ministries. He is president of the Brazilian Baptist Convention, vice president of the Baptist World Alliance, and a member of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. When Billy Graham conducted his crusade in Rio de Janeiro, Fanini served as interpreter. He has spoken extensively in congresses and crusades overseas and will speak in May of this year in Portugal and Romania.

The Brazilian evangelical leader stresses the need for evangelization in Latin America. Concerning the situation in his own country, he contends that three forces vie for people's minds — Marxism, spiritism, and evangelical Christianity. It could be a golden hour for evangelicals, he maintains, if they rise to the challenge and demonstrate that the gospel meets the needs of the whole person.

Through his own congregation's dynamic social and evangelistic outreach in its community and through an extensive media ministry, Fanini has convincingly demonstrated the validity of that contention.

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ON READING THE BIBLE: SHALL DRY BONES LIVE?

W. G. Cotton

Our second article also comes from South America — from Argentina where Bill Cotton is working. But its message comes more closely home!

The title of this article may well seem simplistic to the average reader, yet I venture to suggest that the average Christian does not find in Bible reading that 'delight' of which the psalmist spoke (*Ps. 1:1-3*). U.S. statistics say that only 33% of evangelical Christians read the Bible with any consistency, and I would hazard a guess that in other parts of the world the percentage is even lower.

Might there not be a reason for this, a fundamental reason? In Britain we have built up what I once heard an Australian missionary call 'the English way' of reading Scripture. It is the system which I learnt from my Christian leaders in Britain and it is the system which British missionaries took with them to other lands. I have come to believe that it is a system which militates against serious Bible study! It may be reviewed under three basic forms.

1. Devotional. This is a 10-verses a day system. The believer spends a few minutes each day (it actually takes 60 seconds to read these 10 verses) with the Lord and meditates on a short portion of Scripture. A large dose, presumably would give him indigestion! With my 10 verses I would often find myself imbued with a sense of frustration, even of guilt, for frequently I could not find any spiritual lesson in the passage. The suspicion was always there that the deficiency must be due to my lack of spirituality. Often one would have to lean heavily on devotional Notes.

Then again, as the portion had to be kept brief, accounts had to be mutilated. On a recent visit to England I stayed at a Christian home where we read our daily portion over the breakfast table, *Dan.*

1:1-10, a sheer gem of a story of the living faith of Daniel. I was deeply disappointed when we stopped at v.10, and we were to await the conclusion of the story the next day. But why? The little story is complete in itself and has to be read as a whole. It takes less than three minutes to read.

This piecemeal, arbitrary manner of reading Scripture is against all logic, against all natural ways of reading. If we read two paragraphs from a novel each day, we would soon get bored and give it up. We would lose the thread and thus lose the enjoyment of it. Is it not so with the Bible? This method militates against serious Bible reading and study.

2. Analytical. This is more advanced, but is essentially similar to the foregoing. One takes a small portion of Scripture and dissects it, examining carefully to see what each word, each phrase, each sentence means. I have before me a book on effective Bible Study, which carries the sub-title 'A Guide to Sixteen Methods'; namely, Inductive, Synthetic, Analytical, Critical, Biographical, Historical, Theological, Literary, Rhetorical, Geographical, Sociological, Political, Cultural, Scientific, Philosophical and Devotional. I scratch my head in amazement! What other book do I read in this manner? Would I submit *Oliver Twist*, or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, or even my daily newspaper to this treatment? Surely not.

Yet this is where many of us start — and finish. We want to **study** the Bible before we've even **read** it. Yet all books and articles are first and foremost meant to be read. The author wants us to be caught up and carried along in the enjoyment of what he is writing. He has himself been captivated by his theme and hopes that his readers will also. But when we submit him to intense analysis, we are likely to get bogged down rather

than swept along.

3. Thematic. Soon after I was converted I came across a prize — **Every Man a Bible Student**. That was what I wanted to be, and here was a short-cut. So I spent my precious penny, and soon had my nose to the joyful grind. The first chapter began with the word Sin, and after a brief explanation of the meaning of the word, I was given 55 selected verses of Scripture to look for in my Bible (I still have my copy, so I know the figure is exact). I jumped around all over the Bible with sheer delight. I was a Bible student! The next chapter I went over to Repentance and went through the same dizzy routine, then on to Faith, Sacrifice, Redemption, etc., 44 glorious Bible themes. Years later I came to the conclusion that I had been led astray. I believed myself to be a Bible student, when the last thing I thought of doing was to **read** the Bible. (A speaker on the radio recently described this as 'shish-kebab theology' — one 'skewers' a lot of verses like the meat and other pieces on a kebab! — Ed.)

A colleague tells me that when he was a youth, brought up in an evangelical home, he could not understand why God was so untidy and disorderly in the presentation of truth. It seemed to him that if he had written the Bible he would have got things together. You wouldn't need to jump all over the Bible in order to formulate a doctrine. There would be a book on Sin, in which all the biblical statements about sin would be found put together, and so on for all the other subjects. But God did not present us the truth in this form! Why not? Evidently because he did not wish us to learn it in this cold anaemic fashion.

As we actually get down to the reading of Scripture, we find God revealing himself to man in the midst of the conflicts of life. Man learns God's ways in his personal walk and life of faith, as in the case

of Abraham. There are numerous examples of this, two will suffice from Paul. In 1 Cor. 6 he rebukes his readers for going to court one against the other and asks them in a scandalized tone: 'Do you not know that the saints will judge the world . . . Do you not know that we are to judge angels?' There's good doctrine for you! The Christian will sit in the heavenly tribunal to pass judgement on the world and angels. But this truth rises out of a problem they themselves were facing, economic frictions among Christians. The other example is 2 Cor. 2:12, 13, where Paul is talking about his problems in Troas and his trip to Macedonia. If the reader will read these verses and then pass straight to 7:5, he will notice that there is no break in the sense. If the section 2:14-7:4 were omitted from the letter we would not know that it had ever been there, yet it is the most solidly doctrinal portion of the letter! Paul was stimulated to think and write doctrinally as a result of a distinct crisis in his ministry, in the midst of the conflicts of life. It is as we read Scripture extensively that we are able to relate to the struggles of Abraham, of Moses, of Elijah, of Paul and others, and to see how they saw these struggles in the light of divine truth. This saves us from that division between the sacred and the secular which so often appears to afflict us as Christians.

I lay it down as a basis that *Bible reading should be copious and continuous* in order to be meaningful and enjoyable. This is not to say that devotional, analytical and thematic study is wrong, but that we are guilty of putting the cart before the horse, indeed it seems to me that we are usually pulling the cart without the horse. Therefore, read for your life! Simple, straightforward reading of the Bible should be the presupposition of all other forms of Bible encounter. Indeed these other forms should be born out of our reading of the whole of Scripture.

Clearing Away Impediments

There are, it seems to me, certain impediments in the way of our getting down to this task. There are inborn prejudices against it. The first of these is brilliantly exposed by C. S. Lewis in his little-known introduction to a translation of Athanasius's *The Incarnation of the Word of God*, published in 1944.

There is a strange idea abroad that in every subject the ancient books should be read only by the professionals, and that the amateur should content

himself with the modern books. Thus I have found as a tutor in English Literature that if the average student wants to find out something about Platonism, the very last thing he thinks of doing is to take a translation of Plato off the library shelf and read the Symposium. He would rather read some dreary modern book ten times as long, all about 'isms' and influences and only once in twelve pages telling him what Plato actually said. The error is rather an amiable one, for it springs from humility. The student is half afraid to meet one of the great philosophers face to face. He feels himself inadequate and thinks he will not understand him. But if he only knew, the great man, just because of his greatness, is much more intelligible than his modern commentator. The simplest student will be able to understand, if not all, yet a very great deal of what Plato said; but hardly anyone can understand some modern books on Platonism.

Now this is precisely what we do with the Bible. We instinctively reach for a modern book or Bible study course which will tell us 'What the Bible Teaches'. The last thing that seems to occur to us is to take up the Bible itself and give ourselves to the unstinted, absorbed reading of it; and we project this mentality on to our new believers. One of our hang-ups is that the Bible is a very difficult book to understand. We are separated from it by a cultural, historical, political, geographical and psychological chasm, and we do not expect ourselves, or our converts, to get very far with it unless they are able to get expert help, which will take years to accomplish. In reality this attitude is an undermining of inspiration and revelation. It is incredible to suggest that 'God has spoken', but it is not at all clear what He has said. The Reformers maintained the doctrine of the **perspicuity** of Scripture, where perspicuity means lucidity or intelligibility. The biblical writers wrote in order to be understood by their contemporaries, and God guided them that they might be understood in later ages.

Of course, a lot will depend on what we mean by intelligibility. If we insist on the Bible being read in 17th century English, then it will logically be unintelligible to the majority of the readers, whether believers or not. I find that modern translations usually make 90% of the contents intelligible to the average reader. I delight to tell the story of two seminary students who had a custom of

exercising in a local school gym. One evening they noticed that the elderly coloured janitor was reading a Bible. They politely asked him what he was reading, to which he replied, 'The Book of Revelation'. 'Do you understand what you are reading?', they asked. 'Oh yes, perfectly well', he replied. That was too much for the seminarians, who then asked, 'Tell us, what does it mean?' He looked them straight in the eye, reflected for a moment, and drawled, 'It means that Jesus is gonna win.' Well, it does, it means exactly that. He's gonna win. He's going to subject all His enemies under His feet. Now if the man had spent his time racking his brains on the significance of the number 666, he probably would not have obtained much from reading Revelation. Instead he let himself get caught up in what John is trying to say, and the lasting impression was that 'Jesus is gonna win'. That will sustain faith, the other panders to intellectual appreciation and controversy.

Another problem in getting down to reading Scripture is that we look upon the Bible as a very long book, too long. It comes to us in a big volume of small print and we are frightened at the prospect of tackling it, much less of understanding its message, so back to the study books which will help us avoid the necessary work. Yet here again we are guilty of turning a molehill into a mountain.

We may note in the first place that God has been very gracious to us, giving us a library of books, 66 in total. When Jesus went into the synagogue, we are told that he asked for the Isaiah scroll. He knew nothing of one volume. Instead there were numerous scrolls and one asked for the one he wanted. In my personal library, I don't start with the first book on the shelf and work through to the last. I pick out the one I want to read and work through the books one by one. So why not with the Bible?

At the same time it may be noted that the Bible is not such a very big book. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan once read through the Bible in 96 hours, exactly four days, in a loud voice and at pulpit speed. Whilst travelling once through Bolivia, I read through the Living Bible in about 74 hours. Basing our calculations on Campbell Morgan's 96 hours the calculator will show that the average reader could read the whole Bible through from cover to cover in a year, using about 16 minutes per day. Should a Christian do any less? If faith comes by encounter with the Word of God (Rom. 10:17), then a lack of continuous encounter

with that Word will mean a weakening of faith. It is only by the indwelling Word that we become strong enough to defeat the Evil One (1 John 2:14). Chrysostom said that ignorance of the Scripture is ignorance of Christ. One may add also that it is ignorance of God and His ways, and ignorance of the Holy Spirit and His workings.

This comprehensive, all-embracing reading of Scripture is an important factor in that renewal of which we are all desperately in need. Paul tells us in *Rom. 12:2*, that it is the *mind* which needs continual renewing in order to produce transformation of the life. The Spanish Popular Version puts this very clearly: 'Change your way of thinking, so that your way of living may also be changed.' As we open our minds continually to the wide teaching of Scripture, with its multiple figures and

aspects of divine truth, the Holy Spirit can work on the renewing of our thinking, so that this in turn will give way to a new way of living and being — the Christian way.

This continual, wide reading of Scripture should become the pattern of a lifetime. It is an important contribution to balanced Christian living, and would greatly enrich the ministry of the local church. Imagine a community of believers in which all were fervent readers of Scripture, a community of the Word and of the Spirit. God has promised that the life of a believer who makes the reading and meditation of His law his personal 'delight' will be immensely enriched and fruitful (*Ps. 1:1-3*). In churches which depend, not on a professional pastoral system, but on the contribution of all its members, how immensely important this would be.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

Can readers suggest what Paul may have had in mind when he wrote, 'To write the same things to you is not irksome to me, and is safe for you' (*Phil. 3:1*)? What are 'the same things' and why was it 'safe' for the Philippians to have them repeated?

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

Christian Brethren Research Fellowship

Brethren Assemblies and Full Time Workers

Dear Mr. Coad,

Now that it is possible to discuss rationally the existence and growing numbers of full time workers in the local ministries of our churches, I would like to establish further the CBRF interest in this field, mentioned in Brian Mills's excellent summary in the July 1982 *Harvester*.

The Christian Brethren Research Fellowship has been encouraged to set up a working party to survey the full time worker situation in a more systematic way and to provide information and guidance to those assemblies who are interested in making such appointments to their own local work. The CBRF group, which includes full time workers in its membership, is already busy preparing survey materials and will shortly engage in its field work. I am asking your readers for their support and collaboration in providing us with the questionnaire data which we will be seeking. We hope that assemblies with experience in full time worker ministry will be willing to put their views and advice at the working party's disposal.

The product of this study is intended to be a guide-book or manual for local church leadership to consult for advice and resources. It will contain identifications of church needs, relationships with full time workers, their job specifications, the selection of candidates, their training and subsequent career development amongst other matters. It may also be possible to provide a listing of existing full time workers and their churches and a contact service for assemblies to consult directly.

The Convener of the CBRF working party is:
Mr. Gerald T. West,
46 Canonbury Park North,
Canonbury, London N1
(Tel: 01-226 4277)

with whom further contact can be made.

The co-operation of all assemblies in bringing this work together into a shared fellowship of the Lord's resources for His people is prayerfully sought.

Yours sincerely,
John Boyes, Executive Secretary

13 The Meads, Northchurch, Berkhamstead, Herts. HP4 3QX Tel: (04427) 2654

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TRANSLATING THE BIBLE INTO ENGLISH

4 — Knowledge of the Original Languages and Culture

A. S. Duthie

Continuing this important series that helps us to clear up some of our misconceptions.

Now we come to our first criterion applying to Bible translations themselves. The average reader of a Bible translation knows nothing of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages, and very little of their cultures (except what can be gleaned from the Bible itself). So our question now is whether the translators of the Bible really know the languages and cultures well enough to understand the full meaning before they translate.

A few translators do not know the original languages at all, but make their translations from another translation (e.g. Wyclif from Vulgate in Latin; Cressman from RSV NT). (More on this in section 5.)

Quite a few translators have had very little formal training in biblical languages (e.g. Fenton, Byington, the Twentieth-Century NT translators). But we should not forget that their translations are by no means bad. Indeed, one small point, the name of Jephthah (*Gen. 9*), is correctly transliterated only by Byington as far as I know.

A few translators make mistakes in their understanding of the original Hebrew, either occasionally (e.g. 'by periods', *Gen. 1:7*) in Fenton (even defended in a note), or throughout (e.g. Young who considers the Hebrew perfect and imperfect aspects should be taken as past and present tenses respectively — though even in his translation the unexpected tenses keep one alert to possible fresh meanings).

A certain amount of knowledge of the Old Testament general cultural background had been handed down by Jews and Christians over the centuries down to the 19th century. It has been only from the mid-19th century and increas-

ingly in the 20th century that archaeology and similar investigations have begun uncovering all sorts of information about the Near East (nowadays popularly called the 'Middle East'): about the way patriarchs and townspeople lived, their agriculture and trade, their cultural and religious practices, as well as the history of the whole area. Often the discoveries have to do with the speakers of other Semitic languages; sometimes they have to do with Hebrew and Aramaic speakers directly, even residents of Jerusalem or other towns.

The meanings of more or less obscure Hebrew words have sometimes been made clear for the benefit of translators (and of illustrators) of the Bible. So in *Prov. 26:23*, instead of 'silver dross' (RV and earlier), we now read 'glaze' (GS onwards); in *2 Sam. 1:21*, instead of 'fields of offerings' (RV and earlier), we now read 'upsurging of the deep' (RSV onwards). Rather technical passages, e.g. on mining (*Job 28*) or on astronomy (*Job 38*), have been better and better understood from RV to RSV to NEB. However, this new knowledge from archaeology has not always provided a final, evidently correct solution; often it has just increased the number of plausible possibilities in the various obscure passages, e.g. *Ps. 68:4* 'deserts' (RV), 'clouds' (RSV), or 'desert plains' (NEB); *Deut. 15:18* 'double' (RV, NIV, NEB, GNB), 'half' (RSV, GNB), or 'equivalent' (NEB). Sometimes a manuscript variation has been decided by the new knowledge, e.g. *1 Sam. 1:24* 'three bullocks' (RV), now 'a bullock, three years old' (RSV).

Apart from the discoveries of places and objects, archaeologists have also unearthed tablets, columns, potsherds, etc. on which can be read accounts of the exploits of kings, conquests, religious practices, myths of creation,

etc. So the nature of Semitic poetry has come to be better understood, so that the RV was an improvement over KJV, while the RSV and most other 20th-century translations are immeasurably better still. Hebrew grammatical knowledge, e.g. the uses of prepositions, increased with the understanding of documents in other Semitic languages. The pronunciation of the divine name, YHWH, became clear (though only JB has had the courage to use it: 'Yahweh').

All in all, the knowledge of Near Eastern languages and cultures has helped the Bible translator to make sense of several Old Testament passages in the traditional Masoretic Text which otherwise might have forced a resort to conjectural emendation.

For the New Testament, the situation is rather different. Greek and Roman civilization had been quite well known right through the centuries of this era. However in the 19th and 20th centuries discoveries were made which illuminated details of administration of the Roman Empire, the keeping of time, the geography of Asia Minor (Ramsay), etc. Last century, the rubbish dumps of Egypt at Oxyrhynchus and elsewhere had yielded large quantities of written Greek papyri about all kinds of everyday matters. In other words, it became clear that the New Testament was written in 'koinē' (or 'common' everyday) Greek. During this century, details of the spelling and of the grammar of koinē Greek were worked out, showing many changes from classical Greek of Greece four or five centuries earlier (e.g. mixing of verb tense paradigms; blurring of distinction between 'in' and 'into'; diminutive endings without diminutive meaning). A few words can now be translated correctly (e.g. 'district' in *Acts 16:12* [RV onwards], not 'part' [KJV]). Also, during this century, investigations have

been going on into the New Testament's background of Aramaic, of Latin, and of Septuagint Greek, as well as the poetical nature of the gospels, especially of John (see JB especially). All this activity has resulted in certain improvements in the most recent New Testament translations, though the improvements started from the RV last century.

This first real criterion for evaluating Bible translations is a perfectly clear one. Especially when the translators include experts in the original languages and cultures, the latest 20th-century translations have much better information on the languages and cultures, so that understanding of the Bible text is greatly enhanced and some obscurities are cleared up. Perhaps not all the latest translations make full use of the information available. But no translation before RV had any access to it at all. No blame of course attaches to these earlier translations; but blame does fall on the modern reader who relies exclusively on them when many better informed ones are available.

Having said all this, however, it must be

stated clearly that the overall effect on a Bible translation of the latest knowledge of languages and cultures is remarkably slight. The specific examples of improved translations of words are few and of little spiritual importance (though recognition of poetical forms is a more substantial matter). So the net result is that just a few verses here and there may be translated in later translations differently because of superior knowledge. Preachers should never base a whole sermon on **one verse** as it is in **one translation**; e.g. from *Eccl. 3:11* should he preach on 'eternity', 'time in definite', 'the timeless' (KJV, RSV, MLB, LB, BLE, NIV, NWT, NAB); or on 'the world' (RV, JND); or on 'ignorance' (GS); or on 'knowledge' (Young); or on 'time in its wholeness' (JB), 'sense of time past and future' (NEB), or 'the future' (GNB)?

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Question 221

HOUSE GROUPS

What do you think about the increasing tendency to replace meetings of the whole church by meetings of smaller groups such as 'house groups'?

I welcome it wholeheartedly. In my experience, and that of many others, meeting in such groups brings Christians closer together, puts an edge onto their study of the Bible and stimulates prayer.

A fear is sometimes expressed that such groups may have a divisive effect. Admittedly, the possibilities of division within a local church are almost boundless but house groups seem less likely to have this effect than other subgroups, such as those concerned with a particular type of Christian work or catering for the needs of a particular sex or age group. House groups should reflect the variety of people within the fellowship and thus encourage cohesion rather than division. They are local expressions of the larger fellowship just as the larger fellowship is itself a local expression of the whole Christian community within the area from which its members are drawn. There is something else which needs to be said. Research has made it quite clear that church growth is more likely to be happening within churches where a significant portion of activity takes place in small groups. Peter Wagner of Fuller Theological Seminary has distinguished three different kinds of relationship based on the size and purpose of the group. The terms he uses are worth considering. 'Celebration' is a corporate act of worship uniting the whole congregation. 'Congregation' is defined as a circle of fellowship in which each person knows the other by name. 'Cell' is a spiritual kinship group of around eight to twelve people who although they meet for prayer and Bible Study have as their main function close personal fellowship. There seems to be a direct relationship between the amount of cell activity within a church and its rate of growth. The survey published as *The Brethren Today* found a similar relationship. Of the churches having had six or more baptisms in the previous two years, more than 70% sometimes had home meetings or house groups. Of those reporting

no baptisms, 74% never had home meetings or house groups. And of the churches having ten or more baptisms in the previous two years, 59% had house groups fortnightly or weekly.

What all this amounts to is that, not only have we no biblical reason for opposing the establishment of cell groups within a church — there is good evidence that their establishment is associated with spiritual blessing.

Question 222

'... INTO ALL TRUTH'

In what sense can the Holy Spirit be said to lead us into all truth (John 16:13)? How generally is this intended? Does it apply to so-called secular knowledge?

In general terms it would certainly be possible to argue that wherever men come to a knowledge of any truth, this results from the operation of the Holy Spirit in common grace. In just the same way, we should be grateful to God when we see an unbeliever showing love.

But we should be greatly mistaken if we thought that this was the intended meaning of *John 16:13*. The verse is to be interpreted in its context, both immediate and general. So far as the immediate context is concerned, the words are spoken to disciples of the Lord Jesus at a time when he is alone with them. Not only is he speaking exclusively to them, he is also speaking quite specifically about their need to be reminded of the things that he has said to them (*15:26*). In fact, in *John 16:13, 14* it is said that the Spirit will 'take what is mine and declare it to you'. The implication is clear: there was a great deal of teaching of the Lord Jesus that the disciples had failed to understand or that they had not been ready to receive (*16:12*).

When we look at the more general context, we find that John's gospel refers often to the truth. When Jesus says in *18:37* that he came to the world to bear witness to the truth, he is affirming something which is repeated again and again in this gospel. (See, for *Continued on page 11*

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'.

70 YEARS ACTIVE: A HISTORY OF THE MSC CONFERENCE W. and A. Weston

Days 'before the First World War' seem an era away. The Empire was still in building: country houses were still staffed by dozens of retainers and wages for much of the country were about £1 a week. It was in this world that the first MSC Conference was held. At Weston-super-Mare in 1912 Professor Rendle Short collected about five dozen young people at Lewisham School. They came from the 'Missionary Study Classes' which at that time flourished in British Assemblies. Even Professor Short's vision probably failed to extend over the seventy years to 1982, when the Conference he founded will be meeting over the August Bank holiday weekend at Monkton Combe School, near Bath.

After a number of years at Weston-super-Mare the Conference met through the 1930s at Ellerslie School, Malvern, then on a number of occasions at The Park School, Yeovil and now for nearly 30 years at its present venue.

The first Conference was planned, publicised and run almost entirely by Professor Short, his wife and his brother. Soon, however, he saw the value of sharing responsibility. The present Committee is the direct successor to the one which he invited. The joint writers of this article (both in their time officers of this committee) have been associated with the work for a total of fifty-five years. It would be tedious to recite a catalogue of the names of the many

men and women who over the years have shared this avenue of Christian service. But one would feel that tribute could perhaps be paid to the special contribution which we will always associate with the names of the brothers John and Melville Capper and house parents till the 70s Charles and Nora Sims.

Surprisingly one Conference took place in the war time year 1941. Those with long memories recall Robert Laidlaw's teaching at that critical time, especially a most challenging talk on the Judgment Seat of Christ. Post war conferences included one in 1954 with Geoffrey Bull as one of its principal speakers and marking his return to preaching ministry after his years of captivity.

Much has changed since the early years of the century. Professor Short wore a morning coat to welcome the first conference members. And now within the last twenty years the suits and ties which speakers invariably used to wear have given place to the sweaters and jeans informality of today. The scope of teaching has broadened from that implied by the term 'missionary study' to embrace the whole spectrum of Christian life and witness, applying the teaching of Scripture to the needs of the present day. The conveners have endeavoured to ensure that traditional themes and teaching methods have been adapted to contemporary needs with up-to-date methods of present-

ation. But there is much which the Conference founder would recognise and (we think) approve of in the conferences of the 1980s. Perhaps in advance of his time, he saw the need to ensure that the conference members enjoyed a balanced diet of Bible teaching, discussion, organised recreation and shared relaxation. He would have enjoyed the stimulation of today's discussions, the intensive study of specialised topics, the emphasis on music and its place in worship and witness, the activity of dozens of young people playing rather disorganised and 'nobody-minds-who-wins' games and the sheer exuberant fun of two hundred young people making and cementing friendships and thinking, learning and talking about their best Friend. There have been, there still are results. Many young people have been challenged to full-time Christian service, abroad or at home. Many lives have been radically changed.

The very first address given at Weston-Super-Mare in 1912 was on the verse 'Say to Archippus: take heed to the ministry which thou has received in the Lord that thou fulfil it.' And with the passing of nearly three generations this challenge remains as relevant as ever.

Enquiries about this year's Conference 27th to 31st August should be made to: Peter and Elspeth Metcalfe, Hindersley Cottage, Gloucester Road, Ross on Wye, HR9 7NJ.

QUESTION AND ANSWER *continued from page 10*

example, *John 8:26,31f.*) Jesus has come from above to witness to the ultimate and unshakeable reality of the Father. This means that he is involved in a direct conflict with the devil and his children and this conflict leads to his death (*8:44-47*). It thus becomes clear that the Holy Spirit is to

continue this witness of Jesus. He will lead them, says Westcott 'not (vaguely) "into all truth," but "into all the Truth" . . . , into the complete understanding of and sympathy with that absolute Truth which is Christ himself. The order of the original is remarkable; the truth in all its parts.'

LOOKING AT BOOKS

AN ESCAPEE?

Tony Crosland Susan Crosland. Cape. 422pp. £10.95.

The full name of Britain's former Foreign Secretary, whose biography this is, was Charles Anthony Raven Crosland. His mother, Jessie, was the daughter of F. E. Raven, the civil governor of the Royal Naval College in Greenwich and leader of the Darbyite group of Brethren. Unusually for a Victorian he thought daughters as well as sons should be educated. Jessie got an M.A. at Bedford College, became a lecturer at Westfield College, and wrote standard monographs on French medieval literature.

Her Lancastrian husband, Joseph Beardsell Crosland, went to Trinity College, Oxford, via Manchester Grammar School. After a successful

career in Whitehall he became No. 2 at the War Office under Churchill, who once told Mrs. Crosland: 'Your husband is the truest Christian gentleman I've ever known.'

The author of this biography, Tony Crosland's second wife, confesses that, although the Exclusive Brethren had a creed, 'it was difficult for an outsider to gather what it was. They didn't have rules: there were pressures, things one didn't do — shibboleths.' Most of the book is concerned with politics, an aspect that has been fully discussed in other reviews. There are only a few, fascinating, insights into the religious life of the Crosland parents. 'It was a loving family, the parents far less severe, forbidding than those of Edmund Gosse . . . in **Father and Son**. But for Tony, the sect that constricted his family was as Gosse

described it.' (It is salutary to remind ourselves that Gosse belonged to the *Open Brethren* for most of his life and was never an Exclusive.)

Apart from the largely silent but total repudiation by the son of his early upbringing, the saddest note in the book is the brief account of the ostracising of his mother in her seventies for not joining in the denunciation of some fellow-member. 'It was very unpleasant sometimes', she recalled in her nineties or thereabouts. 'I'm glad now, because the Brethren since then have become Taylorites — that American, you know. They've gone downhill . . .' Let us be thankful that this is not true of all Brethren, 'Exclusive' or otherwise.

Review by Dr. J. S. Andrews, University of Lancaster

Reflections on the Beatitudes Simon Tugwell O.P. Darton, Longman and Todd. 180pp. £4.50 (paperback).

Here are one man's collected thoughts around the Beatitudes which may not necessarily reflect the way we would think (especially since he is a catholic priest) but which nevertheless are interesting and thought-provoking. It is a scholarly book, suggesting that just as *faith* and *hope* have something negative about them, setting up a space for *love* (charity) which re-makes us; so the first two Beatitudes the *poor* and the *meek* are also 'antidote virtues', preventing us from being overpossessive and overactive, creating an emptiness, a spaciousness in which there is room for us to be remade. The last six Beatitudes then become 'symptoms of charity' which help in the remaking but which must never completely fill that necessary emptiness before God.

A few quotations at random may whet the appetite to read more. Of 'Behold I make all things new' he says: 'We cannot bring the luggage of our past with us into the new movement of God's making.' And of meekness: 'It is not by fretting and flapping, but by bearing the cross of our helplessness and frustration, in union with Christ bearing His cross, that we shall find any genuine power for a more satisfying life.' Of mourning: 'this beatitude defends us against all bossy attempts to oblige us to be cheered up.'

He writes of the danger of too many narcotics to numb our senses and of the dangers of advertising so that 'we find ourselves caught up in pre-packed needs and desires which may have very little to do with our genuine appetites.' As to seeing God — 'it is a mistake to think that our way to heaven is best negotiated with blinkers on . . .

we shall not see God the more clearly for narrowing our vision.' Some of the arguments I could not agree with but mostly the book is helpful reading. There are comprehensive footnotes and an extensive bibliography.

Review by Barbara Baigent

Christ: The Christian Experience in the Modern World Edward Schillebeeckx. SCM. 925pp. £19.50.

What does it mean to believe in salvation in Christ at the end of the twentieth century? Is it possible to experience the grace of God in the same way as the early Christians did? How are we to apply the language and concepts of the NT to our vastly different social and political situation? Edward Schillebeeckx, a Dominican and Professor of Theology and the History of Theology in the University of Nijmegen, Holland, and author of **Jesus: An Experiment in Christology**

(Collins, 1979), tackles these important questions in this massive volume.

In the first part of the book, Professor Schillebeeckx discusses the authority of new experiences and the authority of the NT. After analysing the nature of experience as seen in the light of modern philosophy and psychology, he investigates the relationship between revelation and experience and the expression of religious experience in religious language. He concludes that 'revelation is an action of God as experienced by believers and interpreted in religious language and therefore expressed in human terms, in the dimension of our utterly human history'.

Part two (the longest part) explores the NT theology of the experience of grace. Each of the NT writers/writings — except the Synoptic Gospels (which were treated fully in the earlier book) and Acts — is dealt with in

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

The Incomparable Christ

Since World War II, the influx of immigrants has transformed Britain into a multi-faith society, in which Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and others co-exist with Christians. This brings home a problem missionaries have often faced: what right has the Christian to press his faith on others? Is not Christianity but one of the several roads to the One God? The Old Testament is familiar with this kind of challenge. Moses battled with the gods of Egypt. Joshua contended for the Lord against alien deities (24:15). Elijah confronted Baal on Carmel (1 Kgs. 18). Isaiah poured scorn on idols and their makers (44:9-20). Jeremiah (2:11) castigates Israel for deserting the true God for 'no-gods'. Nebuchadnezzar has to confess the supremacy of the Most High (Dan. 4:34ff). These random selections enforce the message that there is but one true God, who alone is to be worshipped. All others are shams and distortions.

The New Testament focusses on the uniqueness of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Gospels, Jesus makes many statements explicitly or implicitly claiming deity. Thus, at *Matt. 7:22f*, He knows He will be judge at the last day. He exercises the divine prerogative of forgiving sins at *Mark 2:7*. At an early age, in *Luke 2:49*, He is aware of a special relationship with God. John records His statement, 'He who has seen me has seen the Father' (14:9). These quotes suffice to illustrate the truth of the aphorism, 'Jesus is not good if Jesus is not God'. Nor is the rest

of the New Testament less emphatic. Paul designates Jesus (*Tit. 2:13*) 'our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ'. Similarly, Peter (2 *Pet. 1:1*) calls Him 'our God and Saviour Jesus Christ', while the writer to the Hebrews recognizes Him as Son of God in a special sense (1:1f). John reveals Him as the Word become flesh (1:14) and James calls Him 'the Lord of glory' (2:1).

There is another aspect of this truth. Since the Lord Jesus is 'God over all, blessed for ever' (*Rom. 9:5*), His death on the cross is no mere martyrdom. It is God Himself making a sacrifice for the sins of the world. A reduced estimate of the person of Christ involves a correspondingly limited evaluation of His atonement. So the Christian is compelled by the logic of his beliefs to affirm that Jesus Christ is the saviour of the world. Indeed, there is salvation in no other, for no other name under heaven given among men can bring salvation (*Acts 4:12*). Evangelism therefore is more than an expression of compassion for lost men and more than obedience to a divine command (*Matt. 28:19*). It is no less than an act of worship, a humble confession of the conviction that our Lord Jesus is incomparable.

A point to ponder is this: the deeper our devotion, the stronger our urge to evangelize. Does our slackness in witness, therefore, indicate a cooling of devotion?

The Rise of the Monarchy

Studies in 1 Samuel (8)

David J. Clark

David Vindicated (1 Sam. 27-31)
David Among the Philistines
(27:1-28:2)

Despite David's miraculous escapes from Saul, he seems to have suffered another onset of depression or doubt, the immediate cause of which we cannot guess. As a result, he decided to leave Saul's territory and seek refuge again among the Philistines at Gath. This time David's request for sanctuary was supported by a force of 600 warriors, and it is hardly surprising that his reception was rather different from before. King Achish acceded to David's request to settle in an outlying town, and David and his men took up residence with their families at Ziklag. David's move at least achieved its professed aim of putting a stop to Saul's continual harassment. While this was undoubtedly to David's advantage, it was probably in the national interests of Israel also, for while Saul was dissipating his energies and troops on hunting for David, he could not be giving his attention to more important affairs of state.

However, the time at Ziklag was not a time that brought much credit to David. He was in a position where his security depended both on ruthless banditry and unscrupulous deceit. In order to justify his continued presence in Philistia, he had to pretend to attack the territory of Judah or of peoples friendly to Judah. In order not to prejudice his future position among his own people, he dared not attack Judah or her allies. In order to maintain himself and his men, he had to attack and plunder somebody. In order that Achish should not learn who his real victims were he had to adopt a 'no survivors' policy, and kill the entire populations of the areas he raided. That this was not the normal military practice is shown by the relatively humane treatment given the population of Ziklag by the Amalekites (30:18-

19). Perhaps it is not insignificant that no psalms are attributed to this period of David's career.

Be that as it may, David's deceit was successful and Achish was so convinced that David had cooked his goose among his own people that he ordered him to join the Philistine troops mustering for a battle against Saul (28:1). We can imagine how David's heart must have sunk at this. His ambivalent reply to Achish suggests that he was actively considering a further change of sides. But what a dilemma his duplicity had led him into! If he fought for the Philistines and they lost, he would if caught be killed as a traitor. If he fought for the Philistines and they won, he would earn the permanent hatred of his own people. If he fought for Israel and they lost, he would lose all further hope of sanctuary among the Philistines, and would if caught be killed as a traitor. If he fought for Israel and they won he would lose his sanctuary and have to return to face further persecution from Saul. It seemed indeed a hopeless situation for David, whatever happened.

The scene was thus set for the climax of the whole story. The literary skill of the narrator now shows up in that he next includes an interlude which is not directly related to David's problems and thus keeps his readers on edge until the main theme is resumed.

Saul Consults a Medium (28:3-25)

The interlude opens with a reminder of Samuel's death, presumably to emphasize that Saul had no official and nationally recognized prophet to go to for guidance. On seeing the Philistine troops assembling, Saul took fright and sought the Lord, but received no answer by any of the usual channels. Such was his state of hardened disobedience that he was, so to speak, out of earshot of the Lord's voice. Yet such was his desire for supernatural

support that he determined to seek the help of a medium, not only in open violation of the law (*Lev. 19:31*), but even in violation of his own injunctions suppressing mediums (28:3).

Inevitably, Saul's own legislation had not been wholly effective, and the existence of a medium at Endor was known to Saul's officials. Saul made a secret nocturnal visit to her. The woman's wary reception brought from Saul a solemn promise not to harm her. The promise, contrary though it was to the explicit commands of the Lord, was given in the name of the Lord, and thus Saul once more added blasphemy to his other sins (28:10, cf. 19:6).

The woman then agreed to practise her forbidden arts, and upon their success, she was shocked by the realisation of who her client was. Saul, anxious to proceed, again reassured her, and the spirit of Samuel became accessible to him. Despite Samuel's discouraging attitude (28:15) Saul presented his needs. But Samuel could give no help or support to one whom the Lord had abandoned. All he could do was reiterate the decisions made when Saul had disobeyed in the Amalekite war (*chapter 15*). The day had now come for the fulfilment of the prophecies given at that time. Within 24 hours Saul would reap the full reward of his disobedience, and would drag his sons and his subjects down to destruction with him.

The principles manifested in Samuel's reply are still operative today. We are as free as Saul had been to choose whether to obey the Lord or not. Once the decision is made, however, we are just as bound as he was to live with its consequences (cf. *Gal. 6:7-8*).

Saul was literally stunned by Samuel's words. His stupidity and vacillation were once more shown by his initial refusal to eat the food he needed, and his subsequent yielding to the persuasion of the medium and his officers.

David Dismissed by the Philistines (29:1-11)

The impending battle promised to be a fateful one for both Saul and David, though each was unaware of the other's problems.

As the Philistines mustered at Aphek, David and his men were at the rear of Achish's contingent. The other Philistine commanders were, not without reason, suspicious of his intentions, and so, mindful of his reputation, they insisted on his dismissal (29:4-5).

Achish, who appears a rather gullible fellow, was quite apologetic in conveying this decision to David, perhaps fearing that if offended David might make domestic trouble for him later. We can imagine David's inward joy at receiving the decision, and the difficulty with which he must have concealed it. He remained sufficiently diplomatic to make a token protest (29:8), but must have begun the long march back to Ziklag next day with considerable relief. In a situation in which he could do nothing to help himself, the Lord had used the pagan Philistines to get him off the hook.

David Defeats the Amalekites (30:1-31)

All was not to be plain sailing, however, and David's relief was short lived. The Ziklag he had left as a bustling community was now a smoking ruin, with the population in the hands of raiding Amalekites. Probably the Amalekites had heard of the impending battle between the Philistines and Israel, and had taken advantage of David's involvement to avenge themselves on him. Ziklag would have been an easy prey with all its able-bodied men summoned to battle elsewhere. Naturally the loss of homes and families caused great distress among David's troops. Illogically perhaps the men were inclined to blame David for their troubles, but in such a situation, he drew his strength from the Lord. In contrast to Saul (28:6), David had no difficulty in obtaining the Lord's guidance (30:8) and despite their tiredness, his 600 men set out to rescue their goods and families. After a while one third of them were too exhausted to continue the chase and had to remain as a guard on the supplies.

The others were soon encouraged by finding a sick slave, who, abandoned by the Amalekites, was able to provide valuable information to them. As a result of this help, David's band were able to catch up with the Amalekites,

who, intoxicated with success and liquor, were no match for them. Victory was complete, and David not only recovered the families of his men, and their possessions, but also took over large amounts of booty that the Amalekites had gathered from other victims.

On rejoining the 200 men who had not gone on the final march, David had a further problem to face. Some of the more selfish of his troops wanted to keep the booty for themselves and not share it with the 200, but David knew that he could not afford to allow such a cause for later grievance to arise. Accordingly he insisted on a policy of equal shares for front line troops and reserves alike, and thus set a precedent for subsequent battles.

The booty that was taken from the Amalekites had come from both Cherethite (i.e. Philistine) and Judean sources (30:14) and with an eye to the future, David saw to it that some of this booty was sent to the leaders of Judah, especially in the areas where he and his men were already known. In this way, he tried to build up the kind of power base he would eventually need in order to establish himself as king. How close the time was, even he himself was not yet aware.

The Death of Saul (31:1-13)

With David's problems and adventures settled for the time being, the narrative returns to Saul. The climactic battle with the Philistines which had been forecast (28:1), alluded to (28:19), and prepared for (29:11), is now described in all its tragic drama. As Samuel had predicted, it was a heavy defeat for Israel, and even the king and his three sons were forced to flee. They could not escape, however, and Jonathan and his brothers died at the hands of the enemy (31:2). Saul was badly wounded, and knew that death was inevitable, yet even in this extremity he was concerned with outward appearances. Rather than allow the Philistines the glory of slaying him, and perhaps fearing torture, he threw himself upon his sword, and in this way perished at his own hand. Thus ended a career so rich in promise but so poor in fulfilment.

News of the crushing defeat spread panic among the civilian population of the Jezreel area, and even of the Transjordan. They fled, abandoning some of their towns to Philistine occupation (31:7).

When the Philistines came to plunder

the bodies of the fallen, they had no difficulty recognizing Saul, and so appreciating the magnitude of their victory. In accordance with custom, they put his armour in one of their temples to acknowledge the help of their deities in battle (cf. 5:2). Saul's decapitated body was nailed to the wall of Beth-shan. This barbarous display provoked a final act of loyalty and gratitude to the late king. The men of Jabesh, whose rescue from humiliation and servitude had established Saul's reputation at the beginning of his reign (chapter 11), made posthumous recompense by rescuing his body from Beth-shan and giving it an honourable interment.

Thus at last the Lord's decree taking the kingdom away from Saul and his family had been fulfilled, and fulfilled without David taking matters into his own hands. According to David's faith (24:6, 12, 15; 26:9-11, 23, 24) so events turned out. The Lord who had both chosen and rejected Saul brought about his final downfall. Psychologically, if not quite yet politically, the way to the throne was now open to David. Though Saul still had one surviving son, it was David who was, and was known to be, the Lord's next choice for the throne. It could be only a matter of time before the opposition crumbled and David was openly acknowledged as king throughout the nation (2 Sam. 5:1-5).

Conclusion

The *First Book of Samuel* covers a unique period in the history of Israel. The destiny of the nation was wrought out through the lives of three men, Samuel, Saul and David. In background and character they were very different from each other, yet the intertwining of their lives had results which influenced the national life of the chosen people for four centuries, and their national aspirations for much longer.

Samuel was ever remembered as a true prophet and a man of effective prayer (Ps. 99:6, Jer. 15:1, cf. 1 Sam. 7:9, 12:23, and see also *Sirach* 46:16-18). David's reign became a symbol of the nation at its greatest, so that even the Messiah himself would claim descent from him (Isa. 9:7, 11:1, Jer. 23:5, Matt. 1:1, 21:9, Rom. 1:3, 2 Tim. 2:8, Rev. 22:16). Between them stands Saul as a perpetual sad reminder that 'No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God' (Luke 9:62).

The Gospel of John (62)

F. F. Bruce

The Upper Room Discourses

(John 13:31-16:33)

ii. THE LORD AND HIS PEOPLE

(John 15:1-16:33)

(c) Warning of persecution (John 15:18-25)

15:18, 19 If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love that which is its own. But because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world — for this reason the world hates you.

From recommending the cultivation of mutual love within the fellowship of his followers, Jesus turns to warn them against hostility from those who are outside. As so often in the Johannine writings, 'the world' is the godless world, the world organized in opposition to God, and therefore opposed to his people. At the moment, Jesus himself was the target for their opposition; in a few hours he would be the victim of their hostility. It was inevitable that his associates should incur the world's hatred as he himself had done. It is an odd fact that the world soon justified its hostility to them by imputing to them the initiative in hatred. What is probably the earliest extant reference to Christians outside the New Testament charges them with 'hatred of the human race'.

Jesus' followers have been described in *John 13:1* as 'his own people who were in the world', on whom he set his love. He chose them 'out of the world' to be 'his own people', and therefore they no longer belonged to the world. The world looked on them as aliens, and treated them accordingly.

15:20, 21 Remember the word that I spoke to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they

persecuted me, they will persecute you also; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. Indeed, they will do all this to you for my name's sake, because they do not know the one who sent me.

The statement that 'a servant is not greater than his master' is repeated from *John 13:16*. It appears also in *Matt. 10:24*, in a context not unlike the present one. In *Matt. 10:16-25* (as also, more briefly, in *Mark 13:9-13*) Jesus forewarns his disciples against the persecution which they will have to endure on his account: 'you will be hated by all for my name's sake' (*Matt. 10:22; Mark 13:13*). Those who appreciated Jesus' teaching will appreciate the teaching which the disciples impart in his name; they will acknowledge that the disciples have been commissioned by Jesus as Jesus himself was commissioned by God. But those who repudiated his teaching, refusing to recognize him as the Sent One of God, will repudiate the disciples when they come teaching in their Master's name. The close association between his persecution and theirs finds expression in the voice from heaven which Saul of Tarsus heard on the Damascus road: 'why do you persecute me?' (*Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:14*). The Lord who was personally persecuted on earth continued to be persecuted, even in his exaltation, in the person of his persecuted followers. Their being persecuted for his sake was a sign that they belonged to him, as it was a token of coming judgment on their persecutors (cf. *Phil. 1:28; 2 Thess. 1:5-10*).

15:22-25 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have (incurred) sin; but as it is, they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done the works among them

which no one else ever did, they would not have (incurred) sin; but as it is, they have both seen and hated me and my Father. This has happened to fulfil the saying that is written in their law: 'They hated me without a cause.'

It is emphasized repeatedly in the Synoptic Gospels that the generation to which Jesus came bore a greater responsibility than any previous generation, because men and women of earlier days had not heard his teaching or seen his mighty works, as his own contemporaries did. His own contemporaries for the most part rejected his teaching and refused to admit the evidence of his works; therefore they compared unfavourably with pagans like the queen of Sheba who was impressed by Solomon's wisdom or the people of Nineveh who repented at Jonah's preaching (*Luke 11:31f.*). Indeed, the cities which had been the centres of his ministry would receive severer judgment on the great day than the sinners of Sodom (*Matt. 11:23f.*).

The Evangelist has noted earlier that, although Jesus had performed so many signs in full view of his hearers (especially in Jerusalem), yet 'they would not believe in him' (*John 12:37*); here a similar judgment is expressed on Jesus' own lips. The greater the privilege, the greater the responsibility; and no greater privilege could have been enjoyed than that of hearing Jesus' teaching and seeing his works. If the hatred which his disciples were to receive from 'the world' was due to its hatred of him (*verses 18, 19*), the hatred which he himself received is traced back by him to hatred of God: 'they have both seen and hated me and my Father.' They saw the Father in the Son (cf. *John 14:9*), but did not realize that this was so. Had they

recognized Jesus as the Son of God, they would have recognized the Father in him; as it was, in repudiating the Son they repudiated the Father also (cf. *John 5:23b*). He had come to show them the love of God, but they reacted to his love with hatred, just as, when he came to them as the light of the world, they chose darkness rather than light (*John 3:19*). They thus passed judgment on themselves: if they rejected the giver of true life, they shut themselves up to the only alternative: death.

'Their law' here (like 'your law' in *John 10:34*) refers to their own acknowledged scriptures, whose authority they were bound to recognize. The fact that Jesus quotes this 'law' as authoritative indicates that it was not exclusively *their* law; the Evangelist, like his Master, accepted it as the word of God. Here (as in *John 10:34*) it is the Psalter that is quoted. 'They hated me without a cause' might be taken either from *Ps. 35:19* or *Ps. 69:4*, but in view of the currency of *Ps. 69* as a source of messianic 'testimonies', especially in relation to the passion of Jesus (cf. *John 2:17*), it is *Ps. 69:4* that is probably in view here.

(d) The Third Paraclete Saying: The Spirit as Witness (*John 15:26, 27*)
15:26, 27 When the Paraclete comes, the one whom I will send to you from the Father — the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father — he will bear witness of me. And do you bear witness also, because you have been with me from the first.

The witness which Jesus had borne, by his words and works, to the grace and truth of God would not come to an end when he was no longer in the world. The Spirit would take up this ministry of witness and carry it on, and he would do so not least through the disciples. It is not surprising that this aspect of the Spirit's work is foretold in a persecution context. In the related Synoptic contexts the Spirit enables the persecuted disciples to bear their witness boldly: 'When they deliver you up, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you' (*Matt. 10:19f.*; cf. *Mark 13:11*). There is, moreover, a remarkable instance of the fulfilment of this promise in *Acts 5:32*, where Peter and his colleagues, making their defence before the high priest and council, pro-

claim the resurrection and enthronement of Jesus and say, 'And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.' So here, the witness borne by the Spirit and that borne by the disciples are one and the same witness. Since the disciples' witness is mentioned in the present tense, whereas the Spirit's witness is foretold in the future tense, the present **martyreite** may be imperative (as it has been rendered above) rather than indicative ('you bear witness').

Neither the witness of the Spirit nor the witness of the disciples is confined to the forensic setting, of course, but it is plain that in this Johannine text and in its counterpart in Acts such a setting is implied. A wider relevance for the Spirit's witness is indicated in *1 John 5:6*, 'it is the Spirit that bears witness, because the Spirit is truth' (cf. his designation here and in *14:17* as 'the Spirit of truth'). The witness of the disciples takes many forms in Acts, but it cannot begin until the Holy Spirit comes on them with power (*Acts 1:8*). Whereas in *John 14:26* it is the Father who sends the Paraclete in the Son's name, here it is the Son who sends him. Similarly in *Acts 2:33* the Son receives 'the promise of the Holy Spirit' from the Father and 'pours it out' on the disciples. The statement that the Spirit 'proceeds from the Father' probably has no metaphysical significance; it is another way of saying that the Spirit is sent by the Father. The clause is quoted in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. The western expansion of the clause, 'who proceeds from the Father and the Son' (**filioque**), could be justified by the fact that the Son as well as the Father is said to send the Spirit; the basic objection to it is that it was unwarranted for one part of the church to make such an alteration in the wording of the ecumenical creed without reference to the rest of the church.

The disciples are said to have been with Jesus 'from the first' (**ap' archēs**, 'from the beginning') in the sense that they had been with him from the beginning of his ministry, the period following his recognition by John the Baptist (*John 1:35ff.*).

(e) Further warning of persecution (*John 16:1-4a*)

16:1, 2 I have told you this so that you may not take offence. They will expel you from the synagogue; indeed, the time is coming when any

one who kills you will think he is offering worship to God.

If the troubles predicted by the Lord were to come on the disciples unawares, they might feel resentfully that they should have been forewarned and conclude that he had let them down. The verb (**skandalizō**) has been used in *John 6:61* of the people of Capernaum who were put off by Jesus' unacceptable discourse in the synagogue. In *Mark 14:27* the same word is used in Jesus' warning about the disciples' reaction to his unresisting submission to arrest in Gethsemane later in the same evening.

Expulsion from the synagogue of those who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah has been mentioned in *John 9:22; 12:42*. At the time when the Gospel was written these words had acquired a special relevance from the inclusion in the synagogue prayers of a curse on the Nazarenes, which was intended to ensure that the followers of Jesus could take no part in the service. (See note on *9:22*).

As for the idea that the killing of Jesus' followers was pleasing to God, we may recall how Paul's unenlightened 'zeal for the law' was shown in his persecution of the church (*Phil. 3:6*). There were some militant Zealots who regarded the killing of an apostate as an acceptable sacrifice to God.

16:3, 4a They will do this because they have not come to know the Father or me. I have told you this so that, when the hour for these things comes, you may remember what I said.

As in *John 14:7*, to know Jesus (as the one sent by the Father) is to know the Father (as the one who sent him). Such knowledge Jesus came to impart; to possess it is to have eternal life (*John 17:3*). Hostility to Jesus and his followers springs from lack of this life-giving knowledge (cf. verse 21 above). Once more Jesus impresses on the disciples that he is telling them this so that, when it happens, they may not be taken by surprise but may remember his words (cf. *John 13:19; 14:29*).

The Divine Attributes (7)

The Faithfulness of God

M. L. Burr

One of the most important qualities we look for in one another is reliability. Unfortunately we all tend to be unreliable at times, partly through defects of character and partly because of circumstances outside our control. We are all subject both to some degree of fickleness and to involuntary changes which occur to us just as they do to the rest of the universe in which we live. If we feel the need of someone who is absolutely trustworthy we must look to God Himself.

Old Testament

For God does not change. As *Ps. 102* says, earth and heaven 'will perish, but thou dost endure; they will all wear out like a garment. Thou changest them like raiment, and they pass away; but thou art the same, and thy years have no end'. He is the 'I AM' (*Exod. 3:14, 15*) who is self-existent and not dependent on anyone or anything else. Because of this, He alone is absolutely dependable.

God's changeless is not a merely negative inertia. He is actively faithful to His own character and to all those who stand in a relationship to Himself. This is well shown in *Ps. 89*, which deals particularly with the topic of God's faithfulness. God has established His faithfulness in heaven itself (v. 2, NIV); His faithfulness surrounds Him (v. 8). His throne is founded on righteousness and justice, so that He is invariably true to His own righteous character; steadfast love and faithfulness go before Him (v. 14). He made a covenant with David, to whom He promised His faithfulness and love (v. 24). God undertook not to violate His covenant, for then He would be false to His own faithfulness (v. 33, 34). He has sworn by His holiness to maintain David's line, so that God's holy character is the guarantee of continued blessing. All this is recounted by the psalmist, who is deeply troubled because God has apparently renounced His covenant (v. 39). He asks, 'Lord, where is thy steadfast love of old, which by thy faithfulness thou

didst swear to David?' (v. 49). The whole psalm raises profound questions which are not answered until we come to the New Testament.

Faithfulness and steadfast love are connected in several other Old Testament passages. For example, *Deut. 7:9* speaks of 'the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him'. In times of affliction God's people can still say 'The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases . . . great is thy faithfulness'. The LORD is Himself their portion even when earthly comforts fail (*Lam. 3:22ff.*). The psalmist even says 'In faithfulness thou hast afflicted me. Let thy steadfast love be ready to comfort me according to thy promise to thy servant' (*Ps. 119:75, 76*). Again, God is faithful to His own purposes, which include the discipline of His servants, but will supply the comfort they need to endure that discipline.

A further example of how God's changelessness lies behind both the chastisement and the preservation of His people is seen in *Mal. 3:6* 'I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed'. The Israelites were failing to keep covenant with God and with each other, while professing to delight in the expected 'messenger of the covenant'. God was still faithful to His covenant, since He (unlike His people) does not change. He would visit them in judgment and purify them, for He will never be reconciled to their sins. These passages show God's faithfulness to Israelites who could count on His covenants with Abraham and David. In *Isa. 49* there is perhaps the suggestion that God's faithfulness will have a wider scope. The mysterious Servant is called to be a light to the nations, so that God's salvation may reach to the ends of the earth. 'Kings shall see and arise; princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the LORD, who is faithful' (v. 6, 7). In so far as this refers to God's faithfulness to anyone in particular, it seems to be the Servant to whom He is faith-

ful here. Now God's faithfulness was not in itself any basis for the blessing of Gentiles who had no prior relationship with Him. But this passage suggests that God's faithfulness to His Servant may be the ground of their eventual salvation. God chose and commissioned His Servant to save Israelites and Gentiles alike, and He would be faithful to His Servant in ensuring that this commission was completed. All this has of course been perfectly fulfilled in Christ.

New Testament

The New Testament shows God's reliability even more clearly than the Old. Again, we find that God is faithful firstly to His own character. He swore by Himself (i.e. by His own unchangeable nature) in order to show us the immutability of His purposes (*Heb. 6:13-18*). It is impossible that God would prove false to His character and act in a way unworthy of Himself. And His purposes of grace have the same immutability as His character. So there is no danger that He will ever change His mind about His plans to bless us. Secondly, He is faithful to His promises (*Heb. 10:23; 11:11*). There are certain things that He has undertaken to do, and we may be sure that they will be achieved. He who began a good work in us will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (*Phil. 1:6*). We cannot always foresee how God's promises will be fulfilled, and like the writer of *Ps. 89* we may sometimes wonder why our prayers seem to be unanswered. But we now know that God's covenant with David, which the psalmist thought He had renounced, has in fact been fulfilled on a far grander scale in Christ, 'for all the promises of God find their Yes in him' (*2 Cor. 1:20*). So we must learn to trust Him to keep the various promises in His word, especially those 'better promises' of the New Covenant (*Heb. 8:6-12*).

Thirdly, He is faithful to His relationship with His people. We tend to place

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More Meditations on Mark (2)

The Gift of Sabbath Rest

David Brady

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all tell the story of the disciples' plucking and rubbing ears of corn as they passed through the fields on the sabbath day, but Mark alone among the evangelists includes in his account the memorable saying of Jesus in which he reasserted the proper purpose of the sabbath: 'The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath' (Mark 2:27). It is by no means certain why Matthew and Luke omitted this saying from their own accounts, but it cannot be that Matthew found it too hard a saying to put before his Jewish readers, for he apparently felt no reservation about including the saying that the priests in the temple desecrate the sabbath day (Matt. 12:5), a hard saying enough in its own right.

If, as Jesus says, 'the sabbath was made for man', then it was not instituted for the sake of Israel alone. The sabbath was instituted for the benefit of all people not at Sinai, but at creation. In this it is directly parallel to the institution of marriage, for just as on another occasion Jesus checked hard-hearted attitudes within marriage by an appeal to the order of creation (Mark 10:2-9), so here he does likewise with respect to the original purpose of the sabbath. If then the sabbath was given to mankind as a whole at creation, it cannot be passed off as being appropriate only to Jewish man under the old covenant. It is a divine recognition of the bio-rhythms which God himself has implanted in each person and we reject this provision at our peril. 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy'. Thus there is probably evidence in the Bible for the seven-day cycle before Sinai: cf. Gen. 7:4, 10; 8:10, 12; 29:27ff. and the recognition of man's need for days of quiescence is not confined to Jews, Christians, and Muslims; there are parallels in the Uposatha of Buddhist lands and in the common rest-days of South East Asia and Polynesia. Even when the observance of Sunday was abolished during the French Revolution, it was found necessary to make every tenth day a

holiday. All this seems to testify to the basic need of man for periodic recreation, almost like the periodic servicing of a machine. Indeed, the Hebrew sabbath was extended beyond man to his animals and his fields as well. Jesus' call to 'come aside and rest awhile' was spoken with the same divine recognition that first hallowed the seventh day for man's benefit.

Chiasmus

The way in which Mark introduces this saying of Jesus would seem to suggest that it was uttered by the Lord on more than one occasion: 'and he used to say to them . . .'. This introductory formula occurs elsewhere in Mark (e.g. 4:2, 11, 21, 24, 26; 6:10; 7:9; 8:21; 9:1) and serves to remind us that the Gospel accounts are not based on mere fragments of information about Jesus, but on incidents and sayings which were well known because they were often repeated by Jesus. Only the NAS version among translations that I have consulted seems to recognize the distinctive force of the imperfect tense here, but the translators might have done better to render 'he used to say . . .' rather than 'he was saying . . .'. The saying is a particularly memorable one because it has a very simple and balanced structure known as chiasmus, whereby the second phrase inverts the order of words followed in the first (cf. the KJV translation of Luke 16:3: 'I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed'). The study of chiasmus in the Bible has been developed extensively and it has been shown that these structures relate not merely to short passages, but to longer sections and indeed to whole books as well. Mark's fondness for chiasmus is evidenced elsewhere in his Gospel, e.g. 13:1, 2; 14:58. A more notable example is found in Gal. 4:4-6, in which the descent of Christ is effectively paralleled by the exaltation of the redeemed:

A
God sent his Son,
B
born of a woman,

C
born under law,
C1
to redeem those under law,
B1
that we might receive the adoption of sons;

A1
because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts.

The word chiasmus is derived from the Greek letter *chi* (a cross shape) and describes the criss-cross of thought patterns in a particular text. In the passage we have quoted from Galatians, Christ's work of redemption on the cross is itself the perfect chiasm across the chasm between God and men and unites the two. So in our passage in Mark, the balanced structure of our Lord's saying would counter the bondage of Pharisaic legalism by reasserting the freedom of creatorial grace. If the sabbath was submitted to man's service, then how much more was the Son of Man Lord even of the sabbath; such seems to be the force of our Lord's argument in v.28 (the same kind of logic underlies his reasoning in John 10:34-36).

The legalistic approach of the Pharisees lay simply in their apparently logical reasoning that the plucking and rubbing of corn on the sabbath was unlawful, since it must be regarded as a form of harvest labour. The irony of the Pharisees' position was that they were in fact still *working* for salvation on the sabbath day by their painstaking adherence to their code of laws governing sabbath rest. There are hints, however, of a moderating force in Judaism, witnessed especially in the reported saying of Rabbi Simeon ben Menasya (c. A.D. 180) in his comment on Exod. 31:14 ('Observe the sabbath, because it is holy to you'). In the words 'holy to you' this rabbi believed that we are shown that 'the sabbath is delivered to you and you are not delivered to the sabbath' (*Mekilta Shabbata* I on Ex. 31:14 & Jub. 2:31).

Continued on Page Sixty-Four

The Gift of Sabbath Rest *continued from Page Sixty-Three*

Rest or Burden?

Too easily man turns natural good into ritual slavery. For example, it is not natural for men to fast when they are feeling happy (*Mark 2:18-22*). As soon as the sabbath became thought of as a tribute exacted by God, the logic of the situation seemed to be that the more onerous it is made to man, the more pleasing it must be to God. But this was a complete perversion. 'If even this law has to yield to considerations of human welfare, so must every ritual precept whatsoever. That is the force of the phrase, "even of the Sabbath".' (W. Lowrie, *Jesus according to St. Mark* [London, 1929] p.149). God is always looking on the heart. He looks not merely for the *giver*, but for the *cheerful giver* and if our giving is begrudgingly done, then we may as well give it up, for it will not be pleasing to God. I cannot agree with those who say that it is good to continue doing such and such a thing even if it is done only out of a sense of duty. With no

conviction and no love to Christ, it will profit me nothing for I will not be a vessel fit for the Master's use. 'Who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Stop bringing meaningless offerings! . . . Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar!' (*Isa. 1:12f.; Mal. 1:10*). What we need is not so much a sense of duty as the sense of the presence of Christ. Whilst in the body, we acknowledge and thank God for the provision of weekly rest, but we constantly remind ourselves that rest that is a burden is no rest. On a higher plane, we have begun to celebrate that rest which the sabbath provision could only foreshadow (*Heb. 4:1-11*). For those who worship in Spirit and in truth, the sabbath rest has become a celebration of the completion of God's new creation, just as the old sabbath crowned the first creation. In the words of J. Moltmann, Jesus 'abolished the separation between the cultic and the

profane, the pure and the impure, sabbath and everyday. He did this, however, not in favour of everyday secularity but in favour of the messianic festiveness of the whole of life . . . The whole of life becomes a feast' (*The Open Church* [London, 1978] p.77). 'Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a new moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ' (*Col. 2:16f.*). In the New Jerusalem, John sees no temple and no sabbath, for there can be no sabbath if there is no more night to mark its beginning and end. These things were made for man, but man was made before them and will endure beyond them. 'Oh how great and glorious are those sabbaths which the heavenly court for ever celebrates!' (Peter Abelard).

The Faithfulness of God *continued from Page Sixty-Two*

great emphasis on the moment of our conversion, when our link with God (so far as we were then aware) began. But our connection with Him is a living relationship which depends on His continued faithfulness. The One who initially called us will faithfully sustain us to the end (*1 Cor. 1:8, 9*) and sanctify us wholly (*1 Thess. 5:23, 24*). In times of temptation 'God is faithful' and will not let us be tempted beyond our strength but will provide the way of escape (*1 Cor. 10:13*). So we can trust Him not to put us in circumstances where we are unable to stand. And when we do sin, 'if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins' (*1 John 1:9*). The blood of Jesus enables Him to act in accordance with His own righteous character and His commitment to us. So we can rest assured that our sins really are forgiven.

The Lord Jesus too is faithful to His own character. 'If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself' (*2 Tim. 2:13*). 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever' (*Heb. 13:8*), and the words of Ps.

102:27 are applied to Him (*Heb. 1:12*): 'Thou art the same'. Furthermore, Christ is faithful to God who appointed Him as a high priest (*Heb. 3:2-6*). He has undertaken the care of God's people in obedience to His Father's will. Thus the Son's faithfulness to the Father is our security. As 'a merciful and faithful high priest' He may be trusted both to put away our sins and to help us in temptation. He is also faithful to us in strengthening us and guarding us from evil (*2 Thess. 3:3*). His faithfulness leads Him to discipline and correct His people. It is as 'the faithful and true witness' (*Rev. 3:14*) that He rebukes the church at Laodicea, for He is faithful to the truth and sees His people as they really are. And it is as the Faithful and True that He will come forth to judge and make war in righteousness (*Rev. 19:11*). In His faithfulness to God and to righteousness He will put down all opposition to God's rule and exercise the wrath of God.

Our Response

What then should be our response to

divine faithfulness? Obviously we should trust One who is utterly trustworthy and yield Him our total allegiance. Even when we cannot understand His actions we can still have confidence in Him; Peter urged Christians who were suffering unjustly to 'entrust their souls to a faithful Creator' (*1 Pet. 4:19*). We should be free from the love of money and be content with what we have, for He has promised never to fail us nor forsake us (*Heb. 13:5*). But we are not just to believe that He will do everything for us while we continue to be totally unreliable. We are told to 'hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful' (*Heb. 10:23*). God's faithfulness encourages us to become stable Christians who act upon God's promises. So Paul told the Corinthians to be steadfast and immovable, knowing that in the Lord their labour was not in vain (*1 Cor. 15:58*). He spoke of God's faithfulness being reflected in the way he himself had dealt with them (*2 Cor. 1:17, 18*). Our trust in a faithful God will help us to be faithful ourselves.

such a way as to expose the distinctive elements in his/its doctrine of salvation. The purpose is 'to show how all the authors as it were colour the same basic experience — of decisive and definitive salvation from God in Jesus — according to the horizon of their own experience and understanding, on the basis of difficulties and problems which arose in the Christian communities to which they wrote . . .'. Believing that 'theological analysis is valueless unless at the same time the historical circumstances are also analysed', Schillebeeckx demonstrates how the early Christians applied their theology of grace to the social, political and historical conditions in the world at that time. Part three looks at the structural elements of the NT theology of grace, isolating those key concepts which are shared by all the NT writers. These are the fundamental principles that Christians must take account of in any contemporary reinterpretation of the Gospel if it is to remain 'Christian'. This short section forms a bridge over to the lengthy fourth part in which the author comes to grips with the problems of relating the NT experience of salvation to life in the modern world. In order to do this, he argues, we need to have 'a critical understanding of what is experienced and desired and thought by men today to whom here and now the same good news is being directed'. He therefore probes man's utopian consciousness, concluding that 'a purely teleological conception of history in terms of the model of means and ends lands man in alienating frustrations, and in the last resort reduces him to despair and defeatism'.

At the end of a lengthy section in which he surveys man's experience of suffering and the responses made to it (not only by the major world religions but also by Marxism and humanism) Professor Schillebeeckx presents Christian salvation as the answer to suffering, not in the sense of an explanation but as a positive response to it and an attack upon it. This leads him (via a treatment of the nature of 'salvation history') into a thorough discussion of the extent to which a Christian ought to be involved in political action. Finally, recognizing the eschatological aspect of salvation in which death is overcome, he summarizes his understanding of salvation today. Sal-

vation is concerned with the liberation of the individual from guilty failure but it is also concerned with the liberation of societies from political oppression; salvation involves contemplation and prayer but it also involves social action; salvation in Jesus from God is 'being at the disposal of others, losing oneself to others . . . working through anonymous structures for the happiness, the goodness and the truth of mankind'. In other words, the grace of God in salvation through Christ leads not only to love for God but also to love for all men.

This is a tremendous achievement. True, it is not all that easy to read: it is rather long-winded and (in places) repetitive. The author takes his time to build up his argument, but it is well worth the effort trying to follow him to the end. On the way we will gain an understanding of the rich theology of grace in the NT and then receive a jolting challenge to relate our faith to the actual world in which we live. We may not completely agree with every point of exegesis nor even with the author's basic thesis, but we can hardly criticise unless we are prepared to do as much study and thinking as he has done and to come up with alternative answers. The attractively produced volume is replete with notes (at the end), bibliographies (interspersed), glossary (of technical terms), and index of authors; unfortunately, there are no indices of subjects and passages.

*Review by John W. Baigent,
West London Institute of Higher Education*

The Daily Study Bible (Old Testament). **Genesis** Volume 1 J. C. L. Gibson. 214pp. **Leviticus** G. A. F. Knight. 173pp. **Daniel** D. S. Russell. 234pp. Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh. £2.95 each.

These three volumes inaugurate a new series which will be of great interest to those readers who have over a good many years appreciated the New Testament **Daily Study Bible** commentaries by the late William Barclay. The English-speaking Old Testament world of scholarship lacks — it would seem — a communicator as skillful and effective as Barclay, so until now the **Daily Study Bible** has consisted of the New Testament volumes only. Now, however, the Saint Andrew Press plans to

complete coverage of the whole Bible. The new series is entrusted to the editorship of John Gibson (of the University of Edinburgh), who has written the first volume himself; in the absence of a Barclay, however, there is to be a considerable variety of authorship.

The series has a two-fold aim. It seeks to convey to a general public 'some of the more important results and fascinating insights' of recent scholarship, and also the Christian message of the Old Testament. The emphasis is more on the latter than the former. The combination is perhaps the chief fascination about these three volumes.

Some of the contributors are to be younger scholars, but all three of these writers are well-known. Dr. Gibson may be less known to the wider public, since most of his publications have been of a technical linguistic nature, but D. S. Russell and G. A. F. Knight are well-known, the former for his writings on Old Testament apocalyptic and intertestamental Judaism, the latter chiefly for his **Christian Theology of the Old Testament**. All three are Scots; Dr. Russell has been General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland since 1967, while Dr. Knight's last position before retirement was as Principal of the Pacific Theological College in Fiji.

Not surprisingly, all three accept widely-held critical positions on date and authorship, and this fact may immediately discourage some readers. However, it would be a pity to neglect these volumes purely on that account. Indeed, it could well be a revelation to more conservative readers to observe how it is possible to combine a moderately 'critical' position on such matters as date and authorship with firm Christian convictions and commitment and moreover with a devotional thrust.

The most predictable of the three is the **Daniel** commentary, probably because of the nature of **Daniel**. Dr. Russell draws out the relevance of the message of **Daniel**, both its narratives and its visions for the period of Antiochus Epiphanes especially; but he constantly makes that message relevant to our own age, or shows how the New Testament supplements the message of **Daniel**. He does not see **Daniel** as a blueprint for future history, but he cites with approval David Edwards's remark that 'it is

worth while to put the *broad pattern* of the Bible's interpretation of history alongside the news . . . to hold the Bible in one hand and today's newspaper in the other'. George Knight's study of **Leviticus** is particularly rewarding. Taken at a literal level, **Leviticus**, with its many detailed prescriptions for a bygone age, holds all too little interest for modern readers, and typology has often been the route for extracting devotional value from it. Such typology has frequently centred on Christ as sacrifice. Dr. Knight prefers to put emphasis on the worshipper and on God Himself — the two parties primarily involved in the sacrificial act. These emphases enable him to show in no little detail the varied needs of the people of God, on the one hand, and the character and demands of God on the other. He makes constant cross-reference to the New Testament, and no less than Dr. Russell offers challenging modern perspectives, as for instance when he extrapolates from **Leviticus 25** a new commandment 'Thou shalt not use DDT'. His treatment of such major topics as sin, sacrifice, and atonement is well worth reading.

The most fresh and vivid writing, however, comes from the pen of Dr. Gibson, who has set a very high standard for other contributors to follow; indeed, his treatment of **Genesis 1-11** bids fair to rival William Barclay, both for sheer readability and for the personal touch. One is never left in doubt as to Gibson's own opinions, and the result is that the reader often finds himself in mental dialogue with the author. Even when one disagrees with him, even quite strongly, there are lessons to be learned. For instance, Gibson makes the strange and unacceptable comment on the story of the curse of Canaan that 'it ought not to be in the Bible'; yet it must be confessed that — as he points out only too clearly — such passages have all too often been put to the most unchristian of uses by those with inclinations to racialism. How, then, should we face up to such passages? What positive lessons are we to glean from them?

Another example is Gibson's interpretation of **Genesis 2:16-17**, which makes God's words those of deliberate deception, though he eases the difficult theology of this by reference to the parable of the importunate

widow, which after all compares God to an unjust judge. The point of depicting God in such terms, he suggests, is 'to underline God's total abhorrence of man's proneness to disobey'. One can disagree with the precise exegesis without losing the value of Gibson's point.

One criticism of Gibson (unlike Russell and especially Knight) is that his very real insight into the mind of the Old Testament writers is not always matched by a particularly sympathetic understanding of some New Testament writers, notably Paul. This occasional fault may spoil the effect of the whole for some readers.

All in all, these three volumes make a promising start to a series which will, one hopes, prove to be suitable shelf-companions for William Barclay's New Testament volumes.

Review by Dr. D. F. Payne, University of Belfast

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Sure Thing John Allan. Kingsway. 64pp. 95p.

The Radical Christian Arthur Wallis. Kingsway. 192pp. £1.75.

Radical Discipleship Christopher Sugden. Marshalls. 214pp. £1.95.

How to Live the Christian Life Selwyn Hughes. Kingsway. 151pp. £1.60.

Walk in the Spirit Michael Harper. Kingsway. 91pp. £1.25.

Who Needs Satan? Clive Calver. Marshalls. 146pp. £1.50

Sure Thing by John Allan is a first rate, fast moving, easily read 64-page apologetics pocket-book. Clearly aimed at school students, it answers many of the common difficulties which people express, without getting bogged down in detail. School-boy misconceptions continue in the minds of university students, and in my experience, in the minds of 'the man in the street'. It must be admitted that Allan has little space to deal with genuine problems (e.g. suffering), but red herrings are effectively dismissed, and a positive case for Christianity is presented. I'd like to see this book in the hands of many a young person who is prepared to consider the Christian position as even a feasible option. It would also help young and wavering Christians to come to the assurance that their faith is founded on solid rock.

In **The Radical Christian**,

Arthur Wallis gives a 'from the shoulder' presentation of the Christian life. It is radical, and will give any reader a spiritual shake-up, which can only be a good thing. **Harvester** readers will be glad to see not only thoroughly biblical individual living being advocated, but the same standards applied to church life and order. However, most will have serious differences of opinion with Mr. Wallis on several issues, as his commitment to House Church Movement principles is evident, and indeed comes across as *the* Christian way. This is not a very suitable book for the Christian who has no grounding in Scripture; but for one who wants to keep walking in the searchlight of God's Word, Wallis brings challenge to thoroughgoing discipleship.

Avid readers of **Third Way** will enjoy Chris Sugden's **Radical Discipleship**, though its appeal to others may be limited! Reading very much like a quotation-filled thesis, it will be welcomed by only the very committed. While Sugden is certainly more thorough than **Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger**, he has nothing of Sider's persuasiveness. But if you want to follow up the **Rich Christians** line, Sugden will help your thinking. He is no armchair theologian, and in this book presents his own theology of life.

Selwyn Hughes provides a much lighter 'read' in **How to Live the Christian Life**. I confess that I react badly to 'How To' books, and I am not an 'Every Day with Jesus' fan. But once you get past the quasi-technical counselling jargon (which tends to complicate relatively simple issues) and his poor exposition of *Romans 7* and *8*, there is some good practical teaching on devotional life, discovering gifts, and triumph in temptation and trouble. (This is a reprint of a 1974 publication, so check your shelves before buying! If you do buy, lend it to your friends to read the second half of the book.)

Walk in the Spirit by Michael Harper is another reissue — from 1968 this time. It presents very early Fountain Trust teaching which has certainly not met with general acceptance in Brethren assemblies. However, now that the 'charismatic debate' seems to cause less steam, and much of the 'arguing about words' is past, perhaps we would all do

well to come afresh to the Scriptures and ask the Lord to lead us more fully in the ways of the Spirit. Too many of us have thrown out the baby with the bathwater! A sympathetically critical reading of Harper may be rewarding, but there are certainly better books available.

I am disappointed that I cannot recommend Clive Calver's recent book more highly. **With a church like this ... Who Needs Satan?** is rather too wordy and anecdotal, although some of the stories are quite touching.



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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The June Question

I have a good deal of correspondence from people in many parts of the world who have engaged in private Bible study and, as a result, have come to hold minority views (the minority sometimes being a minority of one). But several of them, instead of submitting their conclusions tentatively to the judgment of other Bible students, are so sure they are right that they regard those who take another line (especially a 'traditional' line) as being in serious error. Could there be some psychological reason for this tendency?

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

I approach this question with some diffidence; had the question merely asked for comments and not mentioned 'some psychological reason' I should be happier to give an answer. But perhaps these two approaches ultimately amount to much the same thing. It seems to me that these correspondents should have taken notice of the words: 'In the midst of counsellors there is safety' (*Prov. 11:14*), and also of the middle three qualities of the fruit of the Spirit: 'patience, kindness, goodness' (*Gal. 5:22*) which should be one's attitude to others. Like so many readers of this magazine I have had no formal training in psychology, but I have always understood it, briefly, to mean how one's mind is expected to react to circumstances and information when presented in a certain way. Perhaps the ignoring of the aforementioned OT advice and NT graces makes room for the opposite attitudes to occupy the mind, and so to act accordingly even to the regret of one's self on reflection; and perhaps in this way there is a 'psychological reason'. And I say this as one who holds a few minority views (not alone) in preference to the traditional ones.

Mr. Clive Govier replies:

Could it not be that truth is always in the minority and must fight for its existence against misconceptions hallowed by time and buttressed by learning? I offer the following examples in support. Evangelicals are still a minority in Western European Christendom. Few 'Christian' scholars are convinced that our Lord's view of the OT was the correct one (in re: plenary inspiration) — and did He not, supremely, stand alone? The validity of the Greek text underlying the Authorized Version (NT) has been destroyed by the critical theories of Bishop Westcott and F. J. Hort. We are now reduced to accepting some Scriptures with the caveat 'the reliability of these passages is not sufficiently substantiated'. Dean Burgon is cast in the rôle of a power-crazed King Canute — yet the depth of his critical scholarship stands as a continuing witness to the unprejudiced (see William Pickering's *The Identity of the N.T. Text*, Nelson). 'Creationists' are a strange phenomenon in a scientific world dominated by the concept of evolution. They will always be a source of humour to those who have never questioned seriously this most 'sacred' of all secular dogmas. Papal Infallibility was opposed by a learned majority (Cardinals and Archbishops among them) at Vatican Council I including the courageous Bishop Strossmayer (see his speech appended in *Papal Power* by H. T. Hudson, Evan. Press 1981). Yet for the sake of visible unity the affirmative vote for it was overwhelming.

As to the place of predictive prophecy in Christian thinking today, those who read and get help from *The Apocalypse*, whatever their assumptions, are undoubtedly a minority. Yet it is the only NT book which promises a special blessing to those who study it (*Apoc. 1:3*) and 'keep' it (*22:7*).

If a man believes he has a preserve of insight in the above areas and then feels he has discovered new truth as to e.g. the significance of Daniel's visions in the context of The Revelation, he is not likely to allow his minority status to attenuate his dogmatism. It was doubtless the force of J. N. Darby's utter conviction that largely accounted for his pre-tribulational view of the Rapture being once prominent among Brethren. And was it not Luther whose conviction on more essential matters made him willing to stand alone against all the Councils of Christendom in the spirit of Paul, who waged unceasing war against Judaism in the Church, even against the prince of Apostles (*Gal. 2:11*)?

Dr. R. H. Kipping (K.St.J., M.B., Ch.B.) replies:

So Professor Bruce asks (if I understand him aright) is there a psychological reason why odd people hold odd views and refuse to part with them. The answer surely must be, like the school-boy's — it all depends. In 1780 or thereabouts the word 'psychological' came into the English language to denote a state of mind unrelated to physical tissue such as the brain. It is possible to induce a person to change an attitude of mind by reason alone (God says so in Isaiah — 'Come now let us reason together', and He did so also with Job — beautifully expressed in *The Living Bible*, Job chapter 38 etc.) but the inexorable law of cause and effect means that every effect has a cause, even a mental state and a 'fixed' idea. The human babe at birth has a head circumference of 12 inches which increases to 19 inches at 12 months. It is this extra post natal brain development that God has given to humans that gives them the ability of conceptual thought and of converse with their Maker, to appreciate the thoughts and actions of

Eternal Wisdom. The quality of this portion of the brain, in common with the rest of the body, depends upon ancestry (genes), food, care and attention (environment), physical, mental and spiritual education. These can be warped, deformed, destroyed at any stage. Hence no wonder that personality, mental or 'psychological' states, frames of mind vary so much in individuals, and even from hour to hour. In cultured societies reason is probably the greatest influence in making people change their minds. Perhaps the Professor can draw some comfort from the fact that God used a clap of thunder (according to some) and a voice from heaven (according to the recipient — the voice of Jesus) to make Saul the sinner change his mind and become Paul, the servant of the Lord Jesus and a saint.

Mr. William P. Holden replies:

Whether the minority view is submitted or not for another interpretation there are psychological reasons for the views of the minority, the majority, the novice and the 'authority'.

What we do is influenced by the people with whom we meet and worship. A local church does affect the members and it makes different demands of its differing members.

Throughout the many facets of the set problem there is highlighted the forces which shape thought and action; these

being the manifestations of personality and the impact of the local church.

The internal system of personality cannot be seen only as a subject in its own right, it must also be seen as fashioned by and expressed in the church milieu. It was Allport who summed up this approach in the loaded words of group pressure, conformity, independence and deviancy.

The local church has an inborn group character — the working of the Holy Spirit as a regulating mechanism. In this closed system traditionalism may be viewed as a stereotype or the inborn unalterable psychological characteristics. The church imposes the constraint to play the rôle of 'saint' or 'person dwelling in the Spirit'. The way in which this rôle is performed is determined by the original personality make up — the old man, and the continued performance of the rôle which the church expects and enforces — the new man. This conditioning reinforces certain traits and extinguishes others to determine behaviour.

Campbell Morgan when discussing Divine government as seen in the message of Isaiah wrote, 'All conduct is the outcome of character, and where the character is holy, the conduct is righteous.'

Professor Bruce replies!

One of these days I may submit an article comprising answers to several of

the questions that have been asked under the above heading. But since Mr. Ellison says (June 1982, p.16) that it would have been better if I had answered my question about Phil. 3:14 myself, instead of putting it to others, let me answer it.

In a commentary on Philippians (GNB text, forsooth!) which I have just finished writing, I have said: 'what can the prize be but that final gaining of Christ for the sake of which, as Paul has said, everything else is well lost?'

This is not the view of our late mutual friend, to whom Mr. Ellison refers: he believed the prize to be participation in the first resurrection and the ensuing millennial kingdom. He and those who made him suffer for his answer are now able to resolve their disagreement in an environment where they know even as also they are known. But to gain Christ is a better prize even than reigning with him. As Paul has indicated in Phil. 1:21, death is gain for the believer to whom life means Christ, because death will bring more of Christ than was possible in life.

I agree most emphatically with Mr. Ellison that to gain Christ, to know Christ, to love Christ, to be like Christ cannot be forced on anyone. If my question has stimulated him to write as he has done about the superior value of Christ-likeness over all the rewards held out in the New Testament, then I am glad that I asked it.

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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.

Going to College '82

From Mr. Jonathan Lamb

Dear Mr. Coad,

September will mean the start of a new era in life for many young people as they go to college or university for the first time. The student world can appear glamorous and a little frightening, but it certainly provides many opportunities: to build new friendships and make many fresh discoveries. For the Christian, it can be stimulating and demanding.

Christian students have recognised the pressures and the opportunities facing them at college and have formed Christian Unions with the aim of better withstanding the pressures and of making the most of the opportunities. Not the least of these is the openness of many students to consider the truth about Jesus Christ. CUs now exist in all the universities and many of the colleges (polys, techs, education, agriculture, art, further ed. etc.) aiming to strengthen the faith of their members and pass on the truth about Jesus Christ to fellow students. These groups have been making preparations to welcome new students but, faced with large intakes, they value any help which they can receive. In some colleges where there is as yet no Christian witness it may be possible to start one by linking up new Christians.

If any of your readers will be students or have friends going to college next September who would benefit from links with other Christians, we should be very pleased to hear from them and to link them up with the Christian Union at their future place of study. If they write to me, Universities' Secretary, Univer-

sities and Colleges Christian Fellowship, 38 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GP, giving details of college/university, term address and subject (as much information as possible to help us make a speedy link-up), I will pass on the news to the CUs. I would also be happy to supply introductory leaflets which may help to set the scene more fully for new students. I am sure that an early link with other Christians helps new students to quickly settle into their new life and makes for a continuing growth of biblical witness in the student world. Perhaps I may add that if any of your readers would like an up-to-date report on the work of CUs which make up UCCF, I will gladly send one on request.

Yours faithfully,

Jonathan Lamb

Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship, 38 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GP

The Leprosy Mission

From Mr. K. Morgan Crane

Dear Mr. Coad,

Readers of *The Harvester* may be interested to know that the Leprosy Mission has produced video tapes of one of their most popular and educational films about the Mission's healing ministry in India, entitled 'The Net'. This is available in the following systems:

1. VHS
2. Betamax
3. Sony U-Matic (¾")

There is no set charge for the hire of video material, although a donation towards expenses is appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

K. Morgan Crane

P/A to Director

The Leprosy Mission, 50 Portland Place, London W1N 3DG

Mr. George Ritchie Rice

From Mrs. Douglas Bell

Dear Mr. Coad,

It was a great pleasure to read the tribute to the late George Ritchie Rice in the June *Harvester*.

May I follow it with another personal remembrance in gratitude to God for his life and witness.

For several years prior to the last war, Mr. Ritchie Rice was living in Kensington, and was a great source of strength and encouragement to my late father, Cecil Davis, and other elders in the small Kensington assembly, who maintained the witness of a Sunday evening Evangelistic Service in Kensington Town Hall.

These services had been carried on since early in the century with much blessing over the years, and I feel there must be some reading these words who remember the witness there with thanksgiving to God.

Mrs. Elvira and Mr. Ritchie Rice were frequent visitors in our home and as a young Christian I owed much to their prayerful interest in all that concerned us.

Last week I stood at the bus stop in Kensington High Street and watched the demolition of the Town Hall taking place, with many nostalgic memories of my youth. It was never possible to restart the services there after the war owing to a council decision that the Hall was not to be opened on Sundays, but surely Heaven records a harvest reaped there over which we shall rejoice together in Eternity.

Very sincerely yours,

Phyllis L. Bell

40 Grosvenor Avenue, East Sheen, London SW14 8BX

'Lord of the Dance'

From Professor F. F. Bruce

Dear Mr. Coad,

Miss Mullen's plea against attempts to update the wording of our heritage of

classical hymnody is one that I fully share.

But, as regards the editorial P.S. to her letter (in the June issue of *The Harvester*, p.18), my understanding of Sydney Carter's song, 'Lord of the Dance', is that the dance is eternal life — 'the life that'll never, never die'. If this be so, then the lines which refer to the cross underline the folly of those who imagined they could lift the life which was the light of men. But I agree, Isaac Watts does it better.

Yours sincerely,

F. F. Bruce

The Crossways, 2 Temple Road, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 9BA

Action in Worship

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,

Concerning Mr. Lovering's interesting letter about 'Action in worship' (June '82), let us take a cue from the author and consider two different groups of people.

The first consists of Christians who know that believers are in the good of the new covenant and who understand something of what that entails. They will realize that, whereas in OT times spiritual realities were symbolized by outward activities (e.g. the sprinkling of blood), today God writes His law in our hearts. Such a group would almost certainly wish to worship God with a minimum of outward activity, and be more than content with 'reading and verbal explanation'.

The second group consists of those present at a 'family service' with no dramatization. This group will, hopefully, contain a mixture of believers and unbelievers, and have a high proportion of younger people. Even if the reading were simple and the explanation ample, some might well come away wondering what it was all about.

We live at a time when, every day, most see the news illustrated on TV by action; and can watch history re-enacted in plays — a wonderful way to impress on the mind what otherwise would have to be learned by reading only. What parents have not enjoyed the Nativity plays at their children's — in my case grandchildren's — schools?

It was to help make plain some point that He wished to 'get over' that the Lord set a child in the midst; said 'Bring me a penny'; waited two days before going to Lazarus's grave (*John 11:4, 15, 21-27*); and healed the palsied man let down through the roof (*Luke 5:22-26*). Is it to be thought that such a One would disapprove the dramatization of His

message, suitably and on appropriate occasions? Rather, in this TV age, if there were resistance to a prompting of the Spirit towards such dramatization — I'm not too sure about Dance — might not the Lord wish to remind us that for their own generation, the sons of this world are wiser than the sons of the light (RV)?

Mr. Lovering quoted *1 Cor. 13:11* immediately after referring to children's meetings; but care is needed here. As I see things, that verse refers to growth to maturity in secular life and Paul wishes for his readers a corresponding growth in things spiritual (*cf. 1 Cor. 14:20*). But the reaching of maturity in that sphere is an aim, not a realized goal; because he goes on 'For now we see through a glass darkly' — 'now I know in part' (v.9 also). Maturity in things spiritual is not to be equated with the ability of one to comprehend verbal presentation, as opposed to the need another may feel for 'words with actions'. Spiritual maturity relates to love rather than intelligence.

In fine, it is not the method we use but the message we preach that is of first importance (*cf. Phil 1:18*).

Yours sincerely in the Master's service,
L. L. Fox

9 Warden Close, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0JL

Salt of the Earth

From Dr. John S. Andrews

Dear Editor,

I read your May issue with its editorial, the articles by Brian Mills and Keith Walker and the Readers' Forum, after attending a conference entitled *Salt of the Earth* organised in Glasgow on May 15 by the Librarians' Christian Fellowship. After a talk by our Life Vice-President, Philip H. Sewell, on the historical and biblical background to social commitment, we saw an impressive videotape showing the Church of Scotland's work among various underprivileged classes. In the afternoon Angus J. Howat, the Principal Librarian of Elgin, discussed the practical aspects of social commitment for librarians. I gave an epilogue.

The addresses will be published in full in our annual journal, *The Christian Librarian*, in June or July, and the epilogue in the *LCF Newsletter* in August. Copies are available from Graham Hedges, 34 Thurlstone Avenue, Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex, IG3 9DU. The journal costs 80p, the *Newsletter*, 35p. Graham would be glad to send details of the Fellowship to anyone interested. Non-librarians may apply for associate

membership. The doctrinal basis is similar to that of the Evangelical Alliance and the UCCF.

Readers may like to know that Professor Bruce has kindly agreed to give this year's Annual Lecture, which will be at 2.30 p.m. on November 13, at Loughborough Library, Granby Street, Loughborough, Leicestershire. Non-librarians are welcome. The subject is 'Two centuries of New Testament criticism'. Fuller details are available from Graham Hedges.

Yours fraternally,

John S. Andrews

270 Bowerham Road, Lancaster LA1 4LP

Theories of Creation

From Mr. J. E. Todd

Dear Mr. Coad,

Dr. Packer in his article 'The Creation of the World' in the April issue lists the three theories of the six days of creation. May I suggest a possible fourth.

Ignoring the unfortunate divisions of the text caused by the man-made reference system of chapters and verses, the creation passage ends in the middle of verse 4 of chapter two of *Genesis*. Are the opening verses of chapter two the explanation of the days in chapter one? The sabbath was not introduced until the time of Moses (*Ex. 31:12-13, Deut. 5:15, Neh. 9:13-14*). Does Moses take up the eight-stage work of creation (note 'God said' eight times) and use it as an illustration of the sabbath principle? Just as God worked on earth and now rests from his creatorial work, so the Israelites must now work and then rest. But Moses takes the illustration a step further; just as the Israelite is to work six days and then rest on the sabbath, so Moses portrays God as working six days and then resting. To achieve this illustration Moses places two creative acts in the third and sixth days. Do the passages *Exodus 20:8-11* and *31:12-17* imply that God instructed Moses to use the account of creation as an illustration of the sabbath principle? The opening verses of *Genesis* tell us that God has created this planet which is our home. Also that the Israelite is to observe the sabbath. Are we correct in treating the passage as if it is a scientific treatise on cosmology and anthropology? Yours sincerely,
J. E. Todd
47 Rother Avenue, Brimington, Chesterfield, Derbyshire SA3 1LG

NEWS PAGE

Africa

Student Work. A letter from Chua Wee Hian refers to 'fantastic growth' in student groups in Africa. 'Many groups have seen their membership doubled or trebled in recent months.' Another exciting development is a new emphasis on mission. African believers are being challenged about the need to pioneer student work in Portuguese — and French-speaking countries. There is also a great interest among Egyptian young people in studying the Bible and a real need to find suitable help in translating and adapting Bible study material for the local scene.

Uganda. After eight years of chaos followed by nine months of war, the need of Uganda continues to be absolutely desperate. A ministry of reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation is both difficult and dangerous because the country has inherited a legacy of guns in the hands of criminals, insecurities of all kinds and rampant corruption and greed. The Karamoja region has been badly hit by famine but the need is general. Festo Kivengere writes: 'Bishops come to us for help and we are very glad to work with them in the dioceses in areas of need and relief, in catering for orphans, in feeding school children, in helping with establishing cleaner water supplies, in saving people from perishing in typhoid and dysentery epidemics. We need more hoes so that people can work to provide food like peas, beans and maize. We also need building materials . . . We need simple things like cement, and iron bars, and, of course, we

need tipper lorries for transportation and for planting trees . . . We need men and women and churches with funds to come to our aid in reconstructing and rehabilitating our beautiful Uganda.' He points out that giving people work will change the trend from crime — stealing, breaking and entering and blackmarketeering. When a programme such as this is allied to the preaching of the Gospel there is some hope even for ravaged Uganda.

The Bible

Bulletins from the Emmaus Bible School (UK) contain constant reminders of the power of the Scriptures to change lives. The conversions that result from this ministry are a Divine work — but how much do they owe to the prayers of believers? **Harvester** readers should not forget to 'water the seed' in this way. *The Pocket Testament League* has devised a way of bringing the Gospel of John to people of China. The Chinese government has advised its people to learn English and millions of students are enthusiastically doing so. So they welcome a copy of the Gospel printed in two parallel languages — Chinese and English — bound in an attractive cover and called *The Living Water*. As young people in China search for a deeper meaning in life as well as a knowledge of the English language, there are three ways in which **Harvester** readers can help with this programme. One by daily prayer for the people of China — both Christian and unsaved. By practical support to finance printing costs (£60 will pay for 1000 bi-lingual gospels). And by undertaking to post some of the Gospels to

China from home or church, using names and addresses which will be supplied by the Pocket Testament League (address: 16 Holwood Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 3EB; telephone 01-460 5317).

Centenarian

June 24 was an important day for Mr. Sydney Arthur Kirby of Faringdon, Oxfordshire. It was Mr. Kirby's 100th birthday and he received a telegram from Buckingham Palace. Born in Cardiff in 1882, he later left home to work in Bristol where at the age of 22 he married his landlady's daughter, Miss Rena Grace Gibson. 'Born again' for a long life of service in 1906, they were received into assembly fellowship and later baptized at Ashburton in a private garden lake, the ceremony being announced by a town crier. Mr. Kirby's career took him to various parts of Devon, to Abingdon, and to Woolwich. At this point (during the 1914-18 war) he and his family moved to Welling, Kent, where they were in fellowship for nearly 40 years. In 1953, retired, they moved to Westgate-on-Sea whence they migrated to live with their married daughter in Faringdon in 1967. They celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary before Rena was 'called home' in 1969. Sydney and his daughter Beryl (now a widow) are in fellowship at Southmoor (a village cottage meeting) where he still takes part in all respects at the 'morning meeting'. The celebration party included his son, four daughters, ten grandchildren, nineteen of twenty-three grandchildren. It was held at Faringdon Baptist Church where Beryl's son-in-law is the

working part-time pastor.

Evangelism

Stephen Gillham writes from Wimborne, Dorset, reporting a variety of activities during the Spring of 1982. He has been particularly challenged about three matters for which he requests prayer. 'Firstly, literally hundreds of people of all ages have been confronted with the Gospel this year and yet the response to Christ has been so, so, small. Do pray that in these needy days we shall see a God-given increase to the preaching of the Gospel. Secondly, over the last 9 years we have had contact with so many young people, who have made professions, and have been enthusiastic. Sadly we learn that a great number of these have lost interest and are following the ways of the world. What can we do? This surely must concern every Christian and assembly and church in the county. Are we right in going ahead in evangelistic endeavours when we are not able to care for those we already have? Thirdly, so many of our churches don't seem to be making any impact in their areas. If they closed their doors tomorrow, would they really be missed? Let us pray for a Revival in Dorset in these days.' Three items in his schedule which will be of interest to readers are as follows; '(a) July 22-August 16. Dorset Adventure Time Camps. This year numbers are down somewhat on previous years. Do please pray that some who we would like to see at Camp will be able to come. As usual we face a shortage of Tent Leaders; again we ask for prayer that the Lord will provide

the right people for each task. Do pray that we might be given wisdom in every aspect of the Camp work.

(b) September 4. Dorchester Show Outreach. Plans are at an early stage but we have booked a site to take the large marquee. Please pray for help to be given in all the preparations.

(c) September 6-11. Young People's Holiday on Exmoor. We still have room for any young people over 16 who would like to join us for the week. We trust that it will be a time of spiritual relaxation and refreshment.'

The Haven School of Evangelism has produced a highly attractive brochure outlining the courses available. There is an impressive list of tutors although unfortunately it is not made clear which of these are on the permanent staff and which are visiting lecturers only. Prospective students must be single and over 18. References will at some stage be required, one of which must be from the local church or fellowship. 'We do not ask for specific educational requirement to our course, nor even a sense of call [but] a genuine commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and a desire to serve him by obeying the great commission to "go into all the world and preach the gospel".'

Italy

Elizabeth and Brian Hodges report that Elizabeth has had her spinal operation and they are continuing to pray for a full recovery which will take 12-18 months. During her stay in hospital she was so blessed with 'unofficial' visitors in the way of Christian staff and various ministers who stayed for a chat in passing that one nurse remarked, 'I really can't work out what religion you are!'. Brian has been spending some time working in the Manchester University Library on a voluntary basis, cataloguing some Italian letters and documents for the Christian Brethren Archive there. 'We cannot share any definite plans yet about our future but we think we can say that the tunnel does not feel as dark or as long as it did.' They all hope to go to Italy for the summer as usual, doctors permitting.

Meanwhile, letters from Italian believers speak of the work being done in the earthquake area. 'Many brothers and sisters . . . worked night and day for many months to meet the needs of the earthquake victims. Many sacrifices have been made, enduring fatigue, cold and hunger. We lived in the same way as those who had lost their homes, how many times we have cried with those who have lost home and family. We can say in a certain sense the earthquake hit us too.'

'I would like to tell you two stories to bring praise to the Lord. One day I signed a cheque for 10 million lire, not knowing that there was not that money in the bank, the manager sent for me and said he would not pay it. In that moment I was shocked, but with a burst of faith I told him that during the day I would cover the cheque, but really I did not know how. The morning afterwards Brian arrived bringing me a cheque for 20 million lire. Seeing that amount I wanted to cry seeing how the Lord had responded to my act of faith, so, punctual to my appointment I went and paid the money in the bank. The second time, I had been a long time without money, no answer from God, a great silence. Night and day I pleaded with the Lord, on 22 March, Brian arrived again, bringing me another generous gift in money. Here also I saw the hand of God and how he had used him another time. I can say with certainty that right from the first day I have undertaken this work with faith alone, without seeking money from anywhere. It hasn't been the money which has given rise to the work, but the work of faith which has provided the money. The Holy Spirit acts according to his will through many people with various means and systems. This experience has made me understand again that God does not work only through big organisations and groups, but also and principally by means of his individual children. Through the many bureaucratic battles, and the enormous problems and difficulties the work of God has been realised.'

Leprosy Mission

Outstretched Hands is the title of the annual report of the

Leprosy Mission published in May 1982. It is attractively presented and full of information giving ground for praise and prayer.

London Bible College

The end of the summer term saw the retirement of Dr. Donald Guthrie, Head of the New Testament Department, after 33 years on the staff of the College. Author of many books, and with guest lectureships in the USA and Europe, Donald Guthrie is known all over the world for his outstanding *New Testament Introduction* which represented a landmark in evangelical scholarship and presented conservative positions with unparalleled fulness and authority. Most recently, his *New Testament Theology* has shown every sign of achieving a similar recognition.

Music

Hildenborough Hall has from time to time organised Making Music weeks. During June they organised a School of Christian Music. Visiting lecturers included Graham Kendrick, Derek Kidner, Christopher Idle, and Steve James, Music Director at St. Helen's, Bishopsgate.

The wide-ranging syllabus included seminars on such topics as biblical understanding of music in worship, arranging music for instruments as a more inspiring accompaniment for congregational singing and differentiating between good and bad music. The emphasis throughout the two week course was on practical work with the chance to continually bring 'work-in-progress' before the encouraging and well-discerning audience. Nigel Styles summed up the hopes of the School in this way: 'Teaching principles provides a good foundation and the potential in their application is great. Our prayer is that each student can go home with particular ideas to put in practice so that the worship in those churches represented may more and more be the kind of worship which gives God pleasure.'

Publicity

From Release Publications comes news of the availability of the latest section of their handbook on communication

for churches, 'How to be a public relations officer for your church'. It is a re-issue, in revised form, of one of the 12 sections of 'Say Something Simple', which is issued as a supplement to the quarterly package of resource material for local church communication 'Release Nationwide'. When the original edition of this file first came out it was described by one widely experienced minister as the best guide to the subject of local church 'PR' he had ever seen. It covers the reasons for having good contacts with the media, the way radio, TV and newspaper newsrooms are organised; how to have a 'nose for news' and to build relationships; how to present news releases — with full examples of the way to do it and the way not to do it! The guide was written by professional journalists with experience of the world of public relations — giving both sides of the picture. It is obtainable by subscribers to Release Nationwide, which is available from 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 4DN. Free sample copies of the total pack are available.

Radio

World Radio Missionary Fellowship (HCJB) are involved in a variety of property projects at the moment. A new hospital is being built in Shell, Ecuador, following a ground-breaking ceremony on March 21. Swedish agencies are financing the undertaking although money is not yet available for a footbridge which is needed to connect the existing property with the new site. Meanwhile, from a very different setting in Bingley, Malcolm Goodman writes to say that the WRMF (GB&I) is looking forward to moving to Bradford, where a property will either be purchased or built. There is an urgent need for extra office space to provide for the increased workload — a need also for finance to provide the new premises. Meanwhile, *FEBA* has expressed serious concern about the financial problems being faced. The average monthly expenditure is £75,000 and the average monthly income is £68,000. The trend of their income is going up all the time despite monthly

fluctuations. The trouble is that it is not going up fast enough to keep pace with inflation. Cutting back would involve not only reducing broadcast hours but also, as a result, a reduction of local staff which would have implications for FEBA as employers in the eyes of the Seychelles government and would also do great damage to the Association's credibility with its radio audience since in a broadcasting ministry a commitment to broadcasting has to be made and it is not possible to make continual adjustments to the level of broadcasting according to income. There is clearly a need for prayer and for practical fellowship.

The Larne Gospel Hall, Curran Road, Larne, Co. Antrim, will be on the air on September 12, 1982. The service will be conducted by John McQuoid and the speaker will be Norman McCall who like John is an elder of the assembly meeting in Larne Gospel Hall. Readers of the *Harvester* will wish to pray for the service and to encourage Christian friends within the range of Radio Ulster (224 metres) to listen to the broadcast.

Relief

World Vision has made an immediate grant of £56,000 to the World Council of Churches for a large emergency relief aid effort being mounted in battle-torn Lebanon by the Middle East Council of Churches. The funds donated from all sources are being used by the MECC to provide desperately needed food, blankets and medical supplies for the war victims in South Lebanon and the battle zone in and around Beirut. Peter Searle, UK Director of World Vision of Britain, reports: 'The grant by World Vision International is in addition to the £294,000 plus budget which World Vision has allocated this year for our on-going "Childcare" and relief projects in Lebanon.'

Travel Grants

Churchill Travelling Fellowships are open to all UK citizens of any age or occupation, and since no educational or professional qualifications are needed, they are of special interest to people who would

not be eligible for other types of grants. 'Churchill Fellowships are not normally given for academic studies.' The object of the awards is to enable those who would not otherwise have a chance, to gain a better understanding of the lives and work of people in countries overseas, and to bring back useful knowledge, skill and experience for the benefit of our community. About 100 awards are made annually, and there are now over 1500 Churchill Fellows.

Grants are offered in different categories each year: candidates whose trade, profession or personal interest are covered by any of them may propose a project they wish to carry out in whatever countries they choose. The only requirement is that applicants have to show that they can make effective use of the opportunity both while they are abroad and when they return. The final selection for the next group of awards will be made by interview in London in January 1983. Successful candidates will be expected to start their travels during that year, making their own plans and arrangements within the scope of the grants. The grant will cover return air fare, plus all travel and living expenses abroad for a period of about two months.

The employment and personal interest categories for 1983 include cooks, bakers and confectioners, emergency services such as ambulance fire and rescue, weavers and workers in wool, lace and leather . . . Also 'ministers of religion' — a category that might include some readers of the *Harvester* who are 'full-time' Christian workers. For further information, send a postcard to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust, 15 Queen's Gate Terrace, London SW7 5PR. The closing date for completed application forms is October 27, 1982.

Victoria Institute

'A mixed bag' occupied the annual meeting of the Victoria Institute on May 22. Instead of the usual symposium on a particular topic, the subjects ranged from 19th century church history to the nature of the universe. The meeting started with a paper on the life and

particularly the theology of Charles E. Raven (1885-1964). Michael Collis gave a detailed account of the background and experience of this outstanding liberal theologian, and then concentrated on his attempts to produce a 'scientifically intelligible theology'. However, Raven's attempts to bring scientific and religious truths into a harmonious whole led him to reject ideas that didn't fit into his framework and thus to his reinterpreting Scripture in a way that did not do justice to the holiness of God and also the sinfulness of man. Christians are challenged to present Christian truth in a scientific world, but must achieve this without distorting biblical truth.

The next paper was presented by Kenneth Brownell under the lengthy title: 'The Willing Sorte: Voluntaryism & The Heritage of 19th Century Protestant Nonconformity'. This concerned the struggles the Congregationalists faced in holding to the Voluntary Principle during the 1800s. Should the Church be completely independent from the State and its influence or, as the Anglican church argued, should the Church seek to influence society by being involved in it? The debate continues today, and the lessons of history should be well heeded.

Possibly the highlight of the day came with Prof. Sir Norman Anderson's Presidential Address: 'Some Thoughts On The Incarnation'. He gave a brief outline of the history of the Christological debate, with a greater emphasis on the recent debate provoked by the Myth of God Incarnate School. But this school of radical theologians presents Jesus as genuinely man — and no more. The human Jesus only acted divinely — he was not truly God. Prof. Anderson countered these claims as totally contrary to New Testament teaching and the experience and witness of the Church down the ages. He also pointed out that an objective view of the Atonement was impossible from this standpoint, and ended by reaffirming the 'mainstream' view of the Incarnation. Despite ill-health Prof. Anderson coped admirably.

The meeting finished with Prof. Robert Boyd talking on recent

ideas regarding the creation of the cosmos in the light of continuing research into space. He dwelt on the meaning of space and time and warned us not to be too complacent in our theological thinking about such things. He also covered the theory of relativity and the creation of the cosmos through the 'Big Bang'. In his light-hearted but informative manner Prof. Boyd helped to end the annual meeting by leaving the audience with much to think about.

Home Calls

Samuel Frederick Hugh Butcher at Colyford, Devon, on June 3, 1982, aged 80: just less than six months after the homecall of his wife Zillah May. For many years at Woking, and later in Devon, they were known for their quiet faithful service to the servants of God. Without children of their own, they took many of the Lord's children into their hearts, and many have reason to thank God for their lives.

Harold Henry Nye on May 5, aged 81. A member of the small group that met in St. Edward's Passage, Cambridge, in 1926, his enthusiasm strengthened the Young People's work later at the Liberal Assembly Rooms and in Panton Hall which was opened in 1932. He served for over 40 years as a much valued Overseer. Enthusiastic in evangelism, he was also most helpful in his devotional ministry of the Word. In spite of heavy domestic responsibilities, increased by a larger than average amount of family illnesses, he never spared himself in his spiritual commitments. At the Thanksgiving Funeral Service the full attendance, representing Panton Hall, Queen Edith Chapel, Roseford Chapel, North Arbury Chapel and a number of outlying country assemblies, bore eloquent testimony to the esteem in which he was held.

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

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12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received by the Fund during June amounted to £1,227.96.

FULL TIME SERVICE

The Assembly at Roman Road Hall, Motherwell, have much joy in commending Mr. and Mrs. Ray Keilty to full time service for the Lord, and our prayer is that their service will be blessed of the Lord, and that many may find Salvation through their testimony and witness.

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.:
Exmouth Beach Mission 1-20; Cumbria 21-31.

Campbell, B.:
Carnhell Green 1; Falmouth 2-6; Marthoe Plymouth Camp 7-14; Falmouth 15-22; Pembroke 23-31.

Clifford, D. L.:
Poulner; St. Leonards; Charminster, Bournemouth.

Galyer, W. S.:
Dorking 1; Fetcham 4; Eastbourne area 7-17; Walthamstow 22; Perth 29.

Gillham, S.:
Dorset Adventure Time Camps 1-17; Annual holiday 18-29; Charminster Chapel/Harman's Cross 30.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Broadstairs, Kent 1; Melton Constable, Norfolk 8; Bottesdale, Norfolk 22; Harnham, Wilts 29.

Lambert, P. A.:
Tent Mission, Pertom 1-20; Poole 22-29.

Leighton, D.:
Tent Crusades — Darwen, Lancs 6-22; Lytham St. Annes, Lancs 28-Sept. 19.

Lowther, G. K.:
Cumbria 1, 2; Grimsby, Lincs and Humberside 3-31.

Phillips, C. F.:
Oakwood, Harlow 1; South Ealing 5; Hemel Hempstead 8; Meadowcroft, Bowness 21-28.

Pierce, D. H.:
Allerbridge 1; Barnstaple 2, 9, 16, 22, 23; Tavistock 8; Beach Mission, Woolacombe 8-20; Braunton 15; Holiday Bible Club, Barnstaple 23-27.

Short, S. S.:
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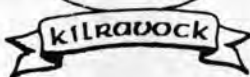
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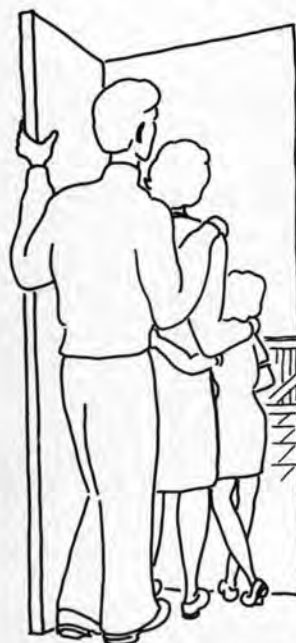
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INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'

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Editorial

'REJOICE . . .'

'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say Rejoice.' Paul, as usual, laid his finger precisely on the spot. The rejoicing man or woman is a winsome person; a generous person; a forgiving person. The rejoicing person bears no grudges, no secret envy, no sourly critical spirit. The world is better when such a person passes by. Shadows are a little lighter, burdens easier, the good is brighter, and evil is ashamed.

The pity of it is that so few of us are good rejoicers. Even our faith is too often a darkly serious matter, a weight upon ourselves and a heaviness upon our fellows. Like the Pharisees of old, our tendency is too often to bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders: and if we do not emulate their hypocrisy by refusing to touch them even with a finger, then it is because we have first made our own lives burdensome too.

Our God is the Greatest: a God immense in forgiveness and love and righteousness. A God Who, because of His holiness, has reconciled us to Himself through the death of His Son. A God of beauty and happiness; of justice and of mercy: a God too of transparent honesty and sanity — even if in our attempts to bear witness to Him we too often diminish Him and cause Him to appear arbitrary and capricious. A God Who has no delight in cruelty or selfishness or violence though the world be never so full of them. In that wonderful lesson with which the story of Jonah finishes:

'Do you do well to be angry for the plant?' And Jonah said, 'I do well to be angry, angry enough to die.' And the Lord said, 'You pity the plant, for which you did not labour, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night, and perished in a night. And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?'

How many Ninevehs does He pity today?

A CHRISTIAN AND HIS UNION

Pierre Meylan

This article is reprinted from the magazine of French-speaking Swiss assemblies, Semailles et Moisson, and deals with a subject of considerable topical interest.

'Hear the cases between your brethren and judge righteously between a man and his brother or the alien that is with him. You shall not be partial in judgment. You shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not be afraid of the face of man for the judgment is God's' (Deut. 1:16-17).

In October 1980 a conference took place in Monnetier-Mornex. There were Bible studies on the subject of work by Professor Henri Blocher and also testimonies from Christians engaged at various levels in industry. Among these was one from a brother well known in the assemblies of the Suisse Romande, Pierre Meylan, who shared his experiences as a Christian actively involved in trades union activity. Since this type of involvement appeared not to be very common among the assemblies it seemed desirable to give readers the opportunity of hearing what Pierre Meylan had to say.

To begin with, will you please explain your present position?

PM First of all, I was trained in agriculture and began to work in this field. But when I was 28 my health forced me to give up farming. After a complete year when I could not work because of illness, I found myself with family responsibilities, in debt, and I had to start again at the bottom of the professional ladder in a hospital in Geneva.

Very soon I realised that even the union didn't want to accept me among its members, being unwilling to accept responsibility for somebody who might be a liability since nobody knew whether I would be able to carry on working. It was not easy to begin again as an

unskilled labourer, even in the public service, having already had professional training and been an employer. Being deprived of responsibility made me unhappy. I had to find out how far a trade union or an employer was able to help somebody to return to a position of responsibility. But in 1950 this was not at all clear. And I had to overcome this obstacle first of all — of recommencing my professional training.

Was it this state of affairs which involved you in conscientiously considering the importance of being involved in a union?

PM At that time I was principally concerned with the problem of defending myself in my work. But one of my chief motivations was remembering a hospital worker who had been unjustly treated and who, knowing that I was a Christian, threw back at me: 'Here it is only the Communists who have the courage to defend us!' That made me think. I was able to reply that in the place where we were working, there was a group of people who were building a trade union activity based on honesty, mutual confidence, respect and truthfulness. It was on this basis that we were able to build something positive in the hospital.

But the term union implies, at any rate outside working class circles, systematic wage claims, strikes, the class struggle, in fact political action. You give a rather different picture of trade union activity. Can you describe what were your objectives and the means you adopted to achieve them?

Certainly the trade union is there to speak for the wage earner. That is why anybody who is involved in trade union activity must pay attention to all the issues. It is not just a question of pay. He is equally concerned with restrictive practices, hours of work, night work, hours of rest, production, work conditions (noise, danger, environmental

hazards, etc.). The trade unionist is involved with industrial diseases, retirement pensions, sick pay, and redundancies. He may even have an interest in housing problems since he has to care for the interests of the tenants who may be most disadvantaged. Linked with the wages issue is the question of purchasing power and the cost of living. He has to have regard to the state of the economy in order to direct his efforts: reduction in purchasing power, increases in the cost of public services, health insurance and so on.

If the trade unionist takes his responsibilities seriously he will soon realise that justice and common sense do not count for very much in our society.

All this surely calls for a wide range of knowledge?

One soon realises this: in order to make any useful contribution to discussion, one must be adequately informed in a number of different fields. The arguments used in any matter where there is social conflict must be well thought out and well supported. It is essential to be familiar with the social and legal institutions of the society in which one lives. It is essential to know where to go for action and to avoid entering a blind alley in the bureaucratic labyrinth.

But when you become involved in this way are you not fighting a class war? This is the traditional image of the trades unions.

Once upon a time — but happily not today — some people called courses on the workers rights, strike-ology! Only the 'conflict' aspect of trade union activity was recognised. It is quite true that when there is a dispute one has to take account of the possibility of repudiating an agreement or ceasing work. But certainly there are many other ways of settling disputes which must be taken into account: negotiation and arbitration are always possible. Over a period of

several years I have been able to avoid confrontation in a number of cases and to find positive solutions to disputes. The state of mind of the people involved is very important. The trade unionist who takes part in negotiating a contract of employment knows that, for his part, there are moral obligations such as respecting confidentiality about methods of production. He must recognise that the whole of the national economy is based on such obligations. And when it is a question of shared responsibility within industry one cannot escape one's responsibilities: it is impossible to confine oneself to fighting for unilateral benefits. In the hospital, for example, to have demanded immediate application of the principle of sex equality would have presented an intolerable financial problem because of the high proportion of female employees. Intransigence on this point would have destroyed the financial balance.

Surely this sort of involvement demands sacrifices — of time, of effort, and even with good relationships with an employer?

To be honest, yes it does take a great deal of time. Unless you have a quite unusual capacity for work you cannot take the lead in too many activities. Sharing in the work of a trade union committee occupies several evenings in the week. Doing this, one runs the risk of being cut off from the life of the church apart from services on Sunday and this can lead to spiritual dryness. Because of this, I don't easily see how anybody who is an elder in a local church can spend time in trade union activities. This is not a question of principle but of the time involved. On the other hand, it is easily possible to imagine a Christian who has spent ten years in trade union activity accepting responsibility in a local church: he has learnt what it means to spend his time for the good of his neighbour!

As for the risks involved, yes I think that one can speak in this way, especially as in Switzerland there is no legal protection for trade union officials when they are doing their work. The trade unionist has not an easy job and he can be in danger of dismissal when he defends other people. On occasion, he may find it necessary to use indirect methods in order to avoid the danger of being a target for his employer's revenge.

That leads me to ask a specific question: what precisely are the responsibilities of a trade union official? Do people come to you for help when they are in trouble with their superiors?

Sometimes the work involved is shared and this is the best way of proceeding. One becomes aware of the problems faced by an individual or a group of people. Examining difficulties may lead to an approach by one of us to the management about a comparatively trivial matter. If it is more complicated, the matter must be followed up in more detail. This may be based on information given by the plaintiff — which may involve a payslip, a work schedule, or talking to a foreman or manager who has complained about somebody he is responsible for, in order to find out whether the problem is an occasional one or habitual. It is essential to get the facts right. Defending the interests of an individual is one of the most difficult tasks one can have.

But you are involved with other sorts of problems?

Yes. Trade union work is more easy and more profitable when it is a question of undertaking the case of a whole group of employees — renegotiating pay or introducing new patterns of work and so on. It's easier to do things of this kind than to cope with bad personal relationships. At a rather higher level, one may take part in grading employees: their pay will depend on their training, their experience in the job, the amount of responsibility they have or the personal danger involved. A responsibility of this sort will take up weeks over and above working hours.

But once you have reached a certain level of involvement, are you not involved with politics? What do you think about the relationship between unions and political parties?

People ask me this question from time to time. Indeed, for many people, the word union means the Swiss Trade Union, a left-wing body which is linked to the Socialist Party. Now many people are taken aback at the possibility of this sort of involvement; they are afraid they may be ensnared by instructions coming from a political party. But it must be made clear that one can take part in the work of a union without belonging to a political party. On my union committee there were people belonging to various parties, left, centre and right-wing. As for me, the work that I did at the hospital for 25 years was done without any involvement with a political party.

But in all honesty I must say that if certain claims are going to be given the weight of law, they must be worked out in the legislature and for this one needs the support of a political party. If it's the centre that supports us, so much the better. But sometimes one has to

rely on help from the centre left and the left in order to advance social principles. **Can you give some examples of typical problems — apart from questions of salary — that show the need for trade union action?**

We might consider the problem of industrial diseases. This is often something that industry should be thoroughly ashamed of. First of all, because of some employees who behave dishonestly and profit from a situation where truth is difficult to attain — sometimes they are helped by easy-going doctors who in effect are wronging the whole of the community. But there is something else to be ashamed of: our legal system weighs very heavily on the worker. In many ways we are ten or twenty years behind the real state of affairs. And there is a great deal of hostility to reform. Employers apply the letter of the law and find themselves legally covered although very often they are swindling their employees. I remember a case where miners were cared for by doctors who were in the pay of the management and who gave wrong diagnoses. But this is not simply something that used to happen: I think of people working under me at the hospital, aged 50-55, victims of advanced silicosis which has left them 50-60% disabled, but where the diagnosis has been delayed so that the organisation need pay them nothing. We might also cite the way in which some chemical products poison people working with them. There is appalling inequality between, on the one hand, those who have got the controls of business in their own hands and, on the other, the uninformed employees who find themselves in industries concerned for nothing but amassing profits, whatever the sacrifice in human suffering.

At a time of growing unemployment, we should also mention blackmailing employees. Here at Geneva in 1982 there are respected companies who quite systematically have brought in early retirement so they don't have to concern themselves with employees who are over 55 . . .

Finally, I will mention the problem of working speed with reference to one particular case. In the factory there was one work station recognised as being so demanding that it formed the most effective threat that the foreman had at his disposal. 'If you can't work faster than that we'll put you over there!' It was certainly unpleasant: at the end of a production line, a finished article weighing 60 to 70kg used to arrive every 3 minutes to be taken on further. A special

study was undertaken by specialists in industrial diseases because so many people doing this job fell ill. From this inquiry there came a proposal to modify working conditions. They constructed a fitting where stock could be held so that the worker could stop without risk and could rest for ten minutes every hour, then go back and deal with what had accumulated. This is the extraordinary thing — that what had been the worst place to work became the best one in the factory. By escaping from the pattern imposed by the production line, the worker regained some individual responsibility since he was now able to work at his own pace, and thus felt himself to be in control. At the end of the day, the same weight of goods had been shifted — and absenteeism became a thing of the past so that the employer benefited as well!

Now I want to ask a question which our readers will certainly have thought of. What influence can a person's Christian faith have on his work as a trade unionist? Is there sometimes a conflict between his Christian beliefs and his trade union involvement?

First of all, the Christian who has any trade union responsibility must be

involved in a way which is wholehearted but ethical. His work must be totally trustworthy. He must be able to recognise his mistakes and refuse to be involved in anything which is underhand or dishonest. People have a right to expect that he will be impartial and conscientious in the way he checks and makes use of information that is passed to him. There is no reason why his faith should give rise to any inner conflict, provided that his involvement does not lead to any sort of rabble-rousing, to a determination to have a strike at any cost, to destroy the business and the political system of our country. Christians have often been accused of having a great deal to say on Sunday and doing nothing about it all the week. So this sort of involvement is right for a Christian provided he remembers that justice must be his chief concern.

The Bible teaches that we are to protect the weak and deprived. It is significant that you selected the text from Deuteronomy which is quoted at the beginning of this interview.

Yes indeed. Some employees start life with a heavy handicap. Through lack of training, they may have difficulty in making themselves understood and presenting claims that are perfectly legiti-

mate. They find themselves with jobs at the bottom of the ladder sometimes dangerous and physically demanding and so they are in a weak position. It is necessary for other people to help them defend their interests. It is not necessary to be a Christian to do this but the concern for justice and righteousness that the Bible enjoins provides a secondary motivation. From this point of view, the *Deuteronomy* text is important: it reminds us that we should 'not be partial in judgement'. It is not easy to obey this implicitly. We are easily influenced by the person who puts up a good show, presenting his case fluently. But when we look into things, he may not be the one who is in the right. Also this text tells us to 'hear the small and the great alike'. This is not characteristic of our age, not even in Christian circles! 'You should not be afraid of the face of man', for when all is said and done it is to God that we must give an account of what we have done — and of what we have failed to do. Here is a basic attitude and programme for action appropriate to inspire and guide the Christian who recognises that God wants him to be actively involved in the work of his union.

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AT THE VERY END

A. G. Newell

Another of Dr. Newell's occasional articles meditates on an unfamiliar aspect of the Cross.

Two of my colleagues have recently died. One of them was a few years younger than me, the other near retirement. Both had worked for the university with noteworthy conscientiousness for many years. The younger, so far as I know, was an agnostic; the elder, a highish churchman with a very knowledgeable grasp of all things Anglican. Along with several other members of the staff I attended both funerals. The older man's funeral service turned out to be a dignified farewell thanksgiving for the life of a well-loved member of the parish church's congregation. Despite the now nearly inevitable use of the NEB and the Alternative Service Book, the sermon, readings and prayers poignantly conveyed a sense of loss as well as celebrating the Christian hope of eternity to be enjoyed in God's presence. The other funeral was quite different. The clergyman had not known the dead man, who had tragically taken his own life. What could be said to the large congregation of mourners in these circumstances? In fact, the minister delivered an excellent address in exactly the right key, emphasizing the being, the power and the mercy of God. He challenged the mourners to acknowledge God and accept His mercy. Although hymns were missing from both services and neither was remotely evangelical, I felt that within the limitations of the officiating ministers, the best had been done for the mourners. They had been pointed to the Lord, and in each case had been reminded of His death and resurrection.

The loss of colleagues doesn't have that personal impact produced by the death of a friend or a relative. Mourners who were close to the dead men were

grieving far more acutely than any mere fellow-workers could. For them, indeed, the funerals may have failed to provide religious consolation. The kind and degree of feeling we experience at a close relative's or friend's graveside, or as the drawn curtains hide the retreating coffin — that sharp awareness of temporal severance, that heightened appreciation of what was, but now can never be again — these emotions are reserved for those we loved.

When we really feel very little except the odd pang of pity for the anonymous neighbour following a coffin to the crematorium or cemetery, can we react emotionally to the death of others? The victims of the Ripper, say, or the millions of Russians and Jews murdered by the regimes of Stalin and Hitler? How do we feel about the butchery of combat troops in the two World Wars? **The Sharp End of War**, by John Ellis, is a compilation of first-hand reminiscence and reporting on the lot of the actual fighting soldier during the 1939-1945 conflict. It makes an impressively balanced, compulsively readable and thought-provoking book (even though, like so many other modern writers, Ellis is addicted to splitting every infinitive on sight). Nobody, I think, could finish its 352 pages of text and permit himself ever again to underestimate the chronic privation, stress and suffering endured by front-line troops in modern warfare. The conscripted veteran whose portrait emerges from Ellis's book was only vaguely aware of what he was supposed to be fighting for and was given to much justifiable grumbling. In battle he was dirty, dog-tired, hungry and often thirsty; he was constantly and increasingly afraid of imminent pain, maiming or death, and terrified of surrendering to his terror and so humiliating himself. Only the brotherhood of front-line combat troops, Ellis emphasizes,

can enter into this experience. As Christians, we like to believe that such ultimate danger generates some kind of religious response. Ellis denies it. 'For many men nothing so utterly and completely dissipated their residual religious beliefs as the randomness and pervasiveness of violent death' (p.105). But a positive quality did grow from all the carnage and suffering. Between the combat soldiers there arose, in Ellis's words, 'an identification with and a concern for one's fellows so all-consuming that one can only speak in terms of love' (p.350). A sombre and sober book can therefore conclude hopefully. 'At the last extreme of the human spirit men turn to those nearest to them for reassurance as to their own plight and of the continued existence of common humanity. At the sharp end few men turned in vain' (p.352).

What such a volume documents in the way of accumulated human suffering could easily be seized upon by pacifists. Nobody wants to go to war. Nobody wants to compel his fellows to endure the experiences Ellis dispassionately describes. His book left me with a deep respect for the courage and decency of the ordinary man in the face of continuous hardship and personal danger. The simple message of most modern films, plays and novels about war can be crudely summarized as anything must be better, but Ellis's unemotional analysis of the mass of factual data now available doesn't harp on that same note. Instead, by focussing our attention on the individual fighting soldier, he invites us to admire the man's fortitude and comradeship. It is as if war might almost be worthwhile in order to bring out and display human qualities of this calibre. The very worst demands and discovers the very best.

The successive deaths of my colleagues together with my reading of Ellis's book

prompted me to contemplate the crucifixion once again; this time to see it as the culmination of our Lord's life which demanded exactly those qualities we've been thinking about — to a divine degree, if we can allow ourselves the expression. Shakespeare exploits this resonance in *Macbeth*, where the wounded Captain at the beginning of the action significantly describes the valiant deeds of Macbeth and Banquo against the Norwegian invaders as their striving to 'memorize another Golgotha'. But even Shakespeare couldn't successfully harness all the energies of the word and I would argue that the image is so powerful and releases so many emotions, some of them so sacred, that it is inappropriate. For Jesus's death was like no other. His was ultimate suffering. His was ultimate courage and love. There can be no greater.

Calvary possesses a personal dimension for the Christian. The experience Jesus underwent was unique partly because it was all for us. Because He endured there God's wrath against our sin, He is now our Lord. Familiar though they may be, we can never sing Bliss's lines glibly, 'In my place condemned He stood; Sealed my pardon with His blood'. The very heart of the gospel, the central tenet of our faith, is the Atonement — that Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God Himself, died instead of and on behalf of me. My response to His unique and saving death is therefore equally unique, for His death guarantees my life.

The natural Catholic implications of Newman's hymn 'Praise to the Holiest in the height' used to upset me. Churlishly, I would decline to sing the words 'teach His brethren and inspire To suffer and to die', because they seemed to me, in my self-assured Protestant fashion, to degrade the worth of what the Lord actually achieved by His death and resurrection. Age and experience, however, tend not only to fossilize some attitudes but also, paradoxically, to liberalize others. I can see, now, that Newman was highlighting one legitimate interpretation of the cross — the exemplary. While some early Christians' thirst for martyrdom derived from an unworthy desire for superior heavenly status, the quiet readiness of others to face the terrifying consequences of disobedience to civil authority because they owed ultimate allegiance to their Lord, was wholly admirable. They looked to His example, set during His Passion, for their inspiration to suffer privation, torture and death with sublime courage and love.

We are soft. We have been morally

undermined by the comparative historical success of Protestant Christianity in Britain. Believers have experienced very little real persecution for their faith. In addition, the British have enjoyed living in a stable and increasingly prosperous and fair society. Desperate, faith-testing poverty or real deprivation arising from membership of a despised minority have not featured prominently in our modern history. Protestant Dissenters and even Roman Catholics have not actually suffered real persecution for centuries: distrust, contempt, disabilities, outbursts of popular hostility, yes, but prolonged and determined persecution, no. In fact, deliberate governmental repression in this country, happily, has nearly always been half-hearted. As a result, our evangelical theology, inevitably affected by prevailing fashion in the wider world, has also gone soft. It finds it difficult to cope with disaster, perhaps because its idea of God has become unbiblically romanticized. A passive Jesus has obscured the Christ who taught and argued and dominated crowds with such authority that He was the fickle people's choice for nationalistic leader. Consequently, when we consider the crucifixion, we tend to view it as the ultimate in divine love. But that is only one facet of that awesome event. We forget that Calvary is also, among other things, the noblest example of manhood and courage.

An anonymous Anglo-Saxon Christian poem, usually editorially entitled 'The Dream of the Rood', expresses this aspect of the crucifixion marvellously well. We now visualize our Lord's crucifixion largely in terms dictated by Catholic realism (popularized by those grim crucifixes outside some churches). The accent is on suffering. In this poem, the cross itself describes the Calvary event in totally different terms. What happened is interpreted as the victorious personal combat of a warrior prince on behalf of his people. In J. A. W. Bennett's recent translation it runs, in part:

*Then the young warrior — it was God Almighty —
Stalwart, resolute, stripped himself;
climbed the high gallows,
Gallantly before the throng, resolved to
loose man's bonds. . . .
As a rood I was raised up, bearing a
noble king,
The heavens' lord. . . .
All creation wept,
Lamenting a king's fall. It was Christ
who hung there on a cross.
Yet to this prince I saw men from afar
come hastening. . . .*

*It was God Almighty they there were
handling. . . .*

*And he rested there awhile,
Exhausted by his great battle.*

*(Poetry of the Passion, O.U.P., 1982,
p.29).*

These lines, which are, perhaps, faintly echoed in Watts's 'wondrous cross On which the Prince of glory died', force us to reassess our modern understanding of Calvary. In an age when it is only moral courage that many people applaud, the poem reawakens our appreciation of the Lord's immense physical bravery. Christians in the Services can look to their Lord with total confidence for their example of fortitude in the face of death.

And not only servicemen and women, either. Active persecution is the lot of many believers in today's world: the editor of the *Evangelical Review of Theology* estimates the proportion at 50% of all real Christians. By the grace of God, this country's heritage of freedom at present protects its Christians. But a political or revolutionary coup could result in a serious curtailment of our religious liberties. Then, like our brothers and sisters in other countries, we would have to summon all our reserves of courage and love to endure faithfully for His sake who first suffered for us and left us an example, that we should follow His steps. Our Saviour's death, our living Lord's glorious eternal sovereignty, these give meaning to life and a new significance to death. The most courageous Christian soldier and the timidiest, most shrinking Christian defier of a godless state may alike look to the Lord Jesus for their example in adversity. At once victorious warrior Prince and suffering Lover of mankind, He offers everything His people need in every circumstance. His life and His death serve as our example, the standard at which, with His grace, we aim. Because we are 'dead to sin' and should 'live to righteousness', we are to follow Him to the end, holding out His atoning death as the means of eternal life to those who as yet remain spiritually dead. It could involve facing the worst with courage and love that, although palely, resemble and derive from Christ's own.

THE APOSTLE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

John Peters

John Peters, in a review article, takes us back to look at the life of George Whitefield.

Volume 1 of Dallimore's biography of Whitefield dealt with his life up to the end of 1740 and we now review the second volume, and a reprint of Whitefield's own *Journals*.*

The *Journals* trace the main events of his life up to the spring of 1745 — that is, the first twenty-six years of his experience — and thus they correspond almost exactly with the limits of volume 1 of Dallimore's work. In them Whitefield speaks to his readers in a personal and direct way. The following important extracts reveal the whole motivation of his life; his exhausting schedule as an itinerant preacher both in Britain and America; the immense importance of prayer to him; his total reliance on God's strength; as well as indicating the vast numbers of people that attended his meetings:

I cannot express my desire for the advancing of our dear Lord's Kingdom, both in the hearts of my friends and all mankind.

(p.389)

Preached in Bexley Church, and helped to administer the Sacrament to nearly three hundred communicants, most of whom came from London. Baptized a person, twenty-eight years of age, whom God had worked upon by my ministry. Dined at Blendon, and took sweet counsel with many Christian

*George Whitefield: The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth Century Revival, volume 2, by Arnold Dallimore (Banner of Truth Trust, 1980), £9.95, 538pp.

George Whitefield's *Journals* (Banner of Truth Trust, 3rd impression 1978), £4.50, 558pp.

friends. Preached to above twenty thousand people at Blackheath; and afterwards supped again at the Green Man. There were nearly three hundred in the room. I continued in exhortation and prayer till eleven o'clock, and then retired to bed, much pleased to think that religion, which had long been skulking in corners, and was almost laughed out of the world, should now begin to appear abroad, and openly shew herself at noonday. Let them count us vainglorious for thus confessing Christ before men. It is a small thing with us to be judged with the judgment of men — to our own Master we stand or fall.

(p.289)

Preached nine times this week, and expounded near eighteen times, with great power and enlargement. I am every moment employed from morning till midnight. There is no end of people coming and sending to me, and they seem more and more desirous, like new-born babes, to be fed with the sincere milk of the Word. What a great work has been wrought in the hearts of many within this twelvemonth! Now know I, that though thousands might come at first out of curiosity, yet God has prevented and quickened them by His free grace. Oh that I could be humble and thankful!

Glory be to God that He fills me continually, not only with peace, but also joy in the Holy Ghost. Before my arrival, I thought I should envy my brethren's success in the ministry, but blessed be God, I rejoice in it, and am glad to see Christ's Kingdom come, whatsoever instruments God shall make use of to bring it about. Sometimes I perceive myself deserted for a little while, and much oppressed, especially before preaching, but comfort soon after flows in. The

Kingdom of God is within me. Oh! free grace in Christ!

(p.195)

Still God has pleased to give me fresh tokens of His love. Letters are sent me, and people come to me continually, telling me what God hath done for their souls by my unworthy ministry. At four in the afternoon, I preached again at the bowling-green, to, I believe, seven or eight thousand people. The sun shone bright, and the windows and balconies of the adjoining houses were filled with hearers. I was uncommonly enlarged in prayer, and carried out beyond myself in preaching, especially when I came to talk of the Love and Free Grace of Jesus Christ. The concern the people were in is inexpressible; and I am sure that thousands come not out of curiosity, but a sincere desire of being fed with the milk of the Word.

Afterwards, I again collected for the Orphan House, and it was near an hour and a half before the people could go out. Many were very faint because of the throng, which was so great that they trod one upon another. At eight I hastened to Weaver's Hall, in Temple Street, which was procured me, because the Society rooms were too little. I was almost faint before I could get in through the crowd, but God enabled me to speak with freedom, and was with us of a truth. I believe there might be a thousand hearers. Well may the Devil and his servants rage horribly; their kingdom is in danger.

After I had done, I went to a Christian house, where many waited for me. At my return home, my Master paid me my wages: for my soul was filled with an intenseness of love, and I knew what it is not only to have righteousness and peace, but joy in the

Holy Ghost. This is my continual food.
(p.239)

Preached yesterday and to-day as usual at Kennington Common, to about twenty thousand hearers, who were very much affected. The remainder of my time I spent in preparing things for Georgia. I am not usually so much engaged in secular work; but I as readily do this as preach, when it is the will of God. It is a great mistake that some run into, to suppose religion consists only in saying our prayers. I think a man is no further holy, than he is relatively holy, and he only will adorn the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things, who is careful to perform all the civil offices of life, whether servant, master, or mistress, with a single eye to God's glory, and from a principle of a lively faith in Jesus Christ our Saviour. This is the morality which I preach, and which shall stand as long as the Rock on which it is founded, even for ever and ever.

(p.262)

After having refreshed myself and friends by reading a packet of letters from London, and dispatched some other business, according to appointment, I set out for Bath, and got thither about three in the afternoon. Dinner being ended, through great weakness of body, and sickness in my stomach, I was obliged to lie down upon the bed; but the hour being come for my preaching, I went, weak and languid as I was, depending on the Divine Strength, and, I think, scarce ever preached with greater power. There were about four or five thousand of high and low, rich and poor, to hear. As I went along, I observed many scoffers, and when I got upon the table to preach, many laughed; but before I had finished my prayer, all was hushed and silent, and ere I had concluded my discourse, God, by His Word, seemed to impress a great awe upon their minds; for all were deeply attentive, and seemed much affected with what had been spoken. Men may scoff for a little while, but there is something in this foolishness of preaching which will make the most stubborn heart to bend or break. 'Is not My Word like fire,' saith the Lord, 'and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?'

(p.235)

Students of Methodism in particular, but also all those interested in the spread

of the Gospel, will welcome enthusiastically this third impression of a volume first published in 1960, and once again we are in debt to the Banner of Truth Trust.

Nor is the reception accorded volume 2 of Dallimore's biography likely to be any less warm. It deals with the often turbulent years from 1741-70, when the doctrinal conflict with the Wesley brothers caused him great personal suffering, indeed anguish of soul, for Howell Harris relates that he found him 'sick and vomiting, he wept with strong cryings and weeping' (p.74).

Dallimore shows conclusively and with a plenitude of detail that Whitefield's behaviour during the controversy was notable for its fortitude, generosity and courtesy. Inevitably such a disagreement led to deep divisions within Methodism, and though 'there was a much larger measure of fellowship from 1743 onwards', clearly the idea that entire harmony was achieved is incorrect.

This distressing conflict of opinions was followed by Whitefield's visit to Scotland (29th July-27th October, 1741), where his ministry led to a remarkable revival; the effects of his preaching continued long after his departure. There followed years, from 1744 onwards, of incessant endeavour to bring the Gospel not only to the Calvinistic branches of Methodism but to others such as Independents, Baptists, Presbyterians, and also under the auspices of the Wesleys. A unique aspect of his work was his ministry among the 'rich and great of England' in collaboration with the Countess of Huntingdon. He extended his influence amongst the aristocracy and the titled by means of his correspondence. Here is Whitefield's letter to Colonel Gumley (father-in-law to Lord Bath) who had been converted under his preaching:

... I hope this will find you fighting the good fight of faith and in every respect behaving like a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The news of your conversion hath reached the ears of many of the great ones in Scotland. May the Lord Jesus keep you steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in his work.

The way you know. A constant looking up to the author and finisher of our faith, and watching unto prayer with all perseverance, will keep the soul steady amidst all the temptations of a malicious devil and ensnaring world.

There are two devout soldiers here in

Edinburgh. May the Lord Jesus add more to his church of such converts as may be saved!

In reality a 'clerical nomad' he visited most of the counties of England during this time not to mention a seventh and last tour of America, whither he set sail on 4th September, 1769, and a fifteenth visit to Scotland. Not surprisingly these herculean efforts impaired his health, and Dallimore describes his physical condition at the end of 1760 like this:

Though he refused to admit it, by reason of his long-continued excessive labour and his unremitting burden of care his constitution was permanently undermined. Indeed, before him there lay some months of such weakness that he was to find himself seldom able to preach and reduced to a condition that was virtually that of an invalid.

1761-70 were years of failing strength, but not of any lack of commitment or zeal, and during this time he often preached in great weakness. By 1762 he realised that 'he would probably never again be able to labour with the same tremendous activity as in former years. With a careful husbanding of his strength he might be able to preach perhaps two, or three times a week but it appeared that this was all he could hope for.' John Wesley put it succinctly: 'Humanly speaking, he is worn out.' Mrs. Whitefield died on 9th August, 1768, and just over two years later he too died, on 30th September 1770, in America. The official funeral sermon was preached by John Wesley whose glowing tribute to Whitefield ends thus:

I may close this head with observing what an honour it pleased God to put upon His faithful servant, by allowing him to declare His ever-lasting Gospel in so many various countries, to such numbers of people, and with so great an effect on so many of their precious souls.

Have we read or heard of any person since the apostles, who testified the Gospel of the grace of God, through so widely extended a space, through so large a part of the habitable world? Have we read or heard of any person, who called so many thousands, so many myriads of sinners to repentance? Above all, have we read or heard of any, who has been a blessed instrument in the hand of God, of bringing so many sinners from

continued on Page 10

PROFESSOR J. FAIRBAIRN

An Appreciation

'James Wight Fairbairn December 11th, 1913-July 3rd, 1982.' So read the hymn-sheet on 12th July, with a favourite verse of Jim's from the J. N. Darby of the first decade of the Brethren:

*There no stranger God shall meet thee,
Stranger thou in courts above!
He, who to His rest shall greet thee,
Greets thee with a well-known love.*

The Times, 13th July, concluded: 'Fairbairn was a devoted Christian and preached the gospel with enthusiasm and vigour.' From 41 column inches, in **The Pharmaceutical Journal** issues of 10th and 17th July, we may take: 'His day would often be packed with lectures, visitors from the four corners of the globe, and his research interests. If he disappeared for a short period at lunch-time, then it was to preach the gospel, which he did from the deepest of convictions': 'We first met in 1934 . . . Although he and I differed profoundly in philosophical and ideological matters (Jim was a devout and active Christian) we kept our friendship strong and close over all the years': 'a caring Christian, a person of honour and humility who was pleased to practise what he preached': 'He remained a modest and unassuming person': 'He served as an example to all of us in his teaching, his research and his Christian beliefs': 'He organised tea and dinner parties at his home for his students, and discussed the problems each of us faced at the time . . . He also discussed religious and philosophical questions, but made no attempt to force his views upon us . . . (his) death was one of the saddest pieces of news that I have heard for many years.'

Those Brethren who knew him only in the last quarter of his life in the South may have had little notion of him as a world authority on cannabis (**Daily Telegraph**), or of the details of his attain-

ment: Ph.D., D.Sc., D.Pharm., D.Univ. Lausanne, F.P.S., F.L.S., first Professor of Pharmacognosy at London University from 1960 to his retirement at the end of September 1981, and then Emeritus. His vice-chairmanship of the Conveners of the Swanwick Conference of Brethren ran alongside — though we did not know — the chairing of the committees responsible for the British and European pharmacopoeia, membership of a United Nations working group on the poppy, and with the Phyto (plant) Chemical Society of Europe, to which he had been elected chairman for four successive years. He had substantially changed the knowledge of drugs in plants from the botanical to the chemical: what part the drug plays in the life of the plant, how it can be extracted in the purest form, and produced for medicinal purposes. Government and the media turned to him when legislation was in question for the cannabis problem; and hemlock and senna were among others of the vegetable *materia medica* on which his research, with microscopy and chromatography, was fundamental. In the Christian sphere one of the latest of his chairmanships — and one of those where he will be most sorely missed — was of the committee responsible for the forthcoming Luis Palau Mission to London.

His Christian approach was simple, not 'simplistic', and fundamental, in the truest sense: a direct devotion to his Lord, so that, for him, the breaking of bread with 250 men at Swanwick was often the high-point of the Conference. His mother had treasured a nine-year-old's diary entry — 'saved by grace' — and had been convinced of the evidences of that grace at that age. His brother recalls from childhood onwards: 'I cannot remember a single incident in which Jim does not appear in a good light.'

Jim came from a 'Glanton' Brethren family, and when he came to London in 1934 to take the Pharmaceutical Society's qualification, he was at Kingsland Road, a principal 'broad exclusive' centre with notable preachers such as Ernest Walker and P. T. Shorey who had no scruples about ministry among Open Brethren. Hargrave Hall, Archway, became Kingsland's successor, and Jim loyally maintained his link there until on removal to Enfield in 1968, he regretfully said farewell to Hargrave and the Glanton group, to join the Open meeting at Shirley Hall; but he retained his happy earlier links, ministering at the annual 'Glanton' conference in 1980 with Continental brethren. For long he exercised a convention ministry on the Herts-Essex border. As late as 1982, he was leading undenominational Bible study in his Letty Green village area, and Catholic priest, nun, non-conformist minister, and Anglican rector were all at his grave. Yet, loyally, he still helped to lead the Open assembly at Welwyn Garden City, the 1978 Swanwick Conference on 'The Future of the Brethren' encouraging him to go on when numeric decline might have suggested otherwise.

All down the years, the research scientist had been concerned with the fundamentals of faith. It was through 'squashes', when London University's school of Pharmacy was evacuated to Cardiff, that he met and married, in 1944, his Welsh bride, Barbara Tudor-Lewis. When he gave the Rendle Short memorial lecture at Bristol University it was on 'Ultimate authority in science and Christianity'. At Swanwick he spoke on 'The Authority of Scripture', 'Basis of Law', 'God, Creator and Sustainer', 'This is life eternal' and 'The Church of Christ'. A plain postcard was found on the floor after his first Swanwick address; it carried on one side ten or so

lines of heading — all that his clear direct mind needed for 45 minutes lucid lecture. He only missed Swanwick to go to the international conference of the Research Scientists' Christian Association, and he had in hand when he died a project for a science and faith film with **Fact and Faith Films**.

Jim's preaching father had died when Jim was 12, leaving his mother and two elder sisters to provide for three brothers through a baker's shop. After matriculation at 16, Jim took the slower way to pharmacy, by five years service in a Gosforth chemist's shop. With the limited means so accrued, he went in 1934 to

live frugally in London whilst studying for his qualification, and through the evening course of Birkbeck College also took his B.Sc. in 1939. It was an air-raid death that brought about the call, from ICI Stockton, to the London University School of Pharmacy in 1941, with which his whole professional life was to be spent. His first marriage was cut short by the comparatively early death, at 53, of Barbara, by a kindred condition to his own, leaving to him Helen, Hazel, Sheila and Olive. There are two sons-in-law and three grandchildren. The three hundred who packed the village church on 12th July heard Alan

Barnford affirm the identity of integrity of faith and science with which Jim had professed his Master and sat as in his chair. There was a coach from London University, with the Vice Chancellor, three other Professors of Pharmacognosy, and the Dean of Pharmacy at London, with family roots back to a Gospel Hall on Jim's native heath. Any who sing that most splendid of Brethren worship hymns 'Jesus our Lord, with what joy we adore Thee' might pause to pray for Jim's widow Rachel. Her grandfather, H. d'A. Champney was its author.

G. Robson

THE APOSTLE OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

continued from Page 8

darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God?

Dallimore shows that by any reckoning Whitefield's achievements were extraordinarily impressive. The sheer extent of his preaching was incredible: he usually preached forty and often sixty hours a week. In fact, preaching and exhorting he spoke something like a thousand times a year for thirty years. Another feature was the breadth of his appeal: 'Learned and unlearned, rich and poor, black and white, young and old — Whitefield's ministry proved effective among all.' Add to these his influence on the Methodist revival, both at home and abroad, and it is clear that Whitefield was truly a great man. He may have lacked the poetic talents of Isaac Watts or Charles Wesley, the expository skill of Matthew Henry, the succinct journalistic skill of John Wesley, or the theological acumen of Luther or Calvin, but he 'was superbly equipped for the work to which God had called him — "the 'work of an evangelist'. To move from place to place, to gather vast congregations of mankind, to preach the Gospel, to speak with burning earnestness, with divinely-bestowed authority and melting compassion, to bear ridicule and even physical abuse and to maintain the incredible schedule of labour — this was his ministry and it is in this sense we must appraise it.' How right Dallimore is to point out that

Whitefield speaks to us about the power of the Gospel. *It was not the so-called 'Social Gospel' but the Gospel of redeeming grace — the only Gospel — that wrought the great change two hundred years ago. In the knowledge of the power of the Gospel*

Whitefield went with confidence to the semi-heathen Kingswood colliers or the equally godless aristocracy and to all other classes of mankind and witnessed the transformation of lives among all.

The Gospel is the need of this present hour. Not the partial Gospel which characterizes so much of to-day's evangelicalism, but the whole Gospel that declares the majesty and holiness of God, the utter helplessness of man, the necessity of repentance, and a salvation that is manifested, not in a mere profession, but in the miracle of a new life. May Whitefield's example bring Christians back to the Gospel in its fulness and therewith in its power! Whitefield speaks to us about the primacy of preaching. It is widely declared to-day that preaching is passé, that it must give way to dialogue and discussion and that it is a mark of pride for a man to stand before a congregation as though he had something authoritative to say.

But Biblical preaching is precisely that — the declaration of an authoritative message — a message founded upon an inerrant Book. True preaching is not a discussion, but a proclamation; not dialogue, but the asserting of 'Thus saith the Lord! True preaching should arise from a broken heart, should be alive with a mighty and compelling urgency, and should overflow with compassion.

Whitefield stands as a fulfilment of this magnificent task and his life urges the called of God of this present generation to perform it with new zeal and in all of its God-given, New Testament dimensions.

An exceptional man like Whitefield

deserves a biographer of matching stature, which Dallimore certainly is. He has that rare knack of being able to reanimate his subject so that Whitefield 'comes alive' before our eyes. It is not an exaggeration to claim that in biographical terms the 'last word' on 'The Apostle of the British Empire' has been said. 'Whitefield, volume 2', like volume 1, is a monumental achievement.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

When the Pope was received on Whit Monday by leading Scottish churchmen in the quadrangle of New College, Edinburgh, beneath the statue of John Knox, many people wondered aloud what Knox would have said if he had suddenly become articulate. May I suggest (if we are to deal in such unrealities) that if Knox had heard the exposition of his own favourite scripture (John 17) given by the Pope at Canterbury a few days previously, he would have heard much to command his approval? More generally, did readers find that the papal visit, with the publicity given to it, provided a helpful talking-point for the gospel?

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

QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Question 223

'... COMMITTED TO THE TEACHING'

How do you interpret Romans 6:17, by comparison with 1 Timothy 5:20? In the latter passage the teaching is something that is entrusted to Christians whereas in Romans 6 it seems as if Christians are entrusted to it.

Both are true. Christian truth is indeed a sacred deposit that has been handed on to each succeeding generation of believers, and which is enshrined in the Scriptures. However, Paul is making a different point in *Romans 6:17*. Here he is saying that the truth is something which shapes and sets its mark upon Christians who submit themselves to it. A further point is that obedience to biblical teaching sets us free rather than imposing restrictions upon us.

Question 224

IS THE LAMB'S BRIDE THE CHURCH?

Where in Scripture is it categorically stated that the Church is the Bride or Wife of Christ (or the Lamb)?

It is important to realise that a good deal which is clearly taught in Scripture is not presented as a straightforward proposition. For example, it is nowhere stated that God is 'three Persons in one' although the teaching of Scripture, taken as a whole, supports this proposition.

The Old Testament certainly speaks of God's people (Israel, in the immediate context) as being the wife of Yahweh. The concept underlies the prophecy of Hosea and is found also in e.g. *Jeremiah 2:2*.

Although the image is often used to emphasise the disloyalty ('adultery') of God's people, the prophets look forward to a renewed relationship in which it is appropriate to compare Israel, not to an unfaithful wife, but to a bride (*Isaiah 49:18* and *62:5*). Although Hosea speaks of the restoration of an adulterous wife, he also describes Israel's future in *2:14-23* in terms of a 'second honeymoon'. God will betroth Israel to him forever in righteousness and justice (*19,20*). Thus there is no contradiction between the concept of bride and wife so far as the biblical writers are concerned. Indeed, the status of betrothal was such in the ancient world that a woman who was betrothed to a man might well be spoken of as his wife, which possibly explains a phrase in *Revelation 21:9* which some scholars have regarded as showing evidence of dual sources.

In the New Testament, we find parables and sayings of the Lord Jesus which utilise this image. Even if we hesitate to read too much into some of the parables, it is clear from *Matthew 9:15* and *John 3:29* that Jesus saw his mission in terms of the marriage metaphor. Paul has dominical as well as Old Testament authority for the conception of the Church as the wife of Christ found in *Ephesians 5:22-32* (we may note the way in which *verse 27* shifts the metaphor from wife to bride). It would seem that in this passage Paul is assuming that the relationship God is said in the Old Testament to have with his people of the Old Covenant applies equally to his people of the New Covenant.

Revelation 19:7-9 introduces the concept of the marriage supper of the Lamb and in this context refers to his Bride. Here one Old Testament image merges with another since the messianic age is also spoken of in terms of a great feast. Some expositors find difficulty in this and because of the reference in *verse 9* to the guests invited to the marriage supper, conclude that the guests and the bride should be differentiated. This seems to me an unnecessary complication, arising from a failure to recognise that diverse images are sometimes difficult to reconcile. (Perhaps the biblical writers were less concerned about mixed metaphors than some people are today!) Certainly we have another example of images blending in *Revelation 21:2* where the 'bride' is identical with 'the Holy City, new Jerusalem'. At this point, yet another image for the people of God comes into use. (It has, of course, been present by implication earlier in the book which as George Beasley-Murray has said, may be regarded as 'a tale of two cities'.)

The context seems to imply that the Bride of Christ here consists of God's people in every age. *Revelation 21:12* says that the gates of the city are inscribed with the names of the tribes of Israel, while *verse 4* describes the foundation stones as bearing the names of the twelve Apostles. This seems clear enough for most expositors.

It may be appropriate to point out, in conclusion, that the metaphor, as used in the Scriptures, serves to emphasise the way in which the Bridegroom chooses and loves the Bride. Erotic overtones are as conspicuous by their absence here as they are prominent in some aspects of Christian spirituality.

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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EXPLORING THE BIBLE
Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

BIBLE TEACHING IN LOCAL CHURCHES (1)

Christ as Teacher

J. M. Hitchen

Since 1965, Mr. Hitchen has worked with the commendation of New Zealand assemblies in a Bible College programme in Papua New Guinea and has just completed a three-year training period in the University of Aberdeen.

Since the primary purpose for which God inspired the Scriptures is that they be 'profitable for teaching . . .' (2 Tim. 3:16), the place given to and the methods used in Bible teaching provide a barometer of the overall health and life of local churches. As we explore the Bible, we need to re-evaluate the place of Bible teaching among us. How shall we do this? In these three articles, we shall consider the example of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit and the methods used by the early church, as revealed in the New Testament. These will show us the patterns and principles which should govern our practice.

Teaching was at the centre of our Lord's personal impact on those He met. The very first term by which would-be followers addressed Him was 'Rabbi, which means Teacher' (John 1:38). For his friends the words, 'The Teacher is here . . .' stirred their deepest hopes and desires (John 11:28). Whether it was the accomplished academic with a serious enquiry (John 3:1-8); the religious man seeking to make status gains from Christ's visit (Luke 7:36-40); the astute counsel for the prosecuting opposition (Luke 11:15) or the commoner in the crowd (Luke 12:13), for each the initial approach to Jesus was to recognize Him as 'Teacher'. It was this teaching role which both amazed and attracted His hearers (Matt. 7:28-29; John

6:66-68). Furthermore Jesus both accepted and acknowledged the importance of this title for Himself (John 13:13), though He warned His followers not to seek it for themselves (Matt. 23:8-12). As the 'Word' of God who in His essential being could say 'I am Truth' (John 1:1, 14:6), how could He help but be a Teacher, first and foremost? The challenge Christ brought to all He met always included 'Learn of Me' (Matt. 11:28-29). He has never abdicated this role, nor rescinded this challenge.

Teaching was central both in His work with the crowds and in His in-depth contacts with His followers. Teaching heads the summary descriptions of His general work (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 11:1; Luke 13:22 etc.), for as Mark puts it, 'it was His custom' to teach (Mark 10:1). We notice that He did not 'preach' to the crowds and 'teach' his committed followers. In His approach to what we call both 'evangelism' and 'follow-up', teaching was central (see the references just cited with e.g. Mark 12:35; Luke 6:6). As I have pointed out more fully elsewhere

We notice that this public teaching was not restricted to a narrow area of doctrine, nor to a simple call to discipleship . . . in public the Lord covered a full range of Theology, Ethics, Apologetics, Prophecy and Social and Moral questions as well as the call to discipleship and way of salvation . . . He sought to lay a broad base upon which intelligent decisions and commitments could be made.¹

1. Hitchen, J. M. *Bible Teaching in the Local Church* (Gospel Publishing House, New Zealand), p.2 and Appendix pp.13f.

The Lord did differentiate between the crowds and His committed disciples by giving the latter further teaching. But the distinction is more often based upon the deeper level of application than upon different content. While our Lord recognised the danger of throwing pearls before swine (Matt. 7:6), He could also at His trial when questioned about His disciples and teaching answer categorically 'I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the Temple, where all Jews come together; I have said nothing secretly . . .' (John 18:20). Christ's gospel is an integrated whole. Those who are being called upon to respond to its call to repentance also have the right and need to know that bound up with that repentance is a whole new life-style, new ethics, a distinctive understanding of the nature of God, as well as a Saviour who died to handle the implications of our sin. Christ taught this integrated good news to all who would hear. No wonder, then, that His adherents were called 'disciples' i.e. student-followers. They were learning Him!

Teaching was also at the centre of Christ's legacy. In His special instructions to His disciples in the last hours before His death, and in His post-resurrection appearances, Christ gave careful attention to the continuance of this teaching ministry. He promised the Holy Spirit as Teacher *par excellence*, to sustain this two-stranded teaching. He will teach the uncommitted (John 16:7-11) and He will remind and lead the committed on to fullness of truth (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:12-15). This double-sided teaching was also continued on Page Seventy-Two

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (63)

F. F. Bruce

The Upper Room Discourses (John 13:31-16:33)

ii. THE LORD AND HIS PEOPLE (John 15:1-16:33)

(f) The Fourth Paraclete Saying: The Spirit as Prosecutor (John 16:4b-11)

16:4b-7 I did not tell you this earlier, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' But your hearts are filled with sorrow because I have told you this. Yet I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I should go away. If I do not go away, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

While Jesus was with them, he was their protector and could deflect to himself attacks aimed at them; in fact, he continued to do so to the moment of his arrest (cf. *John 18:8,9*). It was therefore not necessary to warn them of impending persecution earlier — literally, 'from the beginning' (*ex archēs*, as in *6:64*, meaning from the beginning of their association with him; cf. *ap' archēs* in *15:27*). Now, however, things would be different: he himself would no longer be with them in the way to which they had grown accustomed, and they would be direct targets for the attacks of their opponents. (There is a noteworthy parallel to this warning in *Luke 22:35-38*).

No wonder, then, that they were dismayed by what he told them. But even so, he assures them, it is better for them that he should leave them, even if his departure signals the onset of persecution. The coming of the Paraclete will compensate them for the loss of his own visible presence, and will in addition equip them with all the resources they will need in the new way of life on which they are about to enter.

16:8-11 And he, when he comes, will expose the world's error with regard

to sin and to righteousness and to judgment: with regard to sin, because they do not believe in me; with regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you see me no more; with regard to judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

The Spirit is the 'advocate' or helper of those who believe in Jesus, their counsel for the defence. But in relation to unbelievers, to the godless world, he acts as counsel for the prosecution. In both respects he duplicates the work of Jesus: Jesus had been his disciples' helper while he was with them, and at the same time his presence and witness in the world had served as an indictment of those who closed their minds to his message.

The Spirit's prosecuting ministry is here expressed by the verb *elenchō*, meaning (according to the context) expose, refute, convince or convict. His very presence will be a demonstration to the world which condemned Jesus that he was in the right and they were in the wrong. In the paraphrastic wording of the NEB, he will 'show where wrong and right and judgement lie' and thus 'confute the world'. This is not quite the same as what is often called the Spirit's 'convicting' work in the heart, leading to repentance and faith. One stanza of an old gospel song runs:

*I know not how God's Spirit moves,
Convincing men of sin,
Revealing Jesus through the Word,
Creating faith in him —*

but while this is an admirable summary of the Spirit's inward work which results in true conversion, it is not the aspect of his activity which is in view here. The Spirit bears witness to the world (not least through the witness of Jesus' followers, as was affirmed in *John 15:26f.*) that Jesus, rejected, condemned and put to death by the

world, has been vindicated and exalted by God. His rejection, condemnation and execution expressed in violent clarity the world's refusal to believe in him; that unbelief is now exposed as sin. His condemnation, promulgated after due process of law, is now shown to have been utterly unrighteous; his return to the Father is the demonstration of his righteousness — and at the same time the vindication of the Father's righteousness (in *John 17:25* Jesus addresses him as 'righteous Father'). The relevance of the clause 'you see me no more' seems to be that Jesus' departure is the condition of the Spirit's presence. His disciples see him no longer as they formerly did because he has gone to the Father and the Spirit has come to perform his ministry of witness and confutation.

Behind the men who acted as Jesus' prosecutors and judges stood the adversary-in-chief, 'the ruler of this world' who, as Jesus said, 'is coming' but 'has nothing to lay hold of in me' (*John 14:30*). Jesus had foretold his imminent expulsion as the Jerusalem ministry drew to a close: 'Now it is this world's judgment', he said; 'now the ruler of this world is to be cast out' (*John 12:31*). The presence of the Spirit is the token that this prediction has been fulfilled: judgment in the supreme court has been given for the Son of Man and against the world; and the world's spirit-ruler, in consequence of that adverse judgment, has been deposed: 'Our great foe is vanquished; Christ Jesus is King!'

(g) The Fifth Paraclete Saying: The Spirit as Revealer (John 16:12-15)

16:12,13 I have still many things to tell you, but you are not yet able to bear them. But when he comes who is the Spirit of truth, he will guide you in (the way of) all truth. He will not speak on his own initiative: whatever he will hear, that he will

speaking, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

Jesus had come to earth as the revealer of the Father, but the limited period of his ministry was too brief for the disciples to take in all that he had to reveal. His ministry of revelation would, however, be carried on after his departure by the Spirit. As in *John 14:16f.*, the Spirit is called 'the Spirit of truth' — here, with reference to the truth which he would disclose to the disciples. Jesus himself is the embodiment of truth (*John 14:6*); the truth which the Spirit will disclose is not truth additional to 'the truth as it is in Jesus' (*Eph. 4:21*); it is the further unfolding of that truth. It is not that he will guide them 'into' all truth; they had already been introduced to the way of truth by Jesus, and the Spirit would guide them further along that way.

Jesus had insisted more than once that he did not speak or act on his own initiative; his words were those which the Father gave him to utter (*John 5:19, 30; 8:28; 12:49*). So, when the Paraclete comes, he will not speak on his own initiative. He has no message over and above that which is implicit in the incarnate Word; it is his function to make that message explicit. We are no doubt intended to infer that the Gospel of John provides a prime example of the fulfilment of this promise.

As for 'the things that are to come', the Spirit's declaration of these may be understood as exercised through the gift of prophecy in the church. But the verb 'declare' is the same as that used in *John 4:25*, where the Samaritan woman says that when the Messiah comes, 'he will declare (anangelei) all things to us'. As the Messiah was expected to bring out plainly the fuller implications of the revelation that had preceded his coming, so the Paraclete will bring out plainly the fuller implications

of the revelation embodied in the Messiah and apply them relevantly to each succeeding generation.

16:14, 15 He it is who will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. Everything that the Father has is mine; that is why I have said that he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.

For the fifth and last time in these Paraclete sayings the emphatic demonstrative *ekeinos* (masculine, in agreement with *paraklētos*) is used of the Spirit. He and no other will teach the disciples everything (*14:26*), will bear witness to Christ (*15:26*), will expose the world's error (*16:8*), will guide the disciples in the way of all truth (*16:13*), and (now) it is he who has as his supreme mission the glorifying of Jesus. As the Son has glorified the Father by his work on earth (*John 7:18; 17:4*), so the Spirit by his coming will glorify the Son. One might amplify this statement by reference to teaching about the Spirit in other NT writings (especially the letters of Paul), but in the present context the Spirit glorifies the Son by unfolding clearly the meaning of his person and work. 'What is mine' includes his teaching and general activity. Since it has already been emphasized that all Jesus' words were spoken and all his deeds performed by the Father's authority (so that his words were the Father's words and his deeds the Father's deeds), 'what is mine' on Jesus' lips means 'all that the Father has given me'. And since the Father has given him 'all things' (*John 13:3*), what the Spirit discloses to the disciples is 'everything that the Father has'. In making known the Son, the Spirit at the same time makes known the Father who is revealed in the Son.

(h) 'A little while' (*John 16:16-18*) *16:16-18 In a little while you will see me no more, and again a little while and you will see me.' So some of his disciples said one to another, 'What does this mean that he says to us — "In a little while you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me", and "Because I am going to the Father"?' So they were saying, 'What is this "little while" of which he speaks? We do not understand what he is saying.'*

The reader should not imagine too quickly that he understands what was so unintelligible to the disciples. It is easy to suppose that Jesus meant, 'In a little while you will not see me, because I am about to die; but in a little while after that you will see me again, because I am going to rise on the third day and appear to you once more.' Certainly he was going to be taken from them 'in a little while' — in a few hours' time — but 'you see me no more' (cf. *verse 10*) seems to indicate a longer interval than that between Jesus' arrest and the resurrection appearances. Perhaps, then, it is that 'coming again' promised in *John 14:3* that is in view in the words: 'again a little while and you will see me.' But in saying this we must recall what was said in the comments on *John 14:3, 18* about the 'vanishing distinction' in the upper room discourses between Jesus' coming in the resurrection appearances, in the Spirit's abiding presence, and at his final advent.

When the disciples, wondering aloud what Jesus can mean, add to his words quoted from *verse 16* the clause 'Because I am going to the Father', they hark back to what he has said in *verse 10*: 'I am going to the Father and you see me no more.'

BOOK REVIEW

Abraham: Genesis 12-23. Ronald S. Wallace, Triangle, SPCK, 145pp, £1.85

This book by a minister of the Church of Scotland and former Professor of Biblical Theology is part of a series — *The Bible for Every Day* — which he is now writing in Edinburgh. The seven teen chapters are intended for use with daily Bible reading, though for many they will prove a useful companion to the more prosaic commentaries which abound. Others will find here

matter to enrich their preaching. This is because the author applies the narratives of the ancient episodes to our day and situation based on his life of practical ministry. The thought-provoking headings emphasize this. Among these are 'The New Beginning' (*chapter 11*), 'Moving on under the Word of God' (*12:4-9*), 'Schooling in Self-Discovery' (*12:10-20*), 'Abraham and the Power struggle' (*14*), 'Assurance and the Covenant' (*15*), 'Walking Towards the End' (*23*). The scholarship is

wide-ranging, reverent and unobtrusive with different interpretations touched upon or relegated to brief sections. Respect for the text and eagerness to relate the whole to our modern pilgrimage means that most readers will find new and helpful insights on almost every page. Even where one disagrees with an interpretation, noteworthy and quotable phrases will be found.

This is a book to be used and read more than once. Though small it is great value. The

reviewer looks forward to seeing the companion volumes on Isaac and Jacob, and on Joseph said to be in preparation. The new series also bids fair to being closer to the spirit of the late William Barclay's writings on the New Testament than do the initial Old Testament volumes in that other current series *The Daily Study Bible* (Saint Andrews Press) also stemming from Scotland.

Review by Prof. Donald J. Wiseman

PROBLEMS OF CHURCH LIFE

The Conduct of the Lord's Supper

S. S. Short

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the evening before He went to His death, appointed for His disciples a solemn ordinance in which, after He had died and risen and returned to heaven, He Himself, and His death for them on the cross, could be kept fresh in their minds. The ordinance consisted in the breaking and eating of a loaf of bread, and in drinking together from a cup of wine. The disciples obeyed the Lord's command, and so have their successors throughout the centuries of the Church's history, so much so that the ordinance of the Lord's Supper has become, in nearly all Christian communities, a notable feature of their corporate worship.

The purpose of this article is to discuss how the observance of this ordinance can be made a true occasion of spontaneous, spiritual worship. One does not doubt that the celebration of the Lord's Supper can be an occasion for true spiritual worship as it is conducted in Anglican circles, or in Baptist or Presbyterian circles, etc., but one's present concern is as to how this can be so in the context of a church gathering which is without a pre-arranged order of service; for it appears from the New Testament that this is how the ordinance was celebrated in Apostolic times.

Preparation

Much the most important factor in this regard has to do with the state of heart of the members of the congregation. If the Christians who gather are warm and lively in their affection towards the Lord, the worship is likely to be fresh and vital no matter what might prove to be the sequence of the events. Conversely, the putting into practice of the most attractive-looking innovations with regard to the service's course will prove quite ineffectual if those who

have gathered are cold in their love whether towards Christ or towards their fellow-worshippers.

What this shows is the paramount need for each individual Christian to engage in some definite self-preparation before coming to meet the Lord at His Table. This is a truth to which lip-service is often paid, but which is frequently, one fears, completely neglected. Time must be set aside prior to the service for personal communion with the Lord, confession and renouncing of sin, reading and meditation on His holy Word, and also specific prayer that the forthcoming service might glorify Christ, and prove a blessing to all who gather.

For those to whom God has entrusted some responsibility for the spiritual leadership of the church, there is the added need to have something ready from the Scriptures which might be presented to the company so as to encourage them in their worship. Leaders should be *prepared* to help in such a way, though they ought not to be *determined* to do so, and especially if the course which the meeting takes suggests that the Holy Spirit is moving in a direction which had not been anticipated.

Participation

Responsibility for vocal participation, however, does not only lie with the church's appointed leaders. Few factors are of greater importance in causing the celebration of the Lord's Supper to be an occasion of spontaneous, spiritual worship than an exercise of heart on the part of younger brethren to make some personal contribution. This can be in the form of a suitable reading from Scripture, with a brief comment; but more particularly it can be by way of expressing the congregation's worship in

public prayer. Often there seems to be a considerable reluctance to help in this way; and yet when it is done sincerely and appropriately, the tone of the service can be lifted and enriched in a most wonderful manner. It is the freedom to participate in this way which is the distinctive feature of such meetings for worship, and which can raise them to such exalted heights; for few who have had wide experience in this matter of celebrating the Lord's Supper can fail to appreciate that it can give rise to a quality of praise and adoration which is outstanding and unique, and it often does. But it does require that the brethren present, whether old or young, should involve themselves in the proceedings. To come as a mere spectator is unhelpful. To come with a spirit of criticism is even worse. Each should gather in a positive frame of mind, and desirous of actively contributing to the purpose of the meeting. Several, no doubt, will contribute vocally; but not everybody will do this, even among those who are very capable of so doing. The Holy Spirit has a restraining work as well as a constraining one; and those who worship in silence can make just as real a contribution to the meeting as those whose voices are heard. What, however, needs to be conquered is that failure to contribute which comes of laziness, or apathy, or spiritual stagnation.

A person, such as the writer of this article, who has the happy privilege of visiting scores of different local churches each year for the ministry of the Scriptures, and who has the opportunity in many cases also of joining them at their services of worship and Breaking of Bread, is inevitably aware of many variations of form which such services can take. It is good to have *continued on page Seventy*

THE HARVESTER STUDENT'S CHURCH DIRECTORY 1982

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)

Sun. 10:30, 18:30,
20:00 (YP), *Wed.*
19:45

Lunch available at
48 Victoria St., every
Sunday during term.

ABERYSTWYTH

St. John & Red Cross HQ, Vulcan Street.

Mr. Joseph Lewis, Hafod-y-Bryn, Bryn Rd., Aberystwyth

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Thurs. 19:30

Conference May
Bank Holiday

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.)

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)
Sun. 11:00, 18:00
16:00 (summer) open
air on promenade
Wed. 19:30

University C.U. meets
in Students' Union
Coffee Lounge *Sat.*
19:30 etc.
Students welcome at
Dr. Beer's house *Sun.*
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.)

Sun. 10:30, 11:40,
19:00 *Tues.* 20:00
Thurs. 20:00

For activities of the
Christian Union or
International Friend-
ship 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)
2. Beeches Evangelical Church, Beeches Rd., Great Barr, Birmingham B42 2HL. (52 bus to Beeches Estate stops at Cottage Stores.)
3. Duke Street Chapel, Duke St., Sutton Coldfield. (Buses 102, 103, 104, 110 to Cottage Hospital stop)
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)
5. Hope Chapel, Reddings Rd., Moseley, Birmingham B13. (45, 50 & 35 buses to King David's School)
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.)
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. Geo. F. Stickley, 9 King Charles Rd., Halesowen, W. Mids. (Tel. 021-422 3133)

Mr. A. Cardwell, 252 Walsall Rd., Perry Barr, Birmingham B42 1UB (Tel. 021-356 5756)

Mr. Nigel Crowther, 36 South Drive, Lichfield Park, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B75 7TF

Mr. R. J. Partridge, 11 Wirral Rd., Northfield, Birmingham B31 1NX (Tel. 021-476 1958)

Mr. A. E. Timms, 88 Eastwood Rd., Birmingham B12 9NB.

Mr. J. B. Crowton, 264 College Rd., Perry Barr, Birmingham B44 8HE (Tel. 021-356 9958).

Mr. E. H. Holt, F.C.P., 128 Warwards Lane, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 7RD (Tel. 021-472 0585) or Mr. H. Lanchbury, 196 Lickey Rd., Rednal, Birmingham B45 8TE.

Sun. 10:15, 11:30,
6:30 *Thurs.* Prayer &
Bible study 20:00
Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Wed. 20:00

Sun. 10:45, 18:30,
20:00

Sun. 10:15, 18:30,
20:00 YPF. *Tues.*
20:00 Prayer & Bible
study
Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Tues. 19:30 *Wed.* 19:45
Sun. 10:30, 18:30
Thurs. 20:00
Fri. (YPF) 20:00

Sun. 10:15, 12:00
(Bible Study), 18:30
20:00 (Youth). *Thurs.*
19:45

Birmingham and Aston
Universities: students
are regular visitors.
Students from Aston
University, Birmingham
Polytechnic etc. attend
regularly.
Annual students'
service, 1st *Sun.* in
Sept. 18:30.

Tues. Bible Study in
rear hall.

5 mins. from University,
Hospital & local
Colleges. *Sun.* 20:00
is a youth 'Borderline'
feature. Approx. 40
attend.

BOLTON

Students on courses at The Institute of Technology, Technical College and Technical Teachers College requiring advice or assistance please contact Mr. Brian Elliott, Senior Lecturer in Management Studies, Bolton Institute of Technology, Bolton (Tel. Bolton 28851 Ext. 278 or (home) 0704-35604).

BOOTLE

Northfield Gospel Hall, Northfield Rd., corner of Fernhill Rd., Orrell, Bootle 20, Merseyside. (56 bus alight Keenan Drive, walk down Keenan Drive, and turn right at bottom — hall on left; 57a, 58, alight Fernhill Rd. opposite hall; 61 outer circle ditto.)

Mr. J. A. Salisbury, 12 Baucher Drive, Orrell, Bootle, L20 6JF

Sun. 10:45, 16:00,
19:00
Tues. 19:00
Thurs. 19:00

Small assembly in populous working-class area affording excellent opportunities for outreach. Real need for help, especially with Sunday School and Covenanters. 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. 0272-738776).

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.)
Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Thurs. 19:30

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, Redland, Bristol BS6 7UD.

David Ellacott, 17 Westbury Rd., Bristol BS9 3AY (Tel. 0272 622773) or Rhod Lewis, 3 Paulton Drive, Bristol BS7 8JJ (Tel. 0272 44677).

Sun. 10:30, 18:00
Wed. 19:45
Youth Fell. Sun. 19:30

Students' tea 16:45 Sun., and YP Fellowship 20:00. Regular social activities. Lunches and teas available on Sunday for students and visitors.

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).

BRUNEL UNIVERSITY — see London (Uxbridge)

CAMBRIDGE

1. Panton Hall, 14 Panton St. (off Lensfield Rd.), Cambridge CB2 1HP. (Trumpington St. buses to Lays School, Regent St. & Hills Rd. buses to Catholic Church)
2. Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan Way, Cambridge. (Tel. 45584) (Buses 185, 186 to Queen Edith's Way)

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).
Mr. 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.

3. Roseford Chapel, Perse Way, Cambridge (Various E. Counties buses.)

Mr. W. P. Cowell, Slate Hall Farm, Huntingdon Rd., Lolworth, Cambridge (Tel. Crafts Hill 80684).

Sun. 11:00, 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.

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.)

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 CF5 1BG.

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).

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. 9:45, 11:15, 18:30 Mon. 19:45
Fri. 19:00 (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, 18:30
Thurs. 19:30
Sat. Rallies Oct.-Apr.

Half mile from Bishop Otter College and St. Richard's Hospital.

CHICHESTER

Swanfield Chapel, Swanfield Drive, Chichester, Sussex.

Dr. C. E. Turner, The Lodge, Farm Close, Fishbourne (Tel. 786301).

COLCHESTER

Maldon Road Chapel, Maldon Rd., Colchester. (Buses 1, 1a, 6 & 6a to Burlington Rd.)

Mr. B. J. Taylor, 109 Prettygate Rd., Colchester CO3 4DZ (Tel. 73785) or Dr. J. Knight, 79 Magazine Farm Way, Colchester CO3 4EN (Tel. 40650).

Sun. 11:00, 15:00
(Bible Class), 18:30
Mon. 19:45 Wed. 19:45
Fri. 19:30 (YPF)

COVENTRY

Canley Evangelical Church, Charter Ave., Coventry CV4 8DA. (Bus 18 to 'Half Sovereign' from Lanchester Polytechnic: walking distance from Warwick University.)

Dr. Eric Avery, 51 John O'Gaunt Rd., Kenilworth, Warks. (Tel. Kenilworth 54065) or Mr. Michael Grima, 14 Treedale Close, Tile Hill, Coventry (Tel. 466907).

Sun. 9:30, 18:30
Wed. 20:00

Attended by students for many years. Also caters for students from Hereward College for physically handicapped.

DUBLIN

Merrion Hall, Lower Merrion St., Dublin 2, Eire. (Approx. 100 yds from Merrion Square: buses 6, 7a, 8, 44, 45, 46a, 62, 84. Pearse Rly. Stn. 3 mins. walk.)

Mr. Reginald H. Fry, 'Aureen', 37 Farmhill Rd., Goatstown, Dublin 14 (Tel. 984075).

Sun. 10:30, 11:45, 15:30, 19:00 Mon. 20:00 Fri. 20:00

Highway Club, Sats. 18:30, YPF Sats. 19:30

EDINBURGH

1. Bruntsfield Evangelical Church, 70 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh EH 4JU. (Buses 9, 10, 11, 16, 23, 27, 45.)

The Secretary, c/o The Church

Sun. 11:00, 12:15
(School), 12:45 (Bible Class), 18:00 (PM), 18:30 Wed. 19:30 Fri. 19:45 Winter Sats. (monthly) 19:00
Sun. 11:00 Lord's Supper, 19:00 Evening service, 20:15 YPF. Thurs. 19:45 Prayer & Bible Study Wed. 19:30 Women's Hour

YPF Sats. 20:00 at 9/4 Merchiston Park. Youth Outreach Tues. 20:00 Younger ladies outreach second Thurs. 20:00
Young People's Fellowship. Special on-going visitation programme.

2. Ferniehill Evangelical Church, 19 Ferniehill Rd. (off A7), Gilmerton, Edinburgh. (Buses 3, 8, 31 or 33 to Ferniehill Drive at Gilmerton Rd.)

Mr. J. Gordon Birss, 21 Gracemount Rd., Edinburgh 16 or Dr. J. Hannah, 46 The Spinney, Gilmerton, Edinburgh.

EXETER

1. Belmont Chapel, Western Way (near city centre).

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. Goldsworthy, 'Claremont', 62 Alphington Rd., Exeter (Tel. Exeter 75186).

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Mon. 19:30

A favourite student church for many years

2. Buller Rd. Evangelical Church, St. Thomas, Exeter EX4 1BJ. (Buses B, C, D, F to St. Thomas shopping centre.)

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Tues. 19:30
Fri. YP (varies)

A smaller fellowship warmly welcoming students.

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.)

Dr. Robert Walker, 'Rominar', Erskine Rd., Whitecraigs, Glasgow (Tel. 041-639 4808).

Sun. 10:30, 18:30
Wed. 19:45

Students are warmly welcomed by the fellowship.

Mr. Ian MacDonald, 5 Hillside Rd., Glasgow G43 (Tel. 041-632 5470).

Sun. 11:00, 19:00
Thurs. 19:30

Youth Fellowships Sun. 20:30. A good number of young people.

GRIMSBY

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate (which is near Town Centre, Rail and Bus Stations).

Mr. & Mrs. D. A. Roy, 61 Welhome Road (Tel. 55634/5 and 42464)

Sun. Bible Hour 11:00,
Lord's Supper 15:00,
Family Service 18:30,
Wed. Bible Study 19:30

Welcome to all students at Coll. of Technology.

GUILDFORD

Manor Road Hall, Manor Rd., Stoughton, Guildford, Surrey. (228 bus to Grange Rd.)

Mr. J. Knight, 157 Worpleston Rd., Stoughton, Guildford (Tel. Guildford 570388).

Sun. 10:00 (SS & YP)
11:15, 18:30
Tues. 19:45

A very warm welcome is given to students and other visitors.

HUDDERSFIELD

Lindley Evangelical Church, Stanley House, Acre Street, Lindley, Huddersfield. (Buses 70, 71, 73 from Westgate to 'Bay Horse' roundabout — then 200 yds along Acre St; 92, 93 from Milnsbridge and Newsome.)

Mr. David Ingleby, 41 Bankfield Park Ave., Taylor Hill, Huddersfield HD4 7RD (Tel. 41911) or at Computer Section, Huddersfield Technical College.

Sun. 11:15, 18:30
Wed. 20:00

Opposite Royal Infirmary and within walking distance of Holly Bank Technical Teachers Training College and Huddersfield School of Nursing.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES — see London (Kingston)

LANCASTER

Moorlands Evangelical Church, Balmoral Rd., corner of Dumbarton Rd., Lancaster. (Any buses to Cathedral; from S. Martin's 15 mins. walk; from Univ. bus to Royal Infirmary, then 10 mins. walk.)

Dr. John S. Andrews, University Library & 270 Bowerham Rd., Lancaster (Tel. 66856), 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. 32690).

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.

A small assembly (about 30) which warmly welcomes visitors and would appreciate help, especially during the week with YP and children.

LEEDS

Hope Hall Christian Fellowship, Scott Hall Grove, Leeds LS7 3JL (near Prince Philip Playing Fields — off Scott Hall Road).

Laurie and Nancy Beynon, 15 St. Chad's Rise, Far Headingley, Leeds LS6 3QE. (nr. Beckett's Park College) (Tel. 785388 — 24 hr. answering service) or John and Patricia Bastow, 9 Farrar Lane, Adel, Leeds LS16 6AD (Tel. 678658).

Sun. 10:15, 18:30
Informal home fellowship 20:00 Tues. 20:00
Prayer & Bible talks

A very warm welcome is given to students and other visitors. Hospitality is always available.

LEICESTER

Goodwood Evangelical Church, Gamel Rd., Leicester (buses 34, 35, 53, 55 to Gamel Rd. junction on Goodwood Road).

Dr. Ken Wycherley, 13 Dixon Drive, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 1RA (Tel. 708785).

Sun. 10:30, 18:30,
20:00 (YPF)
Thurs. 19:45

Informal contacts with CUs. Transport can be arranged for Sunday services.

LEWES

In different homes.

Mr. H. E. Pope, 25 Prince Edwards Rd., Lewes, Sussex.

Sun. 20:00

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 Str., 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 0JP. (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 Kripe, 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 Dr. Kenneth Brownell, 52 Middle Lane, London N8 (Tel. 01-348 0727).

Dr. Peter Houghton, 7 Culverden Rd., Balham, London SW12 9LR (Tel. 01-673 7884).

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, 6 Ospringe Rd., London NW5 (Tel. 01-267 1801) or Mr. G. Simpson, 39 Chetwynd Rd., London NW5 (01-267 8623).

Mr. D. Bell, 40 Grosvenor Ave., East Sheen, London SW14 8BX (Tel. 01-878 2973).

Mr. M. Flatow, 22 Pennyford Ct., Henderson Drive, St. John's Wood Rd., London NW8 8UF (Tel. 01-286 5304).

Mr. N. W. Murray, 6 Monkham 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.

Youth activities Fri. 19:30 and Sun. 20:00

Sun. 10:45, 18:30
Tues. 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!

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).
John and Barbara Baigent, 6 Windmill Rd., 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
Thurs. 20:00
Sun. 10:15, 18:30,
20:00 Thurs. 20:00

Near Brunel University
Hospitality for lunch
& tea usually available
(Suns.). Active Youth
Group.

Sun. 11:00, 18:30
Wed. 19:45
Sun. 10:00, 11:30,
19:00 Wed. 19:45,
20:30

Many youth activities
Basic Bible teaching
at 11:30 Sun.

Sun. 10:45, 18:30
Tues. 20:00
(subject to
amendment)

Small assembly in
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 (YPPF)
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.

Mr. G. G. Brown, 98 Allt-yr-yn Ave., Newport, Gwent (Tel. 64399).

Sun. 10:45, 19:00

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.
Near UE & Horsham
residences.

Mr. T. J. Leggett, 24 Penryn Close, Norwich NR4 7LY (Tel. 0603 55726).

Sun. 11:15, 18:45

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.

For Edge Hill College of Education.

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).

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 Warrington Hospital.

PORTSMOUTH

South Road Church, South Rd., Drayton, Portsmouth. (23, 24 Corp'n. buses, 331, 327, 357 Southdown.)

Mr. Rob Porter, 8 Craigwell Rd., Waterlooville, Portsmouth (Tel. Waterlooville 544780).

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. Hornal, '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 activities. 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
Student supper 20:00 at various homes.

'At Home' fellowship tea at the chapel Sun. 10 Oct. 17:00 — all students welcome.

SOUTHAMPTON

Portswood Church (Evangelical), Portswood Road, Southampton. (Nr. junction of Portswood Ave. and Brookvale Rd., with Portswood Rd. Buses 3, 3a, 11, 12, 13, 13a, 14, 14a, 17, 20 to Brookvale Rd.)

Mr. John Carrick, 25 Belmont Rd., Portswood, 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

Mr. Carrick is the church's full-time pastor. Students are very welcome to Fellowship tea in church on 3rd Sun. each month at 16:30.

SUSSEX UNIVERSITY — see **Lewes**

SWANSEA

- George St. Gospel Hall, George St., Swansea. (Buses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 from west, 26, 31, 32, 14. Also most other local buses.)
- Castleton Chapel, Newton Rd., Mumbles, Swansea. (Buses 1, 2, 3 to Oystermouth bus station.)

Mr. W. F. Burt, 14 Lon Cedwyn, Cwmgwyn, Swansea (Tel. 0792 22318).

Mr. P. E. Davies, 3 Willowbrook Gdns., Mayals, Swansea SA3 5EB (Tel. 0792 67956).

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

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 Nigel and Tricia Lee, 51 Wathen Rd., Leamington Spa (Tel. 315367).

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.

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (8)

The Greatness of God

M. L. Burr

If there is one of God's attributes which needs particular emphasis today it is His greatness. Science and technology are advancing so rapidly that human ability seems limitless. People therefore tend to be impressed with the greatness of man and think of God (if at all) as one who exists to supply that decreasing range of benefits which we cannot supply for ourselves. Even Christians are liable to have too small a conception of God. Possibly we evangelicals are particularly in danger of imagining that we know all about God and thereby failing to be aware of His majesty. And if we lose the sense of the greatness of God we shall misinterpret everything else that we know about Him, thinking that His kindness towards us reflects our own intrinsic importance rather than His undeserved grace.

In fact it is impossible to know God without having some sense of His greatness, which must increase as we know Him better. At the end of his life Moses prayed 'O Lord GOD, thou hast only begun to show thy servant thy greatness' (*Deut. 3:24*), and then called on Israel to 'ascribe greatness to our God' (*Deut. 32:3*). For it is not just that God's power, mercy and love are great; He Himself is great, and greatness characterizes all that He is and does. 'There is none like thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of the nations? For this is thy due' (*Jer. 10:6,7*). We should ask ourselves whether we have that reverential fear and awe as we approach God, for otherwise our knowledge of Him must be very superficial.

Greatness Revealed

So how can we become more aware of the greatness of God? Firstly, by considering His workmanship in creation.

Science supplies its own correctives for human pride in showing us something of the mind-baffling extent and complexity of the universe. We may acknowledge in theory that God is infinitely greater than we are, but the mere notion of infinitude conveys little to our minds, whereas the vast distances and time-intervals that we now know about make us feel our utter insignificance. This is sometimes felt to present a difficulty for Christian belief — can we still believe that an infinitesimal creature like man is so important within the universe? This problem was considered long ago in *Ps. 8*: 'When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast established; what is man that thou art mindful of him?' The psalmist goes on to describe the dignity that God has bestowed on man, but he clearly feels the relative smallness of man in a vast universe. The writer of *Ps. 104* begins his meditation on the wonders of nature with the exclamation 'O LORD my God, thou art very great! Thou art clothed with honour and majesty.' The extent and grandeur of creation should convey to us, as they did to him, the greatness and majesty of the Creator.

Secondly, God's greatness is shown in His dealings with men in general. He is a great king over all the earth who reigns over the nations (*Ps. 47:2,8*), raising them up and casting them down at His will. He is the great and mighty God, great in counsel and mighty in deed, whose eyes are open to all the ways of men, rewarding every man according to his ways (*Jer. 32:18,19*). We can realize something of His greatness by remembering that He knows us and all men intimately, and that we shall all have to give an account of ourselves to Him.

Thirdly, God's greatness is revealed in

the way He blesses His people. He redeemed Israel through His greatness and made them His heritage (*Deut. 9:26*). In every aspect of His salvation this quality of greatness was seen. His judgements on their enemies, His patience with their failings, His kindness and mercy towards them and His jealousy over them display in different ways the divine attribute of greatness.

David's Discovery

It is instructive to see how David came to recognize the greatness of God in *2 Sam. 7*. He had intended to build a house for God, but was told that it would be built by his son. He was then told that God would make a house for him. God had taken him from following the sheep to make for him a great name, like those of the great men on earth. His family would enjoy a special relationship with God, whom they would know as Father. His house, his kingdom and his throne would be established for ever. Hearing all this, David sat before the LORD and said 'Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? . . . According to thy own heart thou hast wrought all this greatness, to make thy servant know it. Therefore thou art great, O LORD God; for there is none like thee.' God was blessing David, not according to David's deserts, or his abilities, or his aspirations, or his needs, or anything else to do with David, but according to God's own heart, to show what He could do with a shepherd boy. David makes the same point in *1 Chron. 29:11* onwards: 'Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come from

thee, and thou rulest over all. In thy hand are power and might; and in thy hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.' God's greatness is seen in His ability to confer greatness on nonentities.

In the New Testament 'the Majesty' (or the Greatness) is a title of God in *Heb. 1:3* and *8:1*. We have access to Him with confidence, but our awareness of His greatness should be more not less because of the close relationship which we enjoy. The greatness of Christ is also made clear. Before His birth Mary was told 'He will be great' (*Luke 1:32*), echoing the prophecy that 'he shall be great to the ends of the earth' (*Mic. 5:4*). His greatness is now shown in the perfection of His functions as the 'great high priest' and 'great shepherd' of His people (*Heb. 4:14; 13:20*). And ultimately 'the appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Jesus Christ' will manifest that greatness to all (*Tit. 2:13*).

Like David we can learn the greatness of God through the great things He does for us. His dealings with us are all on the grand scale and show the kind of Person He is. We who once were dead in sins have been brought into fellowship with God. We know God as our Father, Christ as our Lord and Friend, and the Holy Spirit as our indwelling Guide. We shall be individually like Christ and corporately His bride. He shares with us His knowledge of the Father (*Matt. 11:27*). His

Father's love (*John 17:23*), His glory (*John 17:22*), His throne (*Rev. 3:21*) and His inheritance (*Rom. 8:17*). We did not need any of this; we would all have been perfectly happy if we had simply been told that our sins would not be raised against us, our present needs would be met, and we would go to a better world when we died. But God has dealt with us 'according to His own heart' to show 'the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus' (*Eph. 2:7*). So Paul prayed that the Ephesians might understand 'the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe' (*Eph. 1:19*), which will bring all these purposes to fulfilment.

The Effect

What should be the effect upon us of knowing to any degree the greatness of God? Firstly, we shall realize our own nothingness, and say with David 'But who am I? . . . For all things come from thee' (*1 Chr. 29:14*). We shall thus be delivered from pride, which is something God will not tolerate and which is liable to ruin anything we might do for Him.

Secondly, the privilege of knowing so great a God, and the scale of His blessings to us, should help us to see other things in perspective. We ought to be free from materialism and worldly distractions. We ought also to be free from pettiness in Christian affairs. We are all liable to get over-occupied with

details of little consequence and let them interfere with things that really matter.

Thirdly, a consideration of God's greatness gives depth and reverence to worship. We should, of course, be grateful for His many mercies to us in our daily lives. But we are also told to 'praise him according to his exceeding greatness', for 'great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable' (*Psa. 150:2; 145:3*). Our liberty in approaching our heavenly Father must be tempered with reverence and awe (*Heb. 12:28*), precluding any carelessness or over-familiarity.

Fourthly, the greatness of God gives us courage. *Isa. 40:9-31* contrasts the majesty of God with the nothingness of man, and then promises His strength to those who trust in Him. We may sometimes feel disheartened because Christians are a small minority in a hostile world. But 'greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world', so that we can overcome the world (*1 John 4:4*).

Finally, the little that we already understand of His greatness makes us want to know more about it. We are in fact wholly dependent on God to reveal it to us, as He did to Moses and Israel (*Deut. 3:24; 5:24*). We can never of ourselves overcome our own small-mindedness; we can only pray to be shown more of the greatness of our God.

THE CONDUCT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

continued from page Sixty-Eight

the freedom to institute such variations, and most of the ones which I have encountered seem to have some particular value. Certain of these changes which have been put into effect have been determined on account of some special local circumstance of the church in question. On the other hand, I am equally happy at services for the Lord's Supper where the procedure followed has been substantially unchanged for a hundred years. One can have dull meetings and exciting meetings no matter what methods are used.

The statement that, 'what God chiefly

requires are not better methods but better men' has often been made; but one doubts to what extent it is really believed. Certainly one should not be unconcerned about improving one's methods as and when this is required; but what is of the greatest importance is that we Christians should be better people than at present we are. If only we walked more closely with the Lord, and loved Him more, and loved His people more, and were more characterized by holiness of life, and a desire and determination to do His will in all things, it would have, I feel persuaded, an immense effect upon the quality of

our Christian meetings. The Lord would be increasingly glorified. We His children would be increasingly enriched with His blessing; and, as in *1 Cor. 14:25*, unconverted people in attendance would realize His presence amongst us, and would respond to Him in repentance, faith and worship. In an 'open' meeting for the Breaking of Bread, the opportunities are enormous, and the potential is incalculable. Perhaps this article has shown why these high possibilities are not always attained.

MEDITATIONS IN PSALM 107 (1) *Lost and Exhausted* J. Job

The Rev. John B. Job, M.A., B.D., has studied at Oxford University and successively served as lecturer at Magee University College, chaplain at Westminster College, Oxford, and Rydal School, and Vice-Principal of Immanuel College, Ibadan, as well as as a Methodist Circuit Minister. He is currently Tutor in Old Testament Studies at Cliff College, Calver. He is married with three sons and a daughter.

The question what it means to be saved is clearly at the foundations of the Christian faith. But the word has an uneasy ring about it, and has done for a long time. Bishop Westcott was once asked in a train by someone in the Salvation Army whether he was saved, and he covered his embarrassment (or amusement) by replying that it depended whether what was meant was *sesōsmenos* (having been saved), *sōzomenos* (in the process of being saved) or *sōthesomenos* (destined to be saved). It was a very good answer and certainly alerts us to some of the complexities of what looks like a simple, if impertinent question. But it leaves us with another consideration: saved from what? Or, if being lost is the opposite, what does it mean to be lost?

We are used to answering this question in staunch theological terms culled from the New Testament. But these can sometimes fail to register — particularly with unbelievers whom we want to help, and even with committed Christians, whose grasp of the faith can be rather like a man whose wealth is all in stocks and shares, so that he never sees the colour of it. What is proposed here is to study in a series of four articles the graphic pictures contained in *Psalm 107*, in the hope that we may gain a more exist-

ential hold on what we believe.

Much scholarly ink has graced the difficulties of knowing the origin of this Psalm. The most attractive solution is that it began as a pattern of thanksgiving for individuals to use at the sanctuary for deliverance from various plights, but then later (perhaps with such modifications as the addition of the first three verses and the hymn of praise from verses 33-43) it became a general thanksgiving for the people's restoration from exile.

Certainly vv.2-3 stamp the Psalm as it now stands with an undeniable reference to the exile, and there are two important ideas here.

(i) God has *rescued* the people from an alien power. The word used implies acting as somebody's next-of-kin, as illustrated by Boaz in his kindness to Ruth. It comes several times in *Isa. 40-55* to refer to the return from exile, and it is used in *Exod. 6:6* to describe God's part in the deliverance from Egypt.

(ii) God has *gathered* his people from every corner of the earth, where they had been scattered. Redemption emphasizes what they had been rescued *from*. Gathering makes the point that they had been rescued *for something*. Redemption marks the end of what was old and bad. Gathering marks the start of something new.

Return from exile, of course, as it took place in Old Testament times, gives colourful clothing to these two ideas of rescue and gathering. But the whole basis of the exposition to be attempted here involves seeing the catastrophe of the exile and God's deliverance of his people from it as a picture — what scientists and philosophers call nowadays a model — for understanding a much wider spectrum of human needs.

The legitimacy of this approach is clear

from Jesus' own teaching. He took Old Testament texts applicable primarily to the exile and said categorically that they were fulfilled in his own ministry (e.g. *Luke 4:21*). So for us, there are problems external to ourselves from which we feel the need of his deliverance. But we have other problems which cannot be distinguished from ourselves. I am my own problem. Seneca makes a prophetic comment on the package-tour industry when he asks what solution there is in expensive holidays when 'te semper circumferis' — you take yourself wherever you go.

The bundle of divided and conflicting interests and drives which are summed up rather inconclusively in what for simplicity's sake I call myself is often far from added up in reality. We don't talk of being scattered, but 'shattered' comes near to the same thing, as also the need for pulling ourselves together, as though the burdens of life had reduced us to something like an overloaded donkey which sinks to the ground with limbs splayed. So the need for this gathering, say, of spiritual resources is something that we know well enough.

The body of the Psalm has four sections, each describing one aspect of exile. Some take these four pictures as parables. On this view each refers to the same catastrophic experience, as though exile were *like* being lost in the desert, or *like* being in prison; *like* being desperately ill, or *like* being storm-tossed at sea. Others (and this second view is implied by the translation both of RSV and NEB) see the four pictures as vignettes of what different groups of exiles actually experienced. The Hebrew does not make the matter clear, but probably there is truth in both alternatives. In a literal sense, different things did happen to

different people. But each of these physical experiences has its own spiritual counterpart, and in any case as a people they all went through it all.

1. Wanderers retrieved

Some lost their way. It can happen in England. The cadet corps of a school in Ipswich went to Catterick for its summer camp. The corporal detailed to drive them home was told to get on to the A1 and stay on it for a hundred and thirty miles. He did as he was told and the first indication that anything was wrong was a signpost which said 'Edinburgh, 49'.

All very trying. But nothing like getting lost in the desert, when the road, such as it is, disappears in a sandstorm. Lostness is, of course, the condition of an unbeliever. But the sense of lostness can come to a Christian. The Psalms, after all, are not the case histories of unbelievers but of the people of God. The road ahead disappears in an unexpected redundancy, sudden bereavement, disenchantment with the rat-race. Up to now it may have been crystal clear what should be the next step. Now there is a new decision to be made with far-reaching implications for the whole pattern of life. And it is not clear what that decision should be.

2. Hunger and thirst

Any desert journey presents great problems over food and drink. Those problems are multiplied if one gets lost. The Exodus narrative vividly illustrates the shock which came to the Israelites when they had crossed the Red Sea and seen Pharaoh's army destroyed. It suddenly dawned on them what the trek across the desert involved. The need for food and water and guidance is the heart of the story that follows. In the book of *Job* too (6:15) the combination of being lost in the desert and desperate with thirst is graphically portrayed. *Job* has looked to his friends for help in his trials, but has found them utterly unforthcoming and incapable of meeting his needs. He compares his situation to that of a caravan going across the desert. It runs out of water, but away in the distance there can be spotted a stream running down the side of a mountain. They turn off their route to make for it, but before they get there all the snow on the summit has melted. The water has stopped flowing.

Do these pictures ring any bells for us? Perhaps there is some Egypt with its lush vegetables that we have left, and

like the Israelites we look back to it longingly: why were we ever so foolish as voluntarily to leave its advantages? We glance over our shoulders at contemporaries who went through doors which would, we imagine, have opened just as easily for us. Their feet have been firmly placed, it is tempting to imagine, on the ladder; the foundation is laid for a lifetime's security. Or is it that Christian work has been for us a romantic vision in the distance, glamorized by breakfast sermons in the Christian Union? But the reality is very different. You are at the end of the road in some African country. The general strike has doubled the price of petrol. The parts for your car are stolen in transit. You slosh through the swampy market to find something different from the eternal pumpkin. Your wife is in bed with hepatitis. It is months before you are due home on furlough. All very much, *mutatis mutandis*, like the waterfall which upon arrival turns out to be turned off. What you had expected to quench your spiritual thirst is in the event a very different menu.

3. Exhaustion

Their spirit sank within them. This is the natural sequel. Elijah went on his marathon journey south to Beersheba and beyond; but without clear objectives, so that he could not give a proper answer to the question, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' He sank down exhausted under the broom-tree. It was only a matter of hours since everything had seemed so clear. How vividly must have come to him the memory of Carmel, the sure touch he had displayed in his encounter with the priests of Baal, his complete unconcern at Jezebel's intentions, his certain expectancy as he called down fire from heaven, the energy which took him like some Pheidippides, running all the way to Jezreel. But now he had lost the way which earlier seemed so obvious. He was hungry and thirsty, both physically and spiritually. And he was tired out. This must also have been the experience of some of the exiles: on their way to Babylon, no doubt, but also on the way back. Hard enough to summon the next step if it is clear where your foot has to go. When that is not clear any reserves of energy dwindle to nothing.

Here then is the first picture which is painted by this Psalm of the exiles' problem. But it is a problem that has been resolved. The remedies have been discovered.

Those who were lost have been shown a straight and easy way to a city to dwell in. God has satisfied the thirsty and filled the hungry with good things. Beautiful. But how does the Psalmist's experience help us? That picture in *Isaiah* 35 of a kind of spiritual motorway to Zion for the exiles — how can it become realistic?

In conclusion what is said here will restrict itself to one brief point in answer to this question. Other things that could be said will emerge as we proceed. If the Psalm is going to help us, it is because we can see it as describing the totality of our experience: whereas we are only in the middle of ours.

Again and again the Bible depicts situations from which there was apparently no way out: the sacrifice of Isaac; the Red Sea; Elijah in despair; Jerusalem under siege by the Assyrians; Daniel in the den of lions — to cite but a few. Into these situations God came and made a way. The believer reads their record, in which the Psalm we are studying takes its place, and he says, 'I too, like those exiles, am lost, hungry, thirsty, exhausted. But God met their needs, and I believe he is going to meet my needs.'

It is the certainty that there is going to be a way which is the first step to discovering what the way is. The great value of God's word is that it can give to us that certainty. It was after all that same word of God which gave such certainty to Jesus himself, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross.

CHRIST AS TEACHER

continued from Page Sixty-Five

the heart of His parting command to His disciples. They are to make more 'learners' — 'disciple the nations' — and they are to 'teach them to observe' all His teachings (*Matt. 28:19-20*).

Neither the Holy Spirit, nor the disciples were given any other commission. What Christ 'began to do and to teach' (*Acts 1:1*), they are to continue. Christ's example, then, suggests our fellowships ought to be teaching centres. Our relevant and authoritative teaching should strike both outsiders and committed alike. But even more we should be known as learning centres where Christ's teaching is being clearly put to work as we learn more and more of Him.

LOOKING AT BOOKS

The Shadow of the Cross. Walter J. Chantry. Banner of Truth. 79pp. £1.25 (pbk).

Discovering God's Will. Sinclair B. Ferguson. Banner of Truth. 125pp. £1.95 (pbk).

Grow in Grace. Sinclair B. Ferguson. Marshalls. 159pp. £1.60 (pbk).

Born for Battle. R. Arthur Matthews. OMF/Send the Light. 182pp. £1.35 (pbk).

Be Still and Know. Michael Ramsey. Fount. 124pp. £1.25 (pbk).

The Living Fountain. Ronald Wallace. Marshalls. 81pp. £1.25 (pbk).

While the volumes listed above are by men from different ecclesiastical traditions, they have a number of common characteristics, most notably a devotional and practical attitude to Christian experience.

Walter Chantry's work is hard-hitting, sharp, even acerbic in tone. His main premise is that the 'Lord of glory has called (us) to a life of self-denial, to a cross'. He defines 'bearing a cross' as every Christian's 'daily, conscious selection of those options which will please Christ . . . and aim at putting self to death'. He also claims that the call of the Gospel to take up one's cross is not 'an invitation to take pleasure in self-abuse', simply because 'Joy in (Jesus's) kingdom comes with a cross'. Chantry then applies these principles to such important areas as 'Christian Liberty', 'Marriage', 'The Christian Ministry', and 'Prayer'. This book is as haunting — and alluring — as the picture of Glencoe that adorns its front cover: it has a profundity, dignity and freshness seldom found in Christian publications today.

Dr. Ferguson's works are inspired by a deeply sincere pastoral motivation. The subject of the first of them may be expressed in the form of a question: 'How does God make his will known to us?' The author's answer is eminently biblical: 'Primarily by teaching us about himself and our relationship with

him. As we come to know the character of God, and his ways with men, we shall increasingly discover this wisdom — that is, practical knowledge of his will and the ways in which it is to be put into action.' This knowledge of course is provided by the Scriptures of Truth in the form of **commandments** (the Ten Commandments and the apostolic commands as found in the New Testament), **principles** (Jesus must be Lord in all Christian activities), and **illustrations** (general principles as exemplified in personal experience). Ferguson also shows that the diligent study of God's word must be accompanied by patience, understanding, and a willingness to be obedient. There's nothing new here, but the volume is nevertheless a valuable introduction to this complex and problematical subject.

Grow in Grace is about the way we progress and mature as Christians. It is designed to reflect Paul's dictum in *1 Corinthians 3:7* ('neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase'), the main contention being that spiritual growth only becomes a reality as we enjoy 'personal fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ'. He then looks at the lives of such biblical characters as Daniel, Peter and Timothy in order to illustrate his overall themes. Another careful, useful and solid book.

Born for Battle lacks cohesive unity, which is not surprising because most of its thirty-one chapters were originally written as editorials for *East Asia Millions*, the official magazine of OMF. But any loss of structural unity is more than made up for by Matthews's pungency of expression and sheer spiritual insight and perception. He calls for a head-on, unflinching and resolute conflict with Satan. Listen to this incisive comment: 'The thing we need to be afraid of today is that the spirit that produces world trends should

invade Christ's mighty army and argue us off the offensive into a compromised coexistence with the world's attitudes — so that we end up just like the world, taking lessons in French and practicing detente.'

But whether a Christian is endeavouring to discern the will of God, to 'grow in grace', to deny self, or to contend for the faith, prayer is absolutely vital, and this is the subject of Michael Ramsey's balanced and wise book, **Be Still and Know**, in which he makes a special plea for silence and stillness in the life of prayer: 'Silence enables us to be aware of God, to let mind and imagination dwell upon his truth, to let prayer be listening before it is talking, and to discover our own selves in a way that it is not

always possible when we are making or listening to noise. There comes sometimes an interior silence in which the soul discovers itself in a new dimension of energy and peace, a dimension which the restless life can miss.'

Each of these books asserts that the Christian life is a matter of hearing and responding to Jesus's call to follow him on the way to the Cross, the price of such obedience being explored in Wallace's slim volume, **The Living Fountain**. They deserve a wide audience because they pinpoint the antidotes to much of the flabby thinking and sloppy behaviour that masquerades as Christianity today.

Review by John Peters

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READERS' FORUM

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This month's Readers' Forum contribution is from Mr. Jeremy Sparkes.

PRAYING AND SHARING

There have only been two occasions when I have been sickened by something that I have seen. The first was some years ago when I saw someone who had just been beaten up. The second was when I heard the thud and saw the dust of bricks as they were thrown at the line of policemen in Manchester, during last year's riots.

I had spent the past year living in Moss Side, only a few hundred yards away from the violence that occurred there. On one of those nights as I lay in a friend's house (I could not get home because of the trouble) I turned again to the book of Jeremiah: 'Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper' (29:7). These words cut me, for I realised how I had neglected to pray for peace in the place where I lived.

Jeremiah is writing in contrast to false prophets who said that very soon God's people would be out of Babylon and back in the promised land. So there was no point in putting any effort in, as far as life in Babylon was concerned.

The Lord, though, declares that He has placed them in Babylon and there they will be for seventy years, and during that time they are to be actively involved in work and prayer in the affairs of that place.

It is interesting that our life-span is also seventy years; and yet have we grasped the essential need to pray and to be involved in where we live? I cannot find anywhere in the Bible anything that supports an 'opting out' of life and its issues, and neither does this stance fool me by attempts to label it as being 'spiritually' rather than 'secularly' minded.

Yet if we are to pray and to seek the prosperity of where we live, we need to do so intelligently and in an informed way, so I'd like to share some thoughts that stem from my time in Moss Side in the hope that they might help us to get 'inside' the situation.

First, there was a fair degree of activity by some left-wing political groups, regularly canvassing with a newspaper or pamphlets, which generally were pro the Irish hunger strikers and anti-police in their nature. Yet amongst those that we have talked to, they seem to be disillusioned with the response, or rather, the lack of it, in Moss Side; so the effect of these groups is uncertain.

Second, a child tends to learn what it lives — if it lives in deprivation, it learns depravity. There can be no doubt that the inner city areas have been neglected and abandoned. Many people, Christians included, as soon as they can afford to, move out to the suburbs with never another thought for the poor and the bad housing which they leave behind them.

Just outside of my flat in Moss Side was an adventure playground which was in constant use during the daylight hours when we first moved in. Due to local authority cutbacks, it was then only open for a limited time on some days. Even worse, in the latest proposals for redevelopment in Moss Side this playground, and other areas used by the children, are to be used for houses or warehousing, with no apparent provision for anywhere nearby where the children can play. It is on issues like this that we can take an active part and let our voices be heard if we know about or bother to find out. We cannot let ourselves be conformed to the world's mould of

abandoning the inner city and to sanction the *status quo*, as much by our silence and inactivity as by anything else.

The recent setting up of the Evangelical Coalition for Urban Mission may bring to life again the church's radical nature, but only if we put our weight behind it, and perhaps this time weight is not meant in a figurative sense but in a literal one — Christians being prepared to live in the neglected areas and to associate themselves with the ignored and the rejected of society, just as Jesus did, rather than following the accepted middle-class pattern of deserting them as soon as possible. To stay on the theme of children, I was walking home early one evening, hands in my pockets, when a little coloured lad aged about seven stopped me with tears in his eyes, and asked if I had a stick.

Curious at the request, I asked what the trouble was, and discovered that the drain cover was missing and his ball had disappeared down the drain. Due to the lack of rain at that time the level of the drain was very low. I took off my jacket and was just able to reach the ball. As I gave it to him I noticed the look of disbelief on his face, that an adult should bother to help him.

Perhaps in this society where what a person possesses rather than who he is is the measure of his worth, we have neglected the loving care that our young people need — not just to shower presents on them, but to spend time with them, and most of all to show the lie to materialism as a genuine life-style.

There is much more that I could say and share, especially in the spheres of the media reporting of the troubles and of unemployment; but one final thing we can all do something about, is to strongly oppose in word, should we hear anyone supporting such a view, that our troubles are the result of immigration.

On a simple numerical basis, for a good number of years since 1960 Britain has had net emigration, that is,

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REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The July Question

Sometimes one hears an appeal made to the 'law of first mention', according to which the first occurrence of a word or concept in Scripture has a significance specially determinant for its meaning throughout Scripture as a whole. I suspect that this 'law' is invoked only where it seems to work, and that occasions when it does not work are overlooked. What do readers think?

Mr. John Kilpatrick replies:

There is a law which states that 'no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation' (2 Pet. 1:20 RSV). In an attempt to escape the subjectivity proscribed by that law, men have devised an objective system of interpretation based on historical and grammatical principles. One of the methods of that system is to study every occurrence of a word or a concept in the scriptures. It has been observed that, very often, in the application of this method, the earliest reference is the most useful.

It is this observation which has led to the postulation of a 'law' of first mention. No such law is set out for us in scripture and it seems to me dangerous to award this technique the status of a law without the authority of scripture. Just as the objective should not be subjugated to the subjective in matters of truth, so the authoritative cannot be bound by any merely **objective** framework and the only authoritative rule of faith and practice is the scripture.

A law must be applicable in all cases, without exception, and it has not been proven that the first mention of a word in the scripture is in any way determinative of its future use. At most all that has been shown is that first mention is an aid to interpretation. The technique cannot stand on its own and corroborative evidence should always be sought for interpretations based on the evidence of first mention.

Finally, a law should be comprehensively stated. What formulation of the 'law' of first

mention could deal with the paradoxical first mentions of 'bread' and 'wine' in the scriptures. Separately we find them both associated with a curse on first mention. When first mentioned in conjunction they are in the hands of Melchizedek and associated with a blessing. The same pitfalls await those who depend on the 'law' of first mention as for those who lay too much stress on etymology or the significance of numbers.

Dr. Graeme W. Fairbairn replies:

Some strange conclusions could no doubt be arrived at by pressing the idea of a 'law of first mention' literally in all cases. May I suggest, however, that the idea is possibly an extrapolation of another oft-quoted but valuable idea that 'Genesis is the seedbed of Scripture'?

There is no doubt that *Genesis* is particularly important in establishing principles that are developed or assumed throughout the Scriptures. It is more than simply a question of a 'first mention'; there are important concepts for which the primary Biblical source material is in the early part of *Genesis*, e.g. creation; the creation of man in the image of God; the ordinance of marriage, of a day of rest, of work; the fall of man. In addition the judgement of God, the need for sacrifice, justification by faith, God's sovereignty over the events of history, the setting up of the House of Israel, and other fundamental Biblical concepts are introduced as the book progresses.

Hence it is not a question of forcing a 'law of first mention' in a mechanistic way, but rather accepting the need to interpret much of Scripture in the light of principles developed in the early chapters of the Bible.

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

I cannot recall hearing the expression in question in the circles in which I have moved, but I have heard arguments supported on such a principle. In this connection there is a profitable study in examining the occurrences of the phrases: 'the

earth/world', 'all the earth/world, and the whole earth/world'. These expressions commence in *Genesis* and continue through to *Revelation*.

'Replenish the earth' (*Gen. 1:28*) and 'the judge of all the earth' (*Gen. 18:25*) must, without controversy, relate to the whole earth or world, literally. But when we read 'because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth' (*Gen. 11:9*) the whole inhabited earth must be the meaning.

I think it is important to bear this distinction in mind when studying the prophetic books, particularly, *Daniel* and *Revelation*. The 'third kingdom of brass' refers to Greece, 'which shall bear rule over all the earth' (*Dan. 2:39*); yet the maps in our Bibles show that the Grecian empire embraced hardly any of Europe. Of the first beast we read: 'all that dwell on the earth shall worship him' (*Rev. 13:8*); and of the second beast we read: 'he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth' (*Rev. 13:14*). But in *Daniel 11:40,41* we read that the kings of the south and north will 'push at him' (who, according to E. W. Rogers in **Concerning the Future** (P & I), presumably relates to the Antichrist (p.104) but who is only the first beast's lieutenant according to p.107 and not the main ruler himself). Be that as it may, this suggests that the whole world might not be ruled by the beasts, but only 'the revived Roman empire' or 'western confederacy' as understood by some.

This little study, I think, proves that Bible students should study every mention and not merely the 'first mention' when it suits a theory. Incidentally, the writer thinks that the Antichrist (*1 and 2 John*) consists of Satan, and the two beasts collectively.

Mr. Malcolm Jones replies:

Might one impishly suggest to those who accept the 'law of first mention', that the meaning of the word 'Oversight' in the AV of *Genesis 43:12* might give a fairly accurate definition of a number of ruling bodies among us today who own that title.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Kids and Alcohol

From Mr. T. H. Friston

Dear Mr. Coad,

In reply to Mr. David Hughes's article, it is incredible to me that any group of young people (or older ones for that matter) who regularly spend their time and money on 'social' drinking in the local public house, can be regarded as truly born again. In my own experience, over the years, any one behaving in this way who presented themselves for baptism and church fellowship, would not have been regarded as a suitable candidate for these divinely appointed demonstrations of the Lordship of Christ. Similarly, such behaviour in an assembly member would give rise to doubts about the reality of their Christian profession. It would result not only in loving exhortation, but possibly, lead finally to some measure of discipline.

I know that the older generation has a great deal of responsibility for any generation gap in assemblies. For years, many fostered the idea that young people were a race apart, sponsoring separate meetings for them to an extent which now makes mixing with the rest an undesirable aim. I have never been sure whether this was because young people were considered too stupid, or too superior, to find their place with the rest! I know of one assembly where young people, baptized and brought into fellowship, refuse to attend the worship meeting for Breaking of Bread, because 'they don't understand what goes on'. On the other hand, I remember older brethren, who come to the Bible Study and pray for the Lord's guidance, when, in fact, they made up their minds on the subject years ago. We have prayers, with the same unctious phrases repeated week after week, and prayers which are largely theological addresses to God. There is ministry which gives answers to questions we do not ask, but never answers the questions young people want answers to! And, when will Brethren learn that

sisters need not wear a head covering, if they are not allowed, by the same brethren, to pray or prophesy (1 Cor. 11:5)? The idea of having to 'dress up' is no reason for absence. The Scriptures require only decency and modesty, not formality. Young people should be encouraged to take part, provided they wait upon God, as all of us must. And it would help the Spirit of God if the sisters were given the rights the Lord has granted them. I do not believe in the (exclusive) priesthood of all male believers. So, there are faults and stumbling blocks from both young and old. But there comes a time when wise and loving counsel has to say to young believers (or others), 'Enough is Enough'. To the young people of David Hughes's circle, I would say, 'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve: the courts of the Lord, or the tippler's tavern.' Finally, I find the title of the article, 'Kids and Alcohol' rather strange. My dictionary defines 'kid' as a 'child'. A strange epithet to apply to teenagers of eighteen and upwards, the lowest legally permitted age for pub crawlers. Does this imply a rather patronizing and yet indulgent attitude to the subjects of our problem? If so, not a very good starting point for wise Christian counselling.

Yours sincerely,

T. H. Friston

12 Pearson Street, Cardiff, CF2 3EL.

The hymn-book saga

From Mr. E. L. Lovering

Dear Mr. Coad,

Music has always played an important role in all great movements of the Spirit of God. One of the last things Moses was commanded to do was to 'write a song' (Deut. 31:19). Dr. Campbell Morgan wrote 'the church is more enriched in her catholic songs than in all her systematic theologies. In the former she realises her unity, whereas in the latter she too often creates her divisions. The Wesleys did more for experimental Christianity in their hymns than in all their printed explanations.'

Though in general this is probably true, many hours have been spent by individual churches in deciding the choice of a suitable hymn book. The legacy of the Moody-Sankey mission was the Sankey

Sacred Songs and Solos, still in circulation, though in far fewer churches than previously. The 'Graham' crusades will be remembered, not least, by the singing of George Beverly Shea and the massed choirs under the inspired conductorship of Cliff Barrows.

In comparatively few years one has witnessed the replacement of one hymn book after another and the emergence of an all-purpose hymn book in such collections as **Hymns of Faith and Christian Worship**. In such collections, consciously or otherwise, 'chorus hymns' were virtually excluded; thereby, it was thought, adding dignity and reverence to the worship. In the Foreword of the 1979 edition of **Hymns of Faith** it is stated 'the current shortage of acceptable new hymns (words and music) is one expression of the spiritual dearth of our day. Before this new hymn book has run its course we trust that the tide will have turned and the Holy Spirit moved revivingly through the church.' The hymn book saga, however, is not finished. With the popularity of the guitar and 'beat music' the 'chorus' has again emerged, and the 'hymn', better suited to the organ, has almost disappeared from many services of worship. This has been replaced by repetitive and often demonstrative chorus singing by the use of such books as **Scripture in Song**.

It would be interesting to know readers' thoughts on this recent phase in the Hymn Book Saga.

Yours sincerely,

E. L. Lovering

'Style Close', Marlborough Road, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8JP.

From Mr. H. C. Innes

Dear Mr. Coad,

Before this letter reaches you I am afraid your readers will have long since forgotten the two letters by Miss Mullen and Mr. Lovering in your June issue but their juxtaposition with each other and with my recent experience was too striking to fail to comment.

I must admit to a basic agreement with both of their arguments, but two exposures to differing view points have made me wonder. With reference to Mr. Lovering's comments on drama, I

recently attended a presentation of the Gospel in mime called 'The Toymaker and his Son', by 'Youth with a Mission'. It was professionally done and a simple appeal was made at the end for decisions. There could be no mistaking the message, but I found myself uncomfortable with the medium. However I was amazed to encounter a young Chinese Christian almost in tears, she was so deeply moved. Later, I found that this presentation had been used by God in bringing hundreds of young people to Christ. Inevitably I wondered if my distaste for the medium was more a reflection of my background (and age?) than of my spiritual insight.

Miss Mullen's reaction to 'Lord of the Dance' reminded me I had recently read with profit Tom Marshall's **Chance or the Dance** — a critique of modern secularism. It didn't say much of hymns, but I think it supplies a clue to that one. May I, rather belatedly, express my

appreciation for Dr. McIntosh and his 'Musical Interludes'?

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Innes

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READERS' FORUM

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more people have left the country than have entered it.

Yet, on a different level, the only way our children are going to grow up not to be prejudiced is not by sheltering them from people of a different colour or customs, but by bringing them up in a multi-racial environment where, from the very start, as they play with children of other cultures they can know that there is no superiority or inferiority that is dependent upon colour or creed.

Perhaps we need to remind ourselves that Jesus was neither white nor an European, and that it was Simon of Cyrene from Africa who had the privilege of helping Him with the cross. Let us never forget that the grace of God can break down every artificial barrier that man erects, and let us live it in our lives also.

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Dr. Roger Moss on 'The Healing Scene Today'

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Dr. David Atkinson on 'A Theology of Healing'

A theologian associated with the 'Care and Counsel' group, chaplain of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

Group studies of cases and a 'questions arising' forum will be included in the programme.

PLEASE RESERVE THIS DATE

The seminar costs will be £2.00 per member; LBC makes a 50p charge for use of premises. A freewill offering for CBRF support will be taken. Light refreshments will be available; packed lunches may be brought.

CBRF Publications will be on display and for purchase; tape recording orders will be taken.

CBRF subscriptions can be taken out on the forms provided.

Enquiries to: Dr. J. Boyes, CBRF, 13 The Meads, Northchurch, Berkhamsted, Herts. HP4 3QX (tel: 04427 2654).

NEWS PAGE

A State Religion?

The controversy that sprang up in connection with the Falkland Islands service held in St. Paul's Cathedral on July 26, demonstrated how the gap between the establishment and the churches is widening. The preceding weeks had seen numbers of people wrestling with problems about providence and prayer which were nonetheless urgent for being commonplace. If one thanked God for the end of the conflict, did this imply that he is responsible for its beginning? How far was victory a sign that God approved the British cause? Was it right of Christians in Britain to pray in terms which could not be used by Christians in Argentina? In the event, the emphasis was on thanksgiving for the end of the war rather than praise for victory vouchsafed to British arms. There were public expressions of regret that 'Onward Christian soldiers' and 'Fight the good fight' had not been sung (!) but any frustration the Prime Minister may have felt at not being able to stage a military triumph in St. Paul's Cathedral was not given public expression since she recognised that the service had brought immense comfort to the mourners who were present. However, the issue remained unresolved of how far it is appropriate to give thanks publicly when people (is it relevant that they were British subjects even though many have not the right to live in Britain?) have been delivered from a tyrannical regime though at a sad cost in human life? How far is a state church obligated to provide the sort of religion that the government of the day (or even the British people in general, assuming their wishes can be known) may require? In this context, it was not surprising that a new Church of England hymnbook earned some useful advance

publicity when it became known that the book included an alternative version of the National Anthem having the second verse purged of its jingoistic overtones. Archbishop Runcie has emerged with his stature enhanced. Since he himself holds an award for gallantry in the field, he is free from accusations of cowardice or sentimental pacifism. It is to be hoped that he may find a way of enhancing the Church of England's witness to biblical doctrine as well as to the need for reconciliation.

Children's Meetings and Holiday Clubs

However imaginative leaders may be, there always seems to come a point where one runs out of ideas for children's meetings and holiday clubs. Two Church Information Office publications could be immensely helpful in this connection. **Together for Holidays** (106pp., £3.50) includes a wide range of material for Christmas, Easter and Summer holiday events, ranging from dragon hunts and time machine trips to a serial story and a Bible study for Holy Week. **Harlequinade** by Janet Green (60 A4 pages, £2.75) is packed with games, puzzles, playlets and assembly items for class room and church use. Janet Green teaches RE in a Bristol comprehensive school and the material here is more suitable for children over ten. Readers who know how to select what suits them and ignore the rest will find both these books very useful.

The Church

Elders (in particular) who find themselves forced to consider searching questions about the nature and activities of a local church should be glad to know that David Watson's **I Believe in the Church** has been reissued by Hodder & Stoughton in a mass-market

paperback form, at £2.25. The type is a little small for comfortable reading but working through it together would make a challenging programme for any body of elders. The biblically based studies in the nature of the Church which occupy one-third of the book are encouraging as well as challenging. And the rather longer section dealing with the life of the Church contains a great deal of practical help, as well as historical perspective, about the way in which biblical principles can be translated into practice. Some readers who are unaware of the changes that have come to the Church of England in recent years may be surprised to find Watson accepting the following six principles of Christian ministry. 1. No distinction, either in form, language or theory, between clergy and laity was ever accepted by the New Testament church. 2. The ministry is co-extensive with the entire Church. 3. The local church in the Apostolic age always functioned under a plurality of leadership. 4. There are no uniform models for ministry in the New Testament; the patterns are flexible and versatile. 5. In the New Testament church we found both leadership and authority, but no kind of hierarchical structure. 6. The only valid distinction which the New Testament church recognised . . . apart from the different functions . . . (is) the distinction between local and itinerant ministries.

Elim Hall, Glasgow

This year sees the centenary of the assembly that meets in Elim Hall, Glasgow, and among other events to celebrate their centenary they have planned a fellowship meal and an evening of praise and thanks on October 30. They have sent invitations to many former members but realise that there are many

others whom they have been unable to trace. If any reader is a former member of the fellowship and has not received an invitation but would like to join in the centenary celebrations, please write to Mr. J. E. Munro at Elim Hall, 5 Prince Edward Street, Glasgow G42 8LU.

Evangelism

Luis Palau's mission to London, originally scheduled for 1983, has now been extended into 1984. Area missions are planned throughout Greater London utilising the anticipated visit by Luis Palau during October 1983. He hopes to return for a major series of central meetings in the summer of 1984. Since planning began, Billy Graham has agreed to visit England during May and June 1984 under the title of Mission England. There will be close consultation between the two teams over dates and activities and for this reason the final dates for the 1984 visit of Luis Palau will not be available for some time. However a two-day conference will take place in London on October 18 and 19. Attendance at the two-day conference is described as being 'limited to ministers together with one lay representative from each church'. (Presumably a local church which is served by a group of ministers may send two people!) Readers who are interested should make sure that their fellowship contacts the Mission to London office, 112 City Road, London EC1V 2NB.

Brian Mills is among those helping with the Mission to London project — indeed he is giving one day a week to help with the regional co-ordination. Most of his time is being devoted, however, to Mission England, a three-year period of mission to the nation involving emphasis on prayer, contact, evangelism and nurture, climaxing in the visit of Billy

Graham for a week's mission in five regions of the country between mid-May and the end of July 1984. Brian and Ruth have moved from Wokingham to Earley in Reading where they attend a fellowship recently formed through the division of one congregation into two because of the growth of the church.

David Iliffe returned at the end of July from camp work in Greenland. Not only is the country cold, work among the Eskimos is difficult. But slowly evangelism by Faroese, Danish and Greenlandic Christians is breaking down the opposition.

Eric Hutchings still needs prayer in respect of the pleurisy from which he has been suffering. The 'sealing' treatment required to stop fluid re-entering the lung causes complete body exhaustion, weakness and severe pain. Eric asks that prayer be for the success of the treatment and for his complete healing for God's glory. Eric says that 'the Lord seems to be pouring his power increasingly into our worldwide missionary radio ministry. A very deep moving of God's Holy Spirit in the lives of our listeners leaves us feeling like the words of the gospel song, "God is getting us ready for something big".'

Evangelism and Social Responsibility

An international consultation on the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility might sound a somewhat academic occasion. But as 58 members from 26 countries got together at Grand Rapids from June 19 to 26, it became obvious that the Holy Spirit was confronting delegates with a challenge to love not only 'with words or tongue but with actions and in truth'. Some of the time was spent in full session considering papers presented by evangelicals from all over the world, but even more important, perhaps, was the time spent in Bible study groups and in close discussion of the issues involved. There was a noticeable difference between the attitudes of the West and those of the Third World (or 'two-thirds world' as some preferred). Members from the West tended to show a good deal of concern lest evangelism in the traditional

sense of 'preaching the Gospel' should become overshadowed by a 'social gospel'. They were inclined to discuss whether a concern for the well-being of others was the root or the fruit of gospel teaching. It was an Argentinian (!) delegate who said that it seemed to him they were more like the left and right wings of a bird which could not function without using both. In fact, the Third World members obviously felt that Western Christians tend to be unbiblical because of their unwillingness to look at people in a holistic way. To concentrate on saving souls while not manifesting concern for bodily or emotional well-being is an attitude that the Bible knows nothing about since it regards human nature as a unity. But would concentration on social concern not reduce the emphasis on evangelisation in the sense of disciple-making? One delegate replied cogently, 'If I love my wife, does that reduce the love available for my children?' Yet Third World opinions were varied. Some members came from situations where involvement in action for social justice might prejudice the work of evangelism and were thus chary of political involvement. But all agreed that the Bible knows nothing of a relationship with God that is distinct from a relationship with other persons. It was made quite clear that the imperative to show love in deed as well as words was not confined to the Third World. Broken family relationships, urban loneliness and unemployment are only some of the human needs that demand a response from Christians in the West. One member found himself recalling a significant finding of the survey published in *The Brethren Today* (now reprinting). When asked 'What are the three main aims of your assembly?' only 2% of the respondents having no baptisms recorded in the last two years included meeting social needs or helping the community among the objectives. But of those that reported 10 or more baptisms in the same period, 15% mentioned this objective. There may well be other evidence from church growth specialists.

Pocket Testament League
Harvester readers may not

realise that the Pocket Testament League has four workers available to help local fellowships. Fred Hudson is an evangelist and Bible teacher — we have heard encouraging reports of a 'Good News Week' held at Moorlands Evangelical Church during the early part of spring. Peter Honour has wide experience and is known to many assemblies for his work in literature outreach, visiting schools, imparting missionary vision... Geoff Simmons modestly describes himself as 'available for the struggling fellowships' which may feel embarrassed at the idea of inviting anyone. However, he also says that he is happy to visit the 'more successful'. He enjoys getting people to participate and always uses visual aids to convey his message.

Religious Broadcasting

Harvester readers will wish to pray for David Winter, recently appointed Head of BBC Religious Programmes. He is in the goodly succession of schoolmasters who have succeeded in other professions as well and was for some years editor of *Crusade* magazine. He married into a family long associated with Clapton Hall in North London and is thus related by marriage to John Martin, formerly of India and now of Queen Edith Chapel, Cambridge.

Rural Evangelism

Mission for Christ — Rural Evangelism — is again urging Christians throughout Britain, to remember the spiritual need of the rural areas of Britain by making Sunday, September 26 a day of prayer for village evangelism and pastoral ministry. Over 13 million people live in rural Britain, occupying 90% of our total land area. Few of Britain's farming community attend a church. Little is being done for the spiritual needs of 3½ million children in rural Britain. A vast majority of rural churches have small, ageing and declining congregations. Youth activities are few and amenities, finance and manpower are sadly lacking for this vital work. There is a serious shortage of full time and lay leadership in the village church. Christians should work in faith to ensure that Britain's villages

are effectively evangelised and cared for spiritually.

Scripture Union

Paul Marsh has a new role as the Bible Consultant for the Scripture Union. He will be fulfilling a Bible-teaching ministry in this country during May, June and July and in September, October and November for series of meetings arranged by churches or fellowships or groups of churches. During the rest of the year he will be available for an overseas ministry particularly in Pakistan, India and amongst Christian communities in the Gulf States. This ministry is being jointly sponsored by SU and BMMF International of whose UK Council Paul is a member.

Readers of the *Harvester*, many of whom got to know Paul when he was 'on the Echoes list' during his missionary service in Pakistan, will be praying for him in his new ministry.

A new Bible reading guide for young adults is being published as a co-operative venture between SU and British Youth for Christ. The first two booklets of AM/PM, each with 'three months material transmitted on a 15+ wavelength to get you tuned in to God', are now available. The other two booklets in this one year programme are due for publication in the late autumn. The booklets are priced 75p each and are available from Christian bookshops or from the SU Mail Order Department.

Youth Work

The Plymouth and District Assemblies Youth Camp, which has used its present site for 20 years, believes it is being led to acquire a site near Tintagel in Cornwall. The initial cost of the purchase is £65,000 which must be available by mid-September. Gifts or notification of loans should be forwarded to Mr. Barry King, 17 Tor Lane, Hartley, Plymouth. In addition to much manual work necessary in preparing the property there will probably be a need for a resident caretaker/warden to provide care and security.

Home Calls

William Morrison on July 1 aged 89. Converted at the age

of 7, from his early teens he became increasingly involved in the work of the Lord. Initially he met with Christians in the Gospel Hall Drongan but since 1921 with the Church which met in Victoria Hall, Ayr (now Riverside Evangelical Church, Ayr). He was a tract worker, Sunday school teacher, joint superintendent of Sunday school, church treasurer and elder. For many years he served on the Missionary Council in Glasgow where his experience and balanced judgement were greatly appreciated. The last few months of his life were spent in the home of his son and daughter-in-law, Mr. & Mrs. W. K. Morrison, in Falkirk. Mr. Morrison was held in high regard by Christians in Falkirk and in Ayr and they, along with many missionary friends, will miss him greatly. Prayer is requested for his family in Falkirk and especially his daughter, Mrs. Helen Rodgers, and her husband and family in Australia.

Frank Nickells on July 27, aged 73, after several years of increasing ill-health borne with

quiet dignity and courage. Converted at 17, he was in fellowship at Ebenezer Gospel Hall, Cardiff throughout his life, and was certainly one of its most consistent and faithful members. His understanding of the Scriptures was wide-ranging and balanced, and he presented the fruits of his prayerful meditation upon them in carefully argued articles for a number of biblical journals, including *The Harvester*. By profession a commercial printer, he approached everything he did, both inside and outside the assembly, with meticulous attention to detail and, characteristically, he wrote out a list of the hymns and readings for his funeral service months before he died. He will be sorely missed at Ebenezer and especially by his only surviving sister, Win, who nursed him lovingly and devotedly right up to the end, and for whom prayer is earnestly requested.

J. B. Phillips, a pioneer New Testament translator, on July 28, aged 76. It was when J. B. Phillips was giving epilogues to the young people at his South

London church that he realised that, although they normally listened to him eagerly, they did not respond to Scripture readings. So he used his knowledge of Greek to translate Paul's letters in what he later called a 'dynamic' translation. This was translation, not paraphrasing, but he did aim to produce the same effect in English that the Greek produced. Later he compared the experience to working on an electricity mains with the power still switched on — so great was his sense of the life latent in the New Testament. Although encouraged by C. S. Lewis to complete his work on the *Epistles*, Phillips was turned down by several publishers until Lewis suggested his own publisher, Geoffrey Bles. Later he translated the *Acts*, and *Revelation*, and in 1958 the whole New Testament in modern English was available. He also wrote smaller books including a biographical work, *Ring of Truth*. His translations were less used in later years because so much else was available. But at the time they represented an

immense advance on Moffat and Weymouth and on the Sunday after he died, a 'Songs of Praise' session at Belmont Chapel Exeter heard from a young barrister of how a public library copy of Phillips's *Your God is Too Small* had led him to a faith in Christ. The name of Phillips has a right to stand in the great succession of Bible translators.

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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 July amounted to £299.00.

Missionaries' Children's Fund:

29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. Gifts received for the Fund during July amounted to £1,329.71.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:

12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received for the months of June and July amounted to £1,227.96 and £4,832.70 respectively.

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, B.:

Falmouth 1-4; St. Ives 5; Weston 11-17; Bristol 18-21; Falmouth 22-30.

Clifford, D. L.:

West Moors, Weymouth, St. Leonard's, Swansea, Morriston (Florida).

Galyer, W. S.:

Aberdeen area 4-12; Enfield Highway 12, 22, 29; South Ruislip 29.

Gillham, S.:

Dorchester Show 4; West Moors 12; Bristol Homemaker's Conference 18-21; Dorset CEW Rally 25; Hamworthy 26; Swanage Mission 27-October 3.

Iliffe, D.:

Angmering 6-10; Filey 11-18; Littlehampton 19-30.

Lowther, G. K.:

Grimsby, Lincolnshire and Humberside 1-24, 27-30; Hemsworth, Yorkshire 26.

Phillips, C. F.:

Roe Green 1, 8; South Park, Seven Kings 5, 12, 19; South Grove, Walthamstow 7, 14, 21, 28; Chingford 9, 16, 23; Berkhamsted 15, 22, 29; Frinton 25, 26; Culver Grove 30.

Pierce, D. H.:

Maldon 12-19; Colchester 20, 21 & 26; Chelmsford 22, 24, 25; Braintree 23.

Short, S. S.:

Chelmsford 5, 6; Maldon 7; Colchester 8; Gloucester 12, 13; Newent 15; Hereford 15; Dublin 17, 22; Dun Loaghaire 18-21; Greystones 26.

Stewart, J.:

Counties Exhibition Unit: Cowes Week 2-6; Sandown Sea front 9-11; Shanklin Sea front 12-14; Solent 15; Cowes 22, 24; Shanklin 29.

Stringer, D.:

Rugby 1-3; Hastings 4-12; Warwickshire area 13-24; Weymouth & Dorchester 25-30.

Tryon, G. C.:

Eltham Park 1; Reigate 5; Redcar 12, 19, 26; Lazenby 13-17; Dormanstown 20-24; Buckhurst Hill 29.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Boscombe:

Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, by kind permission. Annual Conference, Saturday October 9 at 7.00 p.m. Speakers: J. Jackson (Weald) and J. B. Hewitt (Chesterfield).

Bristol:

Broadmead Chapel. Homeworkers' Conference, September 18-21. Reports from workers; ministry by Rowland Forman (New Zealand) and Ivan Steeds.

Devon:

United Missionary Meeting: Saturday, October 2, Belmont Chapel, Exeter, 3.15 & 6.30 p.m. October 4, Grosvenor St. Chapel, Barnstaple, 7.30 p.m. October 5, Underwood Chapel, Plympton, 7.30 p.m.

Dundee:

Dundee Assemblies Missionary Weekend and Conference, October 15-18. Theme: 'Look East'. Speakers: Mr. & Mrs. Peter Perry (Thailand), Dr. & Mrs. Alex Stewart (Pakistan) and Mr. Andrew Gray (Glasgow). Friday, 15th, 7.30 p.m. Introductory/Testimony Night. Saturday, 16th, 4.00-8.00 p.m. Conference Reports and Ministry. Monday, 18th, 7.30 p.m. Ladies' Night.

Grimsby:

Wellowgate Chapel, 67 Wellowgate. September 18 at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Dr. G. Moxon (Hartlepool). Subject: Evolution.

High Wycombe:

Cherith Gospel Hall Silver Jubilee. Saturday October 2 at 4.00 p.m. & 7.30 p.m. Sunday, October 3 at 6.30 p.m. Speaker: Alan Nute. For details telephone: 0494 712952.

Hornsey, N.8:

Alexandra Hall. Conference to be held on Saturday, September 11 at 4.00 p.m. & 6.00 p.m. Speakers: Tom Watt & Malcolm Jones. Mr. Watt will minister at 8.00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, 13-15, following.

Luton:

Onslow Road Gospel Hall. Annual Conference, September 18. Speakers: A. Carew (Tooting); M. Horlock (Cardiff). Afternoon 3.15-4.45 p.m. Evening 6.15-8.00 p.m. Refreshments during interval.

Maidenhead:

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road. Annual Conference, September 25, 3.30 to 5.15 p.m. & 6.15 to 8.00 p.m. Tea in the interval. Speakers: Tom Frears, Malaga (Spain) & David West, Leicester.

Oldham:

Werneth Gospel Hall, Railway Road. Annual Conference, October 2, 3.15 & 6 p.m. Speakers: R. Parnaby (Fleetwood) & A. Gambol (Glasgow).

North East England:

Missionary Weekend September 17-20. Meetings held simultaneously on Teesside, Tyneside and Wearside. Speakers: E. Bermejo, A. Eglington, R. G. German, H. M. Martin, S. H. Moore, G. S. Orr. Full details from W. Archbold, 12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP.

Port Glasgow:

Hebron Hall, 41 Princes Street. Annual Conference to be held on Saturday October 16, at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: Peter Maiden (Carlisle); William Barr (Cumbernauld); Jack Gamble (Glasgow).

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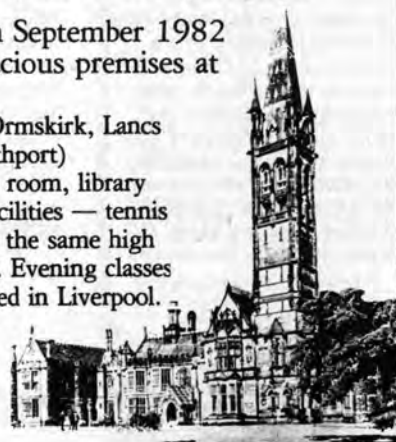
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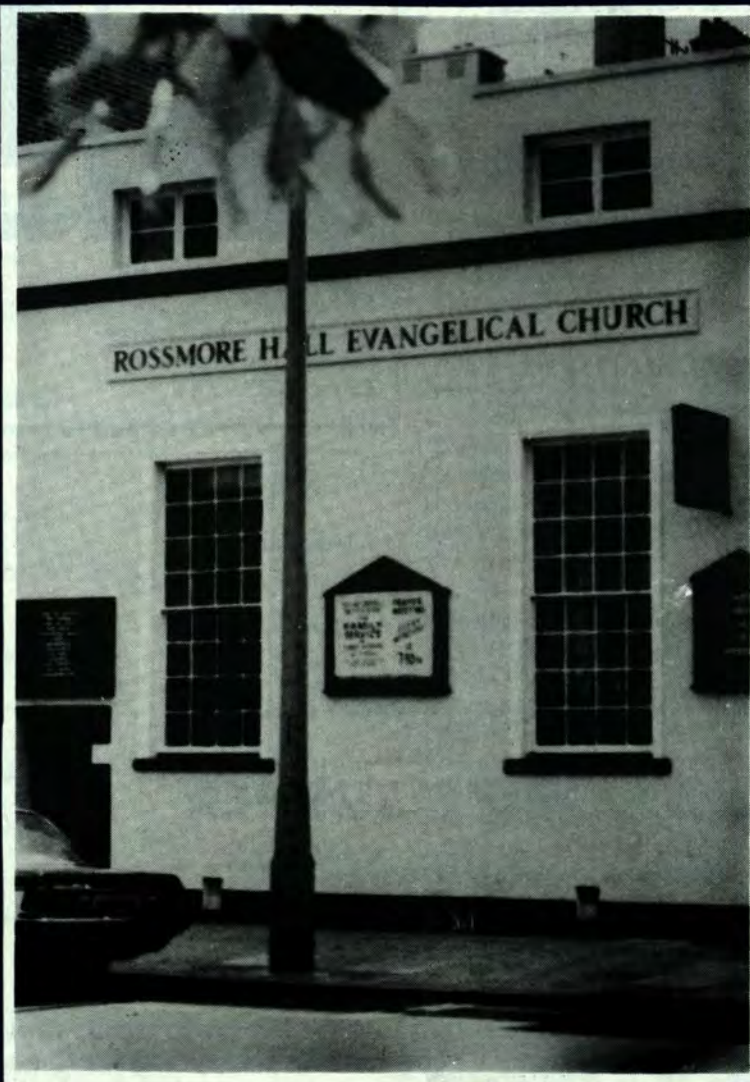
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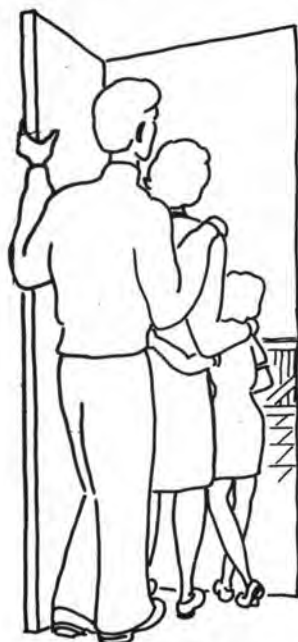
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INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'

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HOW, THEN, SHOULD WE SPEAK?

Do you sometimes feel that the language we use among ourselves is apt to give an unfortunate impression to the over-hearer: the impression, that is, that we have a certain conceit of ourselves in the matter of access to the Almighty?

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul took care to build up in his readers an understanding of the immense privilege they had acquired in Christ: the privilege, no less, of being sons of God — 'no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir'. He spoke of the Spirit crying in their hearts those intensely familiar words 'Abba! Father!'

Yet, only a few verses later, saying 'now that you have come to know God', he corrects himself significantly: 'or rather to be known by God'. He never lost sight of the basic fact that **nothing** is of ourselves or by our own merit: our redemption and all that flows from it is solely the sovereign act of an omnipotent and gracious God. Rejoice in it we surely can: but as soon as we seem to arrogate to ourselves any pride of place or election, we have strayed grievously from reality.

God is all-knowing, all-present, all-powerful. His providence and His knowledge reach every man, woman and child in the world: even if for their part they neither know Him nor have heard of Him. He holds all time beneath His understanding, so that the first and last of mankind are as present to Him as we are. He scans the uttermost limits of the universe, the distant galaxies being as much 'here' to Him as the desk on which I am typing this is 'here' to me at this moment. He is utterly beyond our thought.

And yet we glibly announce that 'The Lord led me to do this', or 'The Lord gave me this'. Assuredly, we should do nothing that we do **not** feel confident He ordains; we can rest confident that all that we enjoy or receive are from His hand — but when it comes to cliché; or (worse) to giving a spurious piety or authority to our words or actions; then, should we not place our hands over our mouths? It is right and proper for us to be publicly thankful to God for His benefits: the line between proper thanksgiving to His glory and mere verbiage is a difficult one to draw, but it is a real one.

ENEMIES OF MARRIAGE

Randle Manwaring

A former contributor returns to our pages with a powerful practical message.

Marriage is one of the most spectacular Bible pictures of the Christian faith and life. 'He who joins himself to the Lord becomes spiritually one with Him' (1 Cor. 6:17). We are married, so to speak, to One who rose from the dead; now we belong to Him. In this we are all 'female'. Once for all for our eternal salvation we fall into the Bridegroom's arms and then, moment by moment, existentially, we rest in Him. What better picture? But let's be honest, none of us is totally faithful to the Divine Lover. We men flirt with that vixen, Monica Moneybags and women with that old so and so, Cyril Status. We are all guilty of spiritual adultery.

When we marry, we leave the strongest social group we know, the family, to form a new and even closer link, as man and wife. (Some, not many, need coaxing out of their old comfy security.) Yet it is God's plan that each partner in marriage should retain individuality in that new dimension.

Jesus, unmarried Himself but with perfect knowledge of all life, was once questioned by the religious experts on the difficulties of marriage (Matt. 19). He said that some males were physically defective through no fault of their own and ought therefore to abstain from marriage, and others would not marry in order to give themselves more unreservedly to God. But He gave no mandate to anyone to avoid marriage because it is difficult to make the relationship permanently successful. No excuses there, dear bachelors! Sadly, some men remain single on the grounds that it is safer, less messy, it avoids intimate bodily contact, some mistaking the body for the 'flesh' in its Biblical sense. In the bargain, they may enjoy a rather selfish bachelorhood, until the shades lengthen and the evening of life finds them very lonely and perhaps sad.

Although it may sometimes take a long time to find the right partner, some males may in the end, unwittingly, have denied marriage to those girls who would dearly have loved to be married to the right man, would have made excellent wives, but no one invited them. Have another think, you who appear to prefer your neat little package of wealthy isolationism — you might be one who could fulfil your vocation better with a wife and family, and also fulfil someone else in the bargain.

Selfishness takes many forms, generally spoiling God's best; and most certainly marriage forces us to consider someone else before ourselves. Only when self-centredness becomes complete does a marriage become unbearable, but a true marriage will involve a lifetime of adjusting to please each other. What a 'school' of Christian living in itself!

Mothers can be very selfish

It is a very strange twist of human nature when a woman, having enjoyed married life herself, does all in her power to prevent her son from getting married. Most mums and dads look forward to seeing their offspring happily married; by the time sons are in their early twenties most mums have had just about enough of washing, ironing and cooking, and they are delighted to realize that someone else is taking on the responsibility. But a few mothers, sometimes widows, have come to depend in every way on their sons, that they make it difficult for them to launch out on their own. Generally, they are young men who need a bit of a push — their basic physical urges are, perhaps, a little sub-normal and they readily fall in with mum's advice, implied or actual, to stay at home — a little longer, 'until the right girl comes along, darling'.

There is no doubt that a widowed mother often needs the support of a son or daughter, but surely not selfishly to the extent of keeping a child from marriage. When an over-possessive mother

dies, it may be too late for the son or daughter to make a full marriage — too late for having children, for instance. There are usually ways and means of caring for an invalid or incapable parent without staying at home 'full time'. Granny flats (often charmingly called 'granaries') have become in vogue for the better off; and where there's a will there's a way, for everyone.

The ways which some mothers employ to keep their sons at home are often very subtle. I knew of one who, when her boy was in his thirties, regularly laid out his clothes for him every morning before he went to work and told him insistently never to allow his boss (myself) to overwork him! Home comforts, **ad infinitum**, and at no cost, can be very attractive to the already selfish young man spending heavily on pleasing only himself. It is amazing how 'shadowed' by their parents some children feel, even in marriage. I heard of one marriage which would not be consummated whilst one set of parents was alive. Some strange parental shadow hung even over the marriage bed.

I recall a keen Christian worker who lived as a bachelor in a part of Essex where he was employed and came home every weekend to be with his widowed mother. He never showed the slightest sign of interest in girls: but when, in his forties, his mother died, he immediately married his landlady in Essex and then 'disappeared'! Just a few mothers have an unpleasant habit of fiercely criticizing almost every girl friend of their son, as if to say 'no girl is good enough for my boy'. A strong female personality can override that of a son taking after a deceased father with a retiring disposition.

An unhealthy affection between son and mother is sometimes known as the Oedipus complex. Fortunately, the relationship hardly ever reaches such an excess, and Christian responsibility requires a

continued on page 4

TRANSLATING THE BIBLE INTO ENGLISH (5)

Which documents are translated?

A. S. Duthie

Dr. Alan Duthie, who teaches in the Department of Linguistics, University of Ghana, continues his series of studies in the art of Bible translation, and its implications for our own reading of the Bible.

In ideal circumstances the English translator would take up the original document in Paul's or Isaiah's own handwriting and translate it. But circumstances are far from ideal as we shall see.

A few modern English translations have been made from earlier English translations (LB from ASV; Cressman from RSV) in order to update or simplify them. Since the earlier translation may have failed to capture the meaning of the original Greek, etc. perfectly, the later translation is likely to have even less of the original meaning.

Formerly, the Roman Catholic Church recognized as authoritative only the Latin Vulgate version of the Bible (rather in the same way as some modern hyper-evangelicals tacitly recognize only the KJV). So, older Catholic translations (Douay, Challoner, Knox) had to be made from the Latin Vulgate, and consequently are also translations of translations.

Thomson's 1808 translation was made from the Greek Bible, including the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. Wyclif, Purvey and their associates had to use as their basic document the only available Latin Bible, the Vulgate, since they did not know any Greek or Hebrew. Tyndale translated the New Testament from Greek, but only part of the Old Testament from Hebrew.

All these translations, therefore, are wholly or partly secondary translations, so that they inevitably come out worse on our present criterion than English translations made from documents in the original languages.

If we now turn to consider documents of the Bible in the original languages, we

find that all the documents now available are copies of copies of copies, etc., of the documents which the original writers wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Over the centuries documents were sometimes copied by a single scribe making one copy of an original open in front of him, so that copying errors were due to his eye falling on the same word/line twice, missing out a word/line, etc. Often, however, one man would dictate a document for many scribes to copy simultaneously, so that copying errors might be due to mispronunciation or mishearing in addition. Most copying of documents was done at very high speed by real professionals. However, they were also very familiar with the Bible, so that, consciously or unconsciously, they tended to 'harmonize' one passage to another similar one (e.g. the parallel incidents and teachings in the gospels). In other cases, copyists tried to 'improve' an unusual or awkward passage in the interests of readability. If a translator were to look at just one copy of the original documents, he would find a few mistakes peculiar to that copy — which he would then have to translate! But translators nowadays always compare different existing copies of the original documents, either directly or by using 'critical' editions of the Hebrew and Greek Testaments embodying the results of 'textual criticism' (the scholarly investigation of what the original writers wrote as far as that can be derived from existing copies). Bible translations should always tell their readers in footnotes wherever there is doubt about the original document's reading, wherever there is an alternative reading to what is given in the main translation, together with some indication of the origin and the validity of the alternatives.

In the case of the Old Testament, all existing copies go back directly to documents of the 9th century AD, over a thousand years after the latest originals

were written, though extreme care had been taken in copying up till then. This 'Masoretic Text' is the foundation of all Old Testament translations up to the present.

Formerly, translators who found difficulty with this Hebrew text could consult only other ancient translations, e.g. the Greek Septuagint (2nd century BC), the Syriac (2nd/3rd century AD), Old Latin (2nd to 4th century AD). 'Let us go out to the field!' (*Genesis 4:8* — RV note) is an addition to the Hebrew original on the basis of ancient translations. *Proverbs 11:30* reads: 'The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise' (KJV); but, on the basis of the ancient translations, 'The fruit of virtue is a tree of life, but violence takes lives away' (NAB); changes in the Hebrew letters are also involved.

From the middle of the 20th century, the 1st century BC Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran, covering mainly Isaiah and Habakkuk, have offered the same direct additional light on the Hebrew original, since they are about 1000 years older than the next oldest (just mentioned). *Habakkuk 1:17* reads: 'Shall they therefore empty their net . . .' (KJV); or, thanks to a Scroll, 'Are they going to use their swords for ever . . .' (GNB).

Apart from consulting ancient translations of the Old Testament, and apart from looking at the Dead Sea Scrolls, it is also open to a translator who is faced with a difficulty or impossibility in the Hebrew of the Masoretic Text to conjecture some change in order to make sense. Increased knowledge of the Semitic languages and cultures (see section 4) has enabled translators now to understand and translate some previously troublesome words and passages. But all translations resort to conjecture at some points: less in the case of evangelical translators; and far more in the case of a translator like Moffatt.

Now we turn to the New Testament where the situation is rather different.

Throughout the so-called Dark and Middle Ages, only the Latin Vulgate was available to the Christian Church, except at Constantinople/Byzantium where Greek was used. There, from the 4th century onwards, a large family of manuscript copies of the Greek New Testament came into being, all closely resembling each other. Late manuscripts from this family were used by Erasmus, the scholar who produced an edition of the Greek New Testament printed by Stephanus in the 16th century; this was the basis of the KJV New Testament. A later edition of the same Greek Testament came to be called the 'Textus Receptus' ('Received Text'), sometimes the 'Majority Text'. This text of the New Testament was abandoned by translators towards the end of the 19th century, though NKJV has reverted to it and other evangelical translators evidently hanker after the old familiar words of KJV and its Greek original, as if it is somehow more inspired than the oldest and best manuscripts of the original Greek!

The best manuscripts came to light as follows: the 5th century Alexandrinus in the 16th century (though it was not taken into account by KJV); the 4th century Sinaiticus and the 4th century Vaticanus in the 19th century; various 1st to 3rd century papyri, each covering quite small parts of the New Testament, during the 20th century. From the 19th century onwards the normal methods of textual criticism have been applied to the New Testament manuscripts, so that the Greek original of most modern translations from RV onwards is far superior to that of KJV. Many verses of KJV result from copyists' 'harmonizing' one passage to another similar passage: e.g. the 'Lord's Prayer' in *Luke 11:2-4* (KJV) has been filled out with material from *Matthew 6* (where it properly belongs); since it is omitted in the best manuscripts of Luke, it is also omitted in most modern translations (NIV, etc.). *Colossians 1:14* 'redemption' has also been harmonized to resemble *Ephesians 1:7* 'redemption through his blood' — 'through his blood' belongs to the latter and not to the former, according to the best manuscripts followed by most modern translations (NIV, etc.). *Acts 9:5-6* 'It is hard for you to kick against the goads' (KJV, NKJV, Young, Ledyard, NBV) has been harmonized to resemble *26:14*, but is omitted by the three best manuscripts and so by NIV, LB, NASB, etc. Many other examples could be given.

Additions are also to be found in the Greek text of the KJV: e.g. *Matthew*

6:13 includes the so-called doxology (KJV, NKJV), (presumably added originally for liturgical convenience), but it is not in the best manuscripts nor in modern translations (NIV, etc.). Similarly, *Acts 8:37* is omitted (NIV, RV, NASB, JND, CL, etc.) because it is in none of the best manuscripts, though it is wrongly included in KJV, NKJV, Young, NL, NBV, LB. *1 John 5:7*, which appears only in very late manuscripts of Greek (possibly translated from Latin!) has been omitted from all modern translations from RV to NIV (though NKJV still includes it together with a note of its late interpolation!). The ending of *Mark (16:9-20)* is evidently not original both from the contents and especially from the fact that two of the best manuscripts omit it; but only RSV, it seems to me, does justice to the case and prints it as a long footnote, whereas most other translations print it as if it were part of the original, with footnotes, or headings, or brackets, indicating that it is not of perfectly respectable ancestry. Sometimes we find differences between the KJV Greek text and that of most modern translations, other than harmonization or addition. In *John 10:16*, only KJV and the Latin Vulgate have 'flock', while every other translation (Tyndale, NKJV, etc.) has 'fold' correctly. In *1 Timothy 3:16*, 'God' (KJV, NKJV, Young) occurs, it is claimed, in hundreds more Greek manuscripts than the alternative '(he) who' (the words resemble each other in Greek); but these hundreds date from the 8th century onwards and come from the same area; while all the ancient translations (Vulgate, Syriac, etc.) had the second alternative, as did two of the best manuscripts, followed naturally by NIV, RV, NBV, LB, NASB, etc.

In most cases, textual criticism gives a reasonably clear indication of what the original documents had. In principle, it is important, according to *Revelation 22:18*, not to add to God's word (even if the additions come from another part of God's word), as has evidently happened several times in the Greek text of the KJV. Most, but not all, 20th century translations take best account of the best manuscripts and the findings of textual criticism (NIV, GNB, NASB, NAB, NEB, JBI), while Wyclif, Purvey, Douay, Challoner, Knox are right at the other extreme on this criterion.

But again it turns out that the overall effect on a translation is quite limited, especially in the Old Testament. Preachers and teachers should learn the same lesson as before: not to base a whole sermon, and certainly not a whole

doctrine, on any one verse of the scriptures, least of all a verse which is not in the best manuscripts; the doctrine of the Trinity can be found in many places other than *1 John 5:7*; speaking in tongues and healing the sick can be found elsewhere than in *Mark 16:17*.

ENEMIES OF MARRIAGE

continued from page 2

proper balance between leaving home to marry (*Mark 10:7*) and continuing to honour parents (*Matt. 15:4*).

Enemies within marriage

The other enemies of marriage in this scenario occur within it — one male and one female. The man is he who neglects his wife — comes home late only to fall asleep in front of the telly, goes to bed too late and, after they have had their children (possibly before also), he never makes love properly to his wife. He has failed as a lover within the married state. And did she not, in order to have their third child, which she desperately wanted, buy a particularly glamorous nightie by which to awaken his attention. It worked and Jonathan is a lovely boy.

The woman villain of the piece is she who, having had her babies (did she marry just to have them?), has switched off from her husband's lovemaking — too tired, too uncomfortable, too anything. In turning away, she is tempting Joe to turn away; for, apart from being a strong Christian, he's also a virile man.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

Some of my friends have built up quite an impressive library of tape-recordings, and listen to them repeatedly — often in preference to reading material in print. It is perhaps a sign of old age that my own preference is decidedly for the printed word. But have I not objective reason for believing that reading, as distinct from listening, gives greater opportunity for the critical weighing and assessment of what is offered? And if people lose the aptitude for reading solid literary fare, are they not cutting themselves off from the heritage of the past?

Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 Kings Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX by 15 October.

MACEDON IN CENTRAL LONDON!

Michael Townshend

An urgent appeal to someone to 'come over and help us'.

Few people watching cricket at Lords, boarding a train at Marylebone Station, or listening to the band in Regent's Park realise the deprivation of the housing estates only 300 yards away. The tenement blocks contain a rabbit warren of poverty, deprivation and spiritual barrenness. This area sandwiched between, and forgotten by the affluent St. John's Wood and the busy A40 Marylebone Road is a real mission field. The newest estate, Lisson Green on the site of the old Marylebone goods yard was built in the late 60s in such a way as to cram as many people as possible into the available area. The 1,400 flats house over 5,000 people. Older tenement blocks fill adjacent streets and provide housing for thousands of people, the long established Marylebone working class as well as an incredible mix of nationalities. The large Irish and Eastern European communities focus on the strong local Roman Catholic churches and convents. The Muslims use the Central Regent's Park Mosque a few hundred yards away. What about the evangelical witness, how is it meeting the needs of the area? Apart from Rossmore Hall Evangelical Church there is very little. To understand the present situation let us survey the history of the Assembly there.

The history of Rossmore Hall Evangelical Church goes back to the early days of the Brethren movement in London. Formerly called Welbeck Hall it was one of the first to be established after the start at Rawstorne Street. Lord Congleton was in fellowship there for thirty years. Other notable names to be found on the register of those who had a powerful influence in the spiritual good of the assembly include Earl of Cavan, Mr. & Mrs. Yapp, Lady Queensberry, Lord and Lady Radstock and family, and Mr. Underwood. At its heyday it had three to four hundred in fellowship and

was the venue for the central missionary meetings. Then as assemblies started in the suburbs the numbers gradually fell. It moved the mile or so to Rossmore Hall in the 30s and began its outreach in the surrounding area of Marylebone.

Rossmore Hall was greatly helped in the 50s and 60s by the London Bible College which had its original premises nearby on Marylebone Road. It was during this time that the outreach in Church Street Market was started. Since then the weekly stall in the large Saturday Market has distributed scriptures free to the multitude of nationalities which frequent it. Because of the demand, over 50 languages are stocked and even now there are some gaps! In recent years there has been a considerable influx of Arabic visitors to the market and it is not uncommon to give out 20 or more Arabic portions to enquirers. This valuable ministry which still continues is an important method of publicising the Hall. However, with the London Bible College's move to Northwood in the early 70s and the steady Christian exodus from the inner city areas the outreach has shrunk drastically.

As the district has changed, the amount of private housing available in the area has become almost non-existent. This makes it very hard for Christians to stay in the area. Others who have been rehoused by the council have taken the opportunity to move away from Central London. In fact Rossmore Hall is the last Assembly left in the West End of London.

Because of this shift the numbers in membership at the assembly fell below ten with the majority of members elderly. The youth work and other ministries which had thrived until a few years ago had to stop and the future of the Christian witness in the area looked grim. Realising their plight, the membership prayerfully asked In Contact Ministries for help. Led by Patrick Sookhdeo, In Contact Ministries is a society committed to outreach in the multi-religious

inner city areas of our land. Seeing the strategic importance and the potential of Rossmore Hall, In Contact spent a lot of time looking for suitable workers who could make an effective contribution to the ministry. When at last an application to the Council for a flat to accommodate workers on the Lisson Green Estate just opposite the Assembly came through it seemed that the Lord would provide the workers too!

In fact He did! Peter and Jocelyn McKenzie had been wondering how to use the sabbatical leave that Peter had from his firm of solicitors in New Zealand. As they prayed they became sure that they should spend a year in Christian service, and wrote to Patrick Sookhdeo to that effect. They arrived in February just a few days after we received the keys to the council flat!

First of all Peter set about following up contacts made by a vacation team of young people who had done door to door visitation on the estate last summer. From this, a very small group of Christians now meet in the McKenzies' flat once a week for prayer and mutual encouragement, and it is hoped that in time the group will reach out in evangelism. Making other contacts through door knocking, and finding out people's needs and concerns, has now led Peter to open a Legal Advice Centre on the estate one afternoon and evening a week. He is assisted in this by a young Christian solicitor who lives in the area. This is helping in getting to know people and in gaining their confidence. There are between 5,000 and 6,000 on the estate from a wide variety of cultures and language groups with very little interaction between people and almost no sense of community. The McKenzies have soon realised how much they need to learn about communicating with people from such a wide background. Being ambassadors of Christ and peacemakers between the different groups and the large white working class community is not easy, but after six months

they are widely known and accepted. For two weeks in July, six students came and helped Peter and Jocelyn in an intensive outreach. In order to make as big an impact as possible they enthusiastically spent time placing Christian newspapers in each home, making contacts with individuals, running filmshows and an international concert in the local Tenants Association Hall, and organising young people's events. All of this with encouraging

response. What of the future? Please pray with us for replacement for Peter and Jocelyn McKenzie. We recognise that unless people come forward to take over when they leave at the end of '82, the Assembly will probably need to close. A lot of ground work is being done this year, there is now a tremendous basis for a future ministry reaching out to this mixed racial and working class area in a variety of different ways. Do you feel

challenged to assist full time (or in your spare time) with some aspects of this ministry (evangelistic, pastoral, community orientated, or legal)? Please contact Mike Townshend, In Contact Ministries, St. Andrews Road, London, E13 8QD. Telephone 01-474 0743. Please pray that the Lord would call forth His workers for this strategic ministry in a barren land.

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'JUST-A-MINUTE' PRAYER

Clive Marsh

The first of two articles that ask us to challenge ourselves on our way of public prayer.

In a part of Christendom quite close to home there currently rages a debate, often quite heated, which sadly seems liable to split the Body of Christ into even smaller and more numerous cliques. Yet surely the Alternative Service Book is a step forward. One may well argue that the message of Christianity does not — indeed cannot — alter; the language in which this message is presented must, however, move with the times. It is simply the case that the human animal is not one which breaks with tradition very easily.

Thankfully, we in the Brethren have no such problems. In such matters as these, we have managed to get everything right. We have no need of a rigidly-structured service. We don't need to be led by the hand through an hour or so of public worship. Spoon-fed prayers are not for us. We are more in tune with the workings of the Spirit. Perhaps we even believe that we know how to pray.

I descend flippantly to a form of parody already. It is difficult not to, of course. It has long been recognized that the Brethren have their own liturgy (consider the remark made by Derek Warren in *The Harvester* for August 1980: 'The same people take part week in and week out and their turns of phrase have almost become a liturgy'). Indeed, the 'spontaneous prayers' which we so often hear repeated may perhaps lose their effect even more quickly than a piece of written liturgy.

I wish to dwell on this point, for it is surely a most important one. We are, in effect, thereby asking the question, 'What exactly do we mean when we say we are praying in the Spirit?' I shall no doubt point an accusing finger a number of times in this brief investigation. Yet this is done in order to provoke thought and reaction, the ultimate aim being to encourage less sterility in the form and expression of our public prayer.

To begin with, one might examine 'set-phrases' which appear in prayers heard in our assemblies. (Examples are quoted

by Brethren, of other Brethren even among Brethren! Praying for those 'laid aside on beds of sickness' is already something of a classic.) The distinction should probably be made, hard though it is, between favourite and meaningful (and sensible!) phrases — for we all have our particular ways of addressing God, our favourite ways of opening, our favourite concluding doxologies — and clichés inserted in a seemingly appropriate context or where the speed and flow of the prayer might otherwise suffer (see below).

Once both the distinction and the allowances have been made, however, we must surely admit that our prayers all too easily become favourite expressions and Christological titles, jumbled together with a handful of convenient scriptural quotes, offered when the structure of the Service, be it the Breaking of Bread, the Gospel Service or even the mid-week Prayer Meeting itself, demands that a prayer be said.

Repetition 'week in and week out' has its counterpart in repetition within single prayers. Arguments to the effect that the number of times a Divine title is used in prayer cannot be criticized are not convincing. Brethren are not the only ones who suffer from the problem where 'Lord . . . Lord . . . Lord . . .' is inserted in every sentence, apparently with little reflection, the motive seeming rather to assist the smoothness of delivery lest, in the manner of the Radio Programme which prompts the title of this brief study, the speaker be accused of hesitation. It may be felt that a human desire to 'give a good performance' has succeeded in cheapening a title we use to call upon God. We must also bear in mind those hearing our prayers for the first time. Perhaps a repetitive and smoothly-presented 'off-pat' prayer never communicates the utmost sincerity. I have no wish to act as judge on such prayers. God will look upon the heart. I ask us merely to consider a possible human response.

We can extend our forced analogy between prayer and Just-a-Minute a stage further. I seem to recall that one category for claiming points is 'deviation'. On such grounds we may lose

more than a handful of points. It may be thought that as long as a prayer is God-centred and 'sincerely meant' it doesn't really matter what you include. On such reasoning is justified the practice of condensing 'the essence of Christianity', as perceived by a particular individual, into a prayer of considerable length, which possesses, however, no single or distinct purpose. Such a prayer serves as a mini-sermon in its own right (and here we have probably lost our grasp of the meaning of 'prayer' in any case). Prayers are not sermons: it seems a simple and unnecessary statement. Yet the statement has become necessary.

I should perhaps give an example or two of such 'deviation'. A prayer offered in the Gospel Meeting intending to 'commit the meeting to the Lord' need not be seven minutes long, anticipate the major themes of the forthcoming thirty-five minute sermon, remind one of the essential doctrines (major, minor or purely Brethren) of the Christian faith and include in a bizarre context pleas for world peace, the salvation of the Queen and assistance in the missionfield. This is not to say that the monarchy does not need our prayers (though should we pray for the Queen's salvation on our terms?), nor that we should not earnestly call upon God as we strive for peace (not as a 'last resort', or as our fellow-worker, but through the recognition that if there is to be peace, then it cannot come about without God.) And if we seek to spread any sort of Christian message without seeing the need to pray first, then surely we're on the wrong track. No, here I simply wish to remind my reader that the prayer was offered 'to commit the meeting to the Lord' and has not remained in line with its purpose. Intercessory prayer must be dealt with at length; I shall return to it at a later stage in this study.

A second example. Deviation from an intended purpose seems to occur frequently in the interests of a desire to 'create' a prayer artistically. Our prayers descend all too easily to the level of catalogues of Christological titles, presented at times almost poetically. I have no desire to enter into a discussion here on the character, or indeed the rights or

wrongs, of Christian (literary) art. (Does the speaker praise God with the prayer or in the prayer?) Again, in the interests of the person who appears amongst us for perhaps the first time, I ask whether it is necessary to cloak meaning in esoteric language, if this can be avoided. (Though my critic may be ready with the observation that any Christological title is in some sense mysterious, any such communication with God is secretive and grasped in part only by the few. This I cannot dispute. But in the context of public worship when we are, after all, speaking on behalf of those gathered, seeking their 'Amen', does it not seem sense to speak in terms which are comprehensible to all Christians — and not just Brethren — and, as far as possible, to anyone who may be present?) Emotion is, in all probability, what lies at the root of such elaboration. My own sense of gratitude to, and dependence upon, God does not, I feel, find expression in this way. This should not hinder me personally from being tolerant of the prayers of others who feel the need to offer praise in this way. I suppose I simply seek a greater measure of level-headedness, in the light of what may be termed 'the basic presupposition' of all that I say here, namely, that we need to relate, yes, even in our public prayer, to

those in our assembly we have not seen before, Christians or not. Yet why should such secular considerations be an influence on the language we use in prayer? For Paul seems to be saying that prayer, in any case, is not a human thing (*Rom. 8:26f.*). This is a notoriously tricky passage, and I naturally hesitate to offer any conclusive interpretation of it. Does Paul mean that the Spirit seizes hold of what we actually utter and knocks it into acceptable shape, so to speak? Or are we meant to drive a wedge between what we think and what comes from our mouths, the Spirit having a hand in the process so that what is uttered is then acceptable to God? (This latter possibility may seem very bold, even for the Christian, yet I feel sure it may lie at the root of much of our thought about prayer. Such an understanding naturally makes us prone to overconfidence and pride.) Or is it indeed that we have here a concrete reference to speaking in tongues? Certainly, we need to look more closely at what we mean when we say that we pray 'in the Spirit'. The critic who may retort that I attempt to push the Spirit Himself out of our praying may well be one who now repeats the same prayers week in and week out, one who has never paused to reflect that his own

prayers might not genuinely be a renewed openness to the Spirit but rather a personal selection of well-known phrases usually associated with 'prayer in the Spirit'.

Perhaps we should rather recognize that prayer has the propensity to be all too human and that a traditional form of praying (terminology, language and manner of delivery) does not necessarily denote the Spirit's assent. Paul must say that the Spirit is the cause of even our faintest groan towards God (whether uttered or unexpressed) because he simply cannot conceive that any desire to approach God can ultimately derive from sinful man alone.

Ultimately, in any case, our language is inadequate. Ultimately our perception of the Spirit's presence with us is found wanting. Our public prayer is an attempt to combine both of these realms in which we are so poor. May we never be satisfied with the way we pray.

Hopefully this article has attracted attention and stimulated thought. Satire and flippant criticism gave way to more profound questions. The study remains incomplete without some specific and concrete suggestions.

(To be concluded)

A NEW ADVENTURE IN SOUTH WALES WITNESSES IN JERUSALEM

A regional seminar of the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship is to be held
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This seminar is designed to help all Christian workers, particularly those living in the West of England and South Wales, to develop their own strategies for church-based evangelism. To help us to understand better the people we need to reach and to inform us of initiatives that have already been taken, Dr. Clifford Hill of Harrow and Tim Steer of Bristol will speak, but a large part of the seminar will be devoted to discussion in small groups of practical problems.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

A. Overt Locke

A meditation on one phrase of the Pattern Prayer.

Peoples everywhere long for peace and cannot find it. World leaders and politicians exhaust themselves in debates and conferences, seeking what always proves to be an unattainable dream.

It is, however, not the world leaders, it is not the generals, nor is it the nuclear threat that deprives mankind of those things longed for in the heart; it is 'evil'. It presents itself in its might across frontiers of nations the world over. It breeds racial hatred, suspicion, greed, oppression and aggression on an international scale. Never underestimate evil. It is the greatest power in the world today, other than Almighty God.

Evil stalks our own land in the violence of our towns and cities, in the strife of our factories, in the black power of the occult and witchcraft societies, in the unspeakable shame of our commercialized sex, strip clubs and vice dens. It provides drugs and 'fixes', it promotes Godless and often depraved entertainment.

We can find it in our Church pews. It insinuates itself into the minds of men and women in the form of pride, envy, dissent and animosity. These all in turn produce broken fellowship in the family of God and above all with God Himself.

How often these evils are cloaked in the name of doctrine or religion, when love, mutual concern and worship of the Lord should be the centre of Church life.

It flaunts itself before us daily. It works internationally, nationally and in the family circle. It breaks relationships. Stealing, lying, gossip, pride, deceit, sexual sins, uncleanness, they all harm our relationships with one another. It does evil and it brings evil — that is, the effects and results of its work are loss, spoliation, destruction, sorrow and regret.

The last petition of the Lord's Prayer is not to be hurried over, or to be used for taking breath before launching into the doxology. Dwell on it; consider the vast scope of this final request 'but deliver us from evil': Father — rescue us!

It has been said that behind all history is the spiritual conflict with evil powers. When we come to the end of our own life-span the pattern of our lives will have been largely determined by what terms we were on with evil.

'Finally then, find your strength in the Lord, in His mighty power. Put on all the armour which God provides, so that you may be able to stand firm against the devices of the devil. For our fight is not against human foes, but against cosmic powers, against the authorities and potentates of this dark world, against

the super human forces of evil in the heavens.'

If ever you feel that evil is not rampant, that it has passed you by, or that it will not harm you to stop and trifle with it or to pass the time of day, look at the final answer of God to the opposition of evil — His holy Son transfixed and done to death on a cross.

*And make me feel it was my sin,
As though no other sins were there,
That was to Him who bears the world,
A load that he could scarcely bear.*

Don't underestimate evil; and pray with conviction 'but deliver us from evil'. Have no fear. If you mean it He will.

'The Lord is to be trusted, and He will fortify you and guard you from the evil one.'

Nationally, universally, all moral and physical evil will eventually be banished. All the evidences of evil will be done away — there will be a new heaven and earth. All the effects of evil will be done away, He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, there shall be an end to death and to mourning and crying and pain — the old order has passed away!

Till then let us pray, honestly, reverently and humbly, 'But deliver us from evil'.

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Question 225

THE IMMINENCE OF THE SECOND COMING

Old Testament prophets apparently knew certain of their prophecies would not take place in their own day (1 Peter 1:10-12) yet Paul (as well as other New Testament writers) gives a strong impression that Christ's return would take place during the lifetime of some at least of those then living. I know that the Lord does not count time as we do and no one can possibly know the day or hour of his coming but it is difficult to understand the emphasis given by the Apostles to the people they were writing to.

The difficulty you refer to is not confined to the writings of the Apostles. The teaching of Jesus itself contains both emphases in a way that has given rise to a great deal of discussion.

The way in which the Old Testament prophets perceived the fulfilment of their words may not have been quite so clear as your question may seem to suppose. If it is significant that the Lord's reading of *Isaiah 61* in the synagogue at Nazareth ended halfway through *verse 2*, then we have strong evidence that the prophets did not perceive at all clearly the time scale of fulfilment. Indeed, the prophetic awareness of the future has often been compared to that of somebody standing on one hilltop and looking across to another: it is easy — as novice hill walkers discover to their cost — to think that the next summit is very close whereas in fact a wide valley may separate the two. In much the same way, the prophets may have been quite clear that certain things of which they spoke would not be completely fulfilled until the time of the end, but their perspective of the end time need not have been at all clear. Often a phrase such as 'After those days . . .' is associated with such an awareness.

It is interesting to notice that Paul's attitude varies from one Epistle to the other, and even in the same Epistle! Sometimes he seems to anticipate the Lord's return before he dies (see for example *1 Thessalonians 4:15, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:51f.; Philippians 3:20*). Yet on other occasions he seems to anticipate death and resurrection for himself, as in *1 Corinthians 6:14* and *2 Corinthians 4:14*. We may note too that in *Philippians 1:21-24* he considers the possibility of death without a hint that the whole question of his imprisonment and condemnation may be settled by Christ's return for his people. It is difficult to believe, also, that *Romans*

11:25-27 was written by somebody who believed that the Second Coming would take place 'at any moment'. As for the Letters to the Thessalonians, while in *1 Thessalonians 5:2* he speaks as if the return was imminent, he supplements this teaching in *2 Thess. 2:1-9* with teaching which is designed to show that certain events must take place beforehand.

It seems clear that the New Testament regards the Incarnation, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, together with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, as inaugurating the New Age. Thus the writer to the Hebrews can say that among his hearers are those who have 'tasted the powers of the coming age' (*6:5*). And John claims that 'it is the last hour'. The New Testament writers show a moral and spiritual awareness of this situation which transforms their whole perception of life. It should have a similar effect on us.

When F. F. Bruce answered a question similar to this some years ago (his reply appears on p.201 of **Answers to Questions**) he quoted some words of J. H. Newman which are worth repeating. 'Though time intervened between Christ's first and second coming, it is not recognised (as I may say) in the Gospel scheme, but is, as it were, an accident. For so it was, that up to Christ's coming in the flesh, the course of things ran straight towards that end, nearing it by every step, but now under the gospel, that course has (if I may so speak) altered its direction, as regards His second coming, and run, not towards the end, but along it, and on the brink of it; and is at all times equally near that great event, which, did it run towards it, it would at once run into. Christ, then, is ever at our doors' (J. H. Newman, **Parochial and Plain Sermons**, p.241).

Question 226

THE PURPOSE OF PUNISHMENT

I have heard it suggested that the Bible speaks of punishment only in terms of retribution. Is this true?

The Old Testament commonly uses two words to convey the idea of discipline. **Musar** is translated in the Authorized Version by 'chastening' (3), 'correction' (8), 'discipline' (1), and 'instruction' (30). **Yasar** is translated by 'chasten' or 'chastise' (17) and 'instruct' or 'teach' (10). Obviously the thought goes far beyond retributive punishment.

continued on page 11

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'.

In the New Testament, the word **paideia** once more includes both chastisement and instruction. Although in *Hebrews 12* **paideia** clearly has a painful and distressing aspect (*Hebrews 12:7,11*), there is far more to it than this. According to *Hebrews 5:8*, the sufferings of the Lord Jesus had an educative function although they were not in any sense a punishment for his sin.

The Hebrew word **paqad** is the word most commonly used for punishment. It literally means to visit, examine, or review. Retribution is implied on occasion as in *Leviticus 25:19*. But *Deuteronomy 19:20* shows that deterrence was also in view. However, the remedial purpose of punishment is often stressed. We

find this particularly in the 8th century prophets, such as Amos, Hosea and Isaiah. Indeed, the suffering endured by Hosea's faithless wife is a classic example of remedial chastisement.

It should perhaps be emphasised that while the Bible speaks of chastisement as being, on occasion, something that a child of God may deserve because of sin, it is nowhere suggested that God's purpose in inflicting such punishment has anything to do with exhausting his wrath against sin. God's wrath against sin was borne, so far as the believer is concerned, by the Lord Jesus on the Cross. Whatever a child of God may suffer now is a sign of God's love (*Hebrews 12:6, 7, 10, 11*).

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LOOKING AT BOOKS

LIFE'S EXPERIENCES

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Betrayed Stan Telchin. Marshall, Morgan & Scott. 139pp. £1.60.

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All that was ever ours Elisabeth Elliot. Pickering & Inglis. 185pp. £2.50.

Encounter with Terminal Illness Ruth L. Kopp. Lion. 223pp. £2.95.

Yet I will Rejoice George Moffat. Pickering & Inglis. 96pp.

Building in a Broken World Brother Andrew. Kingsway. 141pp. £1.35.

Six books — each suitable for holiday reading, or for a journey by train or plane; each personal testimonies to the grace of God; each very different in content and style.

Stan Telchin's **Betrayed** excited me most and impulsively I wanted to lend it to anyone Jewish whom I knew. It describes his search through the Scriptures in order to prove to his daughter, who had become a Christian, that she was deluded. You can guess the outcome!

Grounded by Elaine Brown is also very readable and anyone who has been or is out of work or who knows anyone unemployed will rapidly identify with the circumstances of this wife of a pilot who lost his job. Her diary presentation is warm, human and very relevant for today.

In **All that was ever ours** by Elisabeth Elliot each chapter is a separate entity, compiled no doubt from jottings on her notepad as she travels about and records her perception of life's experiences — boredom, housework, the hospital waiting room, ladies meetings, books etc. She both uses and produces plenty of quotes!

Encounter with Terminal Illness is a quite astounding book for the British public. Whilst we still tend to push death into a corner, ignoring our symptoms, and as medical personnel give our patients little information about the

disease, the drugs and their side effects, this book by an American doctor deals with the importance of understanding our illness, our medication and all the possible side effects. Other chapters are concerned with the patient-doctor relationship; a child's terminal illness; a parent's terminal illness; denial; anger; the Christian's response and facing death.

This book will take longer to read, you will not enjoy it, but it is important, especially for those facing such a situation.

George Moffat died from kidney failure after two years of renal dialysis. **Yet I will Rejoice** is a down-to-earth honest account in diary form of his thoughts as he struggles with God to face this illness.

Brother Andrew of **God's Smuggler** fame, has written **Building in a Broken World** using Nehemiah as the basis for his thinking. Rebuilding needs faith, strategic planning, questioning, zeal, prayer, working together, response to pressure, able to proclaim God's word and above all, to be intensely practical. Brother Andrew's is an exciting story of daring and boldness born from an utter commitment to God and His word. He encourages us to build again also.

. . . and Sigrid Mustow, with long experience of Marriage Guidance Counselling, reviews four on marriage

No Pit-Too Deep Kate Fordham. Lion. **I am a Woman by God's Design** La Hay. Kingsway.

The Christian Family Larry Christenson. Kingsway.

Long Term Marriage Floyd Thatcher. Hodder & Stoughton.

No Pit Too Deep: The Diary of a Divorce, or more aptly — the diary of a deserted woman. I was very challenged by this book. As a marriage guidance

counsellor, I see my clients about once a week for one-and-a-half hours at a time. These can be stressful sessions, which leave the counsellor and client emotionally and physically exhausted. Kate Fordham shares with us in the form of a diary, her deepest feelings stretching over a whole year. There are times of hopelessness and despair, interspersed with spiritual enlightenment. She received constant support from her family, friends and especially her minister. His help was not limited to weekly sessions, but always available when needed. (How did he fit in his other duties?)

The break-up of Christian marriages is increasing and this book should be a challenge to all Christians to value their own marriages, to seek help at the earliest signs of trouble and to be prepared to support in a more realistic way any friend who finds himself in a 'deep pit' like this author did.

I am a Woman by God's Design was quite a contrast to the previous book. The introduction set out the motivation of the writer. Namely: '(1) To encourage those godly women who believe they are designed by God and accept his role for them; (2) to reach out to other women who believe God to be the Creator of all things, but have become confused by the voices of the women's movement and are caught in the tug-of-war between humanism and God's law; (3) to offer a strong defence against those who deny the existence of God and declare women will only be free when they throw off the shackles of religious belief that bind them.'

'Hurrah!' I thought. Just the sort of Christian book we need today! However, I was sadly disappointed when many a chapter developed into a harangue against humanism, abortion and the women's liberation movement. Even the better chapters (5-8) have some aggressive statements about drink, working wives, female ministers, etc. Yet if this book is read carefully, some wonderful biblical truths emerge, e.g. 'The ultimate

EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

BIBLE TEACHING IN LOCAL CHURCHES (2)

The Holy Spirit's Provisions

J. M. Hitchen

Turning from the Gospels to the rest of the New Testament we see the Holy Spirit keeps this teaching work central in local church life. He does so by working certain **principles** into the very fabric of the church, and by the various **patterns** of teaching He demonstrates in the New Testament period. If the Holy Spirit is our Teacher, and if we are truly led by Him, He will surely lead us according to these express declarations of His mind and will. Thus, if He has clearly delegated part of the teaching duty to certain people in the church then we are disobeying His leading if such people do not fulfil that work. Let us notice four of these declared principles by which the Holy Spirit teaches us today.

a. The Holy Spirit has given the authoritative teaching content in the Scriptures

The purpose of the Holy Spirit's work in inspiring the Scriptures was, as we hinted in our opening sentence, to provide the content for teaching to both bring people to Christ and lead them on to mature life and service for Him (2 Tim. 3:15-17). The nature of the Word of God as both life-producing seed and growth or strength producing food should be reflected in the way we handle it in our teaching (1 Pet. 1:23; 2:2). It is the word which the believer needs for enabling and equipping for a Christlike life-style.

In His inspiring of the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit used particular forms of writing to provide the fullness of content necessary for the full range of spiritual need. The given revelation in our Scriptures does not need to be

supplemented — it needs to be known and obeyed. But there is an ever-present danger of restricting the effective power of this Word by our imposed systems of use just as much as we can limit its work by our systems of interpretation. We need to use the Bible in line with the purpose for which and the format in which it was given.

The Holy Spirit declares that the purpose of the twenty-one chapters of *John's Gospel* is 'That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life in His name' (John 20:31). This Gospel, as a unit, was given for an evangelistic purpose. But we do not use it this way. When did your church last teach the whole of *John's Gospel* to a particular group of people to evangelize them? But that is what it was given for — just as the whole of *Romans* was given to explain the gospel, of which 'I am not ashamed . . . for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes' (Rom. 1:16). I am suggesting we must sorely grieve the Holy Spirit when in practice we disregard the purpose for which He gave specific units of Scripture.

As further examples of this, the whole of *Galatians* was the Holy Spirit's 'Word' to show people bound by legalistic nominalism the way to faith and freedom. When so many 'good works' nominal Christians all round us desperately need what *Galatians* was specifically written to offer, why are we not including it as a regular annual series of studies as the focus of our evangelistic outreach to such people? Or, when discussion of spiritual gifts threatens to divide our fellowship, why are we so slow to study together the

whole of 1 Cor. 12, 13 and 14 when the Spirit Himself says they were written 'concerning spiritual gifts' (1 Cor. 12:1)? Or again when 1 Cor. 1:10 right through to 4:21 is the diet the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to present as the food necessary to overcome potential divisions at Corinth, do we quickly turn to that portion of the Scripture when our church is under threat of division? Before we do, we may decide the whole of Phil. 1:27-2:30 would be a better introduction to the problem and that 2 Cor. chapters 10-12 will be the proper follow up since both these sections are also explicitly given to deal with tendencies to fragmentation in the local church.

In other words we must move away from the impulsive 'leading' approach in which we use odd verses to teach from and come back to use the Scriptures according to the purpose for which they were originally given by the Holy Spirit. We are in a very serious state of church health when many of us see no problem in saying that one of the four books setting forth the fundamental facts of the gospel does not really apply to us in the church age. We are sick spiritually when some of our members become very upset if anyone dare preach from large sections of that Bible book in a 'Gospel Service'.¹ Or again if our unwritten tradition concerning what is acceptable 'worship' forbids the expression of personal confession and contrition

1. I refer, of course, to the way we use — or abuse — the Gospel of Matthew and portions of it, like the Sermon on the Mount, because we have misunderstood the purpose for which the Holy Spirit gave all four Gospels.

then we have arbitrarily divided what the Giver of Scripture has conjoined in many key passages of worship (e.g. *Isa. 6:1-9; Rev. 1:12-18; Ps. 40; 51 etc.*). This is surely not what we are enjoined to do when 'rightly dividing the Word of truth' (*2 Tim. 2:15*).

Our plea is to give to the way we handle the Word a proper respect for its life-giving nature and its own declared purpose that we may thereby rediscover the Spirit's power in and through it.

b. The Holy Spirit promises and provides Bible teachers to feed and nurture our local churches

At a time when other church groups are discovering the reality and importance of the diversity of gifts within local churches, we, too, need to reclaim what was one aspect of the initial impetus of the Christian Brethren movement. The Holy Spirit teaches the churches by giving them suitably equipped people to teach the all-sufficient Word He has also provided. This provision is explained in *Eph. 4:11-13* and parallel passages. We see examples of this provision being implemented in various parts of the New Testament — e.g. *Acts 14:22-23*. And we see the provision perpetuated for the subsequent generations of the church in the explicit command of *2 Tim. 2:2*. This latter verse also shows that the sovereign giving of suitable persons by the Spirit is closely linked to godly recruiting and training of such people by existing leaders in the churches. Thus, as He promises to give these people gifted to teach the Word, so He wishes His church to expect them, recognize, utilize, stimulate and further train them in their ministry. This surely means in practice that our local elders will have a list of those who have various kinds of teaching gift; they will regularly provide training and gift enrichment experiences for such persons, and will encourage the whole church to 'see their progress' in using these gifts (*1 Tim. 4:15*). In the New Testament it is evident that in this matter of recruiting, challenging, commissioning and developing gifted teachers the Apostles simply copied the pattern they had been involved in by the Lord Himself. We need so to structure our teaching programmes as to build in these perpetual training patterns afresh for each new decade of Bible teachers in the local church.² Proper utilization of existing Bible teaching gift always has this reproductive overflow of developing the same gift in others (cf. *Acts 11:26-27* with *13:1*

where one gifted person becomes two, then five in little over a year).

c. The Holy Spirit has placed upon local church elders the responsibility for adequately teaching the church

In line with the last point we have been making we see the Lord raised up the Apostles and prophets for their distinct foundational task of establishing the church through Bible teaching (*Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 3:10 etc.*). But within the New Testament period we see these same men transferring the teaching responsibility quite unequivocally into the hands of local elders. *Acts 20:28-35* is an example for a particular city; *1 Pet. 5:1-5* shows the same principle being applied over a wider geographical region. The summing up of this Bible teaching duty in the 'Shepherd' metaphor is full of practical implications.

— The shepherd has to know intimately the needs and health of his sheep. Thus as elders we need to know what parts of the Word each distinct group of believers in our local church know well and what specific problems they face at present which require a particular spiritual treatment.

— The shepherd must know where to find the kind of pasture appropriate to the stages of growth and variety of health in his flock. Can you as an elder run through books like *Ephesians, Hebrews, Colossians, Habakkuk, Hosea* and *Deuteronomy* and make a basic list of the kinds of spiritual ailment for which each of these books is offered as a treatment diet?

— The shepherd knows which of his assistants is best suited to break a new path through to a patch of badly needed new pasture. Do you as a working group of elders have a list of the kinds and levels of ministry different, gifted persons in your fellowship can 'serve up'?

— The shepherd doesn't just erect signs pointing to suitable pastures, nor does he read a weekly list of such pastures before haranguing the sheep on their foolishness at not availing themselves of food offered. No, the shepherd takes the sheep to the pasture, or brings it to them and ensures they actually eat and digest it. Do you as an

2. For a discussion of the OT and our Lord's patterns of equipping His people for ministry, see Hitchen, J. M., 'Some Biblical Patterns of Ministerial Training and their Relevance for Melanesia' in *Point*, 1976, Theological Education in Melanesia. Also available from W.E.F., c/o J. Langlois, Guernsey, Channel Islands.

elder have practical ways of ensuring that the lazy, those who have lost their taste for good food, and those still needing bottle feeding are actually receiving their Bible nourishment?

If these are not examples of what the Holy Spirit means when He says 'Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians, to feed the church of the Lord' (*Acts 20:28*), then what do these words mean? For a group of elders not to take this teaching responsibility seriously; for them not to plan the teaching content; for them not properly to prepare the teaching programmes of the church; for them not to evaluate how the Word is being understood and applied — not to do these things is not only to fail as shepherds, it is to put ourselves under the awful indictment of *Ezekiel 34:1-10*.

The Bible teaching responsibility of eldership is physically, emotionally and intellectually demanding work as Paul warned Timothy (*1 Tim. 4:13-16*). As he himself testified in *Col. 1:28-29* to make the Word of God fully known not only demands proclamation, warning, consecutive teaching, and heaven sent wisdom, it also demands every ounce of energy. The Holy Spirit gives so that we may strive and toil at it.

Proper use of the Bible in our churches this decade will depend upon the way in which elders accept and fulfil the task the Spirit of God has already placed in their hands.

d. The Holy Spirit expressly commands the church to support the teachers He has given them

One part of the answer to the problem of false teachers sweeping through the Galatian churches is set forth in *Gal. 6:6*. To overcome false teachers you free the true ones to do their work more easily. Those being taught are to support materially those who teach them. But this was not simply a crisis provision. *1 Tim. 5:17-18* reminds us that the Lord Himself taught that those who teach and preach seriously should be supported properly by the churches they serve. This is not a matter of what we do or don't do in our churches. It is a matter of obedience to the declared purpose of the Holy Spirit to enable His teaching programmes to be fulfilled.

These then are four basic ways in which the Holy Spirit has both declared His teaching purpose for the church and involved us in fulfilling this ministry. How did it work out in the life of the early church? This will be considered in our next article.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (64)

F. F. Bruce

The Upper Room Discourses

(John 13:31-16:33)

ii. THE LORD AND HIS PEOPLE

(John 15:1-16:33)

(i) Joy instead of Sorrow (John 16:19-24)

16:19-22 *Jesus knew that they were reluctant to ask him, and he said to them, 'Is this what you are inquiring about one with another — because I said, "In a little while you will see me no more, and again in a little while and you will see me?" Indeed and in truth I tell you: you will weep and wail, but the world will rejoice; you will suffer pain, but your pain will be turned into joy. When a woman is in labour she is in pain, because her time has come; but when she has given birth to her child, she remembers her anguish no more for joy that a human being has been born into the world. So then, you are in pain now, but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one takes your joy away from you.*

Even it Jesus does not explain his strange language to them in such terms as they might have hoped for, he does assure them that their present bewilderment and their imminent grief will be short-lived; soon they will be given assurance and joy. Their sense of bereavement at his departure and the anguish and apprehension caused by his crucifixion will be dispelled when he comes to them again, imparting the joy of uninterrupted fellowship with him henceforth through the Spirit. The inbreaking of that new joy, of which none can ever deprive them, will make them forget the nightmare of the hours which are lying immediately ahead of them. A mother's delight in her newborn child, following her labour pains, provides an apt analogy. (It is unlikely that there is any allusion

here to the rabbinical teaching about the 'messianic birthpangs', the time of distress which will precede and herald the dawn of the new age.)

Whereas Jesus has said above, 'you will see me' (verse 16), now he says, 'I will see you again', but it is difficult to see any real distinction of emphasis in this variation of wording. He means 'I will come and see you again', with the implication that they would see him. The initiative in reunion would be entirely his.

The 'world' that would rejoice at his disappearance would be restricted to those who could not rest until they had got him out of the way (cf. John 1:50) and felt relief and satisfaction when they thought they had accomplished their purpose. His return would fill them with dismay, but it would fill his friends with gladness. So it is recorded later, in fulfilment of his promise to them: 'Seeing the Lord, then, the disciples rejoiced' (John 20:20).

16:23,24 *On that day you will ask me for nothing. Indeed and in truth I tell you: if you ask the Father for anything in my name, he will give it to you. Up to the present you have asked for nothing in my name: ask and you will receive, that your joy may be complete.*

The first sentence in verse 23 is ambiguous. Does Jesus mean 'you will ask me no question' or 'you will ask me for nothing'? While the verb *erōtaō* in classical Greek means 'ask a question', it is used repeatedly in the NT (and not least in this Gospel) in the sense of asking someone for something, and the context makes it clear that this is the sense here. 'On that day' — i.e. when I have come back from death and you have the assurance of my abiding presence with you through the Spirit — then you will not ask me for

anything; you will address your requests direct to the Father in my name, and you shall have what you ask for. In John 14:13f. Jesus tells them that he will do whatever they ask in his name, 'in order that the Father may be glorified in the Son'; here he tells them that the Father will give them whatever they ask for in his (Jesus') name — and the clause of purpose might equally well have been added here: 'in order that the Father may be glorified in the Son'. Whether it be in the bestowal of the Spirit (compare John 14:16 with 16:7), or in the granting of any other boon, the Father and the Son act as one, so that either of them can be the subject of the verb.

When the disciples are encouraged to make their requests to the Father in Jesus' name, this is based on their close relationship with Jesus — their dwelling in him and his dwelling in them. One might think that there is a suggestion of his interceding with the Father on their behalf, but this seems to be excluded (so far as the answering of prayer is concerned) by Jesus' words in verses 26f. They had prayed to the Father before — Jesus indeed had taught them to do so — but hitherto they had not prayed to him in Jesus' name. To pray in Jesus' name was a privilege belonging to the new order on which they were about to enter with Jesus' departure and return. Access to the Father in Jesus' name was part of the joy which was promised in place of their present sorrow; it would, indeed, bring that joy to completion.

(j) Tribulation and victory (John 16:25-33)

16:25-28 *I have told you these things in parables. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in parables, but tell you plainly about*

the Father. On that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will make request to the Father for you, for the Father himself loves you, because you have come to love me and believe that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; now I leave the world and am on my way back to the Father.

According to *Mark 4:33f.*, Jesus did not speak to the multitudes 'without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.' Here the situation is somewhat different: he has been speaking to his disciples in 'parables' (*paroimiai*, as against the Synoptic *parabolai*) but henceforth he will speak to them 'plainly' (*parrhēsia*). Since his instruction to them has almost ended, we might suppose that the non-parabolic teaching which he promises to give them henceforth is that further teaching which he will give them through the Spirit (cf. *verses 12-15*); but the disciples' response in *verse 29* suggests that what he now says (*verses 26-28*) is the plain, non-parabolic teaching. The noun *parrhēsia* (in the dative case) has been used before of Jesus' public appearance and teaching (cf. *John 7:4,26; 11:54*), but also of plain speech as opposed to figurative language (cf. *John 10:24; 11:14*). In the upper room Jesus had used the figure of the vine (*John 15:1-8*) and the analogy of a woman in childbirth (*verse 21* above) to illustrate his meaning; now, in summing up, he dispenses with such illustrative devices.

Earlier Jesus had told them that he would request the Father to send them 'another Paraclete' (*John 14:16*). But now he does not promise to make similar requests to the Father on their behalf. They must not be led to think that he has to persuade the Father to answer their prayers: the Father is only too ready to do so because, as Jesus has assured them of his own love, so they may be assured of the Father's direct and personal love for them. This is not simply a matter of their sharing in his general love for the world (*John 3:16*); it is a token of the Father's appreciation of their love for his Son and their belief in him as the one whom the Father has sent. Thanks to their loving and believing reception of him, they have received 'authority to become God's children' (*John 1:12*), and as children they have direct access to the Father with the confidence that he welcomes them and gladly attends to their requests.

Jesus is returning to the Father who

sent him, having fulfilled his mission in the world; but he remains the revealer of the Father to those of whom he now takes his leave.

16:29,30 His disciples say, 'Now at last you do speak plainly; this is no parable that you are telling. Now we know that you know everything and have no need to be asked questions: because of this we believe that you have come forth from God.'

As Jesus has continued talking to them, the perplexity with which they received his earlier words about going away has begun to give place to clearer understanding: now they do not feel that he is talking in riddles. Their belief in him as the revealer whom God has sent has been confirmed because he not only answers their questions with convincing authority; he even anticipates their questions. There may be an allusion to the unvoiced uncertainties which could only with difficulty be framed as articulate questions: Jesus shows the ability to read them and answer them without their having first to be put into words. The verb *erōtaō* is ambiguous here as in *verse 23* above, but whereas there it more probably denotes asking for things, here it more probably refers to the asking of questions.

16:31,32 'Do you now believe?' Jesus answered them. 'Mark this: the hour is coming — indeed it has come — for you to be scattered, each one to his home, and leave me alone. But I am not alone, because the Father is with me.'

Jesus read their hearts better than they knew. Not only could he answer their unspoken questions: he could assess the strength of their belief in him. It was sincere and genuine, bound up with their love for him, but it was about to be exposed to a test such as they had not imagined. For all their faith and love, they would abandon him in the hour of his greatest need. Peter had already been warned of the impending collapse of his resolution (*John 13:38*), but they would all prove unequal to the coming test. If their support was all that their Lord had to rely on, it would prove a broken reed. But the Father's presence and support were assured to him (cf. *John 8:29*); confident of these, he would go forward.

The oracle in *Zech. 13:7* about the smitten shepherd and the scattered sheep is not quoted here, as it is in the corresponding passage in *Mark 14:27*, but there is an implied allusion to it. In *Mark 14:27* the quotation is preceded

by the words 'You will all take offence; in this Gospel the mention of scattering is separated from that of taking offence (*verse 1*: 'I have told you this so that you may not take offence'), but the link between the two is not broken.

16:33 I have told you this so that you may have peace in me. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage! I have overcome the world.

There are two spheres of existence: 'in me' and 'in the world'. That those who are in Christ inevitably suffer tribulation in the world is the consistent witness of the NT writers. They are encouraged, indeed, to welcome such tribulation as a token of their Lord's approval and a harbinger of eternal bliss (cf. *Rom. 8:17; Phil. 1:28*). With this assurance they may well enjoy inward peace. A comparison of *verse 33* with *verse 1* suggests that to have peace in Jesus is the antithesis to taking offence at him.

The peace which his people have in him is not only the peace which he gives (cf. *John 14:27*); it is the peace which he himself enjoys and which he shares with them. It is theirs as they remain in him, participating in his life. The world which inflicts tribulation on them is his enemy as well as theirs (cf. *John 15:18-25*). But it is a beaten enemy: the cross which the Lord in spirit had already embraced marked his triumph and the world's downfall. His triumph, like his peace, is shared by his people. The 'victory that overcomes the world', it is affirmed in *1 John 5:4f.*, is 'our faith' — the faith that 'believes that Jesus is the Son of God'. It is this faith that unites his people to him, so that his victory becomes theirs also.

*As surely as he overcame,
And triumphed once for you,
So surely you that love his name
Shall triumph in him too.*

MEDITATIONS IN PSALM 107 (2) *Prison and Darkness* J. Job

The second picture of the problems faced by the exiles is that of men confined in a dark prison. If our ideas of what prison is like owe anything to the jovial T.V. series 'Porridge', we need to revise them drastically by thinking, for example, of the terrible prison in which Jeremiah was kept, which was nothing more nor less than a cistern drained down to the sludge, and from which he could only be rescued with ropes. For some of the exiles, no doubt this kind of thing actually happened. For others — and in the kind of picture painted in *Ezekiel* — exile was more like a concentration camp. So again we have two ways of interpreting: a vivid picture of what some people suffered literally became a vivid picture of what they all suffered spiritually through the destruction of Jerusalem, the subjugation of Judah, and the scattering of the people. In the first article, we were thinking particularly of a freedom which was useless: you are in the heart of the desert and for what it is worth you can go where you like. Today, we are thinking of the violent curtailment of freedom.

In the Psalmist's treatment of this, we can trace three distinct elements: darkness (10a), chains (10b), and hard labour (12). But before we look at these in detail, we need to say something about the statement in *verse 11* that this whole experience was due to rebellion against God's commands and the flouting of the purpose of the Most High. That this was generally true is writ large in the Old Testament. As a people, the Jews had taken no notice of the fate that overtook the northern kingdom when Samaria fell to the Assyrians a century earlier: they did precisely the same kind of things — perverted their relationship with the true God by idolatry and wrecked their relationships with one another by

injustices of various kinds and sexual immorality. And particularly important for our understanding of how to apply the message of Scripture today is the fact that the Jews were also told that they were doing precisely what the Canaanites had done and for this reason would suffer at the hands of an impartial God exactly what they suffered. One ought therefore to see a warning here to our nation about the end-product of a permissive society. We ought not to imagine that God will let us off because we are British any more than the Jews had any licence to get away with these things because they were Jewish. And yet deep-rooted in our philosophy is that real disasters are reserved for other parts of the world.

On the other hand, not everybody who went into exile was personally guilty. Ezekiel, to name one, was a man who at an early age was convinced of the truth of Jeremiah's message, and responded to its demands, we can only suppose, for repentance and faith. And one important lesson of the exile that Jeremiah himself drew home was that you could not simply say that those who were taken to Babylon as captives were the 'baddies' and those who were left in Jerusalem were the 'goodies'. Actually, he taught, the situation was just the opposite, for those who were left were blinded by self-righteousness, while those who went were chastened by their sufferings. There is a practical lesson here that we ought to beware of looking at other people's sufferings and jumping to conclusions about their guilt. This is one of the crucial points made by the Book of Job. It may sound obvious, and yet if you analyze your thoughts honestly, you will see how subtle a temptation it is to assume your moral or spiritual superiority to those in

trouble.

Much depends on one's point of view how this aspect of the Psalm should be applied. When trouble comes, it kindles feelings of guilt. The way out is not to deny them or fight them. It is to take comfort from this fact that these people in the Psalm were guilty, but it did not alter the way in which God answered their cry for help. The great thing about being a Christian is that one can afford to be guilty.

1. Darkness

This is vividly illustrated by the story of Jacob, and it brings us to the first of our three prisoner-pictures, that of darkness. Jacob too was an exile, and his story will have been treasured by descendants who saw in his experience a prototype of their own. The sun set on Jacob as he got to Bethel, and there is no further mention of the sun in the story for twenty years. It was Jacob's long night, during which he was restlessly seeking to solve the deep-rooted problems of his life. There was, of course, one false dawn, when after going to bed with somebody he thought was called Rachel, 'in the morning, behold, it was Leah'. It was the moment of truth for self-help, and Jacob's long night went on. But the sun did rise again: significantly, after his experience at Peniel, when Jacob comes to the end of helping himself and simply clings to God with the words, 'I will not let you go unless you bless me.' Then we read (*Gen. 32:31*), 'The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel', limping because of his hip. The marks of chastening remain, but the darkness has at last dispersed, and the new day sees reconciliation between Jacob and Esau, the solution of his greatest human problem. And the interesting thing is that this long, dark night was for a man who acknow-

ledged God. So we may need to ask ourselves, when it is our turn for a long night, whether it is because we have not arrived at Penueel, but are still clinging to our independence from God, bargaining with him like one businessman with another.

But not all darkness is like that. When the Psalmist says that a harvest of light is sown for the righteous (*Ps. 97:11*), the implication is that there are times of sowing and hoping for the nights which can be dark. When he says 'Tears may linger at nightfall, but joy comes in the morning' (*Ps. 30:5*), there is no hint that the tears may be self-inflicted. But the same message that we saw in the earlier article comes here in a different guise. There is a way through the most bewildering desert, and there is a dawn at the end of the longest night. Because God's word points to that dawn it is itself a light, a light to walk by (*Ps. 119:105*), and a light to understand by (*Ps. 119:130*).

2. Chains

For an illustration of chains, let us turn to a New Testament character, who ironically, broke all the chains that human beings put on him, but living as he did among the tombs was as much bound as anybody has been. There are chains of inward bondage that make a man as much a prisoner of satanic powers as Israel was of the Romans. There is a story told of the Duke of Wellington that when he was at Shrewsbury school, he spilt ink over a valuable book in the library. There was a fearful shermozzle, but nobody owned up. Years later when the Iron Duke came back for Speech Day or some such occasion, there was his old headmaster sitting in a wheelchair. The moment had clearly come for a clean breast. Wellington approached him with conventional greetings and

then said, 'Do you remember, sir, how when I was at school there was ink spilt over a valuable library book?' 'Yes. It wasn't you, was it, Wellesley?' 'Oh, no, sir.' He conquered Napoleon, but he could not master himself. This is, of course, a fundamental problem which we all face, whether it is in the realm of keeping our temper, or breaking a bad habit, or in one aspect of self-discipline or another. Sometimes, we experience sudden and lasting deliverance from such a chain. What, if not? The answer is surely this: that here and elsewhere in God's word there are promises of deliverance. Jesus has come to set the prisoner free. If he could deal with Legion, he can deal with anybody. Therefore defeat comes not so much when we fall victim to whatever may be our besetting sin, but when we say, 'I shall never be any better.' It is consistent optimism about the future which comes from believing God's promises that is the real medicine for besetting sins.

But there are other chains **within** which God can give us freedom — as when Paul and Silas were in a sense as free before the earthquake as afterwards: hence the hymn-singing (*Acts 16:25*). The most salutary experience I had in Nigeria was once when I went to take a service in Ibadan prison. Afterwards I was invited to speak to a man in the condemned cell. He was due to be shot for armed robbery. But he had become a Christian since his arrest, and there was an unforgettable contrast between the prisoner, though shackled, and the evil-looking men who were guarding him. If God can give a man freedom in that situation, then there must be freedom available to us in however unpropitious circumstances.

3. Hard Labour

It is interesting to notice the way in which motifs keep re-appearing in Scripture. I mentioned Jacob as an illustration of darkness. He would have done equally well as one for hard labour. Similarly, we have seen how the Exodus story has so much in common with the exile. No doubt the Jews were called on to do public works in Babylon. And so were the Israelites in Egypt. The classic example indeed, which has given us one of many biblical proverbs is making bricks without straw. When I began thinking about this my mind went to a Sunday school room that I had to visit some time ago. It was 'Sunshine Corner', a regular feature of college missions. It was the most dismal room. There was a mere handful of children. And the three students in charge gave evidence of their calibre by playing 'O'Grady says' for the first twenty minutes — to say nothing of the astonishing limits that seemed to be set on what O'Grady was capable of saying! No doubt everyone can think of situations which have been comparably depressing. But it is an encouragement to find that Scripture bears on these experiences and makes real the possibility of coping with them. Better still, our Lord Jesus carried his cross to the threshold of Calvary: he knows what hard labour is like. Yet when prison is the appropriate image for our plight, we need to finish not with Jesus carrying his cross, but with Jesus rising from the dead. It is this that gives us the greatest certainty of all that for a Christian no prison is worthy of the name, and this that we ought to think of when we read the words: 'He has shattered doors of bronze; bars of iron he has snapped in two.'

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (9) *The Grace of God* M. L. Burr

We have seen that God reveals His greatness in giving us blessings which we do not deserve and which go far beyond meeting our needs. This brings us to the subject of His grace, which is perhaps that attribute of God most characteristic of Christianity. For grace is undeserved favour, and the Christian faith is all about the many favours that God bestows on sinners who deserve only judgement. Since God is the source of everything it is obvious from Nature that He is a generous giver. But the Bible, particularly the New Testament, reveals that God gives on a scale that is otherwise quite unknown, and to persons who are totally unworthy of His generosity.

The grace or favour of God is mentioned several times in the Old Testament. Snaith (in **The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament**) says that the Hebrew word means 'undeserved favour at the hands of a superior, where there is no bond or covenant between the parties, and no obligation on the part of the superior to do anything at all'. For example, when Jacob had to meet his estranged brother, remembering his past misdeeds, he became profoundly aware of his unworthiness of all God's kindness to him and was greatly afraid of Esau's vengeance (*Gen. 32:10,11*). In fact, to his surprise and relief, 'Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him' (*33:4*). Three times in the ensuing conversation Jacob spoke of finding favour in Esau's sight (*33:8,10,15*), and he likened his unexpected welcome to seeing the face of God (*33:10*) — said perhaps partly in flattery, but more truly than he knew (cf. *Luke 15:20*). In the same conversation he twice mentioned God's gracious dealings with him (*33:5,11*), obviously feeling that he was the object of undeserved favour from both God and Esau.

The idea of grace or favour is similarly prominent in *Exod. 33* and *34*. Israel had forfeited all claim on God's blessing, and Moses repeatedly spoke of finding favour in God's sight for himself and the people. In reply God stated 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious', and proclaimed 'The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious' (*Exod. 33:19; 34:6*). He then gave evidence of this by going with Israel and making a covenant with them. A further example of God's grace was when He forgave Nineveh as Jonah feared He would, 'for I knew that thou art a gracious God' (*Jonah 4:2*). The idea of grace which sustains an existing relationship is expressed by the much commoner word translated as 'steadfast love' in RSV, considered in our March article.

These two aspects of divine favour come together in the New Testament, where the grace of God is fully revealed. 'Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ' (*John 1:17*). Not that God became gracious with the coming of Christ; He gave us His grace in Christ Jesus before time began, and now has manifested it through the appearing of our Saviour (*2 Tim. 1:9, 10*). 'For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men' (*Tit. 2:11*), and is the grand subject of 'the gospel of the grace of God' (*Acts 20:24*).

The Greatness of Grace

The magnitude of that grace is seen, firstly, in the unworthiness of its recipients. If we deserved the blessings God gives us they would not be a matter of grace at all (*Rom. 4:4*). 'But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace would no longer be grace' (*Rom. 11:6*). Three times Paul mentions his former life as a persecutor in connection with the grace which called him (*Gal. 1:15*),

overflowed for him (*1 Tim. 1:14*) and made him an apostle (*1 Cor. 15:10*). So with us; we appreciate God's grace in direct proportion to our realization of our own sinfulness.

Secondly, the grace of God is revealed in the greatness of the blessings He gives us. In the first two chapters of *Ephesians* Paul describes 'the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us' (*1:7f.*). He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places (*1:3*). These blessings comprise our redemption, forgiveness and adoption, 'to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved' (*1:6*). Other blessings include the Holy Spirit (*1:13*), an inheritance (*1:14*), divine power (*1:19*), divine love (*2:4*), divine life (*2:5*) and a position with Christ in heavenly places (*2:6*). All these things are ours because we have been saved by grace (*2:5,8*) — we could never have earned them even if we were sinless. And they will show the immeasurable riches of God's grace towards us throughout the coming ages (*2:7*) in displaying His extraordinary generosity to such worthless creatures as ourselves.

But while God's grace is entirely free to us, it is immensely costly to Him. The third way we learn the grace of God is by seeing what has been involved in making it available to us. 'You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich' (*2 Cor. 8:9*). Divine grace is revealed in Christ's descent from riches to poverty as well as in our elevation from poverty to riches. We shall never know the depths of His poverty when He suffered on our account. He was 'made lower than the angels . . . so that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man' (*Heb. 2:9*). The great-

ness of divine generosity towards us is measured by its unparalleled cost — to God, who gave His beloved Son, and to the Son, who gave Himself.

The Effects of Grace

The result of God's gracious dealings with us is that grace reigns through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (*Rom. 5:21*). That is to say, grace is supreme, overcoming all obstacles; it has a thoroughly righteous basis (the work of Christ) and in no way implies that God condones sin; and it gives eternal life, or fellowship with God and His Son. We are called upon to stand in God's grace (*Rom. 5:2; 1 Pet. 5:12*), and base our whole lives upon it. Our assurance of eternal salvation would be presumptuous if it were not guaranteed by God's triumphant grace, which entitles us to feel secure. We also have the assurance of access to God at all times, especially when we need forgiveness and help in temptation. 'Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help in time of need' (*Heb. 4:16*). Like Paul with his 'thorn in the flesh', we can find the grace of the Lord Jesus to be

sufficient for us (*2 Cor. 12:9*).

We must not, however, deduce from God's generosity that we can do as we please and He will automatically forgive us. This would be to 'pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness' (*Jude 4*). We have confidence to approach the throne of grace; but it is still a throne. Grace reigns; it wields authority. And the authority of grace is greater than that of law, as its claims are more far-reaching. Our utter indebtedness to God's undeserved favour makes His claim upon our allegiance even greater than it would have been if we were saved by our own good deeds. The obligations of law are, in a sense, limited; certain duties are prescribed and other actions forbidden. But the obligations of grace are unlimited; we owe our whole selves to God's redeeming love. And grace, unlike law, supplies the ability which its claims require, for it is the nature of grace to give rather than to demand. So 'sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace' (*Rom. 6:14*). Grace reigns in the believer as well as over him, liberating him from sin's dominion. It does this by 'training us to renounce irreligion and worldly posses-

sions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world' (*Tit. 2:12*). Perhaps the most obvious effect of God's grace in the life of a Christian is a generous spirit in his dealings with others. 'The grace of God which has been shown in the churches of Macedonia' (*2 Cor. 8:1*) was their exceptional generosity, resembling that of Christ himself (*v.9*). Paul hoped to see the same grace (or 'gracious work') in the Corinthians too (*v.6,7,19*). And this attitude is not to be confined to material giving. If we reflect the grace that we have experienced we shall give our time, patience, sympathy and energy for the well-being of others, and be free from a demanding and censorious spirit. The grace of God also confers specific gifts on individuals, as well as those blessings which are the common lot of all Christians. 'Grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift' (*Eph. 4:7*), equipping different Christians with various abilities. It is a great privilege to serve the Master in any way, and it is only by His grace that we have anything to offer in return for all His generosity to us.

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goal of the total ministry of the Church is to introduce people to Christ and to teach them the Word of God for their spiritual growth. This area of service is open to every Christian, male and female; in fact, we are all commanded to be witnesses of Christ' (p.61).

The Christian Family presents some similar ideas, but in a less aggressive way.

The Introduction is realistic: 'Unless you are prepared to re-examine some of your most basic habits and beliefs about family life, don't bother yourself with this book. It cuts too deep. You will never finish it, much less put it into practice.'

My husband read this book some years ago and refused to wash up for a fortnight! Somehow I don't think that is what Larry Christenson had in mind.

Biblical principles are expounded mixed with common sense and experience. There is an emphasis on 'The Authority of the Husband', 'God's Order for Wives' and the 'Obedience of the Children'. Each divine role is explained with great care. Some very wise advice is given, especially to wives with non-Christian husbands. The book points to an ideal form of family life — a goal only reached with the power of the Holy Spirit. Besides bringing blessing to the family, it will be a witness to others. How we need Christian families to live and witness for him!

Finally: **Long Term Marriage or A Search for the Ingredients of a Lifetime Partnership.**

It was a long search and I failed to find the ingredients! However, the many case histories quoted made interesting reading, but the conclusions were often elusive.

The Thatchers spent three and a half years interviewing people — those who had been divorced after at least twenty years of marriage and those who were still together after twenty years or more. Comparisons and isolated thoughts on the break-up of marriages emerged. Both writers included a lot of subjective material. Some of it more helpful than the incident when Floyd bought himself a red sports car to boost his flagging middle-age ego! How many British men could afford to follow suit?

There were some excellent thoughts on commitment to each other, verbal and non-verbal communication, body language and eye contact. Distinctly lacking was a deeper spiritual approach as given in the previous book (**The Christian Family**). One of the best paragraphs reads: 'Confidence: recognising that marriage is not a state of being but

a process — an act of becoming that involves energy and the persistence of gravity. Confidence in each other, in the future, and in the marriage process, frees us to enjoy every day of our relationship without inhibition and fear of feelings of criticism. Confidence calls for having patience with each other, recognising that none of us is a finished product and that we are all engrossed in the process of growing and becoming' (p.209).

BEYOND THE TENTH . . .

John Martin reviews . . .

The Eleventh Commandment Peter Cotterell. IVP. 174pp. £4.75.

Church and mission today is the subject of this informative and provocative book. Cotterell sees *Matthew 28:19* as a command — something more than a commission — and his treatment conveys an urgency and down-to-earthness which other books on mission lack. Twenty years with the Sudan Interior Mission and a spell as visiting professor in Church Growth and Linguistics at Fuller Theological Seminary, USA, have uniquely fitted him to write with authority on several vital questions facing the church today. Those of us who heard him at the conference of brethren at Swanwick in September will not quickly forget his powerful presentation.

This is a textbook for serious study. The opening chapter 'Defining Mission' gets to the root of much muddled thinking about the pagan world by exposing Rahner's concept of the anonymous Christian. Rahner would see 'the individual . . . who may . . . be a member of a non-Christian religion and even expressly opposed to Christianity', as standing under the saving grace of God and needing only to be **told** but not converted! Cotterell defines mission as **elenctics** (Gk. **elenchein**) which the RSV variously translates reveal, expose, reprove, rebuke, convince, confute, exhort. The predominant subject of these verbs is the Holy Spirit. This is a timely reminder indeed when technological expertise is often substituted for the Spirit's persuasion in evangelism.

Chapters on The Church and its Task helpfully set proclamation over against liberation theology which, he says, suggests 'that action stands above revelation, that theological propositions follow from human action.' 'It has been a saddening experience to observe . . . the North Atlantic churches hastening . . .

to confess the truth of every accusation levelled against them by liberation theology. It is an aberrant theology, false in its hermeneutic, wrong in its fomentation of class struggle and mistaken in its epistemology' (p.67).

His section on discipling is a little thin and disappointing. It is here we come to the heart of the great commission and one could have wished for a more thorough look at the example of Jesus, especially in his use of group dynamics. Cotterell helpfully points out that the Jewish **talmid** 'was not a passive absorber of esoteric information, engaged primarily in scribbling notes from lectures, but was concerned with the total praxis of his teacher' (p.49).

Praxis is just one of a number of missiological words which the reader will be introduced to — most of which Cotterell helpfully defines, though one is left wondering why obedience to Christ's commission should involve us in such a battery of jargon. This would point to a basic weakness in the modern Bible school/seminary approach to mission. Certainly we need to face the confrontation with Marxism and Islam. Here Cotterell is most helpful: ' . . . there is the smoke screen of modern theological jargon. The jargon frequently serves to conceal the relativity which has crept into Christian religious thinking. A kind of Christian dialectic is entered upon where every assertion must die the death of a thousand qualifications. There are no absolutes, only relativistic platitudes. We are often intimidated by the nauseous repetition of the current in-phrase or in-words. "Pluralistic" is one such word' (p.144).

His final chapter is most important. Not all will agree on his novel exegesis of *Heb. 12:14*, but Cotterell is surely right when he says, 'If the good news is effective in my life holiness will result, and will validate the spoken word of the Cross' (p.151).

If the Third World is to be helped it must be by the Church. 'Cannot our bishops and moderators and presidents lead us into a new and radical caring and giving?' More space might well have been given to examining this vital question. Someone must give a truly Christian lead to facing the awful dilemmas of the North/South divide. Chris Sugden's **Radical Discipleship** comes to mind.

This reviewer heartily agrees with Cotterell, 'Having worked in the 8.30 to 5.30 industrial world of Britain and having lived for almost twenty years in Third World Ethiopia . . . I would still deeply regret the imposing on Third World nations of the dehumanization appa-

rently inseparable from industrialization, the surrender of the birthright of freedom in exchange for the dubious mess of pottage misleadingly called development. When will evangelicals produce a Gandhi to challenge the axiom that industrialization is the *sine qua non* of progress in society? Certainly not 'North Atlantic' evangelicals. Cotterell surmises, 'The Third World may . . . retain its present concern for spiritual values and may lead the developed world back from its ruthless and suicidal secularization of society' (p.154).

The suggested solution is attractive but simplistic: 'It would be a wonderful thing if the wealthy churches of the developed world could abandon the role of auditor and arbiter of the church accounts world-wide, and could become humble enough to become a simple purse' (p.155). He continues with a challenge which is most timely for our assemblies, 'As we face an essentially naturalistic world, it is vital for the church to demonstrate to that world a frankly supernatural life. Too often splendid Christian doctrine stands in marked contrast to the poverty of our Christian living. A new spirit of community is developing in the church and our ability to transcend the natural barriers of race and social class may well determine the impact of our mission' (p.155-6). As for the content of the gospel (quoting 1 Cor. 15:3-4), 'This historico-theological core does not require contextualization, precisely because the core deals with the event and not with abstract propositions arising out of the event . . . As Neill puts it, "There would be no need to contextualize unless we ourselves had first taken theological education out of context"' (p.159).

His final plea to stop wallowing in orgies of repentance about our past mistakes and follies may be less appropriate for British assemblies than for North American missionary societies to whom he addresses it, but if assembly members are concerned with mission we should read this penetrating book to identify some of our past mistakes and determine to be more obedient to the Spirit in future.

BOOKS FOR BIBLE STUDENTS

Reviews by John Polkinghorne

One of the avowed aims of IVP's *The Bible Speaks Today* series is 'to be readable'. Of the latest volumes to hand

— **Christ Above All** (Raymond Brown, 272pp., £4.75) and **Love to the Loveless** (Derek Kidner, 142pp., £3.25) the former achieves this objective better than the latter. That Dr. Brown served his time as a preacher — and a very good one! — is evident from his exposition of *Hebrews*. Indeed, the reader will find his sermon headings all ready for him — e.g., on 3:12-19: Hear the word; Believe the word; Obey the word; Share the word. This is not to say that a workmanlike effort is not made to bring out the message of the book or that difficulties are ducked. Far from it! After a brief introduction, a running exposition effectively develops the moral and spiritual teaching. A date of origin after AD70 is proposed, which will seem to many too late. 6:4-6 and 10:26-31 are shown to treat an actual, not a hypothetical, problem — that of outright apostasy, and modern believers stand in no less need of the exhortations than the original recipients. Esau's fruitless search at 12:17 is seen as a sombre extension of the warning. But as a true prophet, the writer balances warnings with positive notes of encouragement, a useful reminder for all who follow him. *Hosea* brings a prophecy of immense importance and relevance both for his own day and ours, embedded in passages replete with linguistic and literary difficulties. Derek Kidner has considerable success alike in bringing out its meaning and guiding us through its intricacies. Besides section-by-section exposition, he provides two maps, historical tables with dates and an excellent summary to enable us to keep the thread of the argument before us. Occasionally (especially at 13:14) he prefers NIV to RSV. But at 9:15a, his criticism of the RSV translation 'I began to hate' is suspect: a good case can be made for the ingressive use of the perfect. Indeed, it is arguable that 11:1 might similarly be rendered 'I began to love him'.

Both volumes will amply reward the serious student. No better commendation can be given than to say that they fully maintain the high standard set by the series to date.

Gospel and Kingdom Graeme Goldsworthy. Paternoster Press. 124pp. £2.50.

Dr. Goldsworthy ambitiously attempts in a small compass the major task of interpreting the Old Testament. The brevity of his treatment is at once its strength and its weakness. It will help the beginner to find his bearings in the wood by cutting down obscuring trees; but it also

involves cutting many corners. The extra readings and questions at the end, as well as several diagrams, are accordingly very helpful. A bibliography would have perfected the presentation and its absence is serious.

The OT should not be treated merely as a series of character studies, much less prostituted by ingenious allegorical constructions. It is in fact the beginning of the history of divine redemption extending into the New Testament. Goldsworthy finds the organizing principle in God's Kingdom, involving His covenant. This is traced from Eden (which perhaps receives disproportionate space) through Abraham, to Israel's monarchs and then through the prophets, on to the incarnation and subsequent return of the Lord Jesus Christ. A short note on hermeneutical principles is given. Not all the typological suggestions in Chapter 11 will convince every reader: one at least found Rahab hard to swallow. Nor will everyone feel that passages like *Romans 9-11* receive adequate attention in the dismissal of Dispensationalism on pp.98ff.

Minor details aside: we must pronounce that Dr. Goldsworthy has achieved his ambition and brought us an invaluable guide, which should be strongly recommended to every serious student of the Bible.

More Difficult Sayings of Jesus William Neil and Stephen H. Travis. Mowbray. viii + 128pp. £2.25.

William Neil planned a successor to his **What Jesus really meant** and had written fifteen articles before he died in 1979. Stephen Travis has furnished a further sixteen to complete the book. Sayings being selected at random from the four Gospels, the absence of an index of texts seriously hampers the reader. Not always can one feel sure that the implications of texts are squarely faced. Thus, on *Mark 1:25*, can we validly say that Jesus was merely archaic in thinking in terms of unclean spirits? Leslie Wetherhead, no Fundamentalist, to say the least, thought otherwise. On the feeding of the thousands, the miraculous element is ducked, as also is Christ's deity on *Matt. 11:27*. To balance these remarks, we can report that much useful discussion of other problem texts is provided. This is a book for the discriminating reader only.

The Lord is my Shepherd William Barclay. Fontana/Fount. 153pp. £1.50.

William Barclay achieved almost legendary status as an expositor of the New Testament. This volume, his last and published posthumously, is his first venture into the Old Testament. In it, all the gifts of lucidity, simplicity and readability are in full exercise as he treats — not as might be thought, *Psalms 23* — but *Psalms 1, 2, 8, 19* and *104*. Allan Galloway's Introduction, sketching Barclay's character and career, is in itself worth the price of the book. All Barclay fans will want this one to complete their set.

POETRY AND OTHER THINGS

A miscellany

In a Pig's Eye Robert Siegel. University Presses of Florida. 73pp. \$6.50.

Robert Siegel is that rare combination, a committed Christian and a poet of the first rank. He is associate Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, where he lives with his wife and three daughters. His first book of poems, *The Beast and The Elders*, was published in 1973, since when he has won a number of poetry awards. He is also the author of *Alpha Centaurii*, a parable which would delight anyone who enjoyed Lewis's Narnia stories. This second book of poems is a joy. In a house full of poetry, it is one of my permanent bedside books.

A number of the poems are about pigs — pigs as perhaps no one has seen them before. There is one about a bull, quiescent in a field of flowers,

listening

as the earth builds and the pollen blows to the small crazy song of the bee.

Some are intriguingly inspired by Mother Goose rhymes, and others in-

voke the landscape of the American Mid-west, as in 'You Wore the Heat and Light of Wheatfields', or the small pleasures of suburban life, as in 'Shopping Together'. One of the most moving is 'Simple Simon', a spastic child at a worship service. The collection ends with what could be described as a modern psalm, entitled 'Rinsed With Gold, Endless, Walking the Fields', which ends

Give gladness and joy back to the Lord,

Who, sly as a milkweed, takes root in your heart.

Review by Evangeline Paterson

The Westminster Confession in the Church Today edited by Alisdair I. C. Heron. St. Andrew Press. 140pp. £4.00.

The Westminster Confession, one of the most important creeds of Calvinism, was drawn up (1643-46) against a background of religious and political tension, and it remains a highly controversial issue in the Church of Scotland today. So much so that the General Assembly of 1978 instructed its doctrinal panel to re-consider 'the position of the Confession as the principal subordinate standard of the Church'. Ultimately a two-fold strategy was adopted by this working party: 'to try to make (the confession) more widely available . . . and to offer a forum in which a range of views about the present position and possible ways forward might be canvassed.'

The result is the collection of diverse and wide-ranging papers found in this volume, edited by Professor Heron of the University of Erlangen. The subjects dealt with include the rôle of the confession during the past three and a half centuries; its theological strengths and weaknesses; and also its legal position. The most crucial question — and the

one which reflects the reviewer's own thinking — is posed by one of the contributors: 'Why have a subordinate standard at all?' The unequivocal answer given, that to dispense with the confession would be to 'move away from historic Presbyterianism . . . and will take the Church of Scotland out of the Reformed family of churches', is unlikely to strike sympathetic chords amongst those raised in an altogether different tradition. Those with a catholic interest in theology, however, will appreciate this volume.

Review by John Peters

Man, Ape or Image — The Christian's Dilemma John Rendle-Short. Evangelical Press. 208pp. £1.90. £3.95.

John Rendle-Short is Professor of Child Health in the University of Queensland, Australia. A son of Arthur Rendle-Short, he was for 35 years a theistic evolutionist. He now believes in creation in six days of 24 hours and that Noah's Flood accounts for many geological phenomena. The main thrust of the book is to argue that belief in evolution is inconsistent with Christianity. An interesting passing suggestion is that the 144,000 of *Revelation 14* refer to 'those who are mentally or physically infants' at death.

Review by Peter Cousins

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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.

Only a Boy called David?
Jim Platt

In D. J. Clark's studies in *1 Samuel*

(May 1982), he suggests the generally accepted view of David as a boy or very young man, perpetuating the idea derived in our childhood from such choruses as 'Only a boy called David'. Even though David was the youngest son, Scripture does not say he was a boy or a mere stripling. Scripture does say he married Saul's daughter soon after his victory over Goliath. Also, if we might think Goliath's sword bore some relation to his own size and strength then we must remember that David wielded the same sword to decapitate Goliath. If David had been only a stripling no one would have considered putting Saul's armour on him — Saul was 'head and shoulders' above the

average man and David must have equalled him even to contemplate donning that armour and David's only reason for not using it was because he had not proved it.

1 Sam. 16:15 informs us that he was a brave man and a warrior **before** he encountered Goliath and in *chapter 17* David recounts his ability to despatch both lion and bear during his shepherding.

One verse alone remains and that in *chapter 17:33* when Saul speaks of him as a 'youth', NIV says 'boy'; but this could be a comparative — for I have now reached an age when I may speak of a man of thirty as a 'young man'.

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The August Question

Can readers suggest what Paul may have had in mind when he wrote, 'To write the same things to you is not irksome to me, and is safe for you' (Phil. 3:1)? What are 'the same things' and why was it 'safe' for the Philippians to have them repeated?

(We regret that, once again, the late despatch of the August issue — this time because of holidays at our printers — has resulted in only one reply being received in time for press — Ed.)

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

I believe the answers to both questions are to be found in the unusual word 'safe' (**asphales**) which Paul, probably carefully, chose. Before he departed from Philippi he 'exhorted' the brethren (*Acts 16:40 RSV*). Therefore, for that

reason, and for another to follow, I assume that what proceeds in this chapter is the written repetition of what had been spoken on that occasion. He had also written, briefly, similar things at the conclusion of his Galatian epistle when he denounced glorying in circumcision and uncircumcision (*5:12-16*): and, probably recently, when he had written to the Corinthians as in *2 Cor. 11:16-33; 12:1-13* with particular reference to *11:22* regarding Jewish birth and upbringing which is somewhat similar to *Phil. 3:5*. It was 'safe', or in their interests, to remind them of these things, and it was also 'safe' to write to them about himself as he does in this *chapter 3*. And that because he was sure, due to their growth in Christ, that they would not accuse him of parading himself; even, although, he exhorts them to 'be ye

imitators together of me' as he concludes this section (*v. 17*). But when he wrote about himself in the aforementioned Corinthian passage he was on his guard against those who were opposing the gospel he preached — even referring to his exploits for the Lord as 'foolishness' (*11:1, 16-19*), but only for the sake of his argument. Sometimes it is better to talk about one's self rather than about others, perhaps with embarrassing inaccuracies. It may be observed that this answer implies that I hold the minority view that Philippians was not definitely written from Rome, but probably from a much nearer Roman headquarters such as Ephesus which would, incidentally, mean a more realistic two-way journey for Epaphroditus.

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.

When does the Holy Spirit come?

From Mr. David A. Burgess

Dear Mr. Coad,

Although not a member of the 'Brethren', I have enjoyed reading *The Harvester* for several years. I am particularly impressed with the candid self-criticism of some articles and the generally competent level of biblical exposition. However, some of the comments of the late Mr. F. Nickels in his article 'Pentecost — Before and After' (*Vol. 59, No. 5, May 1982*) should not be allowed to pass unchallenged.

I refer to the vitally important issue of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the life of a Christian. In company with so many who adopt what I can only describe as the orthodox evangelical party line, the article maintains that this takes place once and for all at conversion. There is thus no need to seek a subsequent experience (baptism?) of the Spirit: indeed there can be no point in doing so, any more than in endeavouring to renew Calvary.

Mr. Nickels goes on to 'explain' that the pentecostal tongues (languages) given to the disciples were to preach to the crowds gathered in Jerusalem 'without excessive emotion or excitement'. The latter phrase is indeed interesting in view of the fact that the disciples were accused of being drunk (*Acts 2:15*)! It is of course quite mistaken to suggest that 'tongues' were given to preach; they were given to enable the recipients to glorify God. It was Peter who preached to the crowd that gathered — presumably in his native tongue.

Emotion and excitement aside, the real point at issue is whether Christians have a right to expect an 'endowment with power' subsequent to conversion. Leaving aside the considerable volume

of world-wide modern testimony to such a pentecostal experience, what can we learn from the only scriptural account of the development of the early church, the book of *Acts*?

1. The disciples in *Acts 2* were genuine believers who knew the Holy Spirit already (see *John 13:10, 14:17, 20:19-22*). This was before being 'baptised' in the Spirit.

It is worth considering whether our refusal to 'tarry' because of a dispensational argument has resulted in spiritual loss.

2. Genuine believers in Samaria received the Holy Spirit through laying on of hands by Peter and John (*Acts 8*). It is easy enough to argue that they were not 'really' converted until that moment; was Philip's earlier preaching of so little spiritual consequence? (I am not attributing this argument to Mr. Nickels: it is, however, sometimes used by the 'nothing more' school.)

3. At Ephesus a group of repentant disciples was baptised and subsequently received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of Paul's hands (*Acts 19*). Even if the two previous cases have some special claims to uniqueness, as sometimes urged, it is hard to see what is special about the situation at Ephesus.

Present day exhortations to overcome 'ignorance and forgetfulness of (the) great fact' that 'the Spirit of God dwelleth in you' are entirely beside the point. Such statements were made to normal Christians — i.e. those already baptised in the Holy Spirit as described in *Acts*. It is we moderns who are, generally, without such an experience and who exercise the most amazing ingenuity in rationalising its (rather, His) absence. Could this be the real cause of 'so much of the present deadness in our churches'?

I offer these comments in no spirit of criticism — my own shortcomings leave me few illusions about my own spiritual state. We need to share our insights and emphases; for all its triteness, it remains

an inescapable fact that what sets us free is truth itself, not simply our limited contemporary understanding of it.

Yours sincerely,

David A. Burgess

12 Cardiff Road, Hanwell, London W7 2BW.

Theories of Creation

From Mr. T. H. Friston

Dear Mr. Coad,

Mr. J. E. Todd's letter on this subject (August 1982) gives us several important clues to the meaning of the first creation narrative, which ends in the middle of verse 4 of chapter two of *Genesis*. As he rightly suggests, it is not a scientific treatise on cosmology and anthropology. It is a direct and precise account, and vibrant with the power of God's spoken word. The plan of the narrative is simple and logical. Things need a place to dwell in, so God first makes the places, and then the tenants who occupy them. He first makes two places, heaven and earth. In *Genesis 1, verse 1*, 'heaven' corresponds to our modern term 'space'. So space is the place for the earth. But the earth, also, is a place. God pulls back the waters which cover the earth, thereby making two further dwelling places. Sea and Earth (dry land). God completes this operation by carpeting the land with plant life, which, rooted in the land, is an integral part of it. He had already devoted part of space to the atmosphere, separating up the normal quantities of rain water — vapour from the waters of the seas. All is now ready for the tenants. Place 1, Space. Now populated with the heavenly bodies. Place 2, Seas. Now filled with marine life. Place 3, The Land. Now brings forth all animal life. Appropriately, the birds, which divide their time between sea, earth and atmosphere, are mentioned after the sea life. Clearly, the dwelling places had to be created before the occupants of these places, but otherwise, as the complete account is presented within the

framework of six days of twenty-four hours, there can be no time order of significance in relation to geologic time. Looking back from the present, over millions of years, as the scientist does, all things created in one week would appear to be made at the same time. Any comparison of order, within the week, with the geologic order, is a pointless exercise. Reconciliation is neither possible nor necessary. The purpose of the narrative is to give us an orderly presentation of the infinite variety of God's completed creation. It is not a timetable of creative acts. The modern mind has an obsession with strict chronology which is not shared by the Bible writers.

Ancient creation accounts in the Middle East were customarily written on six tablets. There is a set of seven tablets (polytheistic) recording the making of man on the sixth tablet, the seventh containing a hymn of praise to the creating God. Abraham would have been familiar with such tablets, and Bible writers necessarily used the materials and forms of writing of their own times. Dr. Henry M. Morris, a conservative interpreter, writes 'The original narratives of Genesis were written on tablets of stone or clay, and Moses, acting as compiler and editor, added his own editorial comments and transitional sections, thus completing the book.' If this is so, then Moses, led by the Spirit of God, took an already existing inspired narrative of the creation, and made his own additions and formative alterations. To quote Mr. Todd, 'Just as the Israelite is to work six days and then rest on the Sabbath, so Moses portrays God as working six days and then resting.' So, the Sabbath week of *Exodus* provided the days of creation,

not the days of creation the Sabbath week. God's provision of a day of rest provided the framework of the creation narrative, teaching the need, not only of creative work, but of re-creative rest. There is a second great meaning, of which even Moses was not then aware. It speaks of cessation from the sinner's own works, when he finds spiritual and eternal rest in the finished work of Christ (*Hebrews 4:3 and 10*).

Yours sincerely,
T. H. Friston
12 Pearson Street, Cardiff CF2 3EL.

From Mr. L. L. Fox

Dear Mr. Coad,
Mr. Todd closes his letter, Aug. '82, by asking whether we are correct in treating 'the passage' — seemingly the *Genesis* account of creation — 'as if it is a scientific treatise on cosmology and anthropology'.

With the development of the scientific age, scientists propounded certain theses as to the functioning of the natural world, the truth of which could be demonstrated by successful experimentation. In the face of this approach, and seeming to forget that they 'dealt in' truths of a much higher order than pertains to scientific experiment, some Christians felt the need, as I understand, to stress that their book, the Bible including *Gen. 1*, is true **literally**. Now, no doubt the *Genesis* account will withstand examination aimed at seeing whether or not its statements as to creation are in accord with scientific principles. But its primary purpose is not, I submit, to disclose scientific information. If it were otherwise, the question would arise 'How did the

Genesis account profit the bulk of Christians in the pre-scientific era; and what of the majority today?'

The key lies in remembering that Paul characterized the OT scriptures as given by inspiration of God; able to make wise unto salvation . . . ; and profitable for doctrine . . . That is, the scriptures have to do with salvation. Their interpretation relates first and foremost to things **spiritual**, and the book of *Genesis* is no exception. Thus spiritual truths are seen by Peter as foreshadowed in the flood (*1 Peter 3:21*); and by Paul in the creation of man, in the advent of light, in the growth of seeds, and in the relation of husband and wife (*2 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 4; 1 Cor. 15; Eph. 5*). This is in accordance with *1 Cor. 15:46*, and Andrew Jukes expressed it thus:

Wondrous, therefore, as it is, that the facts of man's first and natural development should figure the growth and progress of his spiritual life, — that a chain of events, such as Genesis records, should spiritually express all the manifold history of man's inward life in every age, — it is but the wonder which meets us everywhere, that all we see, and far more than any see . . . speak to our souls of other higher things, and have been so felt to speak by man in every age.

The brief answer, then, to Mr. Todd's question is 'No'; while at the same time acknowledging the marvel of God's physical creation, including the constitution of man himself.

Yours in the Master's service,
L. L. Fox
9 Warden Close, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0JL.

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NEWS PAGE

Africa

An African Enterprise team of evangelists reports a very encouraging one-week crusade in Zimbabwe during July. Evangelists from Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe and South Africa spread themselves across Mutare (formerly Umtali) in the north-eastern highlands to take the gospel to factories, schools, institutions, army camps, police quarters and so on. 'For a solid week our evangelists spoke about 25 to 30 times a day. At the end of this preliminary week, more than 600 had committed their lives to Christ — and the city-wide mission meetings were still to come.' A former guerrilla came to Christ in a flood of tears and repentance. In front of 3,000 people he confessed his atrocities and claimed forgiveness. His mother witnessing her son's conversion, from the back of the hall, rushed to the platform and, weeping, embraced him. At an army camp, 550 ex-guerrillas asked Christ into their lives. More than 1,000 Bibles provided by the Gideons were snatched up and next day, another battalion requested Bibles. The instances of God's unusual moving in many lives goes on and on, and the number of those who are still responding to the Gospel grows day by day.

Argentina

Jim Taylor reports that the Falkland Islands episode involved him in no trouble with the authorities or neighbours or friends. He has good news of a united Congress for pastors and leaders held in June and attended by 450 evangelicals including 120 from the assemblies. For the first time in the history of the Argentine, there was a united Lord's Supper on the Friday night.

Coventry Law Court Prayers
September 6 saw the

inauguration of formal prayer sessions preceding magistrates court hearings in Coventry. Since 1956 a weekly prayer meeting has been held for the City Council's 4,800 employees. The early morning meeting sprang from this. Interest has been expressed not only by magistrates but also by probation officers, lawyers and policemen. The meetings, lasting about ten minutes in all, are interdenominational and may be even interfaith with a Jewish member taking one of the sessions. The chairman of the bench explained: 'We are all busy people and have little time to stand aside quietly for a while. It can only do good — everybody realises what a responsibility it is to judge a fellow citizen.'

Evangelism

'Tell a Tourist' was held in London for the seventh time in 1982. For over two weeks a team of 35 young people shared their faith with visitors to the capital and as a result several of these became Christians. Among those helping were young students from Canada and the USA, also from Holland, Germany, France, Ireland, Sweden and Yugoslavia. There were open air meetings and 'cold contact' street evangelism using St. Peters, Vere Street and Orange Street as bases. The people interviewed in the survey used to promote contacts came from 35 different countries and 103 countries were actually represented by personal contacts during the campaign. Over 2,700 booklets were given away including 1,076 copies of the 'Peace Truth Love' Gospels of John in English.

Luis Palau will be in London not only during the autumn of 1983 but also during the early summer of 1984. Keeping the Christian community in London up to date with details of the activities, prayer needs and

plans for the Mission is an enormous task. To this end, every church is being asked to appoint its own Mission to London representative and an assistant. It will be through this representative that the information flows to the church — a responsibility that will preferably not be placed on those who are already heavily committed. Churches should therefore appoint their own representatives, with an assistant if required, and send details to Mission to London, 112 City Road, London EC1V 2NB.

Soon is an easy-English evangelistic paper with a circulation of 400,000 copies and a world wide distribution. The ministry of the magazine, which is produced under the auspices of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, is hampered by lack of voluntary helpers. Volunteers are needed to help in marking Bible courses, acting as a pen-friend to students and young people in Eastern Europe, and typing in the home. A group activity is the establishment of 'dispatch units' to wrap, fold and post *Soon* every three months. They have made 700 dispatch units by the end of the year a prayer target. This means an increase of about 50. Six or seven people can handle the work involved in an hour or less and yet be directly involved with people around the world. It is suggested that a mid-week house fellowship might find this a valuable form of shared service. On the other hand, some 'dispatch units' comprise just one or two people who find the work takes them one or two evenings. For details and prayer circulars, contact 44 Twyford Road, Willington, Derby, DE6 6BN.

Honduras

Most readers of *The Harvester* would not think of this as a scene of great evangelistic

outreach. But news has reached us of 1,500 students who heard the gospel during April, 400 of whom accepted Christ as their Saviour. The students are motivated to testify personally. On the other hand, the International Federation of Evangelical Students, from whom this news comes, reports that for the first six months of 1982 its income has been 22% below budget. The Lord is providing opportunities which they are unable to take up.

Label Libel

Procter & Gamble manufacture such well known commodities as Ariel, Fairy Snow and Fairy Liquid. But in spite of their size they are concerned about rumours that their trade mark — featuring the man in the moon with thirteen stars, standing originally for the thirteen original states of the USA — is being interpreted as a symbol of satanism. They have filed two law suits in the USA against three grocery distributors who have been warning Christians against Procter & Gamble's product. Right-wing fundamentalists are among religious leaders in the USA who have denounced the libel campaign. Now it is apparently being promoted in the United Kingdom via a leaflet, 'Is Satan creeping into your kitchen?' The fact that the campaign focuses on a trade mark that has been used since 1850 in the USA merely underlines the irresponsibility of some Christians and the incredulity of others.

Media

Christian Woman is a new publication from the publishers of *Christian Herald*. The publishers describe the magazine as youthful and modern in outlook and so it is aimed at the contemporary reader disillusioned with the anti-Christian stance and permissive overtones of many

other periodicals. The editor, Gail Lawther, is an established book editor, born again under the ministry of David Bubbers at Emmanuel Church, Northwood. The first issue of *Christian Woman* dated October is available at 65p. A special £2.00 discount is being offered on the annual subscription, making this £8.00. It is published from Grafton Place, Worthing.

Third Way is devoted to a biblical appraisal of social, political, cultural and ethical issues. Edited for the last four years by Mrs. Alex Mitchell, it is from September in the charge of Tim Dean who has left a career in broadcasting for this purpose. (Readers of *The Harvester* who find themselves able to cope with the long bits in the *Times*, *Guardian* or *Telegraph*, should consider subscribing to *Third Way* which is a burning and a shining light in a region of increasing gloom.)

Communication for Christians is the theme of a seminar to be held at Harpurhey United Church, Manchester on

Saturday, October 16 from 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. It includes a consideration of video, TV, art, radio, press, music, drama, magazines, journalism, photography, print and writing. There will be workshop groups. The recommended minimum donation is £5.00. Full details can be obtained from Release Publications, 142 Dantzic Street, Manchester, M4 4DN.

Missionary Vision

Evangelical Missionary Alliance is sharing its annual conference this year with the Evangelical Alliance. In view of the vastness of the task of reaching the remaining unevangelised people of the world, the theme is to be 'The Local Church and World Mission: Open Sharing Between Churches and Mission Agencies'. The Conference will explore such themes as the calling and training of Christian workers in the local church, missionary giving, youth involvement in the missionary interest of the local church and prayer for mission and the local church. Brochures are available from the EMA or EA both at 186 Kennington Park Road,

London SE11 4BT (telephone: 01-582 0228).

Mission 83 is a conference to communicate missionary vision to young people of the churches of Europe. It will be held at Lausanne from December 28 to January 2, 1983. The cost is £67.00, including all accommodation and conference fees. Group travel is available by coach from £58.00, with a reduction available for students. Details from Mission 83, c/o CNEC, Wangey Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex, RM6 4DB.

Radio

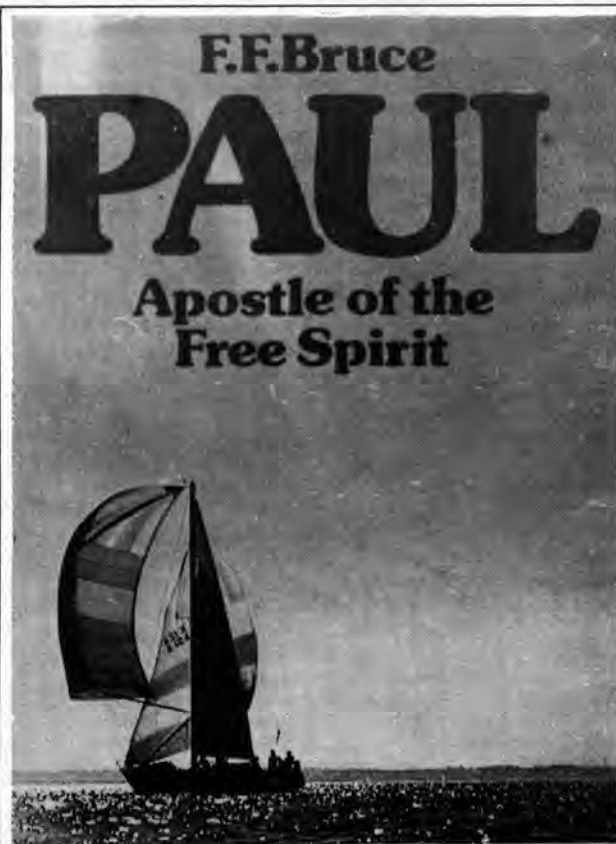
FEBA who were so greatly at risk a couple of months ago, have been able to meet their expenses thanks to increased sacrifice for the sake of partnership in the Gospel through radio. During the five week period following an appeal, £120,000 was sent in — about £36,000 above the normal average for the period. On the other hand, it has been necessary to reduce the power of one transmitter from 75kw. to 45kw. — full power can be restored only when the income

is maintained at the new higher level.

TWR report that English language broadcasts are now available every day from 7.25 to 9.40 a.m. This is on 31 metres shortwave (approximately 9.5MHz).

Relief

The needs of Uganda have been eclipsed by the Falkland Islands crisis and the Middle East conflict. Yet the problems faced there are almost as bad as they were when the notorious President Idi Amin was overthrown in 1980. Disease, urban guerrillas, and inflation are taking a terrible toll. The magazine *Today*, working with Africa Enterprise, Church Missionary Society and Tear Fund, has launched a plan whereby volunteers will be enabled to devote three months and three years to working in Uganda on agricultural, educational and medical projects. They will need to have appropriate educational, medical and agricultural or engineering skills. Further information can be obtained from Derek Williams, 130 City



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Unemployment

In his ministry of visitation among the people of South Norwood, City Missionary Andrew Hewett meets individuals of a wide age range. Last year he became very concerned about the increasing number of young people he found to be unemployed, and his concern led him to investigate ways in which he might be able to help them. Eventually he came into contact with 'Training for Life', a scheme sponsored by the YMCA and funded by the Manpower Services Commission. This one-year scheme aims to train young people from 16 to 18 in basic skills, and helps them eventually find employment. Andrew began negotiating with the scheme's co-ordinator and arrangements were finally made for his Mission Centre to be used as one of the venues for this scheme, and now after a trial period of several months it is an established part of the Mission Centre's activities. He is able to meet and befriend the young people between their morning sessions and is particularly grateful for the

opportunity not only of helping a needy section of the community, but also for the spiritual ministry that it affords.

Youth Contact Service

The Christian Youth Contact Service operates a nationwide directory of Christians who have made themselves available to offer fellowship and practical help to young Christians settling into a neighbourhood. Readers who are willing to help by being included in the directory should contact CYCS, 229 Great Portland Street, London W1N 5HD. Young people on the other hand, who want fellowship, information, or accommodation, should write, specifying their locality and their status (age, single/married, with/without children) to CFCS, 7 London Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 1BY.

Home Call

Mrs. Jean Dickson, on August 22, 1982, aged 82, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. George Pirie, New Jersey. A native of Cockenzie, she was one of the oldest members of Hebron Evangelical Church, Aberdeen, where she was much loved and respected for her quiet and consistent testimony.

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12 Cleveland Crescent, North
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for the month of August
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17; Weymouth Meetings &
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25-30; Dorchester/Wallisdown
31.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Netherlands 3; Exmouth 10;
Crawley 17; Norwich 19-20;
Guildford 24; Sunbury 26-28;
Fittleworth, Sussex 31.

Iliffe, D. J.:
Children's Work, West Sussex
1-18; Training Programmes
19-20; Crediton 31.

Lambert, P. A.:
Bristol 1-7; Liphook 8;
Ringwood 10; Swindon,
Kingsdown 11-18; Frome 24;
Swindon, Penhall 25-31.

Loader, G.:
Celebration, Bristol 2; Zetland
Hall, Bristol 3; Swindon 5;
Speedwell Gospel Hall 10;
Nailsea 13, 20, 27; Preston
Chapel, Yeovil 17; Glasgow 23;
Severn Beach 24; Yeovil 28;
Hebron Hall, Torquay 30.

Lowther, G. K.:
Fleet, Hants. 3; Harrow 4;
Pinner 5; Crouch End, N.8 5,
12; Ilford 6, 13; Edmonton N.9
6, 7; Hainault 7; Hampstead 7,
14; Downham, Kent 10, 19, 20;
Sydenham, SE26 11, 26; Manor
Park, E.12 12; Rainham 13;
Enfield 19; Bromley 20;
Rochester 21; Staplehurst 24;
Leytonstone E.11 25;
Beckenham 27; Gravesend 28;
Southborough, Kent 31.

Phillips, C.:
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Selbourne Luton 3; St. Albans
Lattimore 4, 11, 18; Enfield
Highway 6, 13, 20, 27; Hornsey
7, 14, 21, 28; South Ruislip 10;
St. Albans Thirlmere 12, 19, 26;
Newbury 16; Folkstone Road,
Walthamstow 17; Berkhamsted
24; Woking 31.

Pierce, D. H.:
Westminster 9; Tiverton 6 & 13;
Cardiff 10-12; Lovacott 17;
France 22-31; Rest of the
month in Barnstaple.

Short, S. S.:
Belfast 3; Torquay 9-11, 13;
Paignton 12, 14; Brixham 15;
Barnstaple 17-21; Braunton 24;
Barking 30; Seven Kings 31.

Stringer, D.:
Weymouth 1-2; Rugby 3-24;
East Midlands area 25-31.

Tatford, F. A.:
Dillenberg, Germany 1-3; High
Wycombe 16, 17; Bexhill 20;
Paisley 28-31.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Brierfield:
Hebron Hall, Walter Street. The
Thirty Third Annual Conference
to be held in the Brierfield
Baptist Church on Saturday,
October 9, 1982, at 2.45 p.m.
and 6.15 p.m. Speakers: Philip
J. Widdison, Abingdon, and
Jack Kirkham, Ellesmere Port.
Philip Widdison will continue
until October 18 at Hebron Hall,
with a Children's Campaign.

Hebron Hall, Walter Street.
Saturday Evening Rallies at
7.00 p.m. October 16 and 23.
Speakers: Philip J. Widdison
(Abingdon) and K. Melling
(Norwich).

Colyton:
The Gospel Hall, The Butts.
Bible Study, Saturday, October
23, at 7.00 p.m. Subject: The
Responsible Man (Romans
1:1-17). Speaker: E. Parmenter,
Wimborne.

Grimsby:
Wellowgate Chapel, 67
Wellowgate. October 23 at 7.30

p.m. Ministry. Speaker: James
Marshall (Barnsley).

Luton:
Onslow Road Gospel Hall,
Vincent Road, Leagrave. 16
October Ministry 4-5 p.m.
Conversational Bible Reading
6.30-8.30 p.m. Further studies
in the life and times of Joseph.
Speaker: Dr. H. Barnes
(Bromsgrove). 'The Final Test',
Genesis 44.

Maidenhead:
Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road.
Monthly Conferences,
November 1982 to April 1983.
6.30-7.30 p.m. Address,
Refreshments, 8.15-9.00 p.m.
Discussion. November 6, The
Ideal Citizen (Matt. 5:1-16).
Speaker: R. Catchpole
(Frinton).

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INSIDE:
CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

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The HARVESTER

INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'

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Christina Rossetti: The Mansell Collection

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BOOKS ISSUE?

It has been the custom in recent years for two issues of *The Harvester* per annum to be devoted to 'bookish' subjects. In the past some of these issues have been devoted almost entirely to reviews, but more recently the mix has been a little more varied. In this issue we present articles dealing with two well-known, but very different, writers who (in their different ways) are now classics; what unites them is their Christian faith.

Are 'books issues' still justified in this modern age, when our apprehension (using that word in its older sense) of life is shaped so much more by visual means than by the written word? Ought the scope of such an issue to be extended — were there the writers to do just that — to cover those other means of communication?

Despite the urgent need for greater Christian participation in the visual media, I believe there is also a great urgency that honest-to-goodness reading should also stand up and firmly announce its autonomy: its own 'unilateral declaration of independence'. The trade of word-mongering has caught its coat in the wheels of the visual cart, and is being dragged along behind it, screaming. Even serious journals are finding it necessary to catch their public by visual bait, and to trim their content to a lower level of effort.

One very good reason why this autonomy is necessary is that, by their nature, the visual media are elitist: that is, that the resources they require call for the expenditure of money that is available to comparatively few organisations and individuals. Inevitably those few gain a wholly disproportionate influence over the minds and lives of those who are subject to them. How many of us are provoked to revolt: in front of some vapid outpouring we cry 'why should this man, this rubbish, be permitted to hi-jack the minds of the people?'

Which is why we also need, and shall continue to need, both Christian writers and Christian publishers who are prepared to put their hands to the pen — to ensure that the light of the Christian good news is never hidden under a bushel: that the injunction of *Philippians 4:8* should not perish from the earth.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

Poet of the Deep

Leslie James

Had you loitered outside Christ Church, Upper Woburn Place, in the early 'nineties of last century, you might have seen a dowdily dressed lady approaching from the direction of Torrington Square. You would have felt sorry for her. Even the most head-above-cloud-earth-below-notice theologian must have felt a pang go through his learned heart at the sight of her disfigured face. 'Poor old dear, she won't see sixty again. She hasn't seen much beyond her home and church, that's for sure.'

You would not be the first one to make such a mistake for this frumpish looking spinster had travelled. We cannot understand some biographers binding her so closely to church and home, for we find her staying at places right across the United Kingdom, not to mention on the Continent. Certainly she was not an earth-shrinker in the modern sense — thank God she travelled slower and saw more — but for her times she had been quite a globe-trotter. As for her face. Before the ravages of disease it was a face to be remembered. It had given life to dead paint on the canvas of more than one famous artist. There is reason to believe that Holman Hunt used its brow and eyes in *The Light of the World*. It is certainly a striking face which looks out of the pencil drawing by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, executed when its owner was eighteen. But more to the point; this lady would have heard the nightingale in Berkeley Square. You and I might stand there for a decade and hear nothing — she would have heard the nightingale. Furthermore, Time, that hoary old leveller, would award her with what he awards very few — a room in the House of English Literature; a small room perhaps, but a room of her own forever. For this insignificant looking lady is Christina Rossetti.

Christina Georgina Rossetti was born on 5th December 1830, in what was then

Charlotte Street, Portland Place, Bloomsbury, London. She was the youngest child in a most unusual family, more Italian than English. Her father, Gabriele Rossetti, was a Neapolitan refugee. He had been librettist to the opera house and curator of antiquities in the Naples Museum, but had been forced to flee the country because of his part in the insurrectionary movements of 1820 and 1821. He made his way to England in 1824, established himself as a teacher of Italian, and in 1826 married Frances Polidori who was half-Italian, half-English. They had four children: Maria Francesca, Dante Gabriel, William Michael and Christina. There have been few families of such genius. All achieved some sort of acclaim, two of them fame: Dante as a poet and painter, Christina as a poet and writer. William became a notable critic, and Maria, before she entered an Anglican sisterhood, revealed enough ability to write *A Shadow of Dante*.

By 1831 Gabriele Rossetti was professor of Italian at King's College, London. He had been educated a Roman Catholic, but later became a free thinker, and according to his son William 'tending in his later years towards an undogmatic form of Christianity'. This is perhaps confirmed by his *L'Arpa Evangelica* (*The Evangelical Harp*). He was also an enthusiastic if somewhat eccentric student of Dante. In the family circle he always spoke Italian, and they answered in the same language. His wife, Frances, was an Anglican and brought up the children as Protestants. In fact she took their early education upon herself, and the Bible was the king-pin of the syllabus. Unfortunately the boys did not follow her spiritual guidance in later life. Our research reveals one thing at least: she was a gifted person in her own right, and never encouraged her children to believe in a world simpler than the real

one. William tells us that Christina 'owed everything in the way of early substantial instruction to our mother'. And that mother, who was an excellent teller of children's stories, was teaching her little girl the *Revelation* when she was a child of eight or nine! Christina loved this mysterious book with its symbolism, and it is not surprising that it later became the basis for one of her greatest devotional achievements, *The Face of the Deep*.

Meanwhile it does not seem to have taken Rossetti senior long to become something of a celebrity in the Liberal movement for Italian liberty or for his house to become a meeting place for Italians, many of them exiles like himself. There was Pasta; Moscati, ex-brigand, to whom Thackeray dedicated *Pendennis*; Sangiovanni; Paganini, and others. Conspirators some of them undoubtedly were, but they appear to have too much of the lovable Italian Opera fantasy about them to have been really dangerous, although they might have done Ferdinand a considerable damage if they could have laid hands on him. But think of the myriad of impressions falling upon these gifted children from such a group. No wonder Christina spoke excellent Italian. In fact we are told that even as a woman she still spoke her perfect English with a charming, slow, distinct, foreign sounding intonation. As far as her poetry is concerned it has been suggested that Christina Rossetti's inner vision was so keen she was near to being independent of external influences. Maybe, but I, personally, feel it is impossible to over emphasise this tremendous Italian romantic, political, literary, ethical fall-out upon this intensely emulous child as well as the rest of the family. In plain English, Christina, and Dante for that matter, with their supercharged artistic gifts, had a head start, for their poetic environment

was pretty well unique. Alas, however, we must leave this remarkable family, except so far as they bear upon the life of our heroine. After all, like the Brontës, they all demand attention.

The earliest picture of Christina we have seen is by Filippo Pistrucchi one of the compatriots, and a very determined seven-year-old she looks. In common with some other rare children of incipient genius she was rather unmethodical in her habits, and possessed quite a temper. This fits well with Pistrucchi's resolute little face. Her later characteristic tranquillity did not fall from heaven as a kind of charismatic miracle, but was built up brick by brick over the years, until Mackenzie Bell knew her as 'one of the most lovable women who ever lived'; and Mackenzie did not hand out bouquets for fun. For a city child she had a profound knowledge of nature, the foundation of which was probably laid during her childhood visits to her maternal grandfather, Gaetano Polidori, at Holmer Green, near Little Missenden in Buckinghamshire. It was here she first encountered death: 'So in these grounds, perhaps in the orchard, I lighted upon a dead mouse . . . I took him up, buried him comfortably in a mossy bed, and bore the spot in mind. It may have been a day or two afterwards that I returned, removed the moss coverlet, and looked . . . a black insect emerged. I fled in horror . . .'

Probably her love of nature is as great as that of any other nineteenth century poet. For the most part she missed the heart beat of the city, the murmur of its voice, and listened to the farmyard, orchard, field and wood. She began writing poetry at about the age of twelve and it was Grandpa Polidori who published a little volume of her work on his private printing press in 1847.

Back at home the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was formed in 1848 under the leadership of her brother Dante. Like most young men with pretensions to artistic greatness they were 'against the government'. But stop. We had better add a proviso. When we talk of D. G. Rossetti, Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais we are not talking of those with mere pretensions, not of academic whiz-kids, but of real genius, and that has always been in short supply. The pass-word of the P.R.B. was **Death to slosh**, and Christina, although never a member, had a good deal of sympathy with them. This is not surprising, for while they were in revolt against conventional art, they also stood for a return to nature. She wrote several lyrics for their short-lived journal, **The Germ**, under

the pseudonym of Ellen Alleyn. One of these, **A Testimony**, is a mosaic of scriptural words fitted together in a manner which makes us wonder just what kind of a teenager we have on our hands. Dare we wish we could meet one such in life? For most of us it will remain a wish.

Physically Christina was in ill health from about the age of fifteen, and things were not improved when, in 1845, her father was forced to resign his post at King's College, and the family fortunes deteriorated. During his long illness she assisted her mother in teaching a day school at Camden Town, and afterwards at Frome. From early on she seems to have been fascinated if not overshadowed by death — one could almost say a **death wish**: 'When I am dead, my dearest, Sing no sad songs for me'. Her desire to depart to that 'Near-at-hand-land' continually surfaces, but is this the whole story? Are we not listening to a cry of agony: to a young soul in trouble? Those who are at all familiar with Christina will know that much has been written as to the cause of this sadness. We can only repeat what has been said by more competent observers. Some, of course, see in her over-awareness of death no more than an artistic point of view, but generally it is put down, among other things, to her two unfortunate love affairs. She had been pledged to marry James Collinson, but James returned to the Roman Catholic faith which he had left, and Christina, who knew no other mediator between herself and God than Christ Jesus, broke things off. Her second romance proved more of a trauma than the first. Perhaps she thought to win Charles Bagot Cayley for Christ, but he was not a believer and gave no sign that he would ever become one. So when he proposed she turned him down, and according to Shillito, 'suffered in such a way that deep and permanent scars were left'. Her troubles piled up. Between these two affairs her father died, and then from 1871 to 1873 she was very ill indeed from an attack of exophthalmic bronchele, which caused her eyes to protrude, and disfigured her. But if it does not sound presumptuous amongst all this wisdom may I say I believe the eyes have it! Someone once said, I believe it was Solzhenitsyn, 'Woe to the literature which portrays life as made up of everything except that which I can see around me with my own two eyes' (Christina exaggerators take note). Christina was stimulated by almost everything she looked at, and the things she looked at were passing. But

was she never humorous? Very: 'Come cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer!' As the soldier remarked whose post lay in the rear.'

After Dante and William married, and Maria entered a religious sisterhood, Christina, her mother, Aunt Eliza, and later Aunt Charlotte, made home together. From 1876 they lived at 30 Torrington Square, and after the elderly ladies passed on Christina kept the same house. All her books except two were dedicated to her mother, which needs no comment of ours.

Now obviously we must limit ourselves somewhere in our consideration of this great writer. The most I can do is to try to give you a more intimate introduction than you already have through her hymns, in the hope that you will follow it up until you are fully acquainted. So let us begin then by approaching her on a personal level. Don't let anyone bully you, she wants to speak to you personally, and not through another. She always spoke to me personally. As a very small boy, in an Anglican school, in **The Bleak Mid-Winter** conjured up wonderful living pictures. Then a learned preacher assured me that earth never 'stood hard as iron' in Bethlehem and water was never, but never, 'like a stone'. Bang! one early dream took a beating. The interweaving of the literal and figurative was still a closed book to me, but it should not have been to the one who assured me seeing he was often preaching from the Book which does this better than any other. Young hopeful, beware of learned theologians who are not so hot on poetry. Don't misunderstand me. It will never do to approach Christina in the attitude of a mystic in a trance, for she probably regards poetry as a means of teaching, particularly her religious poetry. You need to be wide awake if you are going to understand what she has to say. It is her devotional work, of course, in which Christians will be interested, but her masterpieces, such as **Goblin Market**, are not devotional, they are world classics. She never slides a screen between herself and me; if she does so to you do not give up, prise it open. It has been said: 'in her disquisition on the connection between fishes and men, she appears to carry her symbolism a little too far.' That's all very well, but as a poet, and she is one of our best, she is bound to be charged with symbolism. Let her demons get mixed up with fairies; let them have cats heads, for me at least, it is a symbolism which in lesser writers might have appeared off-beat, if not absurd. It is a pity we cannot give

examples, but verse takes up so much space. Just get hold of her works and read for yourself. They should not be hard to come by, but shop around. Recently I was asked £3 for a rather tatty copy of her poems in a high class bookshop, and no doubt cheap at the price, but later I found a neat little edition of her **Selected Poems** tucked away among the jumble of a down-town bookshop. It cost fifty pence!

Foremost Christina is a lyrical poet, although some of her work, like **Goblin Market**, does at first sight appear to be narrative. Richard Garnett compares **Goblin Market** with **The Ancient Mariner**, and Shillito says: 'She was the writer of **Goblin Market** and **The Prince's Progress**, which alone would make her place secure among the poets of her country.' Even Gladstone was heard to recite one of her fairy poems, **Maidensong**. Bell goes over the moon at the thought of the words issuing from the great man's lips. Personally I am glad I was not present.

If she was lyrical she was also spontaneous. Her brother William reminded Watts-Dunton that she never 'made up her mind that she would write something, and then proceeded to write it. She always wrote just as the impulse and the form of expression came to her, and if these did not come, she wrote not at all.' But straight from the fountain of genius. Her friend, and minister of Christ Church, the Rev. Glendenning Nash, tells us: 'Christina Rossetti told me that there were times when the power to write had apparently passed away, and at others she wrote for hours with no mental effort or fatigue. The poetic flow was spontaneous and often she wrote on themes which she had not previously decided to write on. She seldom revised her work.'

Certain really worthwhile critics have suggested that in giving so much time and thought to devotional work Christina impaired her poetic gift. All we can say as Christians is we are glad she did, for it is in her religious work we come prepared for much of what she has to say. Or do we? You will realise from her hymns that she had an intimate knowledge of the Bible, and its author; but do not read a line further until you reconcile your mind to the fact that she is not always going to subordinate her language to theology. Whether we like it or not genius will take licence. As long as she does not interfere with fundamental truths, I like it. After all, my little mind could not hope to bind a creator like Christina. If you do not make an attempt to meet her half-way you might well be

offended by strange thoughts like, 'All luminous and lovely in their gore.' The land of Christina's prose is a vast land indeed; in it are deep treasure mines for those who are willing to dig. Again, and how we hate saying this, we can only examine one gem, and that briefly. So let it be one of her finest devotional prose achievements — **Face of the Deep** — always bearing in mind that even her prose work contains something of the poet.

Face of the Deep took two-and-a-half to three years to write and contains five hundred and fifty-two pages. It is a systematic commentary on the entire book of *Revelation*, but it makes no deliberate attempt to expound prophecy. Certainly there are outbursts of ecstasy, we should be surprised if there were not. In fact we can only hold our breath at what this mysterious book with its strange figures must have meant to one so prone to symbolism; but we must say from the extracts we read she never departs from spiritual common-sense. How is this for an analysis on 'And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, . . .' (*ch. 13:6*): 'Devils are not atheists: we are emphatically certified that they believe and tremble. During our Lord's earthly ministry, devils even proclaimed Him in the audience of men. 'Atheism appears to be a possibility confined to a lower nature. A body seems to be that which is capable of blocking up spirit into unmitigated materialism. "No man has seen God at any time": that flesh and blood which cannot inherit the Kingdom of God may, if it will, deny His existence.'

At the close of her great work Christina apologises: 'If I have been over-bold in attempting such a work as this, I beg pardon.'

Dear girl, no apology is needed, for this is what proves you are a writer, and I am a hack.

Her children's books are beyond the scope of this sketch, and prove, what ever else has been said, that she did have one thing in common with the hard drinking Swinburne — a love for children.

Many comparisons have been made between Christina and her contemporary, Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Most critics come down on the side of Mrs. Browning, but not all. Certainly Elizabeth was more learned in an academic sense, and possessed a broader outlook, but surely no more insight or technical ability. In its usual manner **The Dictionary of National Biography** settles the argument once for all: 'Mrs. Browning, however, went on improving

to the last day of her life, and the same can by no means be said of Christina Rossetti. After producing **Common Place** (stories) in 1870, **Sing Song** (nursery rhymes) in 1872, and **Speaking Likeness** (tales for children) in 1874, she devoted herself mainly to the composition of works of religious edification, meritorious in their way, but scarcely affecting to be literature. They obtained, nevertheless, a wide circulation, and probably did more to popularise her name than a second **Goblin Market** could have done.'

These 'works of religious edification' would have included **Annus Domini**, 1874; **Seek and Find**, 1879; **Called to be Saints: the Minor Festivals**, 1882; **Time Flies: a Reading Diary**, 1885; **The Face of the Deep**, 1892, and **Verses**, 1893. Mackenzie Bell claims **Verses** as the greatest contribution to religious verse of the 19th century. If we continue in this vein we might be forced to suspect Bell of some sort of bias.

So Christina or Elizabeth? But who can act as adjudicator? Certainly not I; neither I feel could any of the lecturers I listened to while doing several English Literature seminars at Churchill College, Cambridge. I am just glad that two such geniuses, both so un borrowed and original, lived to enrich my language. But back to the heroine of this sketch. Lionel Johnson in **The Academy** of 25th July, 1896, 'sets her in the company of Herbert, Vaughan, . . . Herrick, Cardinal Newman . . .' I like to put her nearer to William Blake, but perhaps William, poor fellow, sometimes crossed the borders of hallucination.

During this all too short sketch we have dealt solely with Christina Rossetti as a writer, and what she has to say to modern Christians. Someone else must speak of her as a philanthropist; to tell how, in her way, she passed the word around that all men were equal.

After many years of illness she had an operation for cancer in May 1892. It was thought to be successful at the time, but it returned, and at 7.25 a.m. on 29th December, 1894, she passed from 30 Torrington Square into the 'Near-at-hand-land'. She was buried at Highgate and William Michael put two inscriptions over her tomb. One was from Dante: 'volsersi a me con saltevol cenno' ('They turned to me with an act of salutation'). This was obviously suggesting that her mother, Maria Francesca and others were waiting for her. The other inscription was from Christina herself:

Give me the lowest place; or if for me

*That lowest place too high, make one
more low,
Where I may sit and see
My God and love Thee so.*

So we could go on. How shall we end?
No better surely than with a few wise
words from Christina to us who are still
plodding towards the 'Near-at-hand-

land'.
It is 'no light offence to traduce the
dead'. What 'a solemn thing it is to write
history.'
'Non-duties may be attractive; they may
even appear on occasion heroic or self-
devoted: . . . on the contrary, taking the
place of duties, they would degenerate
into offences.'

*None other Lamb, none other Name,
None other hope in heaven or earth or
sea,
None other hiding-place from guilt and
shame,
None besides Thee.*

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

In **The Harvester** for August 1982
Dr. Alan Duthie says that 'preachers
should never base a whole sermon on
one verse as it is in one translation'. Is
it justifiable for a preacher to consult
several translations until he finds a
rendering that brings out the point he
wishes to make, and then base his
sermon on that?

*Correspondence, please, to the Editor
at 18 Kings Avenue, Carshalton,
Surrey SM5 4NX by 15 November.*

*(Further to the discussion on the June
question in the August issue, I reflect
that I myself hold quite a number of
minority opinions on a variety of
subjects, but I recognize that they are
minority opinions, and that they might*

*well be wrong. It is not for me to
assert them dogmatically, but to say
that this is how the situation appears
to me. My problem, expressed in the
June question, was why other holders
of minority opinions cannot do the
same. I am not thinking of the
maintenance of gospel truth against
all comers, but of varieties of
interpretation among those who adhere
to gospel truth.*

*One participant in the discussion made
a point about varying interpretations of
the data of textual criticism, and
mentioned J. W. Burgon. I don't know
who described Burgon as 'power-
crazed'; it is a ludicrously improper
epithet to apply to him. Burgon was
a well-informed student of textual
criticism, and ahead of his time in his*

*appreciation of the importance of
patristic citations and lectionary
evidence for establishing the NT text.
But he had a counter-productive
tendency to overstate his case. Apart
from that, he and Hort shared one
defect: each of them maintained the
almost exclusive authority of one text-
type out of several (the Byzantine text
in Burgon's case, the Alexandrian text
in Hort's), instead of taking into
account as wide a range of evidence
as possible. That does not mean that a
century later we should denigrate
either of them; rather we should learn
what we can from them and profit by
a much more extensive wealth of
material than was available in their
day. — FFB)*

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JOHN NEWTON'S PASTORAL LETTERS

John Peters

(1) The Background

The eighteenth-century in Britain was by turns a glorious, turbulent and decadent period. Any age would be hard put to equal the creative genius and achievements of such diverse personalities as Marlborough, Swift, Bishop Butler, Wesley, the Pitts, Captain Cook, Dr. Johnson, Burke, Adam Smith, James Watt and William Blake.

Turbulent it certainly was, with a vast number of rapid social and economic changes stemming from the Agrarian and Industrial Revolutions: the highly civilised world of Dr. Johnson and Edmund Burke had been dramatically and irreversibly altered, and whilst a polished exterior was presented to foreigners, underneath all was far from well. According to Sir Harold Nicolson the first half of the century was characterised by grave moral disorders: 'The politicians were corrupt, the ecclesiastics lax, the middle classes intent only on making money, and the masses of the people licentious, drunken and raw.'

The ruling classes too were coarse and vulgar. Temperley's comment in the *Cambridge Modern History* is admirably succinct: 'The earlier half of the eighteenth-century is an age of materialism, a period of dim ideals, of expiring hopes.' And all this at a time when the Church of England's witness and influence was impaired by several fundamental weaknesses: its philosophy of 'grave and rational cool piety' was completely ineffective in the face of the age's assertive profligacy; it had little missionary zeal; its organization had not kept pace with the growing population; and its Bishops were more interested in politics than in the spiritual welfare of the people. But there appeared a man who, in Temperley's words, 'brought water from the rocks to make a barren land live again', and he was, of course, John Wesley, the founder of Method-

ism. The Methodist Revival and the general evangelical awakening it prompted was led initially by such people as John Wesley, his brother Charles, George Whitefield and Daniel Rowlands, but as the revival spread other leaders came into prominence, including John Newton (1725-1807).

A remarkable feature of the people referred to immediately above was their diversity of gifts. John Wesley led the attack, an inspirer and organiser of genius; his brother Charles wrote hymns which have become a permanent part of the evangelical heritage; Whitefield was a truly great preacher; and Newton was peculiarly equipped to deal with individual souls, declaring that his 'favourite branch' of the divine truth was 'the human heart with its workings and counter-workings'. Marcus Loane has defined Newton's especial and distinctive contribution to the Evangelical Revival in these terms: 'the letter-writer *par excellence*'.

(2) The Characteristic Features of Newton's Letters*

To read Newton's pastoral letters is to be acutely conscious of a large and generous heart in a century noted for its heartlessness and inhumanity; and secondly it is to sense the nerve centre, the pulse, of a transforming and ennobling faith, a saving faith that was 'a disposition of the heart'. To illustrate the first of these qualities we can do no better than quote the following extract in which he writes to console a fellow-believer whose sister had been most un-

Her illness grieves me; were it in my

*All quotations in this article are taken from *Letters of John Newton* (Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), and are gratefully acknowledged.

power, I would quickly remove it: the Lord can, and I hope will, when it has answered the end for which he sent it. I trust he has brought her to us for good, and that she is chastised by him that she may not be condemned with the world. I hope, though she says little, she lifts up her heart to him for a blessing. I wish you may be enabled to leave her, and yourself, and all your concerns, in his hands. He has a sovereign right to do with us as he pleases; and if we consider what we are, surely we shall confess we have no reason to complain: and to those who seek him, his sovereignty is exercised in a way of grace. All shall work together for good: everything is needful that he sends; nothing can be needful that he withholds. Be content to bear the cross; others have borne it before you. You have need of patience; and if you ask, the Lord will give it: but there can be no settled peace till our will is in a measure subdued. Hide yourself under the shadow of his wings; rely upon his care and power; look upon him as a physician who has graciously undertaken to heal your soul of the worst of sicknesses, sin. Yield to his prescriptions, and fight against every thought that would represent it as desirable to be permitted to choose for yourself. When you cannot see your way, be satisfied that he is your leader. When your spirit is overwhelmed within you, he knows your path: he will not leave you to sink. He has appointed seasons of refreshment, and you shall find he does not forget you. Above all, keep close to the throne of grace. If we seem to get no good by attempting to draw near him, we may be sure we shall get none by keeping away from him.

The style is biblical and dignified. There

is no attempt to find an easy solution, rather a recognition of the difficulties involved and of the testing posed by such problems. But equally, like a sensitive and wise adviser, Newton points his reader to the comfort and consolation which is to be found in God, and which is to be experienced only in close proximity to Him. Modern religious leaders, with their glib, facile answers, might well ponder and profit from a careful perusal of Newton's letters.

Newton's faith was firmly and **uncompromisingly Christo-centric**. He stresses repeatedly that by nature 'we are strangers, yea, enemies to God; but we are reconciled, brought nigh, and become his children, by faith in Christ Jesus'. He defines the Christian as a 'new creature, born and taught from above':

He has been convinced of his guilt and misery as a sinner, has fled for refuge to the hope set before him, has seen the Son and believed on him: his natural prejudices against the glory and grace of God's salvation have been subdued and silenced by almighty power; he has accepted the Beloved, and is made acceptable in him: he now knows the Lord; has renounced the confused, distant, uncomfortable notions he once formed of God; and beholds him in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life, the only door by which we can enter into true satisfying knowledge of God, or communion with him. But he sees God in Christ, reconciled, a Father, a Saviour, and a Friend, who has freely forgiven him all his sins, and given him the spirit of adoption: he is now no longer a servant, much less a stranger, but a son; and because a son, an heir already interested in all the promises, admitted to the throne of grace, and an assured expectant of eternal glory. The Gospel is designed to give us not only a peradventure or a probability, but a certainty both of our acceptance and our perseverance, till death shall be swallowed up in life.

As such, those who are 'born from above' are 'united to Jesus, they are delivered from condemnation, and are heirs of eternal life, and may therefore well be accounted happy'. But his view of the Christian is not limited merely to his acceptance of salvation, it is of someone who realises, appreciates and understands 'the glorious excellency of the Lord Jesus, in his person, offices, grace, and faithfulness; of the harmony and glory of all the divine perfections

manifested in and by him to the church; of the stability, beauty, fulness, and certainty of the Holy Scriptures, and of the heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of the love of God in Christ'; and whose 'great business in life it is to behold the glory of God in Christ; and by beholding he is changed into the same image, and brings forth . . . the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.' Thus the relationship between the Saviour and the Saved is one of mutual trust and confidence — the Christian person has no doubt that he is 'built upon the rock'. This relationship is maintained only 'in proportion as we are solidly convinced of the infinite disparity between him and the things which would presume to stand in competition with him, and the folly, as well as ingratitude, of departing from him.' Consequently it becomes the believer's joy and consuming desire to live 'to him who died for them. He has won their hearts by his love, and made them a willing people in the day of his power.' To Newton, the only way for a person to enjoy peace was an absolute commitment to Jesus Christ: 'By casting our burdens upon him, our spirits become light and cheerful; we are freed from a thousand anxieties and inquietudes which are wearisome to our minds, and which with respect to events, are needless for us, yea, useless.'

Secondly it was **based upon knowledge**. Over and over again Newton refers in his letters to the nature and function of God's Word. For example, in a letter discussing the relationship between the enlightening of a person's understanding and the Scriptures he says: 'Now as God only thus reveals himself by the medium of Scripture truth, the light received this way leads the soul to the Scripture from whence it springs, and all the leading truths of the word of God soon begin to be perceived and assented to.' True knowledge is vital because 'the grace of God influences both the understanding and the affections. Warm affections, without knowledge, can rise no higher than superstition; and that knowledge which does not influence the heart and affections, will only make a hypocrite.' The Scriptures to him are simply 'the infallible word of God', and in a letter dealing with the subject of 'Divine Guidance' he affirms that the 'Word of God . . . is to furnish us with just principles, right apprehensions to regulate our judgments and affections, and thereby to influence and direct our conduct.' Newton felt this was particularly so in times of testing, his reason being that 'Affliction

greatly helps us to understand the Scriptures, especially the promises; most of which being made to times of trouble, we cannot so well know their fulness, sweetness, and certainty, as when we have been in the situation to which they are suited, have been enabled to trust and plead them, and found them fulfilled in our own case.' He conceived of the believer's mind as being informed and enlightened as the Holy Spirit administered the Word of God to him in the circumstances of life itself.

Lastly it is clear that Newton's faith was both **meditative and practical**. So much Christianity today is like our consumer conscious, mass-media world in which the superficial, the glib and the flashy are all important: the image is so often mistaken for the reality. Not so Newton who was concerned with 'soul exercises' — to him the Christian life begins when a 'certain kind of light' is communicated to the soul and to which it was previously a complete stranger. It is an inner life in which 'the very desire and bent of the soul is to God, and to the word of his grace', a life in which a person's desires are fixed 'supremely upon Jesus Christ'. This life also expresses itself in humility, in submission to the will of God, in a longing for progress in the life of holiness. Communion with God is a daily aspect, while every avenue of life is permeated by the love of God, and in one of his most telling and effective letters (on the 'Practical Influence of Faith') he says this:

THE use and importance of faith, as it respects a sinner's justification before God, has been largely insisted on; but it is likewise of great use and importance in the daily concerns of life. It gives evidence and subsistence to things not seen, and realizes the great truths of the Gospel, so as that they become abiding and living principles of support and direction while we are passing through this wilderness. Thus, it is as the eye and the hand, without which we cannot take one step with certainty, or attempt any service with success. It is to be wished, that this practical exercise of faith were duly attended to by all professors. We should not then meet with so many cases that put us to a stand, and leave us at a great difficulty to reconcile what we see in some of whom we would willingly hope well, with what we read in Scripture of the inseparable concomitants of a true and lively faith. For how can we but be staggered, when we hear persons speaking the

language of assurance, that they know their acceptance with God through Christ, and have not the least doubt of their interest in all the promises; while at the same time we see them under the influence of unsanctified tempers, of a proud, passionate, positive, worldly, selfish, or churlish carriage?

Newton's was a faith with an upward vision: 'we see a highway through the wilderness, a powerful guard, an infallible guide at hand to conduct us through; and we can discern, beyond the limits of the wilderness, a better land, where we shall be at rest and at home.'

(3) Some Conclusions

In his pastoral letters we see not the harsh, narrow-minded and unattractive Newton who once preached a series of sermons vilifying Handel for using the Scriptures in writing the **Messiah**, but the warm-hearted man of God for whom

the name of Jesus was incomparably sweet:

*Jesus, my shepherd, guardian, friend,
My prophet, priest, and king,
My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
Accept the praise I bring.*

These four lines from a hymn composed by Newton are direct and straightforward, just like the man himself. The letters also express the same deep-seated devotion to Jesus Christ which Newton celebrates in another of his hymns:

*One there is above all others
Well deserves the name of Friend,
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end:
They who once His kindness prove
Find it everlasting love.*

They reveal his absolute certainty and assurance of faith, two features that are

clearly apparent in another of his hymns:

*Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see Thee as Thou art
I'll praise Thee as I ought.*

*Till then I would Thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of Thy name
Refresh my soul in death.*

Newton's letters are glowingly alive — as are his hymns too — with a warm, passionate, confident faith, which emanated from an experience of the Gospel which was both personal and triumphant. Readers of **The Harvester** — indeed all Christians — might well ponder seriously and prayerfully these pastoral letters.

Dick Saunders

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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Question 227

'RAISE UP'

In Acts 5:30 does 'raise up' refer to the Resurrection or to the general ministry of Jesus?

Most translations take it to refer to the Resurrection. Thus the N.E.B. has: 'The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you had done to death.' '... had done to death...' is necessary to preserve the chronological order but it is in no way demanded by the Greek. Certainly 'raised up' is used in *Acts 3:26* to indicate God's providential action and although the verb used is admittedly different here, we have an almost exact parallel in *Judges 3:9*. On balance, and without being dogmatic, I am inclined to think that the Resurrection is not in view here, because it is referred to in chronological sequence in verse 31.

Question 228

A FULL TIME WORKER

Is there any New Testament warrant for inviting somebody to serve as a full time worker within a local church and paying him for doing so?

I am always a little uncertain about questions which request 'New Testament authority' for particular procedures. In the narrow sense of the word there is no New Testament authority for Gospel meetings or Sunday schools but I should not regard this fact as a conclusive argument against either. After all, although neither is mentioned in the New Testament, the objectives which are in prospect in each of these activities are thoroughly consonant with the New Testament and the methods adopted are certainly such as fit well with the New Testament.

Acts 19:1-10 show Paul spending two years and more in Ephesus, which already had a Christian church when he arrived there at this time. It may be argued that Paul's purpose in going to Ephesus was evangelistic and that the passage therefore gives warrant only to an evangelist basing himself on a local church for an extended period. But to argue in this way is unrealistic.

In the nature of the case, the activity envisaged in the New Testament, which relates to the early days of Christianity, will largely have consisted of church-planting. It is for a similar reason that we find nothing about Sunday school work nor indeed about the use of 'church' premises.

However, in Paul's first letter to Timothy we do find a situation where there is a full time worker within an established church. Paul tells Timothy (1:3) to stay in Ephesus to minister to the church there. And in 5:17f he addresses himself directly to the question of payment. The 'honour' of verse 17 is clearly a euphemism for financial support, as appears from verse 18. Of course, this does not imply that every full time worker based in a local church is functioning in accordance with New Testament principles. Nor does it imply that the reasons that lead a particular church to seek such help are necessarily sound. But it is clear that the practice cannot be ruled out of court as contrary to the New Testament.

Question 229

THEUDAS

I have seen it stated that Acts 5:36 is inaccurate because it refers to Theudas whose rebellion against the Romans is said to have taken place about AD44-46 — ten years after the events referred to in this chapter. Is Luke really mistaken here?

It is often assumed that Luke made a mistake at this point by misreading Josephus (see the Commentaries by I. Howard Marshall and F. F. Bruce). But this is unlikely since Josephus' works were not published until about AD 93 — too late for Luke to have used (or even misused) his work. It is indeed possible that Josephus was mistaken: Luke's reputation for accuracy is higher than that of Josephus. Alternatively, it has to be recognised that Theudas is a common name and that there were many risings of this kind under similar leaders. The rebellion of Judas the Galilean probably took place in AD 6 and this means that we should not be surprised if at some future date evidence comes to light of a rising before this date led by a different man called Theudas.

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'.

JUST-A-MINUTE PRAYER (cont.)

Clive Marsh

Last month's challenge concludes with some practical reflection.

The above title is, I confess, no longer truly appropriate. Yet it must stand, if only to point to the fact that what follows must be understood in the light of the first part of the discussion. The basic contention of that first part, to reiterate, was that the way we pray, by being so standardized, apart from strangling possibilities of experimentation in external form (i.e. few feel able to step outside of the tradition of a particular way of praying) is perhaps also not in keeping with a true openness to the Spirit, who is likely to encounter us ever in new ways.

I now intend to suggest perhaps self-evident and very simple ways of altering the state of affairs. I would also wish to suggest that we in the Brethren do not perhaps extend the scope of our praying as widely as we should.

I cannot say for certain **why** I pray. It would be easy to say that I do because I have read commandments to this effect in the Bible. This may be a part of the truth for the Christian of today, yet it does not explain the root cause.

I am no psychologist and thus cannot probe deep into the recesses of my 'inner man' to explain my need to seek communion with God. Paul, as we noted last time, sees even the faintest groan, the slightest sign of longing for the Divine as induced by the Spirit. Should there be, however, a psychological explanation for the origin of prayer, I shall not quibble. I seek no harmony between the psychologist and Paul. Nor shall I consciously seek the divorce of the two ideas. It is simply a statement of fact that I do not **know** that I pray because I am inspired by God's Spirit. I do not know what the human element in prayer actually is. I feel the need to pray nevertheless.

These are general comments which can be transferred to the context of public worship. There is felt the need to pray. Characteristic of Christian prayer is that it is God whom we address, through Christ. In our worship we summon the guidance of God's Spirit in our thinking, and thus in our resulting praise and thanksgiving. Yet we must ask whether Christ's promise to be in our midst, or even Paul's conviction that all prayer is Spirit-inspired of necessity makes all we say and do acceptable to God. Perhaps this assumption, made all too readily, leads us again to place the worn stylus of an ageing record-player onto a very old seventy-eight, and the joyful and invigorating encounter with God has been turned by a group of presumptuous Christian Brethren into a re-run of an ancient tune.

But there is the need and there is the desire to offer prayer. Yet, I find myself asking, why only after the first hymn, before the Breaking of Bread itself, and immediately prior to the closing hymn on a Sunday morning? Why only after the first hymn, perhaps before the sermon and again at the end of the meeting on a Sunday evening? Have we not already, in creating such a pattern out of habit **limited** our preparedness to **listen** to what God's Spirit is saying to us?

We speak directly to God in prayer. Do we realize, truly, what a privilege that is? We speak with words of thanks, praise and request. We speak to a God before whom we often stand in sheer awe; whom we at times consider as a friend almost standing beside us; we speak to a God who frequently baffles and perplexes us. These means of approach already offer a range of possibilities which we do not respect in our public praying.

We speak with words of thanks and praise. How easily such words could be the fruit of superabundant emotional-

ism. Awe perhaps implies distance. Friendship perhaps implies familiarity. This may be reflected in the language used, and, to risk vast generalizations, we may see awe as preserved in prayers couched in King James English, whereas praise and thanksgiving amongst, say, student groups is offered in a very colloquial form of speech. I may be quite wrong, but I have yet to be convinced that the Brethren movement is capable of holding on to its youth. A possible reason may be that no ground common to old and young is found (even sought?) for such a basic area of Church life, as the means of approach in prayer. Both forms of approach may be regarded as extreme. And indeed neither aspect, neither awe nor friendship in the sense of familiarity, may be emphasized at the exclusion of the other. But perhaps we should be setting ourselves the difficult task of finding a common language, seeking to communicate awe and reverence and/or intimate friendship not by the way we pray but in the content of our prayers. Our new Church-goers, who we have thus far used as our measuring-rod, would perhaps be most grateful.

I have no alternative for an element of emotion which may combine with the above inclinations and render a very private prayer in the context of worship. We here stumble against the individual in his or her uniqueness. I cannot help feeling, however, that for all things to be done 'in a fitting and orderly way' (though how can we quote this scripture in support of a contention when we are baffled by some of the things that Paul has said earlier in the chapter!), there is little place for 'getting carried away'. Our prayers, like our sermons and readings and brief comments, should surely consist solely of what we **intended** to say, and should not be made to conform to an expected pattern. This seems such

a simple and straightforward rule, that it is strange how few adhere to it. Is there not room for **simplicity**? Can not a single sentence possess great worth? Is there not room, therefore, too, for **brevity**? (Though brevity and simplicity do not necessarily have to be one and the same!) And perhaps above all — and in direct opposition to the Just-A-Minute mentality of many of us — do we have to spout our prayers without a pause, as though long bouts of silence were a sign of bad preparation or the absence of the Spirit? Yes, above all there is a place for **silence**, even in the middle of prayers. It is surely possible to pray slowly and briefly leaving time for reflection, or the opportunity for private prayers to be added before a concluding doxology. Let us not strangle such a wealth of opportunities, opportunities which might aid greater concentration upon the God whom we have come to worship.

We speak words of request. In doing so we remind ourselves of our inadequacy and our dependence upon God. We ourselves lack so much. We pray on behalf of others.

Intercessory prayer is one form of prayer which we in the Brethren perhaps do not take seriously enough. Mention is made of the ill members of our assembly, perhaps, in a hasty conclusion to a lengthy prayer. Or the names of the ill are relegated to the end of the meeting, when they are included in the 'notices' alongside the details of the previous

week's collection (in other words, mention is made outside the context of prayer).

Intercessory prayer is certainly difficult. It is difficult especially in public because it is an embarrassment for the Church. It stretches our understanding of God to its very limits. Should some of our members die from their illnesses, what has become of our prayers? Should we be praying for peace in Northern Ireland when our own political theories and views of the world do not allow peace to enter the picture by anything that man may do (and our prayers are thus disguised references to the end-time, when the Kingdom will come in a very political fashion in a way no different to that expected by first-century Jews)?

These questions are very real and are naturally not easily answered. Yet if we say, nevertheless, that we **must** pray for such causes as these, we both remind ourselves that we have handed ourselves over to God and that we must be willing to share in God's plan for the bringing about of that for which we have prayed. This sounds, on the surface at least, like a descent to a sort of humanism. The implication may be drawn that God cannot work without human hands. It would seem hasty to say that he **cannot**. (Though perhaps not self-evidently incorrect. We cannot exclude the possibility that God has limited his own power for the duration of the world, such that his activities are always capable of two interpretations.)

Thus, prayer should be followed by our own activity.

I venture to suggest that the lack of truly world-encompassing interest, as would be displayed by more committed intercessory prayer, shows a great weakness in 'Brethren thought' (if there is such a thing). Certainly the preoccupation with the Millennium, the prime concern with the end of time, which pervaded our inherited tradition and seeps even now into our thinking has without doubt tipped the balance of the 'Here and Now' and the 'Beyond' in the favour of the latter. Perhaps we so eagerly await our Lord's return that we have forgotten the present altogether. May we remind ourselves that it is a balance which must be kept. And those who corrupt Christianity into a purely social or political message would do well, equally, to consider the 'Beyond' in a different light from a mere social Utopia.

I have covered much ground, and this I have done all too superficially. I have said nothing new. And I do not even believe I say anything new to many Brethren. I feel sure that many would echo thoughts about stagnation in the forms and style of Brethren prayer. **Because** prayer is so basic to our faith in God, when we look at it and examine it anew we must return to the grass-roots of our belief. By such an examination may we be enriched and perhaps be ready to re-think and be open to new avenues along which we may hear God speaking to us.

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Footnote. May we apologise to those of you who feel that the first week in the month is too late for the arrival of your copy of *The Harvester*? You will realise that since we do not get *later* each month, we are, in fact, doing a month's work within a month! We have tried to bring our production schedule forward, but we are faced with problems of communication which prevent us from improving matters to any great extent just at the moment. We would, therefore, ask your patience, and assure you that this is not something we have "swept under the carpet", but a matter which should radically improve before the end of 1983.

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EXPLORING THE BIBLE

Edited by G. J. Polkinghorne

MY DEPOSIT?

Most modern translations of the Bible note an ambiguity in the meaning of 2 *Tim. 1:12* — is Paul talking about 'what has been entrusted to me' or 'what I have committed to him'? The noun he uses occurs only here, in verse 14 and 1 *Tim. 6:20*, though the cognate verb is found frequently. Because in the other contexts the reference is clearly to something entrusted to Timothy, many commentators take v.12 similarly and opt for the first sense. But the mention of 'that day' makes the second sense quite feasible. Then, we would have to decide what Paul has committed to God — his converts — his gospel — his own soul?

The noun describes a deposit. In the era before bank vaults were available, a person leaving home temporarily often handed his valuables for safe keeping to a friend or neighbour, expecting them to be faithfully returned when he came home again. Many ancient codes of law regulate the procedure, as does the Pentateuch (*Exod. 22:7-13, Lev. 6:2-7*) with special reference to actual or alleged breaches of trust.

The AV and D. W. Whittle's famous hymn with its chorus 'I know whom I have believed' has popularized the second possible translation — 'that which I have committed unto him against that day'. Whittle very firmly accepts that the Christian's whole being is the subject of the deposit and

that God is both faithful and well able to guard it. A striking use of the cognate verb occurs in *Luke 23:46*, where the Lord Jesus commits his spirit into his Father's hands. In times of stress and bereavement, we can take the rich comfort of this conviction to our hearts.

Even so, the other two occurrences of the noun support the first translation. Timothy (1 *Tim. 6:20*) has entrusted to him a message that he is responsible to maintain and publish. Similarly, in 1 *Tim. 1:18* he is given a charge (cf. also 2 *Tim. 4:1-8* where v.7 'have kept the faith' suggests that Paul has this meaning in mind in a passage where the other might seem to be appropriate). In 2 *Tim. 2:2*, Timothy is told to transmit this charge to reliable men, who in their turn pass it on further. So in 2 *Tim. 1:12* Paul acknowledges that he himself has a deposit entrusted to him — the glorious truths of his gospel. But he takes courage from the fact that the entrusting God is active in guarding the deposit. He has not gone away and left Paul on his own, as human depositors usually did.

What, then, is my attitude to my Christian service? So very often we think in terms of self-fulfilment — I have a gift that I must develop (a legitimate enough attitude in its way) or, worse, I have a right to make my voice heard in the meetings. A church context where every man is left free to do what is

right in his own eyes fosters this approach. Maybe were we to take a more formal attitude to the ministry of the word and insist on the proper training and commissioning of preachers and teachers, we would find a different outlook — that the ministry is a divine trust, so that I have a duty to perform and am answerable for my performance. Still, our natural tendency to self-assertion could manifest itself. Every one of us who takes public part in services needs to have this danger clearly before his mind.

As Paul is discussing his reaction to persecution, we may well further ask how we would behave if we had to suffer for our witness to Christ: or — nearer home maybe — what we actually do about difficult kinds of witness. For instance, has the open air meeting ceased because it was ineffective, or because people mocked? Do we steer clear of door to door visiting ostensibly because we lack the gift, but really for fear of a hostile reception? Our brothers and sisters on the wrong side of the Iron Curtain would think themselves happy had they no more than that to endure! The twin recognition that we have a solemn responsibility from God to fulfil and also a God who is able to guard us as we serve him should raise our service to higher levels and embolden our witness.

GOSPEL OF JOHN (65) F. F. Bruce

The Prayer of Consecration

(John 17:1-26)

The theme of the upper-room discourses finds its conclusion in the prayer of chapter 17, commonly called our Lord's high-priestly prayer — a designation which it is said to have first received from the sixteenth-century Lutheran theologian David Chytraeus. It is a fitting designation, for our Lord in this prayer consecrates himself for the sacrifice in which he is simultaneously both priest and victim. At the same time it is a prayer of consecration on behalf of those for whom the sacrifice is offered — the disciples who were present in the upper room and those who would subsequently come to faith through their testimony. Comparing the part it plays in the Gospel with similar literary compositions elsewhere Ernst Käsemann has called this prayer 'the testament of Jesus'. This description may be applicable in terms of form criticism, but if content is to be considered his 'testament' should rather be recognized in the preceding discourses, addressed directly to the disciples.

John Knox, on his death-bed in 1572, asked his wife to read to him *John 17*, 'where', he said, 'I cast my first anchor'. And almost his last words show how much his mind dwelt on this chapter, with its implications for 'the troubled church of God, the spouse of Jesus Christ, despised of the world but precious in his sight'. He clearly appreciated that the church's true life is lived on a higher plane than the turbulent political stage in which he had been so much involved and with which he was by now so thoroughly disillusioned.

(a) Prologue (John 17:1-3)

17:1,2 Having spoken thus, Jesus raised his eyes heavenwards and said, 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify thy Son, so that thy Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given him authority over all flesh, in order that he may give eternal life to all that thou hast given to him.'

Jesus now turns from holding communion with his disciples to hold communion with his Father on their behalf. While this is a prayer of consecration in view of the impending sacrifice of the cross, yet in some ways it presupposes the presentation and acceptance of that sacrifice and becomes the prototype of the perpetual intercession in which, as his people's ascended high priest, he is engaged on their behalf at the Father's right hand.

On repeated occasions throughout the Gospel we have been told that his 'hour had not yet come' (the first of these occasions being at *John 2:4*). Now, by his own testimony, it 'has come'. Anticipating its arrival, he had said a short time before, 'The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified' (*John 12:23*); now he prays that he may indeed be glorified. None can glorify him but the Father: unlike others, he seeks 'the glory which comes from the only God' (*John 5:44*). The cross, as he knows full well, is to be the vehicle of that glory, and he prays that he may so accept it as to bring glory to his Father in turn.

He will glorify his Father by doing his will, even by enduring the cross, and fulfilling the Father's purpose of blessing for many by means of that cross. His acceptance of the cross,

indeed, is an exercise of that authority which the Father has given him 'over all flesh' — i.e. over all the human race. It is through the cross that he will discharge his Father's commission to him to bless his people with eternal life. His people are here described (as earlier in *John 6:37,39*) as the sum-total of those whom the Father has given him. If the predestinarian note seems here to be absolute, it is modified below in verse 12. Jesus has previously spoken of himself as giving his flesh 'for the life of the world' (*John 6:51*) and has made it plain that faith in him is the condition for receiving this life (*John 6:40*). Now that life is defined more precisely.

17:3 And this is eternal life: to know thee, the only true God, and the one whom thou hast sent — Jesus Christ.

Eternal life, then, consists in the knowledge of God. Since the knowledge of God is mediated through the revealer whom God has sent, the knowledge of the revealer is one with the knowledge of the God who is revealed. Nor is this knowledge a matter of intellectual apprehension: it involves a personal relationship. The Father and the Son know each other in a mutuality of love, and by the knowledge of God men and women are admitted to the mystery of this divine love, being loved by God and loving him — and one another — in return.

(b) The Son's completed work (John 17:4-8)

17:4,5 I have glorified thee on earth by fulfilling the work which thou

gavest me to do; and now, Father, do thou glorify me with thyself with the glory which I had with thee before the world existed.

Up to the present moment, he had glorified his Father on earth by obediently carrying out his will. One act of obedience remained to be performed — one, moreover, in which the Father would be supremely glorified — but this is not excluded from Jesus' present thought. On the eve of the sacrifice of the cross, in the act of consecrating himself for it, he is so totally committed to it that he speaks of it as already accomplished. Any mention of his 'finished work' would be unthinkable if it did not embrace that greatest work of all.

The glory which he would receive from the Father would be the glory which he enjoyed in his presence before creation. Yet, since the resumption of that glory would be attained by way of the cross, it would inevitably have a new dimension which was absent from it 'before the world existed', in that 'beginning' in which the Word was eternally with the Father (*John 1:2*). While John, unlike Paul, does not set Jesus' exaltation in contrast to the disgrace of the cross (cf. *Phil. 2:6-11*), yet he thinks of the cross as the essential stage towards that glory which will be enhanced for Jesus because it will now be shared with those who have believed in him. Of this new dimension of glory Jesus has already spoken to his disciples: 'If God has been glorified in him (the Son), God will also glorify him in himself' (*John 13:32*).

17:6-8 I have manifested thy name to the people whom thou gavest me out of the world. They were thine, and thou gavest them to me, and they have kept thy word. Now they have come to know that all that thou hast given me is from thee. I have given them the words which thou gavest to me, and they have received them and have learned in truth that I came forth from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

Jesus speaks as the revealer of the Father. The Father's name is his character, which Jesus has manifested to his disciples. The 'world' as a whole failed to recognize him as the revealer of the Father, but a select company of men and women (*anthrōpoi*) was given to him 'out of the world' — those who are called 'his own people' in *John 13:1*. They showed themselves to be truly 'his own people' by believing in him, acknowledging that his

teaching came from God and accepting it accordingly. They 'kept' the word of God which he communicated to them by laying it up in their hearts and obeying it in their lives. They thus proved in experience the truth of his promise: 'If any one is willing to do the will of God, he will know whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own initiative' (*John 7:17*). In recognizing that Jesus' teaching came from God they recognized at the same time that he himself came from God, as the Father's 'sent one'.

(c) Dedication of the disciples

(*John 17:9-18*)

17:9, 10 I pray for them. I do not pray for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me, because they are thine. All that is mine is thine, and what is thine is mine; and I have been glorified in them.

For his disciples, then, Jesus prays. If he does not pray for the world, it is not because he has no concern for the world; he is, indeed, the Saviour of the world (*John 4:42*; cf. *3:17*; *12:47*). But the salvation of the world depends on the witness of those whom the Father has given him 'out of the world' (see *verses 21, 23*), and it is they who need his intercession at this juncture. If it is the Father who has given them to him, they belong originally to the Father; because the Father has given them to the Son, they belong equally to the Son. In the reciprocal love which unites the Father and the Son, the Father withholds nothing from the Son: 'all that is mine is thine', says Jesus, 'and what is thine is mine.' But had he truly been 'glorified' in his disciples? He had warned them that they would soon be scattered and leave him alone (*John 16:32*); he had warned their most vocal member that before cockcrow he would have denied him three times (*13:38*). Apart from that, their unintelligent questions and interruptions as he talked to them in the upper room showed how far they still were from appreciating their Master's purpose or the seriousness of the hour which had now come for him — and for them. But he looked at them with the insight of faith, hope and love, and realized their present devotion and their potential for the future. In themselves they were weak indeed, but with the Father's enabling grace and the guidance and illumination of his Spirit, they would fulfil the mission with which they were now being entrusted and bring glory to their Master

in fulfilling it. So confident of this is he that he speaks in the perfect tense: 'I have been glorified in them.'

17:11, 12 Now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, while I am on my way to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given to me, that they may be one as we are. When I was with them, I kept them in thy name which thou hast given to me: yes, I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost, except for him who was destined to be lost, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled.

Jesus was on his way to the Father, and would no longer be with his disciples to guard them as he had done hitherto, but the Father would guard them by his name, that is, by his power. By the Father's power, imparted to Jesus, Jesus himself had guarded them as a treasure entrusted to him by the Father, and now he gives an account of his stewardship. All of them were safe but one, and that was the one to whose defection the scripture pointed forward, as Jesus had said before when he announced to his disciples that there was a traitor among them (*John 13:18-30*). The reference to one 'who was destined to be lost' (literally, 'the son of perdition') is paralleled in *2 Thess. 2:3*, where the 'man of lawlessness' is so described, but the expression does not have quite the same force in the two passages. Despite the predestinarian flavour of the language, Judas was not lost against his will but with his consent. He might have responded to Jesus' last appeal to him in his gesture of fellowship at the supper table, but he chose to respond instead to the great adversary. Jesus has no responsibility for Judas's fatal decision. Judas, like the other disciples, had been given by the Father to the Son, but even among those so given apostasy is a solemn possibility.

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM 107 (3)

Sickness John Job

When we come to the third picture, we are confronted at the outset by a small textual problem. The NEB (*verse 17*) follows the Hebrew and some of the ancient versions with the word 'fools': many modern scholars have accepted the conjecture which is printed in the text of the RSV, 'sick'. One can see the attractiveness of this, since it brings the beginning of this section into line with the way the other three begin, by speaking of an aspect of the exiles' plight. On the other hand, *Romans 1:22* reminds us that from a biblical standpoint to be a fool is itself a penalty, and not simply something which merits or causes punishment. Certainly, this passage does talk about physical sickness (*18*), but it seems wiser to retain at the start this idea of folly, involving as it does the loss of moral bearings.

If this is right, it means that the first thing to learn from this passage, is the truth about sin. Superficially, it is tempting to look at the sick society around us, and particularly in the student world this is something which stares one in the face; one sees such things as drunkenness, drug addiction, sleeping around, dropping out and vandalism, and one sees them as the problems which have to be grappled with. But the Bible will not have this. These things that we label sins are themselves the penalty for transgression. They are symptoms. The real sin, as the Old Testament reiterates time and again, is to abandon the true God, and to put something else in his place.

There are two things which follow from this. The first is the comfort and challenge that come from considering the crucial importance of the work done by Christian Unions among students. When I was a student, it was difficult for the C.U. to be seen as more than one society among others. To try and argue that even then it was in fact more like a first-aid post on a battlefield, would have seemed rather

extreme. It no longer seems exaggerated to talk in this way. It has become a great deal clearer that the gospel is the fundamental weapon of liberation from the fundamental problem of idolatry.

The other thing concerns ourselves. Foolishness in the biblical sense does not disappear overnight when we become Christians. We look back over a day or a week or a year, and we have to convict ourselves of a good deal of aimless, selfish, unworthy activity. The temptation is to cope with this problem at a symptomatic level. But to do so is to open the back door to legalism. The real problem behind all unworthy Christian behaviour is the hangover of idolatry, and the solution is a deeper devotion to Christ: to make our weaknesses topics for prayer rather than grim determination.

But it is certainly sickness which sounds the dominant note in this section, and again there are three points about it which the Psalm raises: the problem of guilt (*17-18*), loss of appetite (*18*) and the fear of death (*18b*).

1. The Problem of Guilt

We need to face the fact first of all that it is possible to make oneself ill through one's own folly. In the case of the exiles, the likelihood of sickness was built into their whole situation, largely no doubt through having to drink water infected by bacteria. The Yorubas have a proverb, 'Dirty water does not kill', which works amazingly well for Africans. But I well remember a severe outbreak of cholera in Ibadan, when the cry went round, 'This time it kills'. You and I can make ourselves ill by our folly (i) by overwork and in particular by not getting a proper night's sleep, (ii) by not eating proper meals (iii) by not taking proper exercise.

But there are two other ways of looking at this altogether. First, there is the kind of situation that Paul spoke of in *1 Corinthians*, where Christians are said to have brought illness upon them-

selves by abusing the fellowship of the communion service (*1 Cor. 11:30*). Notice here that Paul had clear evidence of the sin of the Corinthian Church before he made such an indictment, and also Jesus's quite different approach to the man born blind: 'Neither has this man sinned nor his parents . . .'. Nevertheless, evangelicals have perhaps become over-nervous about allowing the possibility of a connexion between sin and illness — compared, for instance, with the robust days of the Puritans.

Secondly, there is the possibility that unresolved guilt may itself make us ill. This might look like the same thing, but the difference is clear enough. The Corinthians were suffering illness in order to make them aware of a sin that they did not recognize. Here we are thinking of the vivid awareness we may have of something wrong in our lives which can become an obsession, and paralyse us to a state more or less like the paralytic in the Gospel whose friends have to let him down through the roof.

The remedy is stated quite clearly in the Psalm: 'He sent his word to heal them' (*verse 20*). For the exiles it was the message expressed in the words of *Isaiah 40* that the road to Jerusalem was open, and that those who relied on God would receive the necessary strength for the journey. For us it is the message of the Gospel. I once knew an old professor who was in a mental hospital. His felt need was a sense of guilt for a fraud in some publishing venture thirty years or more before. One day the psychiatrist in charge of the case saw fit to write on a piece of paper: 'I have dealt with the publishing fraud of the year whatever it was, and discharged all its obligations.' He had signed his name and given it to his patient. However, whatever illusions the old man might have had in some directions, he had no illusions whatever about this, and I remember his

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES (10)

The Glory of God

M. L. Burr

'I pray thee, show me thy glory' said Moses as God conversed with him (*Exod. 33:18*). What was he asking for, and how was his request granted?

The chief Hebrew word translated 'glory' or 'honour' is said to mean primarily 'weight' or 'substance'. When applied to men it may mean simply wealth or possessions (e.g. *2 Chr. 17:5; 32:27*). It is also used for the outward expression of wealth in the dignity and splendour of those who possess it (e.g. *Esther 1:4; 5:11; Isa. 16:14*) and is, therefore, sometimes translated 'splendour' in modern versions. This in turn commands respect from other people, and the same word is used for the honour in which a person of substance is held by his acquaintances (e.g. *2 Chr. 32:33*). So when it refers to God it may mean His inherent excellencies, or the manifestation of those excellencies to His creatures, or (in expressions like 'giving glory to God') the acknowledgement of His excellencies by those who perceive them.

Glory revealed

Now it is obvious that, God being who He is, we could not know anything about His distinctive perfections unless He chose to express them in a way that we can understand. So the glory of God, as we are aware of it, is always something God shows to us rather than something we can discover. It is characteristic of references to God's glory that people are said to 'see' it. They do not look for it, or infer it, or even believe in it; God just reveals it, and there it is. Its usual manifestation is as light or brightness. Anything that God reveals of His own nature has supreme value and importance, so His glory is described as shining in a way that commands the undivided attention of all who see it.

Several occasions are recorded in the Old Testament when the glory of God became literally visible as brightness or fire. The main idea in these descrip-

tions seems to be that God was displaying His presence among His people. Thus Ezekiel saw the glory of God departing from Jerusalem (*ch. 8-11*) and later returning (*ch. 43, 44*), when the city was called 'The LORD is there' (*48:35*). The visible manifestation of God's glory was often associated with His displeasure with Israel (*Exod. 16:7; Num. 14:10; 16:19,42; 20:6*). God's moral purity is outraged by sin, and if His people are to know Him at all they must be aware of this fact. On other occasions the glory of God appeared in order to assure the Israelites of His presence among them in blessing (e.g. *Lev. 9:23*). Then the wonder of His presence exceeded their capacity to respond to it, so that Moses was unable to enter the tabernacle (*Exod. 40:35*), and the priests could not minister in the temple (*1 Kgs. 8:11*) because the glory of God filled the place. If God shows us something of Himself, it will make us feel that He is 'high above all praise'.

When Moses asked to be shown God's glory he had already had some experience of it, perhaps more than anyone else until that time. These experiences caused him to want to see more of God's glory as something he knew was of supreme value. God's answer was to make all His goodness pass before him and to proclaim His character as the one who is gracious, merciful and forgiving but who cannot overlook sin. There was a reservation in this revelation: Moses could not see God's face, for no one can look on God and live. But Moses obviously received a remarkable insight into God's moral character as it applies to His dealings with men.

Even those without a specific revelation from God can see something of His glory in creation. 'The heavens are telling the glory of God' (*Ps. 19:1*), and 'the whole earth is full of his glory' (*Isa. 6:3*). The beauty and complexity of nature is intended to teach men something of the Creator's skill. The pro-

phets foretell a time when the glory of God shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together, even the ignorant Gentiles (*Isa. 40:5*). That glory will arise upon His people and shine out from them to the nations (*Isa. 60:1-3*). Eventually the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea (*Hab. 2:14*).

Divine glory in Christ

It is in Christ that the glory of God is fully revealed. It again became visible and shone around when He was born (*Luke 2:9*), an appropriate symbol of the divine presence. In the New Testament, glory is connected with the person of Christ in several different ways. Firstly, He is Himself the radiance of God's glory (*Heb. 1:3 NIV*), for only a person (and only that Person) could fully display all that God is. He always has been and always will be the one through whom God is made known, whether in creation, redemption or in any other way.

Secondly, He shared the Father's glory before His incarnation, and laid aside this condition of things on entering the world (*John 17:5*); this glory He has now resumed.

Thirdly, His earthly life displayed a unique glory, that of the only Son from the Father (*John 1:14*). All God's nature was made visible in a form that we can understand. His miracles manifested His glory (*John 2:11; 11:4*) in showing His divine power applied to the welfare of men. At the transfiguration His glory became directly visible, and Moses' prayer was finally granted without any reservation, for he saw the face of God in human form, resplendent with divine glory yet wholly suitable for human vision.

Fourthly, in His death the Son of man was glorified and God was glorified in Him (*John 12:23; 13:31*). For His death revealed all the attributes of God — His righteousness, wisdom, power and love were perfectly displayed then. And Jesus acquired a glory in achiev-

ing something for God and for men which nobody and nothing else could achieve.

Fifthly, He is glorified in His present position at God's right hand, where He is crowned with glory and honour (*Acts 3:13; Heb. 2:9*). Jesus now has the specific dignity of being the Saviour and Head of a new race of men.

Sixthly, His glory will be universally apparent when He returns (*Matt. 25:31; Luke 9:26; 1 Pet. 4:13*). The glory which at present is recognized by faith will then be acknowledged by everyone, whether willingly or not.

Finally, the supreme blessing and joy for His people, granted to them in response to His prayer, will be to see His glory and appreciate it with Him where He is (*John 17:24*). They will be presented without blemish before the presence of His glory (*Jude 24*), will see His face (*Rev. 22:4*), and will share in His glory (*1 Pet. 5:1*). The heavenly

city will be illuminated by the glory of God, which will shine from the Lamb as its lamp (*Rev. 21:23*).

Its Effect on Men

When God shows men His glory it always has a profound effect upon them. Moses' immediate reaction was to bow his head and worship (*Exod. 34:8*), and we too should respond in praise and worship as we appreciate anything of what God is like. Another more profound effect on Moses, of which he was at first unaware, was that his face shone. A vision of divine glory caused Isaiah to feel his own sinfulness and that of his people (*Isa. 6:1-5; John 12:41*). It also provided the means of expiating his sin and commissioned him with a message for the nation. Now the Christian message is called 'the gospel of the glory of Christ', for that is what it is really about rather than our needs. God shines that gospel into men's hearts to

give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (*2 Cor. 4:4-6*). The effect is to transform those who are thus illuminated, in accordance with the New Covenant in the Spirit. They are changed into Christ's likeness and reflect something of His unfading glory (*2 Cor. 3:6-18*). Furthermore, God intends His glory to be our prime motive in life, in that all that we do can be done for His glory (*1 Cor. 10:31*). God will gain a specific glory in His achievements with creatures such as ourselves, and looks for our co-operation in bringing this about.

We have been given the privilege of seeing God's glory in a manner designed to attract rather than to repel us. We may feel that our appreciation of that glory is very superficial, but what we do know of it should lead us, like Moses, to pray 'Show me thy glory'.

Meditations on Psalm 107 continued from Page Eighty-Four

disgust as he showed me this document. But it reminded me of what *Colossians* tells us about the cross, and how it puts a nail through the IOU which stands against our account.

2. Loss of Appetite

Loss of appetite is much more serious in a hot country than it is here. The mildest tummy upsets can soon dispose of a stone or a stone and a half. I well remember the anxiety I had when my wife was in the early stages of expecting our youngest boy. For ten days she scarcely kept anything down, and lost weight frighteningly. (In the end we kept her alive with Lucozade which in Nigeria cost 12/6 a bottle in those days.) One can well imagine therefore why the Psalmist singles this out as a devastating aspect of the kind of illnesses which particularly affected the exiles.

But loss of appetite has its spiritual counterpart. One of the great problems in the Christian life, and you will know too how the same thing arises in counselling those who are suffering from the kind of depressions which are very common among students today, is that people can in a sense know all the Christian answers, and yet have no appetite for them. And this can be just as true of someone who may have shown earlier signs of being a committed Christian as of someone who has never made any profession. It may seem strange to command

someone to develop an appetite. I think of the kind of problem we have at lunch-time, and smile wryly at the possibility of saying to our nine-year-old son: 'Want this cauliflower.' And yet, very significantly, this is precisely what *1 Peter* does say about the word of God. 'As new born babes, desire the pure milk of the word.' And what is the secret? There is a clue in *1 Peter 2:3*, which goes on 'If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.' When we come to the times when our appetite for the means of grace disappears, the secret of recovery is to remember the sweetness of the time when the message of forgiveness first registered, and of the security of finding a Good Shepherd who covenanted to lead us through every dark valley to the place prepared with him above.

3. The Fear of Death

To be buried in the land of promise was a matter of great concern to the Jews of Old Testament days, but death in any case was a problem that was never properly solved in Old Testament days and for the exiles was thus doubly fearful.

It is something that is little talked about, but one can imagine that it is often in the thoughts of Christian young people today, some of whom will wonder whether earlier days of drug-addiction or moral laxity are going to affect their health permanently.

Even when there are no added factors, someone who is perfectly fit can easily enough fall into worrying about his health. There is a classic description of the syndrome in J. K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat*, where the writer describes how he went to the British Museum to read up the treatment of hay fever in a medical text book, and not content with that let his eye drift to what was said about other diseases and concluded that the only one he hadn't got was housemaid's knee. But, of course, that is funny only because it is so true of the fears we have about our health.

Yet a Christian does not need to be laughed out of his fears of death. For death is transformed from the blank wall that it presents to a non-Christian into a gateway to a new and richer life. God sent his word to heal them. Here it is the message of resurrection. Tragically, that message has been masked in the church in recent years, and watered down by doubts about its historical factuality. We need never to forget the crucial part played by the resurrection of Jesus in the earliest Christian message: so much so that the Athenians thought Paul was presenting Resurrection to them as a goddess. Many men died, even on crosses. It is the man who rose again on the third day who was distinctive — this was what put his cross into a unique category.

BIBLE TEACHING IN LOCAL CHURCHES (3)

Early Church Patterns

J. M. Hitchen

The New Testament encourages us to use the historical portions of Scripture as practical examples for guidance in the church today (*Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11-13 etc.*). Without suggesting that only those patterns used in the *Acts* are appropriate for today we can search this book to see some patterns which the Holy Spirit has used and which may offer creative guidelines for us today. Working briefly through the various places highlighted in the *Acts* record we note the following patterns.

a. At Jerusalem teaching was at the heart of both the witnessing and the proclamation — i.e. all their evangelism (*Acts 2:40-42; 5:20-21*). It was the teaching effectiveness which clearly worried the leaders of the civil religion (*4:2-4* and *18*). House groups were also significant in follow-up (*2:46*).

b. In the Samaritan and Caesarean outreaches the longer established Jerusalem congregation released their experienced Bible teachers both to nurture and guide a new work (*8:14-25*), and to encourage uniform nurture, harmony and growth over the wider region (*9:31-2*). This meant the most gifted teacher spending varying lengths of time at different centres (*9:32* with *v.38* and *43*); involving new converts to assist as new opportunities arose (*10:23,48*), and sharing the lessons of such growth with the older congregations — even when it challenged their accepted ideas (*11:1-18*).

c. At Antioch again the older congregation takes initiative (stirred up by the 'ears of the church' — was that an early form of the ministry of women?) to send a suitable teacher (*11:19-22*). Seeing the need for wider gifts than his own, Barnabas uses this as an opportunity to open the door into Christian service for a young radical for whom he had earlier opened the door into the church (*11:25; 9:26-27*). The new assembly of believers take the decision to invite these two Bible teachers to give consecutive teaching for a year (*11:26-27* — see RSV foot-

note). Still other kinds of teaching were added (*11:27-30*) and as we have noted above, the local teaching talent was fully developed till there is an effective team of Bible teachers in the church (*13:1*).

d. At Galatia we see the way in which successive stages of progressive teaching were utilized. The first cycle of teaching evangelism established the churches (*13:13-14:20*). Whoever would have thought a gospel service when the preacher covered the whole history of redemption of the Old Testament would have drawn a crowd clamouring for more the following week? It did! The second teaching cycle concentrated on structuring and transferring of responsibility together with strengthening for trials (*14:21-23*). The third cycle was an extended letter setting out unmistakably the foundational truths of the gospel. The fourth cycle was for assessment of growth (*15:36*); to deepen the level of understanding and to relate it to the wider interests of other churches (*16:4-5*); to recruit a younger man for training in teaching (*16:1-3*); and to spur further evangelism (*16:5*). The fifth cycle of special teaching from outside again emphasized strength for the believers and probably further recruitment of another trainee Bible teacher (see *20:4* — Gaius is from Derbe in Galatia).

e. Meanwhile an international inter-church Bible study conference brought basic unanimity on the relation between the gospel and cultural traditions (*Acts 15*) and regular reporting back to the older congregations continued (*15:30-35; 18:22-23*).

f. By the time of the Macedonian and Greek outreaches the above patterns are well established. The record especially notices the consecutive teaching used for evangelism (*17:2,11,17,19; 18:4 etc.*). The place of homes for evangelistic contact and in depth teaching is likewise noted (*18:7* and later in *Ephesus 18:26*). The most experienced teacher again spends over

eighteen months in one place as the need required (*18:11*).

g. In Ephesus, to give just one more range of patterns, we see that, as well as the home work already mentioned (*18:26*) we have a small group Bible study used for those with a particular misconception (*19:1-7*). The regular weekly evangelistic series in the synagogue — this time extending for three months (*19:8*) is used once more, but then Paul moves to a full scale two year daily Bible school approach to establish and equip the church (*19:9-10*; if we accept the RSV footnote then five hours a day when others were having their siesta shows a high level of seriousness about Bible study). But the fruit of such in depth teaching is evident when the whole province is evangelized thereby (*19:10*) and elders are equipped to assume full teaching responsibility thenceforth (*20:28ff.*).

So we could go on, but these various patterns face us with the question — in what sense can we claim to be New Testament churches if we do not reproduce these patterns of Bible teaching in our churches today?

In conclusion I would simply suggest four ways in which we can implement some of these patterns for relevant Bible teaching programmes in the churches in which we are placed.

(1) Let us seek to provide small group Bible study opportunity for all the different 'ages and stages' in our church family. Something like the 'All-age Sunday School' concept is necessary to take seriously the kind of age graded and experience related differentiation in the commands of (e.g.) *Titus 2:1-10*. There we have the older men, older women, young women, young men, full time workers and 'working class' each referred to as having distinctive spiritual diets to be satisfied by appropriate teaching. No one meeting can ever achieve this range of Bible study need. Each group needs to be able to discuss and apply the teaching relating directly to them. Scripture Union and

PREACHERS WORKSHOP

The Funeral Service

Guidance is rarely given on the conduct of a funeral service, so that the following paper, by a Scottish friend who wishes to remain anonymous, may be found helpful.

The usual mode, or order, of funeral service is divided into two parts, one inside and the other outside. Little need be said here about the service in the church, hall, or home, further than it should always be **on time**, because, apart from other reasons, the undertaker's men may be waiting outside in cold or rain, and also have other work to do. This, apart from other members of the public who should be considered.

It is a different matter, however, when coming to the outdoor service at the grave. Here the cemetery attendants are also involved, and if kept waiting may be provoked to anger, because they often have to work on schedule, and other burials being timed in relation to ours.

Suffer a few suggestions:

1. The committal prayer should be reasonably short, and always relative.
2. The Scripture reading should be well chosen, here ever remembering that, 'little is much'.

3. Unless the preacher knew the deceased intimately and well, little should be said in public of a laudatory or eulogical character.

4. Advantage should not be taken of the occasion to preach an evangelistic sermon. Godly wisdom is required, remembering that professional and business men have not left their offices to come and hear us preach, but out of respect for the deceased or the relatives. Words fitly spoken, are as a rule well accepted, but otherwise a feeling of resentment may be engendered.

We now venture to ask if a hymn should be sung at a burial service? This is quite in order so long as care is taken not to disturb others on the same sad errand as ourselves.

Another over-riding circumstance in the conduct of the outdoor or cemetery service is the condition of the weather, or season of the year. I have stood by open graves in all kinds of weather conditions and listened to sermons being built up point by point to the end. This cannot be the time or place for such particularized exposition. I also know of more than one whose illness and death was directly attributed to the soaking he got at so-and-so's funeral. Surely such risks

should not be taken, for the sake of all present including the attendants.

It is obvious that at times there must be exceptions where some of these suggestions do not apply. Viz: the burial of one outstanding in public esteem and favour, or highly respected and loved in a wide circle among his brethren. Here a large crowd may be expected. For such it is usual to make special arrangements beforehand with all concerned.

Lastly, sensitive consideration should never be lacking for the bereaved, who are the most closely involved. It can be, and mostly is, a most trying experience for those of any age, to stand at an open grave and see and hear the body of a loved one being committed 'dust to dust, ashes to ashes', even with the blessed hope prominent in the message.

I have on purpose refrained from quoting Scripture in support of what is here written, leaving this rewarding exercise to the reader.

Rather would one humbly ask for the prayerful consideration of all who may be called upon to have fellowship in this final service of love.

Bible Teaching in Local Churches *continued from Page Eighty-Seven*

Scripture Press produce very useful aids to get us started on such programmes.

(2) Let us recapture the one-to-one and home based pattern we see in the Aquila and Priscilla household (and implied in Jerusalem, at Corinth, Berea, and Philippi). The life of the body depends largely on the health of the cells. Elders ought to recognize the integral part such cell groups play both for 'body-building' or strengthening the assembly and for evangelistic growth. Since every elder should be 'apt to teach' even if not a public speaker, this one-to-one discipling ministry is the ideal place for our elders to set the Bible teaching patterns required of us. Navigators produce ideal study material for this essential type of study.

(3) Above all, we must develop regular systematic expository teaching of

whole units of the Word of God as the focus of the public teaching and evangelistic teaching of our local churches. Such biblically faithful, Spirit-endued proclamation and application of consecutive portions of Scripture is the one most direct way in which many of the principles and patterns mentioned above can be built into the regular life of our assemblies.¹

(4) Finally may all of us concerned for the future of our local churches take

1. I have listed the advantages, answered some objections and given some examples of how to plan for such expository teaching in **Bible Teaching in the Local Church**, pp. 12-16. See also C.B.R.F. Journal No. 20 (Preaching) and Occasional Paper No. 1 ('The Ministry of the Word' by S. S. Short); H. L. Ellison **The Household Church**; and J. Williams **The Living Church** (both Paternoster) for further comments and suggestions.

seriously the command of 2 Tim. 2:2 and like Barnabas involve ourselves in equipping the next generation of Bible teachers. If we are not ready or able to give the two year, five hours a day Pauline-type teaching necessary to train effective expositors of the Scriptures, then let us develop positive working relationships with those God has gifted and set apart to serve us in the Bible colleges of our land. Otherwise it may not be too long before we hear a voice saying:

*... Because you are lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, NOT KNOWING that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked . . . He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
(Rev. 3:15-17,22)*

LOOKING AT BOOKS

UNDERSTANDING AND USING THE BIBLE

The New Bible Dictionary, Second Edition. J. D. Douglas: Organizing Editor. N. Hillyer: Revision Editor. IVP. 1326pp. £17.50.

The New Bible Dictionary, first published in 1961, has proved its worth and performed stalwart service for a generation of Bible students. Time has not stood still, however, and progress in biblical studies and especially in archaeology during the past two decades has made necessary a thorough revision if the **Dictionary** was to perform the same service for yet another generation and retain its merit to be considered the best one-volume Bible dictionary available. The appearance of a fully revised second edition is therefore a welcome event and the **Dictionary** fulfils all the expectations engendered by its predecessor. The value of the **Dictionary** is enhanced by the inclusion of maps and diagrams, bibliographies, and an extensive index.

To describe the **Dictionary** as an A to Z of the Bible scarcely begins to do justice to the richness and kinds of information which it provides. Major entries are devoted to an introduction to each of the books of the Bible, dealing with such topics as sources, authorship, date, purpose and character. Other comprehensive entries cover all the main aspects of biblical geography, history and archaeology, social customs and religion, doctrines and ethics, as well as biblical languages, text and versions, and English translations. In addition, detailed information is given about the history, religion and culture of the surrounding peoples with whom Israel came into contact in the course of her history. The Bible student can as easily find information on topics such as the nature of Canaanite religion, city defences in Ancient Israel, 'forthtelling' and 'foretelling' in the prophets, the constitution, composition and jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin, the biblical MSS from Qumran, the doctrine of election and the names for God, as he can easily look up who the Kenizzites were

or where Tekoa was. In a comprehensive way and readily accessible form, the **Dictionary** provides the Bible student with the information necessary for a proper understanding and interpretation of the Bible within its wider historical context. Generous cross references greatly assist gathering together from various entries information relevant to the study at hand.

The New Bible Dictionary is an indispensable aid to the study of the Bible and should find a pride of place on the library shelves of every Bible student. It is difficult to think of a better way to spend £17.50 in a bookshop than to purchase a copy, even for someone who already possesses the first edition.

Review by Dr. Kenneth T. Aitken, University of Aberdeen

Bengel's New Testament Commentary John A. Bengel. Kregel Publications. 2 volumes. 1905pp. \$39.95.

Johann Albrecht Bengel was a biblical scholar who lived in Germany in the early part of the eighteenth century. His commentary on the New Testament was published in German in 1742, and was translated into English in 1858. What is now available is a photographic reprint, in two large volumes, of the 1860 edition, produced by an American publishing house. This commentary has traditionally been called the 'Gnomon of the New Testament', a 'gnomon' being the arm of a sundial which shows the time by its shadow on the dial. It has been a standard work of reference for many generations. One of its main aims is to draw particular attention to variations in the New Testament text in the different Greek manuscripts. Spurgeon esteemed it highly, saying: 'Bengel condenses more matter into a line than can be extracted from pages of other writers.' For general New Testament exposition, most readers would find the excellent evangelical commentaries of the present day more helpful and attractive than this; but it would be valuable to consult Bengel with regard to his understanding

of individual verses of disputed interpretation.

Review by Dr. Stephen S. Short

I Believe in the Second Coming of Jesus Stephen H. Travis. Hodder & Stoughton. 252pp. £5.50 (paperback).

Stephen Travis might reasonably be described as an apostle of hope. Having given us **The Jesus Hope and Christian Hope and the Future of Man** he has now enriched our resources with the volume under review, in which the theme of hope runs like a golden thread through all seven chapters. In the first three we are conducted skilfully through the Old Testament, the teaching of Jesus and the writings of the apostles. Then he tackles, bravely, four controversial areas, devoting a chapter each to: mistaken ideas, life after death, judgment and its outcome, and the present effect of believing in Christ's return. The author's position on these matters has been clearly thought out and his conclusions will stretch the minds of many evangelicals, especially those brought up on a stronger or weaker diet of dispensationalism. As particular examples we cite: that many Old Testament prophecies are being fulfilled in the Church; that the Kingdom is a present reality in Christ, experienced through the Holy Spirit, its future aspect differing only in degree and not in essence from that which we enjoy now; that the Church has taken the place of Israel as the people of God; that there will be no millennium. Add to these an aversion to all kinds of programmes and timetables — not just to specific date-setting — and it will be appreciated where Dr. Travis's eschatological sympathies lie, and it's not in the dispensational school. In handling these matters and drawing his conclusions, however, he does not simply dismiss alternative ideas. He examines them carefully and states both sides of the argument with fairness and respect, qualities which have not always attended this particular debate. The book is free from rancour, for which,

praise the Lord!

In dealing with the future state of believers, a very important distinction is drawn between resurrection and immortality (well worth knowing) and, in favouring the doctrine of conditional immortality, the significant point is made that 'eternal may signify the permanence of the result of judgment rather than the continuation of the act of punishment itself.' The final chapter on **Living in Hope** makes out a case for Christian commitment, personal and collective, to seeking to improve conditions within this world in accordance with the central features of the reign of Christ among His people, such as love, justice, peace and sanctity. We must not leave the field to Marxism, which is examined perceptively as an influential secular alternative to the true hope held out in Christ.

This book makes a fitting contribution to the excellent **I Believe** series as well as a first-class addition to available books on prophecy. It is thoroughly recommended to any who wish to think deeply about the second coming and don't mind facing up to challenging ideas.

Review by Jim Harris

Preaching the New Testament A. M. Hunter. SCM Press. 156pp. £3.50 (paperback).

This book contains 34 sermons preached on various occasions. They deal with immense subjects — the Resurrection, Fellowship, Life Eternal . . . and they do so in a very short space. They are the fruit of a lifetime of believing scholarship and offer a salutary lesson as well as some encouragement to preachers who think it is impossible to 'say anything worthwhile' in less than half an hour!

Review by Peter Cousins

OTHER BELIEFS AND OTHER PATHS

Jesus More than a Prophet R. W. F. Wootton (Ed.). IVP. 80pp. £1.25 (paperback).

Here are testimonies of fifteen Muslims from many parts of the world who have come to a faith in Jesus Christ. In a few pages each story is unfolded from the background and upbringing of each person to their encounter with Christ.

The book illustrates the many ways Christ is known and found plus the universal suffering that must be borne for him. The testimonies are not unneces-

sarily pietistic but are presented in a straightforward yet Christ-glorifying way. Perhaps the lasting impression of this very short book is its Christ-centredness.

Here is one example: 'In the whole range of human history I cannot find anyone so noble, so pure, so far-sighted, so generous and forgiving as He — the best people I know are most like Him. Would the world not be heaven itself if there were more like Him? No wonder from the beginning people worshipped Him as divine. He is the telescope focused on God to bring the divine radiance within reach of mortal men and women. When the world finally achieves sanity, it will be on His terms. He is the goal of humanity as well as the goal of history. He has brought a new outlook on life, new insight, new hope.'

The sensitivity and clarity of this book give a good insight into the problems facing many Muslim converts. It is ideal for those wanting to share Christ with Muslims.

The World's Religions Lion. 446pp. £9.95.

This major and comprehensive guide to the study of world religions covers a broad range of topics ranging from the Development of Religions and the Living Religions of the East to the Fulfilment of Religion: Christianity.

Attractively presented, it follows the successful format of previous Lion Handbooks and is to be commended for three main reasons: (1) Its attractive presentation — easy to handle, well illustrated and delightful to use; (2) It contains a wealth of information in relatively few pages; (3) It has brought together a wide spectrum of experts.

In contrast, several major weaknesses sadly mar what would otherwise have been an exceptional volume. First, there is an underlying contradiction within the book. The preface says the contributors 'write from a Christian concern to describe each faith as it is', presenting different viewpoints clearly and objectively so that 'they speak for themselves' and yet Christianity is presented as the best buy 'religion; or the fulfilment of religions'. One agrees totally with the stance made on the supremacy of Christianity, but it would have been preferable either that the book be written from a Christian perspective as 'A Christian understanding of World Religions'; or that each religion should have been presented in the same way as the Christian faith.

Second, the book has majored on Western authors. Given the considerable Third World expertise now available, this was an unfortunate omission. Third, there is a very real problem with the theological spectrum encompassed by the authors used. Some would apparently go so far as to deny fundamentals of the Christian faith. It seems strange therefore that they have been utilised to present other religions from a 'Christian concern'. Fourth, the book contains no bibliography.

However, given the price, range of subjects covered and the lack of better materials, the book is well worth reading by those who desire to gain an overview of world religions.

Reviews by Patrick Soakhdeo

Tell the World Eric Wright. Evangelical Press.

Anyone working among Muslims, traditionally resistant to Christian preaching, must often question the methods being adopted. Eric Wright, after eighteen years of working in Pakistan, reminded constantly of successful methods being used among other people, methods which he knew to be quite ineffective among Muslims, determined to return to the Scriptural source. Under three headings, 'The Apostles' Message: The Apostles' Audience and The Apostles' Method', he sets out the results of his prayerful enquiry. He was quickly convinced that the maximising ministry of the apostles contrasted with two modern tendencies, viz: 'The tendency to present the Gospel in too narrow a context and the dethroning of the foundational place of biblical content by the tyranny of a trio of urgent friends: methodology, activism and pragmatism.'

He concludes with a challenge we should all take up. 'Let the apostles speak to evangelism today! Let the fruit of their insight hone our methods, sharpen our focus and clarify our message.'

Eternity in their Hearts Don Richardson. Regal Books.

Having been very closely associated with Don Richardson in his work in Irian Jaya which produced his best selling books **Peace Child** and **Lords of the Earth**, I can attest the carefulness and prayerfulness that lies behind the quality of his scholarship. In this book, of course, he has moved out of the local situation among the Sawi and Yali

stone-age people of that farthest east area of Indonesia to explore, in a world wide brief, the concept of 'the supreme God'. Don has followed through his discovery in his early days in Irian Jaya of the principle of redemptive analogy, and seeks to show in this splendid thesis that the world throughout all its history and its various peoples is a world prepared for the Gospel because of what he terms the Melchizedek factor. Not least valuable is the closing section with the 'Questions for Study' based on each of the chapters, and cleverly relates Scriptural examples to the great task of reaching the still unevangelised people in the world today.

People in Rural Development

Peter Bachelor.
Paternoster Press. 158pp. £3.60.

Really 'down to earth' stuff, as of course it must be if it is to be of use to the Christian leaders in Africa, to whom the book is primarily directed. By far the greatest part of effort on the part of British missionaries has been among the tribal peoples of sub-Saharan Africa, and in a day when many missionary societies are turning to 'development' as the means of assisting the rapidly growing churches, it is good to read an author who is a 'grass roots' practitioner and one who fully uses the knowledge and experience of his African colleagues. Here is an excellent guide to all who would engage in development work in Third World countries, providing the needed stimulus and warning.

God and Man in African Religion

Emegie Ikenga Metuh. Geoffrey Chapman.

It has often been said that the early pioneer missionaries among the tribal peoples of Africa paid scant regard to the traditional religion of the converts to Christianity. Those tribal people have proved the most fruitful ground in the world for the sowing of the Gospel seed, and there can be no doubting the reality and zeal of their Christian faith. Mr. Metuh, who deals in this book with the religious background of the Igbo of Nigeria, disputes the general view of some Western writers that the influence of God upon the life of the Igbo is negligible. He is at great pains to expound a high concept of God among this people and then in the appendix tries to answer those who, like myself, are tempted to ask upon reading the exposition, whether in fact this concept is not the outcome of contact with the missionaries. An intriguingly interesting book, provocative in its controversial character.

Ernest Oliver

AND MORE POETRY

The Sun, Dancing Christian Verse compiled by Charles Causley. Kestrel Books. £6.95.

This unusual anthology represents a poet's choice. It contains the magic and fascination of Causley's own poetry. The emphasis falls on the less familiar and, while the whole book has a strong contemporary appeal, old and new rub shoulders. Why the title? Tradition has it that the sun dances at Easter. This collection raises the level of spiritual consciousness and stirs and disturbs the imagination. More than simply a voyage into Christian thought and feeling, it is a celebration of faith.

Review by Mary Batchelor

Jesus Praise Norman Warren and David Peacock (compilers). Scripture Union. 95p (words). £6.95 (music).

From the 1920s to the 1950s the Scripture Union did an invaluable job by selecting from the great mass of choruses (most of them Scripture choruses) that were being written those that had some quality whether in words or music and making them available in the well-known 'CSSM Chorus Books'. Following this we had a 'Youth Praise' era. Now it seems that the Scripture Union has done it again. **Jesus Praise** is intended as a song book for all occasions, a replacement for the **Youth Praise** books. Indeed, Norman Warren was associated with **Youth Praise**.

Of the 216 items in the book, one-third are new and unpublished. Many of these seem well worth examining. For the rest, the mix is good. There are some **Youth Praise** favourites such as 'There's no greater name than Jesus'. There are some from way back ('On Calvary's tree') and some from even further back than that ('Mine are the hands'). But the backbone of the book consists of the most popular of the songs and choruses that have come to the fore, largely through the charismatic movement, in recent years. The arrangements are often far better than what is available elsewhere. The type in both words and music books is clear.

Inevitably, people will complain about omissions. I particularly missed 'Jesus is Lord' and 'Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us'. But any local church looking for a collection of 'choruses' for general use, including the Lord's Supper, should think very hard before rejecting this new song book. Nothing better is available.

Review by Peter Cousins

Founded by George Müller in 1834

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H

READERS' FORUM

Readers' Forum is open to contributions from readers. Please send suggestions from practical experience, related to church activities or Christian living; doctrinal or expository questions; useful experiences; what-you-will; to the Editor at 18 King's Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NX. Questions, to which other readers will be invited to submit replies, will also be published from time to time as they are received. It is hoped that readers will take full advantage of this feature.

In this month's Readers' Forum Peter Lowman puts
SEVENTEEN QUESTIONS FOR YOUTH LEADERS

- 1. How can we help the members of our group to have a deeper appreciation of God?** How do we give our group a really thrilling glimpse of God's glory? What areas of Scripture should we aim to study, for this purpose, in the near future?
- 2. How can we help group members to have better 'Quiet Times'?** How can we encourage a hunger for Bible study? Do our group know how to do it? (What about Scripture Union Notes?) How can we stimulate a hunger to pray, and help our members to do it? How can we help them learn to praise God?
- 3. What areas of teaching need covering?** And is our teaching effective and relevant? Are people taking notes and using them?
- 4. How do we give group members a sense of vision, objectives and direction for the group?** How do we ensure that they are really involved in the planning, and really feel it is their group? Can we stimulate them to think about the group's goals, strengths and weaknesses, and their own too? (One idea is to have planning sessions every three months or so with the whole group, and report back on the ways in which the final programme will implement what was asked for: with the aim of giving a vision for it.)
- 5. How can we develop the gifts of group members?** What opportunities exist for them to be stretched, to take an active lead? (YP cell groups can help here, but it is important in small

group Bible study situations to ensure that people know how to lead them, for the sake of the rest of the group!) Which members in particular are ready for this? How can they be trained? (Including the people who may move on in time to become the group's leaders — learning 'on the job' and sharing in the current leaders' vision is the best way!) Youth services and meetings at other churches provide certain types of openings.

- 6. How can we develop friendships within the group** — so that people relax, learn that they can trust one another (and so can afford to fail) — and lose their shyness and participate without embarrassment — e.g. in group Bible studies? (Events like 'desert island discs' with group members, drama, and time relaxing together can all help here.) Do group members care for one another? Are the leaders being models of caring and approachable leadership, and are they/we sharing this vision with other members?

- 7. How do we get the group to care for those of their own age in the church who don't come?**

- 8. How do we develop a sense of belonging to the church fellowship as a whole?** How, as a group, can we show our love for the rest of the church? (Putting on a supper at Christmas, etc?) How can we break the generation gap? Are there any specialist church activities we should have a report from at one of our meetings? What about sessions of singing and worship led by the youth group but with the whole fellowship welcome?

- 9. How can we contribute more to the life of the church fellowship as a whole?**

- 10. How do we get the group to be 'in the world but not of it'?** As regards the latter, how do we stimulate serious thought about what practical holiness means, and how a Christian will be distinctive — e.g. in areas like materialism, thankfulness to God v. grumbling, working to God's glory, pilfering, relationships with friends, sexuality, the 'unequal yoke', alcohol, drugs, etc? Have we given sufficient teaching about the Christian at work — and about unemployment?

- 11. And how do we enable the group to be effective, natural witnesses?** How can we encourage and challenge group members to live the gospel? Do they have this kind of friendship with people who aren't yet Christians? Do all our group know how to witness — do we have a grasp of, and can we express (without too much jargon) the basic gospel? What about basic apologetics (e.g. the seven most common questions, as per Paul Little's *Know Why You Believe* (Scripture Union), and the evidence for the resurrection)? How (and where?) can we expose group members to the fact that evangelism actually works? (Testimonies of people saved through the YPF will help.) We want to create a prayerful expectancy. How can we also help our group members to be useful participants in CUs at school, college and work?

- 12. How, and by what kind of events, can we bring non-Christians into the group** — so that they can see what a community of live Christians is really like? How can we make them feel at home? (The church building may not be the best place for such outreach, nor Sunday the best time.) How can we reach and challenge them for Christ? Is there any practical way in which we can go out and present Christ where they are?

- 13. How can we give the group a better sense of — and exposure to — what God is doing in the world today, and the needs that exist?** Who would it be good for the group to meet? (More contact with Christians from overseas might be useful.) What meetings elsewhere would meet this need? (London missionary meetings? Counties meetings? OM?) Can we encourage older members to use holidays in practical evangelism (e.g. with GLO, OM, Ireland Outreach) — better still, take them with us?

- 14. Are we meeting the group's social needs?** Are there more things we could do together as a group — though not to the extent of creating generation gaps by stopping people spending time relaxing with their families? (Meals? Christian concerts? Trips to London for big Christian events? Weekends away together —

continued on page 18

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The September Question

When the Pope was received on Whit Monday by leading Scottish churchmen in the quadrangle of New College, Edinburgh, beneath the statue of John Knox, many people wondered aloud what Knox would have said if he had suddenly become articulate. May I suggest (if we are to deal in such unrealities) that if Knox had heard the exposition of his own favourite scripture (John 17) given by the Pope at Canterbury a few days previously, he would have heard much to command his approval? More generally, did readers find that the papal visit, with the publicity given to it, provided a helpful talking-point for the gospel?

Mr. D. H. T. Conway replies:

Professor Bruce asks whether John Knox would have found much to commend in the Pope's exposition of John

17. As words must be matched by actions, would his judgement have been affected if he had read a letter I received a few days ago from an Italian brother who was saved in a German concentration camp? He wrote (in Italian), 'Here in Italy, as you will know, the situation has become very difficult, whether by terrorism or by a number of other things. Also the catholic Church with the present Pope has taken again its power, and the religious minorities are again under the law of the Concordat of 1929! But in spite of all the Lord gives us strength for testimony of his Word . . .'

Mr. Norman White replies:

I don't suppose that the Revd. Hon. Roland Lamb is a reader of our esteemed magazine but a few months ago he was telling us that he and his wife were in a crowded shop in Liskeard and heard a lady boldly testifying to her

new found faith in Christ. It seems that the Pope's visit had caused her to think again about her nominal faith. For my part I have been helping some young people to do doorstep evangelism in our village and I told them to use the Pope's repeated remark 'my brethren and sisters in Christ': e.g. 'I claim to be in Christ; what do you think your Pope meant by this expression?' This approach enabled them to get down to essentials right away and not get bogged down in rebutting RC dogma. I cannot report any outstanding results though I did have a very interesting conversation with an RC using this approach.

The **Evangelical Times** has made rather sad and negative reading this summer. Where are the successors of the Reformers who will weep over Rome as our Lord did over Jerusalem?

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters should be addressed 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 biography of Anthony Crosland

From Mrs. Elsie M. R. Alexander

Dear Mr. Coad,

I was partly touched partly distressed to read the sympathetic review of my sister-in-law's biography of my brother, Tony Crosland, in your magazine (August).

My sister-in-law was punctilious in consulting each one of the family about their memories of early days but the mix has somehow turned out wrong and I would like, if I may, to correct the one-sided impression of our upbringing, given by the book.

I don't think our family life was as peculiar as is made out, though it is true that the 'Meeting' played a large part in it. My father was the most broad-minded of men and never imposed his views in a

dictatorial manner. There were few prohibitions: but one from which my brother suffered (though nobody realized it at the time) was not being allowed to join the school OTC. This has often been quoted as an example of inconsistency, since my father was a senior official at the War Office, but in fact it was **because** he was at the War Office that he knew how much pressure was being brought on young men to join the regular army through the school OTCs and he didn't want this for his son.

My brother certainly had an overlong playboy period — which your reviewer kindly omits to mention — but I think this was largely a reaction to the horrors of war for which his academic upbringing had ill-prepared him.

It is saddening that in all the words that have been spilled about my brother more has not been made of the **positive** influences of his early life: a passionate sense of social injustice (our grandfather, F. E. Raven, was often quoted as saying that if he hadn't been a Christian he'd have been an out-and-out Com-

munist!); the immense care taken to treat the humble brother with the same courtesy as the well-off; the dislike of pomposity or any sort of outward show. What put my brother off the brethren and therefore his family was (1) The long boring meetings in a language which (he said) no-one else could understand; (2) The inconsistency between the considerable interest in politics inside our own and some other families and the lack of social concern practised by the brethren for any outside the 'circle of the saints'.

I think if there is a lesson to be learned from the book it is that committed Christians who feel so led should be prepared to soil their hands in the hurly-burly of public life. If more Christians of our generation had done just that the moral decline of our times might have been lessened.

Yours sincerely,

Elsie Alexander

12, Blackmoor Wood, Ascot, Berks., SL5 8EN.

The Christian and his Union

From Mr. D. H. T. Conway

Dear Mr. Coad,

In Pierre Meylan's very interesting article in the September *Harvester* there appears to be no reference to what appears to me to be of primary importance: the union member's undertaking to obey the union's rulings. I have to assume that the signing of such an undertaking is a necessary step on becoming a member.

On page 2 mention is made of the need to take account of the possibility of repudiating an agreement. How can a Christian bind himself to obey a union instruction which involves him in breaking a contract of employment?

I write with much sympathy for the employee, but as one who resisted being linked with an employers' association.

Yours sincerely,

D. Conway

'Hauteville', 24 Glendinning Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 7QS.

(The Editor adds: I suspect the answer is that a modern (and statutory) contract of employment will normally contain a reference to union membership, where that arises, and will thus implicitly recognise the employee's relationship to the union as a factor conditioning his employment. It is unlikely, therefore, that an employee obeying union instructions is breaking his contract of employment.)

Quick Fire

From Mr. W. G. Harris

Dear Mr. Coad,

With respect to the opening part of Mr. Ellison's informative article about *The Swelling of Jordan* in May issue of *The Harvester*, it may be noted that from time immemorial it was the custom of the London 'Saturday Afternoon Village Workers' to 'bawl out' Bible verses in rotation round the ring at 'open-air'. Although not dubbed 'Quick Fire' this was a very generally approved feature of the work. Nor was it always performed haphazardly. For my own part, when in the spring of 1921 I started in the work at 15, a pleasant little hobby was made of memorizing a few dozen mostly 'Gospel' texts. By this means, whatever verse immediately preceded, it was usually possible to match, confirm, supplement or balance it with another.

Whether this could have been done with 'What will you do in the swelling of Jordan?' I don't know — unless it could have been 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment'; which might have thrown a small light on the question for some more intelli-

gent Herts villager if not for someone in 'the poorer part of North London'! (A second question 'How shall ye escape the damnation of hell?' might have been thought unsuitable by some.)

Speaking personally and humanly it was this practice that enabled me, an inarticulate mumbler from childhood (if I could bring myself to talk at all), a couple of years later to 'lift up the voice with strength' and I hope with some clarity in preaching (almost reciting!) my first open-air sermonette which was on 1 Tim. 1:15 outside a pub in Colney Heath. Folk seemed to listen; and in cycling home a kind older brother told me he 'thought the Lord had been using me'. Sixty years have passed; but such encouragements are never forgotten.

J. W. Ashby, a revered, solid evangelist and sober minister of the Word in a past generation, said in my hearing that even seemingly foolish things may be well-pleasing if done for the Lord's sake. To refer to an almost invariably misquoted (and perhaps rather misapplied) verse in *Isaiah 55*, let us believe that the Word of God did not return void to Him but accomplished that which He pleased.

Yours sincerely,

W. G. Harris

6 The Green, E. Acton, W3 7PQ.

'Kids and Alcohol'

From Mr. David Hughes

Dear Mr. Coad,

Following my recent article entitled 'Kids and Alcohol' I would just like to briefly comment on the subsequent letter received from Mr. Friston of Cardiff. Whilst appreciating the need for young people to be actively involved and committed to church life, I whole-heartedly endorse Mr. Friston's comments challenging those a little older and wiser within our assemblies to seek to understand in a deeper way the young people with whom we are involved, to relate to them and to bring relevant Biblical teaching on issues which affect their daily lives. It is so true that young people cannot be treated as a race apart as they are in fact the Church of tomorrow. If we isolate and lose our young people then there will be no Church of tomorrow in the future!

I do not believe that one can categorically say that those who are found spending time and money within the pub scene cannot possibly be born again. Certainly I would agree that such young people would be unlikely to present themselves for baptism or to regularly desire to join a Fellowship; because of the very fact that they have moved into the pub scene they are now already very much on the fringe

of the Christian circle and obviously their Christian lives are stagnating and beginning to spiral downwards. In any church where young people are to be found one is almost always able to find also those who having made the genuine commitment have subsequently been caught up in the pub scene. There is certainly a place for Christian leaders to examine the way we care for and involve and integrate the lives of our young people within the body of the church. Mr. Friston's challenge to young people to choose this day whom they will serve is of course one which must be faced by every Christian young or old, and I stand with him in bringing this challenge to the young people. The danger is of course that we as church leaders stand in judgement as to whether a person is really a genuine Christian; so often such young people are met with cold condemnation from the ranks of those within the church and the result is of course they choose to stay within the bounds of tavern life. If however, Christian leaders exercise more of the example of Christ's compassion and love, and do all in their power to maintain contact, welcome back and seek to involve those on the fringe of our Christian community, then I believe again we will see such young people crossing the threshold of our churches, and that flame which is often so dimly burning being re-kindled in the presence of God's people. May all of us strive and pray towards that end that young people may continue to enjoy the abundant life which Jesus Christ so desires for them.

Yours sincerely,

David Hughes

'The Oaks' Youth Club, 57 Tipwood Lane, Caterham, Surrey CR3 6DB

continued from page 16

which also give scope for in-depth teaching and the development of real friendships? Monkton Combe? Greenbelt?)

15. What about boy/girl

relationships? Is the group one in which healthy and relaxed relationships can exist?

16. How can we give group members (collectively and individually) a sense of vocation, and of the missionary challenge?

17. How should we express our care for student members when they are away? And how do we ensure that — without swamping the rest of the group — they feel welcomed back as soon as they return — and know that what they are doing matters to the rest of us?

NEWS PAGE

Africa

1700 churches in the United Kingdom responded to a call by Ugandan Bishop Festo Kivengere to support the Ugandan Orphans and Rebuilding Appeal on Sunday, October 17 1982. The call to British Christians follows an urgent need to assist the 500,000 orphans left behind after the murderous reign of President Idi Amin and to help meet the physical and spiritual needs of the Ugandan people. The Appeal is being mounted in partnership with the Church of Uganda and others.

The needs include practical assistance for families and spiritual instruction aimed at building trust and confidence in many who have seen, firsthand, torture and murder. African Enterprise is continuing to conduct special meetings throughout the country to help Uganda as it seeks to recover its nationhood.

Bishop Kivengere said: 'Whilst there is a great need for material things, many of our people still need a recovery of heart and mind. This is a spiritual thing and will only happen as we teach them the love of God. We hope Christians in Britain will continue to support us as we work to build a better Uganda'.

Bible Colleges

For several decades the Bible and Theological Colleges worked almost independently and to some degree had a tendency towards rivalry. In 1970, under the guidance of Gilbert Kirby (then Principal of London Bible College) a group of principals met together. That small nucleus eventually became the Association of Bible College Principals which meets annually at a different college. The 1981 meeting authorised Derek Copley (appointed as Chairman for 1982-85) to set up a training conference for college tutors. It was recognised that while a proportion of tutors were qualified teachers, many had entered Bible College teaching

with only their background experience as pastors, missionaries and evangelists. Considerable though that may have been, it had not necessarily equipped them adequately for work in the classroom.

While a number of minor co-operative efforts existed like the sharing of notes and tapes, nothing on quite this scale had been planned before. Thus Derek Copley and Michael Griffiths (Principal of London Bible College) invited an international team whose skills and experience would benefit all tutors. The team consisted of Rev. Peter Savage (International Co-ordinator of the Latin American Theological Fraternity), Dr. David Stephens (General Adviser to Leeds Department of Education, with special responsibilities for Religious and Moral Education), and Miss Patricia Harrison (on study leave from the World Evangelical Fellowship).

64 tutors from 17 British and 5 European Colleges met at Moorlands Bible College from September 13th to 17th 1982. Because this conference was the first of its kind in the U.K., the range of skills and topics varied widely from basic lecturing techniques to creative methods of communication, and from course design to improving students' study habits. The vexing but vital question of how to relate what is learnt in theory to the practical realities of the real world was also covered. In their approach to equipping the tutors, the teaching team illustrated a wide variety of communication techniques which could be utilised in the colleges — with plenary lectures, panel discussions and workshops. In the evenings, Michael Griffiths spoke about Christ as the model teacher using the text 'Everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.' (Luke 6:40)

Tutors returned to their colleges having benefitted in several ways. Some would be able to improve their 'straight lectures'

while others would begin to use a much greater variety of methods of equipping their students both inside and outside the classroom. Many would be able to ask themselves the right questions about the how, why and what of the college curriculum as well as knowing more about the process of how a student learns. One added bonus was the unique opportunity for fellowship which resulted in discovering ways of assisting one another rather than working in isolation.

All this added up to a successful conference, whose goal was to better equip tutors to better equip their students, who in turn would more ably serve God in the church worldwide.

Conferences

The Monkton Combe

Conference is now 70 years old — but it looks remarkably young for its age! Times have changed since Professor Rendle Short stood in morning coat to welcome the first Conference members. He might be surprised at the informality of 1982 but he would recognize the serious intent to learn more of Jesus and grow in spiritual maturity that was evident among the young people who attended. This year almost two hundred were present, eager to share together of their gifts and experiences, and to learn from the Lord and from each other.

There was a strong emphasis on the practical outworking of being a Christian. Bible readings by Don Fleming from Daniel indicated the need to stand out and be different from the world, and yet not be isolated from it. Doug Barnett developed this issue in the specific area of relationships in the home, in the church, and between boys and girls. Other aspects of Christian behaviour were discussed in forums and focus groups, using drama to highlight the problems. Many of the young people had come in large groups, notably from Woking, Handsworth, Stourbridge and Cardiff, but

they mixed well together and got to know new people, not least as they shared in music making, swimming and games of all kinds. The missionary emphasis was on how we can be practically involved at home even if we do not go overseas ourselves. We also heard from young people who plan to give a year or more now to some form of Christian work in this country. Did the sun always shine at the first conference in 1912? It seemed to in 1982, which allowed everyone to enjoy fully the beauty of the surroundings at Monkton Combe. The sunshine reminded us of the 'Sonshine' of the Lord Jesus, whose presence was so real amongst us over the weekend.

The Swanwick Women's

Conference has two ex-missionary speakers so that the messages on the theme 'The Greatest of These is Love', were highlighted with wonderful illustrations from life overseas. Mrs. Olive Smyth, Merseyside, contrasted the love of God, which gives, with our love, which needs. She illustrated the difference that love makes in experience and the uselessness of activity without it. Miss Phyllis Thompson, London, spoke on the qualities of love, and challenged the conference with moving stories of people in whom she had seen these. She emphasised that love involved purpose of heart. Other speakers were Mrs. Siegrid Mustow, who told of her Christian counselling work and about neighbourhood coffee mornings, and Mrs. Eleanor Reid, who showed slides and told of a most interesting visit to Indonesia. Mrs. Amy Ginnings's talks on the Provision of God, His Protection and His Peace were illustrated from the life of Joseph, Peter and the (more recent!) life of Lilian Hamer. The final meeting, at which Mrs. G. Darling spoke on the Evidence of Love, brought to an end a Conference to which many had looked forward, and which, in

the purposes of God, will have been a great challenge and blessing. Those who were unable to attend can enjoy something of the message of the Conference through cassettes or tapes from Mr. David Scott, 40 Bakewell Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport, SK7 6JU.

December Student Conference

Young men and women of student age are invited to a Conference to be held at Salford Evangelical Church, Warwickshire, from December 10 to 12. Organized by Jonathan Lamb and Nigel Rees, its subject is *Food for Life* and it will deal with the use of the Bible especially in preaching and teaching and Bible study groups. Among the speakers will be Dr. John Lennox of Cardiff and Robert Scott-Cook. Details from Jonathan Lamb at 18 Kirlow Avenue, Leicester Forest East, Leicester, LE3 3LA.

Evangelising Muslims

More and more Christians are meeting Muslims at work, where they live, or in the neighbourhood of their churches. In order to help Christians relate to Muslims, the Gairdner Trust runs training seminars which will be found helpful by *Harvester* readers. Ron George and his wife have been committed to this ministry from Calverdon Hall, Tunbridge Wells. They were formerly working with Operation Mobilisation and Ron has completed a degree in Islamics and also a teaching diploma from London University. The seminars are suitable for groups of individuals or even a group of churches and might greatly affect the evangelistic work of the church, raise up new workers and deepen prayer understanding. The seminar runs for about 9 hours so that a weekend is an ideal time to hold one. For further information, contact Ron George at the Gairdner Trust, PO Box 26, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. (0892-22729)

Evangelism

Challenge Literature Fellowship are once more offering special material for Christmas distribution. A wide variety of material is available. Details and order forms can be obtained

from Challenge Literature Fellowship, Revenue Buildings, Chapel Road, Worthing, Sussex. BN11 1BQ.

The Emmaus Bible School's Newsletter reports continuing blessing in prisons. One prisoner who found Christ in Strangeways is now involved in youth work at Elfm Church, Middleton. He has led three lads to the Lord in the past month and has encouraged two of them to use Emmaus courses. 'I know the value of these courses because I became a Christian in Strangeways three years ago. Your course gave me a start to studying the Bible... I count it a privilege that the Lord has allowed me to reach these lads.'

The Scottish Counties Evangelistic Movement reports that this summer there were missions at five centres — Tillicoultry, Blairgowrie, Doune, Dalmellington and Douglas. Some ran for three weeks and others for two. Seven evangelists worked with SCEM this year — P. Brandon, J. Cadzow, A. Carew, A. Bathgate, G. Smith, J. Bathgate and P. Ferry. SCEM does not like to count heads but there is great encouragement in that over 70 professions of faith were made. Weekly/monthly follow-up work is now continuing in most of these places with Bible study and on-going correspondence courses. The 1982 Audio/Visual Report of the summer's work with SCEM will be available from the end of October. For details, telephone 0698-282825.

Müller Homes

What would George Müller have said if somebody had raised with him the possibility of his orphanage ministry 'gradually drawing to a close'. Yet this is the prospect and vision in the Annual Report of the Homes. 'For some years it has been apparent to us that our residential work among children is gradually drawing to a close. Poverty, as it existed in Mr. Müller's day, is happily no longer with us, so that children have not been placed into care for many years past because of poverty, but rather from bad home conditions or broken homes. Local authorities now prefer that children in need be fostered rather than placing them in Family Group Homes for

residential care; hence we are not receiving children to fill vacancies at the rate they are leaving us.'

People sometimes forget that the Scriptural Knowledge Institution that Müller founded in 1834 had four objects: (1) To assist day schools, Sunday schools and adult schools in which instruction was given upon Scriptural principles. (2) To put the children of poor persons into such day schools in order that they may be instructed in the ways of the Lord, besides learning those things which are necessary for this life. (3) To circulate the Holy Scriptures, and (4) to aid in supplying the needs of missionaries and missionary schools.

So far as these objectives are still relevant nearly 150 years later, the Scriptural Knowledge Institution continues to work along these lines. Gifts are sent to missionaries, there is an impressive work in Christian literature, carried on through the main shop in Bristol and another in Bath.

'We are also seeking the mind of the Lord in regard to the needs of elderly believers. If this is the way we should take, we shall seek to establish another Charity entitled "The Müller Homes for Elderly Believers". We shall be guided in this matter by seeing how many friends are likely to need such help, and also to see whether the Lord directs funds for this purpose to us. We commenced "Day Care" in Weston a couple of years ago, and this has gone ahead so well that we are now considering another centre in Weston and a centre in Bristol possibly in the Southmead area. We are finding some difficulty in locating suitable premises. We have two vacant premises in Bristol, but these are both in the wrong areas and unsuitable for the purpose in mind. We are, therefore, hoping to dispose of these houses, using the proceeds to further the purposes mentioned. The Report contains news from all over the world and should make fascinating reading for many subscribers to the *Harvester*.

Nationalism and Worship

Following the controversy about the Falklands Service in St. Paul's, a letter has appeared in the *Church Times* pointing out that Archbishop William Temple gave a good deal of thought to

the question of a victory service for the end of the Second World War. In letter to the Bishop of Southwell he wrote on July 12 1944 (*Some Lambeth Letters*, no. 137): 'I should dearly like it to start with a penitential introduction... for our share in the whole sin of the world after which come the calamities which afflict mankind... It should be as penitents that we offer our thanksgiving and our dedication, which must always be the final expression of thanksgiving... Two years ago, the Prime Minister [Sir Winston Churchill] asked me about using the word "humiliation" in connection with national days of prayer. He was strongly in favour of it... In another letter Temple observes: 'If we pray as our Lord taught us, we are never praying against each other because we are always praying not that what we want shall be done but that which God wants shall be done, and that we may be used for doing it.'

Radio

Christian Broadcast Training did not open its new Training Centre in Newmarket on October 1. One reason was an invitation for Rupert Neve to lead a Missionary Retreat and Radio Workshop in Ecuador, following other meetings in Quito in late September. Another is a time of financial testing which, after extensive re-evaluation of projects, has resulted in a shortfall of some £60,000. Gifts or interest-free loans will be especially welcomed from all who understand the strategic importance of training for radio work.

The Quichua Church in Ecuador now owns a radio station. Half of the converts reported this year say that their first contact with the Gospel came through radio. Among those who came to Christ through contact with radio in former years is one who founded a church in his own village from which five more churches have grown in the same valley. They are sending out missionaries into other areas where their dialect is spoken. Since the people are almost illiterate, they depend largely upon the radio station for Bible readings.

Relief

Tear Fund has recently extended its publications for young

people. *Tearaways* is aimed at 5 to 11 year olds and presents aspects of Third World concern in an exciting and interesting way to capture children's imagination and encourage their active involvement. There are pictures to colour, activities to do, ideas to discuss. The magazine is free but a 50p subscription secures enrolment as a 'Tearaway' with badge, sticker, membership card, Tearaway pen and a copy of *Tearaways* or *On Target* twice a year. *On Target* is also free. It is a thought-provoking and fun-packed broadsheet aimed at 11 to 15 year olds. It opens out into an attractive poster, contains lively articles and plenty of ideas. It appears in February and September. Write to Sue Shaw, Tear Fund, 11 Station Road, Teddington, Middx. TW11 9AA.

Scripture Union

Armin Hoppler, the Swiss former textile manufacturer who became SU's first International Secretary, died on August 20 at his home in Winterthur in German-speaking Switzerland at the age of 71. When Armin became SU's International Secretary in 1961, he was

pioneering a new rôle from his base in Switzerland. Up to 1961 SU's London headquarters had been regarded as the world headquarters of the movement, which is now active in 88 countries. Armin was succeeded by Nigel Sylvester in 1976. Armin was also Chairman of SU's European Council from 1956 until early this year and he was for several years a very active member of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.

Unemployment

A number of Charity Trusts have made it possible to establish a bursar fund at the Mouthlock Christian Teaching Centre. Any temporarily unemployed persons who feel that they have gifts of evangelism are eligible to attend a training seminar at the Centre. Courses are for one week from Monday to Friday and £25 of the normal £75 cost is paid from the Bursary Fund. The course covers three areas of evangelism: 'The Language of Communication' — how to talk about the Christian faith in words which make sense to the non-church person; 'Building Bridges' — from where people really are, to where the

church really is, and 'Audio/Visual Techniques' — in our modern world we must use vision as well as sound and professional training is given in the use of an overhead projector. S.A.E. for full details and booking form to Mouthlock Christian Teaching Centre, Barras, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria CA17 4ES.

Zimbabwe

Controversy has developed in Zimbabwe about Christian attitudes to African traditional worship. Roman Catholic Archbishop Patrick Chakaipa, although he rejects the rôle of the witch doctors and spirit mediums, has a more positive attitude to the ideal of respect for the dead which forms such an important part of traditional worship. Arguing that the people do not believe their ancestors created the world, he claims that not ancestor worship but respect is involved in traditional African religion. The Anglican Archbishop, Peter Hatendi has spoken against 'rice Christians' who have one foot in one camp and the other in a second. 'Traditional worship and Christianity cannot be

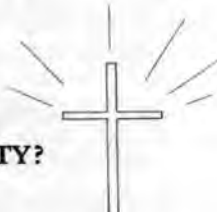
reconciled', he asserted. Inevitably, the Roman Catholic Archbishop's position (which could be interpreted as a syncretistic compromise) gains the approval of the authorities. His attitude to traditional worship has not made many friends for the Anglican Archbishop. However the *Catholic Herald* recognizes that the Catholic Archbishop's attitude raises its own problems. 'Convincing the Zimbabwean man in the bush that he is not worshipping his ancestors, only venerating them, has difficulties analogous to convincing a member of the Protestant Truth Society that Catholics do not worship Mary but only venerate her.' Prime Minister Robert Mugabe finds no such difficulty: 'I don't see any contradiction between Christianity and traditional religion. One prays to the saints for intercession . . . in traditional religion, it is through ancestral spirits. But both are spirits, surely?'

Home Calls

Eric Hutchings on September 21, 1982, at his home in Eastbourne. A memorial



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thanksgiving service is to be held in London.

Many thousands will remember Eric Hutchings for his large scale crusades in the cities of Great Britain in the 1950s and 60s. These concluded in mammoth finales in FA football stadiums when about a thousand would come forward for counselling at the appeal to come to Christ. Eric was supported by a team outstandingly talented in music and song. France and Belgium also became fields for his fluent French preaching. Since 1960 his evangelism extended to South Africa, Australia and the East.

The 1970s saw his 'Call to the Nation back to God' and 'Deeper Life'. Throughout these decades, thousands found Christ and maturer dedication, including many outstanding conversions. In April 1982 he launched a Revival Prayer Crusade at St. Paul's, Portman Square, London.

His radio ministry began in 1953 when he was the first British evangelist to launch evangelistic broadcasts. These were extended to a network around the world. He gave them a sparkle and relevancy which captured the attention and provoked thousands of letters even from remote countries, some seeking salvation and others a solution to problems personal or intellectual. 'He, though dead, still speaks' for the broadcasts still continue, supported by the gifts of the listeners, and prayer supporters, of the Hour of Revival Association, founded by Dr. Hutchings.

His International Daily News Bulletin was remarkable for its insights into the news behind the news, recalling the true significance of events, and

giving informed replies to secularist propaganda. Committed to a fully biblical gospel and theology, yet in the breadth of love he sought to serve the whole church, and received a wide support denominationally and in churchmanship. British evangelists have not found it easy to survive, but he had a great faith in a great God, and was wonderfully supported by his wife Mary and by his staff in Eastbourne.

The Hour of Revival Association continues under the presidency of Sir Cyril Black, and chairmanship of Preb. Victor Pearce, with the ministry of the Rev. Derek Cook.

Helen Rodger on September 25 aged 57, wife of Capt. Stuart Rodger. There are many in this country and Australia who will gladly acknowledge a real debt of gratitude for the loving concern and practical care shown them by Helen. It was typical of her that this 'Christlike' quality of complete unselfishness persisted throughout the long months of her final illness. Her early years were spent in Ayr, but after marriage she and her husband resided in Edinburgh and Kingston-on-Thames before moving in 1972 to Melbourne. In each place they will be remembered for the enthusiasm with which they engaged in the work of God. In her modesty she would be surprised, but in her simplicity delighted to be able to say (borrowing St. Paul's word) 'they praised God because of me'. But while praising God for her, let us not forget Stuart and the family, as also her brother and sister-in-law Mr. and Mrs. Willie Morrison of Falkirk. They need, as they deserve, our prayers.

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STEWARDSHIP

Home Workers Fund:
Equity House, 450 Hackney Road, London E2 6QL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during September amounted to £453.21.

Missionaries' Children's Fund:
29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during September amounted to £333.73.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received during the months of August and September amounted to £2,563.78 and £3,112.19 respectively.

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, B.:
Southampton 2-8; Falmouth 9-13; St. Austell 14; St. Ives 20; Redruth 21; Falmouth 22-30.

Clifford, D. L.:
Nassau, Bahamas and Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Galyer, W. S.:
POCA (London) 3; Bush Hill Park 3, 10, 28; Forest Gate 4, 11, 18, 25; Fleet 7; Kingston 14; Wembley 21; Staines 17, 24.

Gillham, S.:
Lyme Regis 1-5; West Moors 4, 11, 18, 25; West Moors and Ebenezer Hall, Weymouth 7; Dorset Regional Fellowship 8; Dorset Senior House Party 12-14; Charnminster Chapel, Bournemouth 19; Heatherlands Church, Parkstone 21, 22, 28,

29; Strouden Chapel, Bournemouth 24; Dorset Camp Reunion 27.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Redhill, Surrey 3; Clint Green, Norfolk 21; Poringland, Norfolk 24; Ringland, Norfolk 29.

Iliffe, D. J.:
Credon 1; Porthcawl 6; Haven School of Evangelism 7-30.

Loader, G.:
Polytech., Bristol 2; Belmont Chapel, Exeter 7-8; Weston-Super-Mare 11; Bristol University Rally 13; Chard, Coombe Street 14; Zetland Hall, Bristol 21; Bath 27.

Pierce, D. H.:
France 1-12; Puddington 28. Rest of month Barnstaple.

Short, S. S.:
Pinner 1, 8, 15, 22; Romford 2, 9, 16, 23; Berkhamsted 3, 10, 17, 24; Reigate 4, 11, 18; Walthamstow 7; Weston-Super-Mare 14, 25; Brentwood 19; Hornchurch 21; Southampton 28; Hutton, Avon 29; Lockleaze, Bristol 30.

Stringer, D.:
Rugby 1-6; Bournemouth 7-30; Letchworth 13.

Tatford, F. A.:
Paisley 1, 2; Bandon, Eire 5-12; Dun Laoghaire 13-21; Bray, Dublin, Greystones 22-30.

Thurston, A.:
Ashburton 1-4; Dartmoor Prison 5; Ashburton/Chillington 7; Ashburton 8-11; Dartmoor Prison 12; Ashburton/Dartmouth 14; Ashburton 15-19; Torr Hall, Torquay 16; Dartmoor Prison 20; Dawlish/Ashburton 21; Ashburton 22-25; Newton Abbot 23; Dartmoor Prison 26; Ashburton/Kingsbridge 28; Ashburton 29, 30; Newton Abbot 30.

Tryon, G. C.:
Carshalton 1; E. Sheen 3, 10,

17, 24, 28; Hampstead 7; Tooting 13; Eltham Park 14; Staines 21; Balham 28; Kingston 30.

Widdison, P. J.:
Birchfield, Birmingham 2, 3, 9, 10; Florence St. Swindon 4; James St. Oxford 7, 20; London Colney 14; Cheltenham 15; Vernham Dean 16, 23, 30; Swindon, Penhill 17; Tilehurst 21; Victoria Road, High Wycombe 26; Chesham 28.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Boscombe:
Drummond Hall, Drummond Road, by kind permission. Saturday, December 4 at 7 p.m. Conversational Bible Readings. The Epistles to Timothy (1 Tim. 6). Speaker: A. E. Phillips (W. Moors).

Brierfield:
Hebron Hall, Walter Street. Saturday Evening Rallies, 7 p.m. November 6, Speaker: C. Cavanagh, Manchester; November 20, Speaker J. Knight, Chandlers Ford.

Carlisle:
Morton Park Hall. Annual Conference, Saturday, November 6 at 3 & 6 p.m. Speakers: S. Downes, Harrogate and E. Hughes, Liverpool.

Colyton:
The Gospel Hall, The Butts. Bible Study, Saturday November 27. The Reprobate Man (Romans 1:18-22). Speaker: A. Wiseman, Northampton.

Croxley Green:
Fuller Hall, Fuller Way. Meeting Saturday, November 13 at 7 p.m. Speaker: C. Phillips.

Dumbarton:
Lennox Evangelical Church, Risk Street. Conference on the theme 'The Challenge of a Changing World'. November 6

at 3.30 p.m. Speakers: J. Cadzow, R. McLuckie, P. Ferry.

London City Mission:
175 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2AH. One day Conference on 'The Cults', November 4. Speaker: Eric Clarke, Christian Information Outreach. 'Christ for the Capital', November 11. Special evening designed for Teens & Twenties. 'Youth Alive Weekend', November 26-28. Training & Action in Evangelism.

Luton:
Onslow Road Gospel Hall, Vincent Road, Leagrave. Saturday, November 20. Ministry 4-5 p.m. Conversational Bible Readings 6.30-8 p.m. Further Studies in the Life and Times of Joseph: Reconciliation Complete (Genesis 45). Speaker: A. Cundick, Cobham.

Maidenhead:
Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road. Monthly Conference, November 6, 6.30-7.30 p.m. Address, Refreshments, 8.15-9.00 p.m. Discussion. Subject: The Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1-16) — The ideal citizen. Speaker: R. Catchpole, Frinton.

West Ealing, W.13:
Dean Hall, Williams Road. Conference, Saturday, November 13 at 6 p.m. Speakers: W. G. Owen, London City Mission and A. Forster, Langley.

Press Day, Monday, November 8 for Displayed Advertisements, Prayer List, Forthcoming Events and news items. (Please send direct to the Publisher at 3 Mount Radford Crescent, Exeter EX2 4JW).

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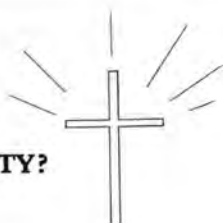
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CHRISTIAN
BRETHREN
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The HARVESTER

INCORPORATING 'THE WITNESS'

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Cover picture: *The Nativity: St Peter Mancroft, Norwich*
Sonia Halliday and Laura Lushington

Editorial

With this issue it falls to the Editor to wish his readers once again a happy and spiritually blessed Christmas, and a New Year that will bring with it further tokens of the faithful care of our Father God. To the Christian those are no merely formal greetings, but expressions of realities that will surely be fulfilled, whatever the circumstances of our individual futures. Death itself has been overcome by our victorious Lord, and every suffering and every joy that we experience He shares and enters with us. If God be for us, who can be against us?

The issue marks also the completion of ten years' of service by the present Editor. In comparison with the long years of Dr. Tatford's labour, they are but a short period: but they have been eventful and interesting years, marked by fellowship — by pen and correspondence, though alas not in person — with many new friends. As for his predecessor, it is good to know that Dr. Tatford is not only still with us, but that his pen is as active as ever. This issue contains a short review of the first of a mammoth series of books from his pen, specially commissioned by the editors of *Echoes of Service* to record the history of mission work in fellowship with those editors. A small bird has whispered to the Editor that already Dr. Tatford is well through with several volumes in succession to the one now published (and to those who know his seemingly inexhaustible capacity for accomplishment, that will come as no surprise) — but that the speed with which subsequent volumes appear on the market will depend on the response of the purchasing public. So here is a very practical hint to those who are still looking for Christmas gift ideas!

As for ourselves, we look forward to continued acquaintance, not only with our present readers, but to a considerable number of new ones as well. The New Year will bring with it news of a number of interesting changes to **The Harvester**: changes which will, we hope, lead to increased usefulness to our readers, and possibly some improvement in the production difficulties that have led to a number of late despatches during the past year, and consequent hindrance to those of our readers who have wished to contribute to our readers' features. For those problems, we apologise. Please keep your letters and other contributions coming!

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

John Peters

A brief meditation for the Christmas season

Shakespeare asked:

What's in a name? That which we call a rose,
By any other name would smell as sweet
(*Romeo & Juliet*)

To John Newton there was clearly a great deal in one particular name:

How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear!

In this paper we shall consider, briefly, the majestic name of JESUS.

Seven hundred years before His birth Isaiah proclaimed the stupendous promise:

'Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel' (7:14) or in the words of Isaac Watts:

Hosanna to the royal son
Of David's ancient line!
His natures two, his person one,
Mysterious and divine.

The root of David, here we find,
And offspring, are the same:
Eternity and time are joined
In our Immanuel's name.

Later in the book of Isaiah: 'For unto us a son is born . . . The Prince of Peace' (9:6). The same theme is taken up by the Gospel writers, for example Matthew: 'And she shall bring forth a son and shall call his name JESUS' (1:21). Luke in a corresponding section amplifies the angel's prediction by adding, 'He shall be great' (2:32,3). Both Old and New Testament writers agree that there's a deep and abiding significance in the name of 'Jesus', something which Peter alluded to in his sermon when, together with John, he was brought before the council (Acts 4:10-12). In fact, the apostles had

been arraigned by the Jewish religious leaders precisely because they 'taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead' (Acts 4:2). To Paul, thinking of the debasement and exaltation of the Lord Jesus (Phil. 2:5-11: a section possibly sung as a hymn originally), the name of Jesus 'was above every name', and that at this name 'every name shall bow', an event to be fulfilled in the future. Adding these scriptures to a large number of others it is apparent that the name 'Jesus' is of the greatest possible importance, for it is the name:

(1) Of the Son whose birth was designed and ordained by God (*Isaiah* 7-9), a thought which captured the poetic imagination of Charles Wesley:

Glory be to God on high,
And Peace on Earth descend:
God comes down: He bows the Sky:
He shows himself our Friend!
God th'Invisible *appears*,
God the Blest, the Great I AM
Sojourns in this Vale of Tears,
and JESUS is his Name.

...
We the Sons of Men rejoice,
The Prince of Peace proclaim,
With Heaven's Host lift up our Voice,
And shout *Immanuel's* Name;
Knees and Hearts to Him we bow;
Of our Flesh, and of our Bone
JESUS is our Brother now,
And GOD is All our own!

(2) For Salvation (*Acts* 4:12; 16:18)

(3) For Baptism (*Acts* 2:38).

(4) With Supreme Authority (*Mat.* 28:18)

(5) Which motivates Christians (*Phil.* 2:13)

(6) Which demands our obedience and allegiance:

All hail the power of Jesus' name;
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

(*Edward Perronet, 1725-92*)

(7) For prayer:

By Thee my prayers acceptance gain,
Although with sin defiled;
Satan accuses me in vain
And I am own'd a Child.

(*John Newton, 1725-1807*)

Such is the Biblical — and poetic — view of the name 'Jesus', and the simple answer to Shakespeare's question is that this name at least has a warmth, a felicity, and an intrinsic quality we ought to meditate upon with serious intent.

PROFESSOR BRUCE ASKS

Having regard to the Brethren's original principles of communion, I find it strange that after some time the idea should have taken root among them that one believer or one company of believers is entitled to forbid others to share the Lord's Supper with them. How did this idea establish itself? And (more importantly) on what scriptural grounds is it justified today? Am I right in thinking that all who profess the Christian faith are equally welcome with myself to participate in the Lord's Supper — assuming that neither their profession nor mine is flatly belied in action or word? If I am wrong, what scriptural teaching am I contravening?

Correspondence, please, to the Editor at 18 Kings Avenue, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 4NX by 15 December.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER: A COMMAND TO CHRISTIANS

R. E. Anderson and B. S. Harris

Two assembly 'full time workers' contribute a study born of their own experience, as an urgent message to close the year.

In our recent experience we have heard this statement being used very freely among Christians, and have wondered what many of them really understood by it. Consequently we were exercised to investigate it in the light of scripture. Often phrases from the Bible are used by us without there first being that very necessary exercise of mind as to what the statements really mean, and often we lack the sensitivity as to the right and proper use of them.

The statement of command was made by the Lord Jesus (*John 15:12*) in the context of our abiding in Him. In this chapter He has given certain injunctions to His people. He has exhorted us to: 'abide' (*vv.5,6*), 'bring forth fruit' (*vv.2,4 and 5*), and 'keep His commandments' (*v.10*). The keeping of His commandments appears to be the evidence of our abiding in His Love. This love He commands is to be expressed by us to each other — 'love one another'.

How Did He Love Us?

In an attempt to discover the nature of God's love in Christ we turned to the Gospel narrative.

Matthew

Matthew opens his gospel with an account of the Birth of Christ. He speaks of that birth as being profound yet humble. God coming as a man to live amongst men; what love! The Evangelist speaks of the teaching ministry of the Lord, a ministry which has a deep-reaching effect upon the lives of believers and demands from them total obedience to the Divine Teacher. We felt that even the demanding Sermon on the Mount was an expression of the love of Christ, for it

teaches believers the nature of His Kingdom and how we should live in that Kingdom. The Lord Jesus never demanded of His people a way of life but what He, himself, had followed. To allow Him, in the person of the Holy Spirit, to live His life in our lives (*Gal.2:20*) will mean that our lives are an expression of the love of God to men as was His.

Matthew covers much ground in speaking of the works of Christ, works which are in themselves expressions of God's love to men. He speaks of:

1. *The Restorative Nature of His Love.* Expressed very forcibly for us in His healing ministry. The Lord Jesus, in healing men and women, restored them to wholeness, and also to a right relationship with God.

2. *The Forgiving Nature of His Love.* Not only does the Lord cure the man sick of the palsy (*Ch. 9:2*), but in the context of the healing also brings forgiveness. Indeed it was the forgiveness which the Lord pronounced upon the man which caused consternation. What love is expressed in His ability to forgive sinners! A love which will eventually take Him to Calvary to die upon a cross.

3. *The Caring Nature of His Love.* What loving care is shown us in the words of the Lord Jesus in *Ch.11:28-30*. What statements concerning His own nature. What a declaration of His own heart. How lovely that when burdened with the cares and responsibilities of this life, the believer can find rest in Him: rest which comes from the very heart of God (*v.28*). 'No-one ever cared for me like Jesus'.

4. *The Supplying Nature of His Love.* Paul speaks of God's ability as an all supplying God (*Phil.4:19*). Jesus reveals that ability when He feeds both the five thousand (*ch. 14:16-21*) and the four thousand (*ch. 15:33-38*). One point of interest is that in both accounts the Lord directed His disciples as to their involvement in the feeding of these people.

What practical expressions of the Love of God do we have here! How thankful these people would be. In informing us as to how Christ loved us, Matthew along with each of the Gospel writers takes us to see the ultimate in terms of love. He speaks of the death of the Lord Jesus. He informs us of the shame which Jesus endured for us: the treatment by Pilate (*ch. 27:24-26*), the treatment by the soldiers (*ch.27:27-32*), the treatment by the people (*ch. 27:39-40*), the treatment by the Jewish hierarchy (*ch.27:41-43*), the treatment by the thieves (*ch.27:44*) and the treatment by God (*v.46*). Matthew brings the whole proceedings to a close with these profound words 'Jesus gave up the ghost' (*v.50*). What amazing love! Matthew teaches another aspect of the nature of the Love of Christ for us when, speaking at the Supper (*ch.26:26-29*), he introduces the subject of the Body of Christ and shows the uniting nature of God's love, that is the uniting of believer to believer in the bonds of the death of Christ.

Mark

We learn from Mark a different emphasis of the love of Christ, but in saying that we mean that Mark has widened our view of that love. We wish to emphasise four points which we feel show the love of Christ as Mark appreciated it.

1. *It was a Sending Love.* In the second verse of his first chapter Mark, quoting the prophet Isaiah (*ch.40:3*) speaks of the coming of the Lord. Mark speaks of Jesus being sent — 'behold I send my messenger'. God's love was expressed in the sending of Jesus. What profound love; God sending His own Son, a sending which would of necessity conclude with Jesus dying for those to whom He was sent.

2. *It was a Sympathising Love.* The sympathy of Jesus is first shown in *ch. 2:9* — the raising of the man with palsy —

an account already referred to by Matthew; but between *chs. 2 and 14* there are a whole list of incidents which show to us the sympathy of the Lord. Some examples are as follows —

1. *Ch. 3:15* — a beautifully sympathetic touch. The disciples are given power to heal sickness and cast out devils. The Lord encourages sympathy for others in the disciples' ministry.

2. *Ch. 4:39* — How sympathetic of Jesus to calm the seas when the fearful disciples speak of perishing.

3. *Ch. 5:8* — An untameable man, slowly destroying himself because of his condition, finds that Jesus can cast out the unclean Spirit from his life. What sympathy!

4. *Ch. 6:37-41* — A multitude have followed Him, they have been with Him for some considerable time; the day was coming to an end and these had nothing to eat. What sympathy — that Jesus should be aware of this and take the necessary steps to alleviate the problem.

5. *Ch. 7:1-9* — The Pharisees had found fault with Jesus' disciples because of their eating with unwashed hands. What sympathy for the disciples is shown by the Lord in His answer to the Pharisees.

6. *Ch. 9:25* — A distressed father brings to Jesus his son, possessed of a dumb spirit. Jesus talks with the man, and learns of the nature of the problem. What a revelation of the sympathy of the Lord is shown in His treatment of the care of the boy.

7. *Ch. 10:14* — 'Take your children away' say the disciples, rebuking those mothers who had brought the little ones to Jesus. In His reaction to the disciples Jesus shows such sympathy for the children and, indeed, for the mothers themselves.

8. *Ch. 12:43* — It was collection time in the Temple — the rich had cast in much — the widow cast in the seventh part of one piece of money, very little by comparison, but her casting in of her all drew the sympathy of the Lord.

9. *Ch. 14:72* — What sympathy will be shown to Peter by the Lord when Peter having denied Jesus will weep bitterly. Will Jesus condemn His servant? No, but he will work for Peter's restoration and blessing.

3. *It was a Suffering Love* — (*Ch. 15*). Spoken of five times in the chapter as the King of the Jews and once as the King of Israel (*v.32*), the Lord Jesus is nevertheless crucified by His own people — (*v.25*). Whatever the nature of His physical sufferings were, and there has been much said about them, the suffering of the Lord must be understood in a much deeper context than that. The

words of *v. 34* penetrate our very beings. He, as the Divine Sin-bearer was forsaken by God. The nature of His suffering will never be totally understood by us. How awful that He, who had known communion with God, which had always remained unbroken, should, in hanging there, be forsaken. Why was it? Paul answers our question, when in writing to the Romans he says — 'The death of Christ was the commendation of the love of God toward us' (*Rom.5:8*). No believer should ever be able to meditate upon these facts without his heart being broken.

4. *It is a Seated Love* — (*Ch. 16:19*). The resurrection and ascension of the Lord of necessity must precede the coming of the Holy Spirit (*John 16:7, Acts.2:31-33*). The One who died to save us is the One who was raised to give His life to us (*Rom.5:5*). The gift of the Holy Spirit is an evidence of the love of God and a pledge of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory (*Eph. 1:14 N. Am. St. Version*).

For lack of space, we jump over to John's Gospel to find further understanding of the love of Christ to us. We are not, of course, implying that there is a lack of evidence for His love in Luke's Gospel. Indeed the ground which Luke in the main covers will have already been covered by the other writers.

John

What has John to say about the love of the Lord to us?

1. *The Divine Nature of His Love* (*Ch. 1:14-18*) — God, who cannot be comprehended by sinful man, is in the person of the Lord Jesus brought out where He might be seen.

2. *The Revealing Nature of His Love* (*Ch. 1:19 - Ch. 4:54*) — The love of God being revealed to an ever-widening circle of men as the Lord makes known to them the truth of God.

3. *The Dividing Nature of His Love* (*Ch. 6:66*) — His love never compromised the truth. Because of the nature of the teaching many of His disciples (*Gr. mathētes* — taught and trained one — see Youngs' Ann. Conc.) I went back and walked with Him no more. His love, which causes us to keep His commandments, divides us from those who do not walk with Him.

4. *The Secure Nature of His Love* (*Ch. 19:28-30*) — Our security lies in the fact that He is secure in the Father and that we are hidden in Him — (*Col. 3:3*). Our security in Him is an evidence of His love for us.

5. *The Comforting Nature of His Love* (*Ch. 14-16*) — Distraught disciples, worried at the news of His departure (*Ch. 13:31-33*), need the reassuring comfort of His ministry to them. His promise of the Holy Spirit expresses the comforting nature of His Love. He will not leave them comfortless. How glad we are for the Holy Spirit's presence and ministry in our own lives. What reassurance He gives to us — how constantly we are reminded of the Lord's love to us through the dealings of the Spirit of God with us. John, of course, will, along with the other Evangelists, emphasise the Dying love of Christ, and will show that love to be proved by the Lord's death. We have already covered that ground in both Matthew and Mark, and indeed from each of these three writers have shown what the scriptures mean by the statement in *John 15:12*, 'As I have loved you'.

Having looked at the nature of the love of Christ to men what should be our response to each other?

This question, suggested quite naturally in view of His love to us, caused us to concentrate on that majestic chapter *1 Cor. 13*. We felt Paul to be emphasising exactly what Divine love was and also what our response to it should be with regard to all other believers.

Paul emphasised two statements initially:

1. Gift without love is worthless — *vv. 1-2*

2. Sacrifice without love is worthless — *v.3*.

The *New American Standard* and the *New International Version* have 'Love is patient, love is kind,' while the *Amp. Bible* has 'Love endures long and is patient and kind'. *J. N. Darby* has 'Love has long patience and is kind'. *Revised Standard Version* states 'Love is patient and kind'. The *Jerusalem Bible* has 'Love is always patient and kind', whilst *Moffatt* puts it as 'Love is very patient, very kind'.

From what we learned in reading each of these translations we saw something of the very demanding nature of love; We saw:-

1. *Love Demands Patience and Kindness*; a need for continuing patience is implied. Patience and kindness are linked together, a most difficult combination to practice.

2. *Love is not Jealous* (*v.4*) — The *New American Standard Version* has a lovely statement here. It says 'Love does not boil over with jealousy'. Jealousy is often the reason for breakdown in Christian relationships. It is not a mark of love. The

Spirit guards our minds and hearts over these matters.

3. *Love Vaunteth Not Itself* (v.4) — Love does not brag, it is not arrogant, it does not boast. It is not vainglorious neither does it display itself haughtily. What conviction comes to us as we investigate and meditate upon such words. We find ourselves standing in great need of help from the Lord in these matters. The Lord Jesus made Himself of no reputation (*Phil. Ch.2*). John the Baptist said 'I must decrease that He may increase.' Often instead of loving we have been guilty of using situations to make way for ourselves. No wonder we know so little of the meaning of Jesus' words (*John 15:12*).

4. *Love Does Not Behave Itself Unseemly* (v.5) — It is not conceited, it is not rude. It does not act in a disgraceful manner. How we ought to bring in subjection to the Lord our dealings with each other, not simply in the area of what we say to each other, but also in the manner of our behaviour one to another. If love is never rude to the one loved it should never be rude about the one loved.

5. *Love Seeks Not Her Own* (v.5) — Love is disinterested in self and only ever seeks the interest of the other. It never has self-seeking ambition. *The Amplified Bible* has it that love does not insist on its own rights or on its own way. In a society where the rights of the individual are

always being emphasised, particularly in the political sense, it is obviously very difficult not to insist upon one's right even among other believers, but that appears to be the pathway of love, and certainly was the pathway which Jesus followed whilst here among men.

6. *Love Is Not Easily Provoked*. — Love does not get angry easily. Love is not touchy, resentful or fretful, but neither must love be reduced to mere sentiment. Love must occasionally challenge; love must ever be linked with truth — these two can never be divided. Love ceases to be love when it sacrifices the truth in order to maintain respectability or relationships. May we explain what we mean by this statement.

Around the country, in many areas, we are seeing groups of believers separating from others, people leaving fellowships. When this kind of thing happens the general consensus of opinion is that those who have left are unloving, reactionary, sometimes rude and very wrong. The accusation has been made that those who have removed consider those left to be somewhat inferior to themselves. Is this always the case? Is it not possible that we might have become so entrenched in our theological position, that any challenge to that position or any questioning of the truth which we hold is seen by us as a threat to our security, and consequently draws from

us reactions which cause others to go from us, a situation which we then have to justify from our own point of view? We could, of course, continue this article by explaining what is meant by the different statements used in following verses. We refrain from doing so for we feel we have been brought to the point which has long been upon our hearts; that is, what does God want of His people — and are we prepared as the Bible-loving folk we profess to be to return to His word, put to one side our own feelings, and seek in the Scriptures the truth as to what God wants both in our lives as individuals and in our life together as believers?

The challenge to our own lives which we wish to convey to you all is this — do we really long for renewal? Are we prepared for God's blessing on God's terms? If so then must Judgment begin at the House of God (*1 Peter 4:17*).

The whole question of loving one another is most important for the life of the Church just now. *A deep concern for each other as people must govern our whole outlook*. The world needs to see this expression of the love of God among us, as the evidence to them of the reality of our faith. The Lord restore this joy to us, so that that growth and increase we long for may be quickly brought about!

AN APOLOGY

May we apologise, yet again, to readers who have been receiving their HARVESTER too late in the month?

The Problem

Our Editor lives in South London. Our typesetter is in Torquay. Our printer is in Tiverton, and we are situated in Exeter. We work to a 30 working day production schedule. We do our utmost to ensure that material moves between the four bases of operation as swiftly as possible, and each month the editorial and production team perform what amounts to a miracle! But with so many working days spent 'in transit', delays are inevitable, and the 'machine ready copy' too often reaches the printer a day or two late.

Maslands do a remarkably swift job of printing and binding. We almost always have our copies here in Exeter before the end of the month. But there are problems with despatch. We had a note, for example, from a friend in Hertfordshire whose parcel of the October issue was postmarked October 12 but who had not received it until October 20! The period from October 12 to 20 is not our responsibility, but the period from October 1 to 12 gives us considerable cause for concern!

The Solution

Our working relationship with our friends at Tiverton is far too happy for us to wish to disturb it to the point of no return! We therefore have to work out a way of shortening the 'despatch time' together. (Although installing our computer will be of some help, its benefits lie within our organization rather than outside.)

An obvious possibility would be to start our monthly production schedule earlier. As it is, the production schedule for the December issue started on Monday, October 18, and we think that's quite early enough, especially for a magazine with a news page.

Please bear with us while we find a solution to this problem. There is good reason for saying that we shall do so to the extent that by this time next year you may well be receiving your copies of **The Harvester** before the end of the month prior to that of publication. That is our aim — please be patient with us while we realize it.

TRANSLATING THE BIBLE INTO ENGLISH (6)

A. S. Duthie

Translating the meanings of concepts

Can translations be accurately made in word-for-word form? Dr Duthie now turns to examine this question, and in so doing presents us with further insight into the way we read our Bibles.

Translations like NWT, Concordant, Young, JND, etc. are so literal or word-for-word (see section 2) that the reader often fails to get the meaning at all, especially in a generally difficult passage. It is very unlikely that one word of one language can always be translated by a single word of another language (though the Concordant Literal Version is a grotesque attempt to do so). Even Young, who criticises KJV for using 67 different English words to translate one Hebrew word (*ntn*) himself has to use 10 different words in his *Literal Version*.

What the translator must do is understand the *meaning* of the original message as it stands (or as it may be reconstructed by textual criticism, see section 5) and then translate it.

The basic semantic unit of reference, by which we categorize our experience of the world, can be termed a *concept*. Each culture has its own concepts named by the words of the language. If two cultures are relatively similar, there will be a lot of overlap between their respective concepts and the words for these concepts (eg. English, French). Since the cultures of ancient Hebrew, etc. and modern English are not so similar, we find relatively less overlap of concepts and of words.

One of the two basic classes of concept may be termed *things*, typically represented in languages by nouns and pronouns; eg. table, woman, village, Israel, it, we. If a concept is concrete and

common to all cultures, then it can usually be translated easily; eg. table, woman. But 'you singular' and 'you plural', always expressed differently in Hebrew and in Greek, may be confused in a modern English translation (NWT uses capitals for 'YOU' plural), though not in an older translation using 'thou' and 'you' respectively. In *Joshua 13-21*, many translations give the impression that ancient Palestine was filled with 'cities' [KJV, GNB, etc.] when in fact they were rather small 'towns' [NIV]. In *Deut. 14:5* one may wonder what a 'pygarg' [KJV] is. In *1 Kings 7:23*, 'molten sea' [KJV, RSV] is almost meaningless, while 'round tank' [GNB] is perfectly clear.

Ancient units of measurement are usually quite clear in principle: a cubit equals 18 inches, an ephah equals 22 litres/half a bushel, etc. But the translation itself ought to have the modern English equivalents [GNB], possibly with a footnote of the literal units (though this is unnecessary); NIV seems to vary between ancient and modern units in the translation with the opposite in the footnotes.

The other basic class of concept, typically but not always represented in languages by verbs, comprises *actions*, eg. run, lend; *processes*, eg. grow, die; and *states*, also represented by adjectives, eg. know, live, big, evil.

Now, most actions, processes, and states, as well as many things, are not clearcut concepts round which firm boundaries can be drawn. A concept can be best thought of as an area of meaning having a (proto) typical centre and a varying range of extension from the centre; eg. 'father' in many cultures is prototypically 'the male parent', but may or may not be extendable in a particular culture to include 'ancestor' or 'uncle' or

'priest' or 'originator'. So, a concept could be symbolized by concentric circles, heavy and dark at the centre, shading off gradually to faint and broken near the periphery. But the chances that two sets of concentric circles, representing two concepts of different cultures, will coincide totally are remote; partial overlap is the best we can expect (see section 2): Greek 'phobos' with English 'fear, reverence, respect'; 'kurios' with 'master, sir, Lord'. To which we can add: 'sarks' with 'flesh, body, person, physical nature, human standards, sexual urge', etc.; 'pneuma' with 'wind, spirit'; 'doulos' and 'pais' with 'slave, servant, boy'.

If a concept is familiar in one culture, it can be expressed by a single word. But, if it is not familiar in another culture, it may be necessary to use a phrase to translate it in that other language; eg. Greek 'daimonion' becomes English 'evil spirit'; 'hagioi', literally 'saints', but meaningfully 'God's people' [NEB, GNB]; 'centurion' either 'army officer' or 'commander of 100 soldiers'; 'dikaio-' (verb), literally 'justify', meaningfully 'put right with God' [GNB] (*Rom. 2:13*, etc); the literal 'the poor in spirit' [RSV] can become 'those who feel their spiritual need' [GS] (*Mat. 5:3*); 'angareu-' becomes at least 'forces you to go with him' [RSV] (*Mat. 5:41*), or preferably 'one of the occupation troops forces you to carry his pack' [GNB].

Simplified translations may carry this much further; eg. 'fast' becomes 'go without food'; 'prophet' 'early preacher'; 'Pharisees' 'strict religious party' [Ledyard]. Easy-to-Read sometimes supplies an explanation in bracketed italics; eg. 'tore his robe (*in anger*)'; 'church (*group of believers*)'. In the case of 'Pharisees' and similar names; it is probably better to keep the name in the

translation, but with a footnote for explanation: 'Pharisees were a Jewish religious group that followed the Old Testament and other Jewish laws and customs very carefully' [ERTV].

Personal names, especially in the Old Testament, often have to be explained in footnotes: eg. *Mic. 1:10-15* [NIV]. Since it is rather wasteful to repeat such footnotes constantly, it might be better to refer readers to a 'Glossary' or 'Word List' of difficult words at the end of the book [TNT] (the Word List in GNB is not much help because the reader does not know which words it may contain as he reads the translation).

Pictures, line illustrations, maps, and diagrams, appearing throughout a Bible translation [eg. GNB] can convey meaning very concisely, and need not go beyond what is already implicit in the original.

Some translations [Amplified, Wuest] try to cover the whole range of meaning of the original words on every occurrence; eg. 'Blessed—happy, to be envied and spiritually prosperous [that is, with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions]' (*Mat. 5:3*) [Amp.]. But the whole potential meaning is not actualized on each occurrence; and of course such a translation becomes grossly overloaded. Translations like Phillips, LB, and especially Barclay tend to add to the meanings which they express beyond what is implied in the original. In the same vein, devotional sentiments, not at all implicit in the original, are put in footnotes in LB, Amplified, MLB.

In the case of figures of speech in the Hebrew and Greek originals, a literal translation comes out particularly badly, as it is very unlikely the figure of speech of one language is acceptable in another language. At least, metaphors (eg. 'you cows of Bashan,' [RSV] (*Amos 4:1*)) should be converted into similes (eg. 'you women of Samaria, who grow fat like the well-fed cows of Bashan' [GNB]), preferably with the point of comparison also made explicit, so that the reader gets the meaning. 'They shall be like wool' [NIV] (*Is. 1:18*) could be improved if 'white' were made explicit [GNB] or if 'calico' or 'linen' were used instead of 'wool' (English speakers do not think of wool as white at all). If the translator can produce a figure of speech of equivalent meaning, then that would be best: eg. 'trample the head of the poor' [RSV]

(*Amos 2:7*) could be 'grind the faces of the poor' [JBP], which is an English figure of the same meaning; similarly, 'hide my eyes' [RSV] (*Is. 1:15*) could be 'turn my face away' [JBP]; 'outstretched necks' [RSV] (*Is. 3:16*) could be much better as 'noses in the air' [JBP]. In *Gen. 4:1, 17,25*, RSV has 'knew', a meaningless euphemism in English; NIV prefers the English euphemism 'lay with', while GNB has no figure of speech but rather 'had intercourse with' or more concisely 'Adam and his wife had another son'. (25); similarly, the meaningless euphemism 'uncover the nakedness of' [RSV] (*Lev. 18:16-18*) comes out directly in 'have sexual relations with' [NIV] or 'have (sexual) intercourse with' [GNB]. 'The finger of God' [RSV] (*Lk. 11:20*) or God's strong arm' could meaningfully become 'God's power'; similarly, 'a horn of salvation' [RSV] (*Lk. 1:69*), a meaningless metaphor in English, could be 'a mighty Saviour' [GNB]; NIV translates as 'horn' but with a footnote 'symbolizes strength'. What is the meaning of the NIV 'anoint my head with oil' (*Ps. 23:5*) or 'put the branch to the nose' (*Ezk. 8:17*) or 'to Abraham's side' or 'bosom' [RSV] (*Lk. 16:22*)? GNB meaningfully translates 'welcome me as an honoured guest', 'insult in the most offensive way possible', and 'to sit beside Abraham at the feast in heaven' respectively. Which of the following is more meaningful in English (*1 Pet. 1:13*): 'put a belt round the hips of your thoughts'; 'gird up the loins of your mind' [KJV]; 'gird up your minds' [RSV]; 'prepare your minds for action' [NIV]? Is the figurative 'bear fruit that befits repentance' [RSV] (*Mat. 3:8*) as meaningful as 'Do the things that will show that you have turned away from your sins' [GNB]? Or compare the figurative 'He does not bear the sword in vain' [RSV] (*Rom. 13:4*) with 'His power to punish is real' [GNB]? So, wherever the original figure of speech would be literally meaningless in English, the figure should be replaced either with an equivalent figure or with a non-figurative expression, in order that the full meaning of the original should be conveyed for the English reader.

The literal Greek 'May it not come about!' (*Rom. 6:2*) is translated plainly as 'By no means!' [NIV, RSV], but with an Elizabethan oath 'God forbid!' [KJV, RV] and by another figure 'Far be the thought.' [JND] which may be the best translation. The literal Hebrew 'Who will grant my death, I instead of you?' (*2 Sam. 18:33*) also becomes an Elizabethan oath 'Would God that . . .' [KJV, RV,

JND], which may be appropriate in the context. In *Eph. 3:21*, 'of the age of the ages' [Young] becomes more meaningful as 'for ever and ever' [RSV, RV, NIV, GNB], but the Elizabethan metaphor 'world without end' [KJV, NKJV] is theologically objectionable both here and in some written liturgies.

A state, process, or action concept is liable to be accompanied by manner or degree, and by time, aspect, or phase, typically represented by an adverbial phrase or a verbal auxiliary in English. Some translators are more careful than others in translating into English the very important Hebrew and Greek aspectual distinction between completed and uncompleted action. 'Our lamps are gone out' [KJV] (*Mat. 25:8*) is more accurately translated as 'are going out' [RV, NIV]; 'the nets brake' [KJV] (*Lk. 5:6*) should be 'were braking' [RV] or 'began to break' [NIV]. The continuous or progressive aspect can turn into English as 'was teaching' (*Mk. 4:2*), 'would sell' (*Acts 4:34*), 'started giving them' (*Mat. 15:36*), or 'John tried to prevent him' (*Mat. 3:14*). The momentary aspect is clearer as 'became afraid' [NASB] than 'was afraid' [RV] (*Mat. 14:30*). The repetitive aspect is obscured by 'for three transgressions and for four' [RSV] (*Amos 1-2*), but clear in 'have sinned again and again' [GNB]. Some translations, like Weymouth, C. B. Williams, NWT, NASB, are particularly careful to translate the Hebrew and Greek aspects accurately, though their English runs the risk of being overloaded with verbal auxiliaries, a sort of over-translation.

A state, process, or action concept is accompanied by an aspect, etc. (as above) in Hebrew or Greek, only when the concept is represented by a verb. But a state (*italicised* in the examples) is commonly represented by an adjective, a preposition, or a noun instead; in each case, the state is accompanied by at least one thing concept, participating in the state; eg. a *tall* man, he *is tall*, John's *height*; *Lucky* you! your *luck*; they *are in* the room. similarly, with process concepts; eg. a *growing* child, his *growth*; they *died*, their *death*; it *fell*, its *fall*. And again with action concepts; eg. He *taught* them, his *teaching* them; they *arrived*, their *arrival*. It is important to observe that the same basic concept is preserved in the noun (or adjective, or preposition) as in the verb (even though no tense or aspect can be expressed in a noun). So the translator has the choice of expressing that same meaning in a verb

or in a noun, etc. according to the normal expression in the receiving language. It happens that Greek, though not Hebrew, seems to prefer nouns to express states, processes and actions; whereas English in normal everyday usage has usually preferred verbs. Moreover, states, processes, and actions come across far more meaningfully and clearly if expressed by verbs in any language. In 2

Tim. 4:6, 'the time of my *departure* has come' [NASB] is clearer in 'very soon now I will *be on my way to heaven*' [LB] (though the last part is an unwarranted addition to the original meaning) and in 'the time is here for me to *leave this life*' [GNB]. In *Rom. 9:8* 'children of the *flesh*' and 'children of the *promise*' [RSV] are more meaningfully translated as 'children *born in the usual way*' and 'children *born*

as a result of God's promise' [GNB] with verbs clarifying the meaning.

We shall go on to look at more complex cases where many Greek nouns in succession, each representing a State, Process or Action, cannot conveniently be translated into English by nouns, but rather by verbs — with vastly increased clarity of meaning.

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HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD?

A. G. Newell

Were any members of your usual Sunday evening congregation late for the service on the day of the World Cup? Did any others not turn out at all? Televised sport, we know, is a potent crowd-puller — even more addictive, perhaps, than serials like *The Forsyte Saga*, which long ago induced at least one church to alter the time of its service in order to allow its members to follow the dramatization of Galsworthy as well as attend evening worship.

Don't let us believe that we can remain uninfluenced by the world we live and work in. We can't. We are people of our time. In Donne's words, 'No man is an island, entire of itself': ideas and values have a way of crossing the most formidable of barriers, especially in the electronic age. Secular thought exerts its general pressure on us, while current trends in the church at large, themselves frequently the product of the thinking of the wider society, also make their contribution towards fashioning evangelical opinion, if only by our reaction against them. Contemporary values have an inevitable effect on even the most isolated and inward-facing group. How do we, as evangelical believers, specifically experience this unrelenting influence, this drive towards standardization and conformity? In at least three major areas. The first, surely, is in our personal behaviour. Although we used to shun the cinema, we have capitulated to television. By its means we expose ourselves to all kinds of material, much of which we would never contemplate making a special effort to see outside our homes, and most of which implicitly relegates religion, let alone Christianity, to a very lowly rung on the ladder of human concern. Again, few evangelicals smoke nowadays, I imagine, but many, especially among the young (as this magazine recently reminded us) see nothing compromising in social drinking. I have

already alluded to the considerable shift in our estimate of what are suitable pursuits on the Lord's Day.

We sense this pressure, too, in our corporate capacity as churches. In our communion, for example, where the term 'assembly' has been discarded, the word chosen to replace it is often not 'church' but 'fellowship'. This is no accident: the keynote is now informality, whether the particular gathering is designed for evangelism, teaching or worship. The decorum and dignity which used to characterize the typical Anglican service (and constituted one of the national Church's chief attractions for its evangelical adherents in the early nineteenth century) must today be sought after. In the praiseworthy quest for greater warmth and improved communication it seems that other values and qualities are being neglected and depreciated.

Lastly, our doctrinal beliefs are also affected. Our grasp of these has been weakened by the general decline in our knowledge of the Bible. Consequently we are ill-equipped to appreciate the multiple influences directed at us to jettison or at least to blur into relative imprecision our distinctively Protestant beliefs. Our forefathers clung to these as the essentials of their faith. In their place it is being inferred that all we need is the simple gospel and good vibrations. Intelligent and enthusiastic young Christians, the leaders of the next generation, are being hoodwinked into thinking that Christianity is 'loosening up and dancing for Jesus'. It is little wonder that some of them seem unable to detect the implications of the momentum towards institutionalized Christian unity.

These are some examples of the fundamental effects of modern thinking and values on our evangelical sub-culture. I suggest again that they are inevitable. We're not enclosed monks or nuns or

members of the communities of Old Order Amish but ordinary citizens living and working in the real world. As part of that world our whole outlook today is more casual, less hierarchical, ultra-conscious of 'rights' and more generally relativistic. We can't expect things to be otherwise. On the other hand, we don't have limply to surrender our own personal or group standards and values. The teacher who gives up correcting the common mistakes in simple grammar and spelling which nowadays almost uniformly disfigure his pupils' written work is not therefore compelled himself to adopt those errors in the belief that they have become acceptable through majority juvenile usage. Many years ago, out of curiosity, I attended a Corpus Christi day mass in a very high Anglo-Catholic church, but my friend and I declined either to reverence the sacrament or to join in the final procession in which the participants held lighted candles and chanted praises to Mary. Even today we don't have to dance in the aisle if we don't want to.

Now, in many ways, today's less restrictive style is most welcome. Few willingly encase their neck in a stiff white collar when custom no longer demands such a sacrifice. Yet limitless freedom possesses its own dangers. Every field of human activity calls for some sort of framework to provide the foundation and the stability without which the edifice will collapse. Total freedom to question and undermine can entail changes so rapid and far-reaching that only ruin can result. Demolition is easier than repairing and the new building is often quite different in appearance and purpose from the one it replaces. Social anarchy operates at a rather more fundamental level than the genuine open-mindedness that must distinguish fruitful academic research. Milton wrote of trendy radicals, 'Licence they mean when they cry liberty'.

It is axiomatic, however, that the Christian faith must respond to its environment. As habits of thought change and the world-picture itself alters with growing knowledge, faith has to react appropriately. If it fails to do so, it has already fossilized into a dead orthodoxy. It has to adapt its formulation so as to appeal to each new generation, and we don't need to be reminded that this is no easy process. It is certainly no automatic one. Although a consensus may be generally accepted as Christianity's up-to-date self-understanding, the various groups within the church can adopt different, even incompatible, attitudes. In the areas of Christian ethics and church practices the same continuing development may be recognized at work. Since the pace of change is much more rapid than it used to be, we're that much more aware of these problems.

At the very centre of our faith lies our idea of God. The Christian understanding of God hasn't remained static over the centuries. Successive generations of believers have thought of their God in varying ways. It is possible to divide church history very simply into broad periods by reference to the Christian approach to the Persons of the Godhead. Although any such scheme lays itself open to countless modifications in detail (as well as to complete rejection in principle!), it can nevertheless be argued that the centuries from Pentecost to the Reformation saw the Church emphasizing in one way or another the Person of God the Son. With the Protestant Reformation the focus of Christianity shifted to God the Father, His sovereignty and His providence. After a comparatively short time this phase passed, leaving its mark on the faith and continuing to control Reformed thinking; but T. A. Smail's recent book reminds us that for many God is *The Forgotten Father*, while current thought is sharply questioning all the traditional roles and values associated with fatherhood. When evangelicalism coalesced as a movement in the eighteenth century, God the Holy Spirit received an increasing recognition and attention, and has retained primary place ever since. Perhaps we could risk further extravagant generalization and suggest that, although all are Trinitarians, the Catholic's God is the Son, the Protestant's is the Father and the evangelical's is the Holy Spirit. Deliberate oversimplifying, of course — but it highlights certain real tendencies in the thought and devotion of each.

So far as we are concerned (disregarding for the moment, that is to say, the main-

stream of theological development) for over two hundred years the gospel of evangelicalism has held the field. While it has itself shifted in formulation and emphases during that time, we have become accustomed to the type of preaching, teaching and literature which concentrates on Christ and the Holy Spirit at the expense (I say it reverently) of God the Father. In popular thought, both secular and Christian, the attributes of God have been limited to love, mercy and forgiveness. It ought not to surprise us, therefore, that we are embarrassed by the Bible's teaching about hell, that we are prepared to accept a shallow understanding of the atonement, and that our view of God, in fact, increasingly aligns itself with that of Christianity at large. We are ever more ready to play down the concepts of God's sovereignty, His wrath and His holiness. The present growth of the evangelical constituency within the mainline churches may be expected not only to influence general Christian opinion for good but also to dilute evangelicalism as it finds itself forced to compromise.

In a day when so many believers, often without realizing what they are doing, are exalting experience at the expense of the word of God, we continue to be influenced by a long-standing and deep-rooted tendency to sentimentalize and romanticize the Person of God. A generation ago J. B. Phillips told us that our God was too small. He pinpointed our failure adequately to recognize Who God is. The passing of years hasn't outdated the need for Phillips' rebuke — our God is still too small. And a diminished God like that is not the God revealed in Scripture as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. A recent television programme about the Chester Mystery Plays included an interview with the Dean of Chester. He explained that for all their adherence to the Bible he entertained reservations about their utility as visual aids because he felt they could reinforce the prevalent idea of the church as an irrelevant relic of the past. He believed, moreover, that the picture these medieval plays present of God, the devil and the literal mouth of hell through which grinning demons thrust the wicked, was too simplistic. Nobody remarked by way of reply that one well-tried stratagem for confronting unpleasant reality is to treat it on a less than serious level. The townspeople of medieval Chester derived great enjoyment from the popular cycle of plays, but they knew that the episodes they watched represented the teaching of their church. These plays offered enter-

tainment within an agreed framework of doctrine which depicted God Himself with decidedly more biblical integrity than some of our modern evangelicalism 'come of age'.

The old liberal critics rejected as spurious those ideas in the Bible to which they were fundamentally opposed. Some of the new evangelicals who are trying hard to liberalize our theology in vital areas (the status and interpretation of Scripture, the nature and content of the gospel, Christian ethics) import their favoured current ideology into their reading of the Bible. To some extent, of course, we are all guilty of both these illicit procedures. Our idea of God certainly suffers from both selective reading of Scripture and a general romantic fuzziness. It lacks definition.

And yet any really serious Christian must surely come to grips and ultimately to terms with what the Bible tells us about God. We gladly prize His Creatorship — but we're not too happy with the swift retribution meted out to disobedience. We welcome God's sovereign choice of Abraham — but there's so much in the Old Testament which embarrasses us. If we see God only through the eyes of our defective modern understanding, then to our crippled moral sense He so often appears in an unfavourable light. Sometimes we fall into the trap which caught the Jews of the Babylonian exile and think that God isn't fair. But Ezekiel declared on God's behalf, 'Your people say, "The way of the Lord is not just", when it is their own way that is not just' (*Ezek. 33:17*; compare *18:25-32*). They were criticizing the God who had endowed them with a moral sense for apparently not measuring up to it — whereas their failure to fit almighty God into their own human scheme should have alerted them to its poverty and imperfection. They were making God in their own fallible image; clay-like, they were querying the Potter's will. The values of the society we live in make it fatally simple for us to commit the same mistake.

For all his enormous learning and towering poetic genius, Milton experienced almost insurmountable problems in his attempt in *Paradise Lost* to 'justify the ways of God to men'. On one occasion at least, however, his presentation of God in glory attains a level far beyond that of the passages trying to 'assert eternal Providence':

About Him all the Sanctities of Heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from His sight
received
Beatitude past utterance

(*Book III, lines 60-62*).

It is as if the blind poet has been granted a vision of the Almighty which has heightened both his understanding and his power to express his imaginative conception of God's awe-inspiring majesty. Would that we could similarly enlarge our own conception of our God! Of course, the way of the world and even the Bible itself pose many problems for believers, and some won't be reconciled this side of eternity. But we can receive what the Bible says and worship the God it reveals to us in all His glorious integrity. He is the God and Father of our Saviour and the Giver of the Spirit of Truth. We can never fully comprehend God's greatness and glory. He is God and we are His creatures, after all. But every advance in our understanding of what it has pleased Him to disclose of His perfection must be for our benefit. As our idea of God grows, as our God becomes greater to us, so our intelligent adoration will become responsively richer, and our rational service — which, it seems increasingly necessary to point out, is equally worship — will expand until it embraces, as it was intended to, the whole of what then will be sacralized life. At times our vision of God dashes us to the ground in our sudden insight into the gulf between us. We feel like George Herbert:

My God, man cannot praise Thy name:
Thou art all brightness, perfect purity:
The sun holds down his head for shame,
Dead with eclipses, when we speak of Thee.
How shall infection
Presume on Thy perfection?

In God's grace, however, we acknowledge our creaturely and sinful inadequacy and realize once again, with Milton, that

God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best;
His state
Is kingly.

May we take to heart that injunction of the writer to the Hebrews, 'Let us offer to God acceptable worship (*service well-pleasing, RV*) with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire' (*Heb. 12:28b, 29, RSV*).

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The Rev. Dr. A. Skevington Wood



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QUESTION AND ANSWER WITH PETER COUSINS

Question 230

BAPTISM AND LEADERSHIP

Do you think it important that people who have a position of responsibility in an assembly should be baptised believers?

I take it that by "baptised believer" you mean Christians who have been baptised since they trusted Christ. After all, there are many believers who would claim that they are baptised although this took place during their infancy. (Indeed, J. N. Darby, to mention one name only of many, was of this number). The problem arises, of course, because of differing interpretations of the Scriptures so that within any local church there are liable to be a small number who have not been baptised as believers, although this may be the practice of the fellowship and may even be incorporated into a trust deed. In such a case, I think it is important to be clear on what is meant by 'leadership'. I could personally see no problem about having such a person teaching a Sunday School class or helping with Youth work. But if someone in this position were to be given responsibility for some aspect of the church's work and witness, then difficulties might arise. Would he or she feel right to draw the attention of new Christians to the biblical teaching about baptism as understood by the fellowship? Could he or she withstand possible criticism from people who disapproved of believers' baptism? At the very least, this question must be ventilated before any decision is taken about leadership.

Underlying the problems, of course, is the question of how far such a person would wish to devote himself to building up a community while disapproving of one of its basic principles. The problem is especially acute if one is considering appointing such a person as an elder. While hesitating to lay down an absolute rule in this matter, I should want to discuss the matter prayerfully and lovingly with anybody who seemed called to leadership in a local church but who had not taken this step.

Question 231

STEPHEN'S VISION

I have recently heard it suggested that Acts 7:56 is in some way a fulfilment of Mark 14:62. Do you think the passages are connected?

So far as Stephen is concerned, we have, of course, no way of knowing in any detail what the vision meant to him although its general significance is clear. But it is quite legitimate to consider the implications of the fact that Luke was led by the Holy Spirit to refer to the

incident in this way. First of all, the 'right hand' has overtones of authority and triumph going back in particular to *Psalms 110:1*. The vision thus takes its place alongside other references in the early chapters of Acts to the triumph of the resurrection in which God has reversed the verdict passed on Jesus by Jew and Gentile alike. This is especially appropriate since Stephen has been accusing the Jews of rejecting the leaders God sent them.

It is significant that the Lord Jesus is described as the 'Son of Man'. This title is unusual outside the Gospels and refers to an individual who suffers and is vindicated by God. This is a pattern that Stephen has followed and in *Luke 12:8* there is a promise that those who confess Christ before men will be vindicated by him in God's presence.

On the other hand, it was a reference to their seeing the Son of Man in glory that led the Sanhedrin to condemn Jesus as described in the passage from *Mark 14* that you refer to. It is not at all impossible that we are meant to associate Stephen's vision with the parousia glory of the Son of Man and with this final vindication.

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THE GLORIES OF CHRISTMAS

Philip Elliott

The account of the Incarnation in the Gospel of John is short, but important. We read: 'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father' (*John 1:14*).

If we are to understand the significance of the term 'Word', as applied to the Son of God, we must turn to the beginning of John's first chapter. The first verse tells us that (1) 'In the beginning was the Word'; (2) 'the Word was with God'; and (3) 'the Word was God'. The second and third of these three statements make it clear that the Word was the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. The first statement makes it clear that the Word was eternal. When time began he was already there; he had no beginning. The second verse of the chapter tells us that (4) 'He was in the beginning with God'. This sounds like mere repetition; but in fact it places strong emphasis on the eternity of the Word. Emphasis by repetition is a common feature of the Bible. Proceeding to the third verse we are told that (5) 'all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made'. How astonishing then it is to learn that the Word became flesh. As we gaze in thought upon the baby Jesus lying in the manger at Bethlehem, let us ask God to open our eyes, as He did John's, to see the glory of the Father's only-begotten Son, the eternal Creator of the universe, who for our sake became man.

Not only did John have his eyes opened to see the eternal glory of the Son of God with the Father before time began, but he also had his eyes opened to see

the glory of the grace that brought him down from heaven into this cold, dark world of sinful men. The Apostle Paul saw the same glory and wrote: 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich' (*2 Cor. 8:9*).

In the life of the Son of God on this earth that followed the Incarnation John saw countless further manifestations of the same matchless grace. It was a life of which our Lord himself could say: '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*). This life of constant serving and giving was crowned by the supreme sacrifice of his death on the cross for us. Never had such a life so full of grace been seen on earth before.

There was yet another glory of the Son of God displayed in his life on this earth: it was that he was full of truth, or reality. What a lot of unreality we are faced with at Christmas-time! Even the magnificent old masterpieces that adorn our Christmas cards, wonderful though they are as paintings, depict the manger-scene in a manner far removed from reality. The usual festivities with which Christmas is celebrated are calculated too often to push the great event celebrated right into the background. Moreover there are those who doubt, or even actually deny, that the event they celebrate ever actually happened.

But John knew that the Incarnation was real. The shepherds also, who heard the herald angel announce the birth in the city of David of 'a Saviour,

who is Christ the Lord', and were told that they would find 'a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger', hurried off to Bethlehem and 'found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger' (*Luke 2:8-16*). It was all real, just as the angel had said. The experience of the wise men from the east was just the same. They received a revelation from God that by following the guidance of a star they would be led to one who was born to be king of the Jews. So they made the long journey to Palestine, and it was not in vain. The star led them right to the place where the young child was (*Matt. 2:1-11*). It was all real. And this is one of the glories of Christmas.

And reality is one of the glories of all the other doctrines of the Christian faith as recorded in the Bible. Jesus not only really lived, but he really died, and really rose again from the dead. He really ascended into heaven, and is now really enthroned there. The Holy Spirit really descended to earth on the day of Pentecost, and to this day He still really dwells in the hearts of all who have repented of their sins and have accepted Jesus as their Saviour and Lord. As soon as God's time has come, the Lord Jesus will really return to this earth and fulfil all the promises which are on record in the Old Testament, but which have not yet been fulfilled in the sense in which they were originally understood and believed by the nation of Israel to whom they were given. Speaking at Jerusalem shortly after Pentecost to a crowd that he addressed as 'Men of Israel', the Apostle Peter assured them of this (*Acts 3:21*). And many years

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THE GOSPEL OF JOHN (66)

F. F. Bruce

With this instalment, Prof. Bruce completes the serialized part of his exposition of John's Gospel, which has run for several years. We are glad to be able to say that he will continue writing for us next year on the theme of 'The Pauline Circle'.

The prayer of Consecration
(John 17:1-26), continued

(c) Dedication of the disciples
(John 17:9-18), continued

17:13 Now I am on my way to thee, but I say this (while I am still) in the world so that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

Earlier that evening Jesus had said to his disciples, 'I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be fulfilled' (John 15:11). 'This' was the assurance that they were being welcomed into the mutual relationship of love that had already existed from the beginning between the Father and himself. Now, so to speak, he reports to the Father what he has said to them. If they hear him as he now prays, the assurance he had given them will be confirmed in their minds; moreover, not only does he state the purpose of his giving to them this assurance but he prays that the Father may fulfil that purpose within them: that the joy which he himself finds in the Father's love may be fully reproduced in their hearts. The example of his intercession for them may further encourage them to approach the Father in his name: 'ask, and you will receive', he had told them, 'so that your joy may be complete' (John 16:24).

17:14-16 I have given them thy word and the world has hated them, because they do not belong to the world just as I do not belong to the

world. I ask, not that thou wouldest take them out of the world, but that thou wouldest keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world just as I do not belong to the world.

The teaching they have received from Jesus comprises all that God delivered to him to impart to them: 'thy word'. The singular 'word' here is the sum-total of all the 'words' of verse 8. The unresponsive 'world' had not believed him when he delivered his Father's message in person (John 5:47; 12:37-50); it was unlikely to give it any more credence when it came from the lips of the disciples. Had this 'world' embraced their hearers in their entirety, the outlook for their witness would have been bleak indeed; as it is, this is the godless 'world', devoid of any appreciation of heavenly truth — a world to which they belong no more than their Master himself does. As this world had not only rejected what he said but manifested hostility to himself personally, so it would manifest hostility to his followers. He had just warned them that it would be so (John 15:18-25); now, again, he reports to his Father what he had said to them.

Hostile as the world is, however, they are not to be removed from it. 'The whole world lies in the power of the evil one' who dominates it as a usurper (1 John 5:19); Jesus prays that they may be delivered from him, just as he had already taught them to pray for such deliverance (Matt. 6:13). The genitive *ponērou* might indeed be construed as neuter ('keep them from evil') rather than masculine ('from the evil one'); but the reference is more probably to the being already thrice mentioned as 'the ruler of this world' (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

17:17, 18 Sanctify them by means of

the truth: thy word is truth. As thou didst send me into the world, so also I have sent them into the world.

The statement 'I have sent them' is perhaps proleptic: his actual sending of them is recorded later, after his return from the dead (John 20:21). Since they are to be sent into hostile territory, to reclaim it for its rightful owner, they must be given spiritual protection. Negatively, they must be preserved from the power of the usurper, whose occupied domain they have invaded; positively, they must be 'sanctified'. This involves their consecration for the task now entrusted to them; it involves further their inward purification and endowment with all the spiritual resources necessary for carrying out that task. This purification and endowment are the work of the Spirit, but here Jesus declares the instrument of that work to be 'the truth' — the truth embodied in the Father's 'word' which Jesus had given to the disciples as he himself had received it from the Father (verses 8, 14). The very message which they are to proclaim in his name will exercise its sanctifying effect on them: that message is the continuation of his message, just as their mission in the world is the extension of his mission.

So, the disciples were given to Christ by the Father 'out of the world' (verse 6), they therefore no longer 'belong to the world' (verses 14, 16), although they remain 'in the world' (verse 11) and are not immediately to be taken out of it (verse 15). They not merely remain in it because they can do nothing else: they are positively sent into it as their Master's agents and messengers. If Jesus does not pray explicitly for the world at this time (verse 9), yet his prayer for the disciples involves hope for the world. God's electing grace is not exercised in such a way that the non-elect are lost, but rather with the

purpose that through the elect the non-elect may receive his blessing.

(d) The Son's dedication of himself
(John 17:19)

17:19 And for their sake I sanctify myself, so that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

If the disciples are to be effectively set apart for the work which they must do, the Son must first set himself apart for the work which *he* must do. He therefore consecrates himself to God on their behalf: Chrysostom paraphrases 'I sanctify myself' as 'I offer myself in sacrifice'. Here is a Johannine counterpart to the Gethsemane prayer (for other counterparts see John 12:27f.; 18:11).

It was not what Jesus' executioners did to him, but what he did himself in his self-offering, that makes his death a prevailing sacrifice 'for the life of the world' (John 6:51; cf. 1:29). Here, then, the priest dedicates the sacrificial victim: it is because priest and victim are one that the sacrifice is not only completely voluntary but uniquely efficacious.

(e) Prayer for the church
(John 17:20-23)

17:20, 21 Nor is it only for these that I pray, but also for those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they in their turn may be (one) in us, so that the world may believe that thou didst send me.

The disciples are the nucleus of the community of the new age. As a result of their being sent into the world with the message of life, others will believe in Jesus through their testimony. For those others also Jesus prays, and specifically that they may all be one. The unity for which he prays is a unity of love: it is, in fact, their participation in the unity of love which subsists eternally between the Father and the Son. 'All will recognize that you are disciples of mine', Jesus had said to the eleven, 'if you have love among one another' (John 13:35). Their manifest oneness in love would give public confirmation both of their relationship with Jesus and of his with the Father. The world, which thus far has not recognized him, will learn from the witness of the disciples' love that he is indeed the sent one of God; it will accept their testimony 'that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world' (1 John 4:14). Then the usurper's control will be thrown off and the world, acknow-

ledging its rightful Lord, will respond in faith to his love for it.

17:22, 23 I have given them the glory which thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are one — I in them and thou in me, so that they may be made perfect in one — in order that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them just as thou hast loved me.

Earlier, the Evangelist has observed that Jesus, by his death, would 'gather into one the dispersed children of God' (John 11:52). It is this same unity for which Jesus now prays, and his language makes it plain that it is a unity of love — a unity which has its root within the soul but is manifested in outward action. Otherwise the world could not see it and be convinced by its witness to the divine revelation in Christ. It is no invisible unity that is prayed for here.

'I in them', says Jesus — but they are also in him (John 15:4). 'Thou in me' — but he is also in the Father (John 14:10). If the Father is in him and he is in them, then the Father is in them: they are drawn into the very life of God, and the life of God is perfect love. That this vital unity through Christ with God is maintained and attested by the indwelling Spirit is clear, even if this aspect of the Spirit's ministry is not spelled out expressly in these chapters as it is elsewhere in the NT (cf. 1 John 4:13, 'By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his own Spirit'). If Christ is in his people and the Father is in him, it follows that they share in the eternal love which the Father has for the Son.

(f) The glorified church (John 17:24)

17:24 Father, as for (all) that thou hast given me, my desire is that, where I am, they also may be with me, so that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou didst love me before the world's foundation.

The clause 'as for what thou hast given me' at the beginning of the sentence refers more naturally to the sum-total of believers (as in verse 2) than to the eternal glory; hence 'all' is added in the translation above to make the sense plain.

Jesus has prayed to be reinvested with the glory which he had with the Father before the world existed (verse 5); now he prays that his followers may behold this glory — and, by implication, have a share in it. If the gift of glory to the Son is the token of the Father's love for him, those who share that love will naturally share the glory. The disciples had seen

the divine glory in the incarnate Word on earth (John 1:14); they will see it more fully when they live in the presence of the glorified Lord — not, perhaps, because he will then be endowed with more of that glory but because they will be better able to behold it.

Jesus, then, has prayed first for the original disciples (verses 9-18), then for the church on earth throughout the ages (verses 20-23), and now for the glorified church of the future, united with him in the place which he is going to prepare for it (verse 24; cf. John 14:3).

(g) Epilogue (John 17:25, 26)

17:25, 26 Righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have come to know that thou hast sent me. I have made known thy name to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I myself may be in them.

In these closing words the prayer is summed up.

By worldly standards of success Jesus had little to show for his mission. He had come to make the Father known, but the vast majority of his hearers refused the knowledge which he offered them. The merest handful of men and women — a very unimpressive company at that — had recognized him as the sent one of God and had come to know the Father in him. Yet to them his mission on earth was confidently entrusted, as he dedicated them to the Father to this end. One further revelation of the divine glory remained to be given to them: the impartation of the knowledge of God would be consummated in his self-sacrifice. The Father's name would be declared in the Son's death on the cross more adequately than in any other way.

For the rest, his prayer is that the Father's love, which he himself enjoys in perfection, may remain within and among them, as he himself does. Is he not the embodiment of the love of God. 'I am with you' is good indeed (Matt. 28:20); 'I am in you' is better still.

Now, then, he goes forth to his final and fullest manifestation of the Father's love and glory.

MEDITATIONS ON PSALM 107 (4)

Storm John Job

The Hebrews were not a sea-faring nation. That part of the Mediterranean coast which was a part of the historic heartland of Israel, between the Philistines in the south and the Sidonians in the north is without natural harbours. And the sea, as something unfamiliar, they were afraid of. It is part of the irony of the Book of Jonah that in order to avoid obedience to God's will, he was prepared to commit himself to the uncertainties of the sea and the foreign crews that sailed it. But it was not only the Hebrews who feared the sea. Built into the creation myths of all the near-eastern countries from Egypt to Babylon there is substantially the same story of a great battle between the creator-God and either the sea itself or a sea-monster representing the sea. Traces of this are to be found in *Psalms 74:14*, where the monster is called Leviathan, and in *Psalms 89:10*, where the monster is called Rahab. A fair number of passages in the Old Testament can be quoted to show how control of the unruly sea is an important part of Hebrew belief in the sovereign power of God. So side by side with the creation story in *Genesis 1*, where everything that God has made is very good, there is this other strand in Scripture which sees in the sea a symbol of evil and opposition to God, though one which nevertheless does not range beyond his control.

In the light of this, one can well understand how the exile was, even for those who never went near the sea, comparable for its upset to a storm at sea: though just as in the other pictures we have looked at, it may well be that for some the sea offered a way of escape from the torments of invasion and siege that were a constant threat to those living in Palestine at the turn of the 7th century BC yet a way of escape which was not without its hazards, as

the story of Paul's shipwreck in the same Mediterranean reminds us.

This Psalm makes three points about the storm at sea which is here described:

1. *It was uncomfortable.* I don't know how good a sailor you are. For my part, I hardly need to do more than read how these people were one moment carried up to heaven, and the next plunged down into the depths, and memories of crossing from Newhaven to Dieppe before the days of hovercraft come flooding back to me, and I'm almost hanging over the rail all over again.

2. *It was dangerous.* Seasickness is bad enough, even in something as sea-worthy as a cross-channel ferry. The boats that plied the Mediterranean were often far from sea-worthy as we have already been reminded, and there were times of the year when no experienced sailor would venture into its waters.

3. *It was bewildering.* The sailors reeled and staggered like drunken men, and their seamanship was all in vain. There is much skill in sailing, but there are situations at sea which make any amount of skill useless.

What kind of situations correspond for us to this experience of the storm at sea? Here are some:

(a) *Economic stress.* Paul said that he knew how to abound. And there is nothing wrong with the sensitive enjoyment of prosperity for a Christian. But it is not his birthright. In the same breath we find the Apostle saying 'I know how to be in want'. Perhaps some of us have already experienced something of such problems. We certainly ought to face the possibility of their coming to us.

(b) *Home.* Homes are more and more becoming storm-centres especially for young Christians today. For a non-Christian son or daughter, there may seem to be a simple solution —

abandon ship. A Christian will usually feel that this is not an option open to him. But the alternative is certainly uncomfortable, if he is caught in the crossfire of marital bickering. It may well be dangerous, if drunkenness plays any part in the problems. Twice on the news recently, it was announced that the ambulance service has been stretched by domestic brawls. In such a situation, the role of a young teen-age Christian is very hard to play, because the basic structures within which he has to act are simply not there. And this is to say nothing of the next problem which can be combined with a difficult home situation, namely:

(c) *Persecution* It is clear from the Book of Revelation that the image of the sea-monster and the sea itself was particularly connected in the writer's mind with the hostile power of Rome. In those days, persecution was dangerous: in Nero's day, Christians were covered alive with tar and set light to as lamp posts at imperial garden parties. Less violent persecution is likely to be our lot, but it can be uncomfortable and bewildering. Jesus said of himself 'They hated me without a cause'. Being hated is bad enough, but when the reason itself is love for those who are doing the hating, there seems to be no answer.

(d) *Other situations* For many young people with whom we work, examinations can be times of storm and stress. So can the very problem of existing as a student, requiring as it does the task of relating to others which may be to us something we don't have to think about, but for many is a daring sea-voyage fraught with perils that for us may be simply inconceivable. One particular matter which comes into this category is courtship, or equally the absence of courtship. For some, either of these situations may be something

they can cope with easily and without fuss. On the other hand, either may present them with the most serious storms they ever have to face.

It is very significant that in amongst all the healing miracles that come in a long series after Matthew's presentation of the Sermon on the Mount, there is the account of Jesus calming the sea. The similarities between this passage and *Psalm 107* are too close indeed to be an accident. The Gospel incident expands the message of the Psalm.

In the first place, it teaches us that storms are to be expected. The things recorded in the New Testament are not recorded for fun or without discrimination. They were remembered because they were of practical value in the Apostles' preaching. If they remembered this story of Jesus stilling the storm, no doubt it was partly to make a point about the person of Christ; but it was also to comfort believers in similar situations — a range of situations far wider than literal storms at sea. But they had in mind storms of one kind or another, — and storms which they knew the followers of Jesus had to

expect, just as Paul and Barnabas taught their converts that through many tribulations and only so one could enter the final safety of the kingdom. If one expects storms, it at least means that we don't take their presence as a sign that we are in the wrong place: the wrong home, the wrong job, the wrong church, or the wrong engagement. Reading *Heirs Together* or *I married a girl*, helpful as they are, can hardly be a comprehensive insurance policy against troughs of low pressure in the process of getting safely to the rail with Miss Right. Or Mr., as the case may be. The other thing is this. While Jesus was asleep in the boat, he was a model of human trustfulness. His heavenly father was the God of Israel who neither slumbers nor sleeps, so, even in the fiercest storm, the son of his love could take his rest. Hence, when his disciples accuse him of not caring whether they drown or not, he replies to the effect that the true comment is not one of his lack of concern, but of their lack of trust. And then, assuming divine authority to illustrate the point, he rebuked the wind and the sea and there

was a great calm. Their seamanship was all in vain, but God is in control not only of the boat but also of the weather. It is this combination of sovereignty and concern which is the theme of the hymn with which the Psalm ends. Much that we see around us casts doubt on the power or will of God to act on behalf of those who trust him. But this judgement, if we make it, is superficial and ephemeral. For God does not for ever allow the godless to enjoy unbroken prosperity, nor does he in the end forget to give the man who looks to him in hunger the reality which the city set in fertile farmland symbolized as the Israelites' paradise. The return of the Jews to Jerusalem bore out this truth for the Psalmist. As Christians we too see it borne out again and again in our onward walk with Christ, as storms which threaten to sink us clear away into the sunshine of praise for his faithfulness; and we shall see it borne out, even if we have to echo the sombre words of Jacob that 'few and evil have been the days of the years of my life' when we reach the reality of which every earthly paradise is a pale picture.

THE GLORIES OF CHRISTMAS

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later the same Apostle wrote: 'For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ' (2 Pet. 1:16). All is real.

During the interrogation of our Lord by Pilate, the Roman Governor of Judaea, Jesus said 'For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice'. Pilate's rejoinder was to ask, 'What is truth?' (John 18:37-38). Pilate was an agnostic. Living as he did in a world of so many conflicting opinions, he did not know where the real truth lay; and he doubted whether anyone else could know either. Nevertheless he was so impressed by the genuineness of Jesus that he pronounced him 'not guilty' of the charges that the Jews laid against him.

But the Jews would not accept the Governor's verdict; so in an effort to placate them Pilate had Jesus

scourged. As they carried out the sentence the Roman soldiers mocked the King of glory and beat him up. Pilate then went out again to the Jews and said to them, 'See, I am bringing him out to you, that you may know that I find no crime in him'. We go on to read: 'So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!"' (John 19:4-5).

Pilate was a man who knew men; and he knew that never before had he seen a man like Jesus, a man so full of grace and truth, so utterly genuine. Little as he realized it, Pilate was looking at a man such as God intended man to be, man in all the glory of perfect manhood, man made in the image and likeness of God. Nevertheless after further argument with the Jews, Pilate gave way to their demands, and handed Jesus over to be crucified. Alas for Pilate! He came face to face with the One who was the truth, and was greatly impressed by

him. Yet in his own interests, as he thought, he felt compelled to dismiss the glorious Son of God from his life. And alas also for those who celebrate the birth of Jesus every Christmas, yet fail to realize that he is the very Saviour they need so desperately, and in consequence find no room for him in their hearts!

One more glory of Christmas may be mentioned in conclusion — Christmas provides us with a splendid opportunity to witness to others about the real meaning of the birth of Jesus. May God the Holy Spirit empower each one of us to be faithful witnesses at all times to our glorious Lord — so full of grace and truth; and may we have the joy of helping others to say, in the words of a well-known Christmas hymn:

*O come to my heart, Lord Jesus!
There is room in my heart for Thee.*

MORE MEDITATIONS ON MARK (3)

Boanerges, 'Sons of Thunder' (3:17)

David Brady

It is an interesting exercise to compare the lists of the twelve apostles in the New Testament. As well as there being some variation in the names themselves, there is also some variation in the order in which they are arranged. Nevertheless, a certain regularity may still be discerned, for the apostles seem to be arranged in three distinct groups, with four names in each. Variations in the order of the names occur only within these set groupings and on each occasion in which they are listed (*Mark 3:16-19; Matt. 10:2-4; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13*), the three distinguishable groups are consistently headed by Simon Peter, Philip, and James of Alphaeus. Our concern here is with the first of these groups as it is given in the Gospel of *Mark*. It will be seen that it consists of two pairs of brothers, but in *Mark's* Gospel (as again in *Acts*), the brothers Simon and Andrew have become separated by the intrusion of James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Two possible reasons for this unnatural arrangement may suggest themselves. Firstly, it is evident as we read further in the Gospels that Peter, James, and John constitute a kind of 'inner three' among the other disciples, being privileged to attend Jesus on three very special occasions: the raising of Jairus' daughter, the transfiguration, and again in Gethsemane. (They are singled out again, but with the inclusion of Andrew, who cannot always have been easily separated from his brother, in *Mark 1:29 & 13:3*.) Secondly, Mark (or rather perhaps Peter, his informant) appears to have been especially fascinated by the sobriquets given by Jesus to these inner three. Thus he passes immediately from Peter to Boanerges, the 'sons of thunder'.

'He calls his own sheep by name' (*John 10:3*) and here we see a literal example of that intimate knowledge which

Jesus has of his own, for the name is not merely an identifier, but it describes the person. On another occasion he would say to them, 'Rejoice that your names are written in heaven' (*Luke 10:20*), encouraging in them a joy that they are known and accepted by the Father. Such also is the joy of every believer. Furthermore, as John himself records, Christ challenges each of us to be an 'overcomer' that we may share in the very name of Christ himself (*Rev. 3:12; cf. 2:17*).

Meaning of Boanerges

But the name that Jesus gave to the sons of Zebedee is one that has long puzzled the scholars. The first problem in the name Boanerges is that **Boane** is a strange equivalent for the Hebrew **Bene** ('sons of'). Secondly, there is no certainty on which Hebrew word is intended to be represented by the second part of the name, **rges**. It has been variously traced, but in each case not without an element of special pleading. With regard to the puzzling vowels in **Boane**, it is possible that **oa** represents a certain kind of phonetic development which might apply in a possible case of Aramaic dialect such as this. Indeed, considering the obviously recognizable difference in the pronunciation of Galilean Aramaic (see *Matt. 26:73*), we may possibly think of **oa** for **e** as representing 'broad' rather than 'well-bred' Aramaic! Be that as it may, there seems to be no adequate reason for Jesus giving a Hebrew name to any of the disciples, since Aramaic was their language. Thus we find the Aramaic nickname Thaddaeus (*Mark 3:18*) for Judas of James (*Luke 6:16*). On other occasions the Aramaic name may be translated in a Greek form and so we have Cephas/Peter, Cananaean/Zealot, and Thomas/Didymus. The patronymic Bartholomew, in which **bar**

is the Aramaic equivalent of Hebrew **ben** ('son'), also stands against the possibility of Jesus' coining a Hebrew patronymic commencing with **bene** ('sons of'). (N.B. also the nickname Barnabas, glossed as 'son of encouragement' in *Acts 4:36*.) Possibly the answer to the conundrum is to be sought in a quite different direction and perhaps a clue to that direction is to be found in the actual words used by Mark, which may be literally translated as follows: 'and he gave them *names*, Boanerges, i.e. 'sons of thunder' [italics mine.] The statement leads us to expect not one name, but two. There may be support for this in the fact that the name of one of Jesus' disciples is given in the Talmud as Bani (*Sanh. 43a*). Could it be that Boanerges is in fact a primitive conflation of two names (a simple mistake, since earlier uncial manuscripts did not leave spaces between words), which have now become lost to us? Attempts may be made to recover these names, but there seems to be no definite guarantee of success. We might, for example, think of those two zealots for King David who murdered his possible rival Ishbosheth, the son of Saul. *2 Sam. 4:2* refers to them as Baanah and Rechab, sons of Rimmon, and it should not escape our notice that Rimmon is elsewhere the storm-god Hadad whose name means in fact 'Thunderer'. Could it be that Jesus compared the sons of Zebedee to Baanah and Rechab, the sons of Rimmon, the Thunderer, because of their similarly misguided zeal for a political Messiah? This, however, is no more than a suggested example of the direction that we ought perhaps to look in for a better understanding of the name Boanerges. For the present, we should perhaps avoid dogmatism and await further light.

The phrase translated 'which is'

('Boanerges, which is sons of thunder') is one which is characteristic of Mark's style and seems equivalent to our Latin abbreviation i.e. (= *id est*, 'that is'). Mark uses it on two other occasions to gloss Aramaic words (7:11, 34) and twice again to explain the meaning of obscure Greek words (12:42:15:16), apparently for the sake of his Roman readers. On another two occasions, when explaining longer phrases, he adds to it the expression 'being interpreted' (15:41; 15:34), but it occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in *Col. 1:24; Heb. 7:2; & Rev. 21:17*. His purpose is evidently to make plain to his readers what otherwise might have remained obscure. We are grateful to him for taking such care in this particular example since, as we have seen, it would have been extremely hard to see why Jesus had called two of his disciples Boanerges if Mark had not told us that this means 'sons of thunder'.

Their Character

The title 'sons of thunder' is in fact an example of a fairly common Hebraism whereby 'sons of . . .' is used not to explain a relationship, but to describe a quality and as a means of making up for the Hebrew language's general shortage of adjectives. Thus we find such other examples as 'a son of valour' (= a valiant man, *1 Sam. 18:17*), 'children of rebellion' (= rebels, *Num. 17:10*), 'sons of affliction' (= the afflicted, *Prov. 31:5*), 'a son of death' (= a condemned man, *2 Sam. 12:5*), and in the New Testament 'the son of perdition' (= the lost one, *John 17:12; 2 Thess. 2:3*), 'sons of Gehenna' (= hell-bent ones, *Matt. 23:15*), and 'sons of the bride-chamber' (= wedding guests, *Mark 2:19*).

If 'sons of thunder' describes some quality of character in James and John, in what sense does it do so? Their fiery spirit is noticed by Mark elsewhere (e.g. 9:38), but it is especially evidenced in the incident of their desiring to call down fire from heaven on the inhospitable Samaritan village (*Luke 9:54-56*). Who in the Scriptures could have appeared to the disciples more like the sons of thunder than God's servants of old, Moses and Elijah? Moses it was who communed with God on Sinai (as did Elijah later) in the secret place of thunder and who brought the plague of hail and thunder on the stubborn Egyptians. Elijah, as James and John well knew, called down fire from heaven to devour his enemies. Could this be the reason why James and John were invited, along with Peter, to see these same Moses and Elijah in glory with God on the mount of transfiguration? It is possible that the sons of Zebedee pictured themselves as attending the Christ in the spirit and power of Moses and Elijah, to bring about the restoration of God's favours (not least political favours) to Israel. On the mount of transfiguration they see in glory those whom they most sought to emulate and the Lord's own garments, not theirs, are said to have become as bright as a flash of lightning (*Luke 9:29*). How appropriate was this vision to humble their pride and misguided zeal. They knew not what to say, for they were not the voice from the cloud of the divine presence, but merely witnesses. Henceforth, as it appears, for John the real sons of thunder, worthy to be described in terms reminiscent of Moses and Elijah, were those witnesses, described by him in the eleventh chapter of the *Revelation*, who demon-

strated on earth a self-sacrificing zeal for God's glory.

Thus the name put upon the sons of Zebedee may perhaps be thought of as a rebuke to their grandiose notions of themselves. Perhaps we too need constant reminding of our all-too-human thirst for self-acclaim. Paul's thorn in the flesh taught him the same lesson and was there to keep him from thinking too highly of himself. But Boanerges are names that the Lord gives, not terms of abuse that the other disciples put upon their brethren. There is a lesson here for us if we are willing to learn.

The desire for self-glory in the sons of Zebedee is all too evident again in the account of their asking to take the highest places of honour, on the right and left of the Lord in his glory (*Mark 10:35-45*). They desired, as it were, to be the thunder from the throne of God. It is the thunder from the throne that still occupies John's thoughts in *Rev. 4:5*, but now among the attendants of the throne he finds no place reserved for himself or his brother (surely he sees his brother among those souls of the martyrs beneath the altar — *Rev. 6:9*; cf. *Acts 12:1f.*); instead, he records for us the Lord's promise to all 'overcomers' that they should sit, not just at the side of his throne, but with their Lord himself on his throne (*Rev. 3:21*), and so he relishes again his Lord's words, 'Be zealous and repent' (*Rev. 3:19*). Zeal is good, but only after repentance from selfish ambition. Christ's way to the throne must be our way too.

EXPLORING IN '83

The annual chore of compiling the index for *Exploring the Bible* leads us on to thanksgiving to God for the way He has led us in 1982 and provided a wide range of useful contributions. Hence we look forward to 1983 with the confidence that His good hand will continue with us. Already, many interesting papers have been provided or promised.

Prof. F. F. Bruce, having completed his expositions of John's Gospel, has undertaken to write on *The Pauline Circle*, to give us some of the fruit of his researches which have pro-

duced such books as *Paul, Apostle of the Free Spirit*. Other contributors are remarkable, among other things, for their widespread geographical distribution. Prof. R. Y. K. Fung of Hong Kong will be expounding *Galatians*, on which he has published a full-scale commentary in Chinese — though he writes in English for us! Mr. Eric Church, a missionary in Senegal, presents the challenge of *Colossians* under the title, *Complete in all God's will*. Dr. J. Keir Howard, now en route to New Zealand, studies *The Liberated Woman*, while Dr.

D. J. Clark, currently in India, surveys *The Seventh Century Prophets*. Nearer home, Dr. M. E. J. Packer (father-in-law, incidentally, to Dr. Clark) develops a theme under the mystifying rubric of *The Serpent's Hiss*. We refrain from decoding — stay with us and see what he has to say! *Preacher's Workshop* continues with articles from Mr. John Wood.

Further papers are in the file and other plans in mind, but hopefully enough has been said to show the road ahead — and leave us some scope to adapt to events. Three things would we

ask of our readers. First is their prayers for editor and contributors alike. Second, their comments, suggestions and, should they feel able, their contributions — we are ever talent spotting. And thirdly, their support both in continuing as readers and in securing fresh subscribers to back up what we believe is the vital ministry of *The Harvester* to the churches.

May we end with our best wishes in Christ for Christmas and the New Year?

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LOOKING AT BOOKS

THE 'ECHOES' HISTORIES: FIRST VOLUME OF NEW SERIES

That The Word May Know Vol. 1 The Restless Middle East F. A. Tatford. Echoes Publications. 256pp. £3.95 (plus postage 50p.)

For the inquiring mind Dr. Tatford's work is a joy to read. It has a blend of factual information concerning the countries of the Middle East and of the Lord's work through the Brethren workers of the West. He has been able to capture the complex issues in the development of these nations in an interesting and readable manner. Thus it provides good direction for the student preparing himself for work or ministry in a Muslim country. A short bibliography at the end of each chapter may have been helpful in this regard. This volume will be a very valuable aid for informing prayer meetings as well as helping to evaluate where the church's

emphasis should be in the coming decade.

The book's strength is also its weakness. In being a record of western missionaries it leaves the impression that the local Christians have not played a significant part in the life of the church. Without the faithfulness and sufferings of Arab, Armenian and Persian believers, the missionaries' task would have been far more difficult. The book also crosses the fine dividing line between the need to inform and the need for security in some of these lands. In the wrong hands the information could be used against the Church of Jesus Christ and her workers. Islam is seeking to limit the work of God's people and build a file on Christian workers. This volume not only points to the dedicated work of Brethren missionaries but also to the failure of God's people to take up the task of the Church in the Middle East. The very paucity of workers is a record of failure

in the Church to love these more difficult fields.

The first Assembly missionary, Anthony Norris Groves, went to Iraq and suffered much for the sake of the Gospel and yet so few have followed in his footsteps. This first volume could be a means of redressing this imbalance as it clearly outlines the opportunities that exist today.

Review by R. George

(Two other just published books which will be of special interest to many of our members and which might feature on Christmas shopping lists are:-

Spiritual Revival (Report of the memorable 1981 Swanwick Conference) ed. Clifford Wadey, H. E. Walter Ltd

I Will Build My Church: 150 Years of local church work in Bristol by Keith and Alan Linton, from Dr. K. Linton, 22 Bromley Drive, Downend, Bristol BS16 6JQ £3.30 post free

— Ed.)

SOME BRIEF NOTICES OF NOTABLE LIVES

The Works of Richard Sibbes, Volume 7. edited by Alexander B. Grosart. Banner of Truth 560 pp. £7.50.

Apart from occasional references to him in the sermons of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Richard Sibbes (1577-1625) is not a well-known name to the present reviewer. Neither *The International Dictionary of the Christian Church* nor the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* carry any notice about him, all of which suggests that Sibbes is likely to be familiar only to the most dedicated Puritan buffs.

Successively lecturer at Holy Trinity Cambridge 1610-15, preacher at Gray's Inn London from 1617, and Master of St Catherine's Hall, Cambridge from 1626-1635, he was known in early seventeenth-century London as 'The Heavenly Doctor Sibbes'.

This volume, which completes the republication of the Nichol edition of Sibbes' Complete Works, eloquently illustrates his own belief that the most

effective Christian counselling is achieved by the Holy Spirit through the *systematic exposition* of God's word, and for this emphasis alone it is worth a brief mention in the pages of *The Harvester*.

Review by John Peters

The Life of Arthur W. Pink. Iain H. Murray. Banner of Truth. 272pp. £2.45 (paperback)

To the reviewer, who corresponded with A. W. Pink for some years, this book is of particular interest. The author is to be complimented on compiling such a detailed and interesting biography from the very limited information available on Pink's life. Much of the material has been gleaned from Pink's extensive correspondence and from his annual letter in *Studies in the Scriptures*, a monthly magazine he published for over 30 years. Pink was born in Nottingham in 1886 and as a young man was converted from Theosophy. His main sphere of public ministry was first in America, where he met his wife, and then Australia. There-

after Pink's openings for oral ministry became fewer mainly owing to his refusal to join any particular denomination, until, by 1936, he was devoting his time solely to the magazine, the entire contents of which were now from his own pen. In 1940 he moved to Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis where he died in 1952, his wife surviving him for ten years. At the close of the book are extracts from his writings on a wide variety of important topics and a bibliography of his major literary works. These are now being more widely published and read than during his lifetime so that in a true sense 'he being dead yet speaketh'.

Review by W. E. F. Naismith

George Whitefield and the Great Awakening. John Pollock. Lion. £2.50

Following his previous biographies of great Christians John Pollock leads us in the footsteps of George Whitefield. We follow him from his early days as a servant at Oxford to the times when huge crowds flocked to hear his preaching both in this country and in America. Whitefield is brought vividly before us

with his humour, his eloquence and his compassion. In this fascinating biography there is revealed not only Whitefield's own greatness but also the greatness of the work wrought by God through him.

Reviewed by Anthea Cousins

A Most Dangerous Woman? Mary Whitehouse. Lion. 252pp. £7.95.

For the past twenty years Mary Whitehouse has been an institution in Britain, primarily because of her work with 'The National Viewers and Listeners Association'. In view of her receipt of the CBE it might be appropriate to call her an 'establishment' figure. Hailed as a 'torch for purity and sanctity in the media world', she has conducted her campaigns — the 'Inside Linda Lovelace' obscenity trial, the 'Gay News' blasphemy trial — with great persistence and immense courage, and at a vigorous 72 gives no indication whatsoever of retiring from the fray.

A Most Dangerous Woman? brings her story — first recounted in *Who Does She Think She Is?* (1971) — up to the end of the case against *The Romans in Britain* (March 1982). It documents in considerable detail her by now well-known crusades, with copious extracts from her diary, press reports, *Whatever Happened To Sex?*, letters to or by her, as well as lengthy verbatim accounts of her telephone conversations.

Largely factual therefore, it has only fleeting references to her faith and inner motivation — to have dealt with this aspect of her life would have been more interesting than the already well-publicised stories featured here. This work has done little to alter my ambivalent feelings towards her. Incidentally, I

doubt the value of Spike Milligan's imprimatur of approval on the back cover.

Review by John Peters

THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

The Practice Of The Presence of God E. M. Blaiklock (translator). Hodder & Stoughton. 93pp. £1.25 (paperback).

My Chains Fell Off Derek Copley and Mary Austin. Paternoster. 150pp. £2.20 (paperback).

A Faith That Conquers Harry Hutchinson. Saint Andrew Press. 134pp. £3.65 (paperback).

The first of these books is a gem. It is a new translation of a work by Brother Lawrence, the seventeenth-century French monk. It is an artless but powerfully impressive work chronicling the delights he found in communion with God. For Brother Lawrence the practice of the presence of God was the most essential principle for the spiritual life: 'that is to find joy in his divine company and to make it a habit of life, speaking humbly and conversing lovingly with him at all times, every moment, without rule or restriction, above all at times of temptation, distress, dryness, and revulsion, and even of faithlessness and sin.' He was a man for whom the worship of God (the delightful phrase he uses is 'to savour him') was as natural and spontaneous as breathing, an exhilarating, liberating process — full of sparkling vitality and freshness — which most Christians never attain to. This is a deeply challenging volume: 'devotional' in the highest sense of the word.

In contrast, the basic problem exposed in *My Chains Fell Off* is that of spiritual aridity. A cold intellectualism predominated in Derek Copley's life even

after he became the Principal of Moorlands Bible College; while for Mary Austin, a student at Moorlands, the Christian life had become one of grudging duty: joy was a stranger to her, though her 'superspiritual' smile fooled her friends and fellow-students!

But change they both did. Derek gradually realised that God was someone 'who cared for him and who didn't just demand to be served but who desired to be his friend'. This vision affected not only his relationship with God — it now became warm and loving instead of tepid and sterile — but also his response to and acceptance by his students. Mary's spiritual chains fell off when she underwent an emotional change: she had 'to become aware of who she really was. Then she had to learn to accept herself just as God did.' Copley and Austin have written an immensely honest book. It is highly recommended. In a sense many of the cynical, doubting or complacent attitudes discussed in *My Chains Fell Off* are dealt with in Harry Hutchinson's volume. Its dominating theme, that a triumphant faith is necessary for victorious living today, is illustrated and exemplified from a wide range of biblical and secular sources. Read in conjunction with the Bible it will help Christians — in an age of anxiety and pluralism — achieve a measure of confidence and repose.

All these books are worth reading, for different reasons. The first has that timelessness which so characterises other classics like *The Imitation of Christ* and Taylor's *Holy Living*, while the other two look at the life of faith in a realistic, balanced and constructive way.

Review by John Peters



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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 Kings 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 Divisive Movement?

This month's contribution is from Mr. E. L. Lovering, and our correspondence column indicates its importance.

The contents of this contribution contain an issue of great concern to the writer, as also to very many Christians at this time.

The above title is how a Christian of long-standing described the impact of the 'charismatic renewal movement' on many local churches. This is a serious

charge indeed but we ask, 'Was he right'?

In a different context the consequence of our Lord's teaching could have been described as 'divisive', for it was to 'set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother . . .

and a man's foes would be those of his own household' (Mat. 10:35,36).

That the church on earth has been 'by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed' is a matter of history.

Having broken from the established church, non-conformists continued to divide, and this not because of a denial of truth but an over-emphasis on one or more aspect of it, thus producing 'churches' bearing distinguishing titles. It is now commonly reported that many long established churches are being torn apart, it would seem, by a movement whose enthusiasm for the unifying work of the Holy Spirit and His grace gifts to the church, is a central factor, and paradoxically, where the supremacy of 'love' that 'all may be one . . . that the world may know . . .'

(Jn. 17:21) is constantly reiterated.

Where leadership has been so strong as to resist any change in existing patterns of worship, the frequent consequence has been an exodus of predominantly the younger element, while in those churches where the renewal movement has been allowed to flourish, Christians of many years experience have felt it necessary to withdraw from church fellowship. In some instances the form and pattern of earlier worship has been so changed that the issue has become one of trusteeship, as to whether the original purpose and principles for which the building was erected has been invalidated.

Without assessing the 'rights or wrongs' of the charismatic movement, we would be interested to learn of readers' experiences in these matters and of any constructive comments which might help to prevent such situations reaching this impasse and where such have already occurred, of any practical suggestions for healing the breach.

REPLIES TO PROFESSOR BRUCE

The October Question

Some of my friends have built up quite an impressive library of tape recordings and listen to them repeatedly — often in preference to reading material in print. It is perhaps a sign of old age that my own preference is decidedly for the printed word. But have I not objective reason for believing that reading, as distinct from listening, gives greater opportunity for the critical weighing and assessment of what is offered? And if people lose the aptitude for reading solid literary fare, are they not cutting themselves off from the heritage of the past?

Mr. C. R. Boswood replies:

In raising the question of the relative advantages of taped and printed records Professor Bruce suggests that it may be a sign of old age that he prefers the latter. When still more years have passed he may find, as some of us are doing, that sight is deteriorating faster than hearing, and so the scale could be tipped the opposite way! It is sad to realise that one's treasured volumes may not remain as easily accessible as today.

On the general question, it is certainly true that reading, as distinct from listening, gives the academically minded

opportunity to turn up quoted scriptures; to re-read crucial sentences; or to make notes. Yet the human voice is a wonderful feature of creation and a good tape brings one very close to the speaker, revealing his personality and giving glimpses of the subtleties of his emphases and emotion in a way that the printed page cannot. But much depends on the particular speaker. I recall looking forward eagerly to hearing for the first time a valued writer and feeling very 'let down' by the experience, as his presence was rather negative, and oratorical gift absent. Perhaps Paul was something like this (2 Cor. 10:10) A tape by Apollos would be much to be preferred Acts 18:24,28)?

To conclude, we have personal communications from the Lord Jesus in His word but the thrill of hearing His living voice is a daily expectation.

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

'The heritage of the past', and even solid books of the present, are hardly likely to be put on tape. And even if they were, the human voice could not simulate typographical devices without constantly interrupting the flow of thought; and even punctuation marks are not unimportant. While one does

not need to be told that 'God' is spelt with an initial capital there may be times to distinguish between the Holy Spirit, the human spirit, and the spiritual realm, when it will be necessary to indicate with an initial capital. For quick reference from one author to another there is nothing like books with their usual indexes — even if stored information can be displayed on a screen in seconds with a word processor, but at great cost. But when it comes to thrilling Bible addresses, missionary reports and interviews there is nothing like a tape recording: whether videos for reproduction on a television will be as commonplace as are cine-films with a sound track of missionary work, we shall see. 'Cold print' can never express the modulations of the human voice, the flash of the eyes, and the movements of the body. Whatever the subject within their ambit, the blind are thankful for a tape; while the deaf are thankful for a book, etc. And so it is all a question of what is best for the purpose required: tapes for the spoken word, and books for the lengthy written word. On one occasion it was a case of 'the books and the parchments' (2 Tim. 4:13); today it could be 'the books and the tapes'.

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.

When does the Holy Spirit come?

From Mr. Stanley Linton

Dear Mr. Coad,

I am grateful to Mr. Burgess (October issue) for challenging again the 'orthodox evangelical party line' about the vexed subject of 'baptism in the Spirit'. Alas, no amount of quoting of Scripture is likely to help us very much. Countless books have been written both for and against this subject and both sides draw heavily on the Scriptures to justify their case. What is more sad, however, is the tremendous degree of animosity the whole subject generates often with deep and lasting hurts. But could I perhaps offer a simplistic explanation — without quoting any Scripture!

We are born again of the Spirit of God who generates within us the faith to repent and believe. This is wholly the work of God. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but not possessed — else from the moment of our new birth we would have the Pentecostal experience we read about in the second chapter of Acts. But it is God's desire to possess us so that His Holy Spirit can start its renewing work in every department of our lives. He wants to flow into every aspect of our being, He wants to immerse (baptise) us with His Spirit. He is standing at the door of our lives and he wants to come in. It is this experience of opening the door that is as real as our conversion experience — and which is often called 'being baptised in the Spirit'. But it is only the beginning — we have not arrived — we have just started! It is something however that seems to start an entirely new relationship with the Lord. Somehow praise and worship take on quite a different character and our Christian lives seem to become so much more an adventure. After all, the Children of Israel had two distinct experiences before they reached the Land of Promise — the Red Sea and Jordan.

What is so very sad is the division this kind of thing often brings about. Just over 12 months ago we had a devastating division in our assembly with about two thirds of the assembly leaving — and this included people with extreme views on both sides. People were badly hurt and some of those hurts will not be cured in the lifetime of some who left. As in these cases it was a complex situation, but at the heart of it all was this whole question of 'being baptised in the Spirit'. We are not despondent — we have baptised (with water!) five young people over the past twelve months, but why, why, why all this trouble and grief. I wish I knew the answer. Can anyone tell me?

Yours sincerely,

Stanley Linton

27 Selborne Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4QP.

From Mr. J. E. Todd

Dear Mr. Coad

The letter of Mr. Burgess in the October issue raises the important question, 'When does the Holy Spirit come?' Labeling a view one does not agree with, in this case receiving the Holy Spirit at conversion, with a suspect label, in this case 'the orthodox evangelical party line', and then feeling free to discard the doctrine, is not the same as biblical exposition.

The historical events in the book of Acts are open to many doctrinal interpretations as may suit the expositor. But the true interpretation is to be found in the doctrinal statements of scripture.

1. The disciples of Acts 2 did know the Holy Spirit, 'He dwells with you' (John 14:17), but Pentecost was to be a new experience, 'And will be in you'. John 20:19-22 is a prophetic enactment of the Pentecostal experience, the Lord breathing new life into them (John 14:19), compare with Genesis 2:7. It is prophetic because in Acts 1:4, 5 and 8 they were still waiting for the Holy Spirit.

2. Neither the Jews (Acts 2:36-37), nor the Samaritans (Acts 8:14), nor the Gentiles (Acts 10:45) could enter the kingdom except at the instigation of the apostle Peter, for to him the keys of the kingdom were given (Mat. 16:19, note

'you' is singular). Thus preserving the unity of the early Church and preventing 'national' churches.

3. The disciples at Ephesus were disciples of John the Baptist, not Christians (Acts 19).

The Holy Spirit is received at conversion (Eph. 1:13, RV or RSV); indeed a person who has not received the Holy Spirit is not a Christian at all (Rom. 8:9). Everywhere in the epistles every Christian is assumed to possess the Holy Spirit (e.g. 1 John 3:24). In the apostolic vocabulary to receive the Holy Spirit is to be baptised with the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:15-17) and so all Christians are baptised with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-13).

Mr. Burgess deduces from this teaching, 'There is thus no need to seek a subsequent experience of the Spirit', this is a false deduction. All Christians, having already received the Holy Spirit, are now exhorted, 'Let us also walk by the Spirit' (Gal. 5:25), 'Be filled with the Spirit' (Eph. 5:18). A life time's work indeed!

Yours sincerely,

J. E. Todd

47 Rother Avenue, Brimington, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 1LG

From Mr. A. G. Levett

Dear Mr. Coad,

May I participate in the long-standing debate on the Holy Spirit re-activated by David Burgess in the October issue. A mistake which is often made is to confine the Holy Spirit to a place as if He were a human being. To suggest that because the Holy Spirit indwells a believer He cannot come upon Him is as absurd as to say that because a cardboard box is full of air it therefore confines the earth's atmosphere! Mr Burgess is right in his argument about subsequence and to refer to the many who experience it today (some, at least, are surely genuine) but there are those who pontificate that only one subsequent experience is necessary, which is surely just as arbitrary as the position taken by Mr Nickels and others. Again, whilst it is right to say that we no more need another Pentecost than we need another Calvary this surely does not invalidate the great Spiritual revivals of

history when large numbers were saved, as at Pentecost, by the evident power of the Holy Spirit poured out in grace in response to believing prayer.

What do we think we are doing? Are we to instruct the Holy Spirit as to His official whereabouts? Are we so certain of these mysterious matters that we feel we can resolve, in a clinical way, the dispositions of the Godhead, three in one, indwelling a believer, *John 14:17 and 23*, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father, *John 15:26*, the Son in the bosom of the Father, *John 1:18*, sitting at His right hand *Heb. 1:3*, and yet standing at the door of our hearts trying to get in, *Rev 3:20*?

Perhaps we are in the wrong debate and should ask different questions suggested by Mr Burgess, e.g. is the Holy Spirit able to energise me increasingly every day? In applying myself seriously to such a question I do not think I shall be too concerned about Spiritual geography.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Levett

25a The Avenue, Branksome Park, Poole, Dorset

From Mr. D. C. Marwick

Dear Mr. Coad,

I read with interest Mr Burgess' letter (*Oct. '82*). I have more questions on this subject than answers, but in the New Testament the Spirit is only actually promised to those who are baptised (*Acts 2:38*), and as we read on we find that baptism and the Holy Spirit are nearly always mentioned in the same breath.

It is possible to receive the Spirit before baptism, but on the one occasion this is recorded, baptism sprang at once to Peter's mind (*Acts 10:47*). When some 'disciples' had not received the Spirit, Paul questioned, not their conversion, but their baptism (*Acts 19:3*).

When converts had not yet received the Spirit it is necessary to repeat, uniquely in Scripture, the fact that they had been baptised (*Acts 8:12, 16*) as if this would have been questioned.

Paul was promised his sight and filling with the Holy Spirit; he received his sight and was baptised: is the connection between baptism and the Spirit assumed? (*Acts 9:17, 18*)

The baptism of Jesus was not the same as ours, but this was when, in some way, He received the Spirit (*John 1:32*).

Certainly the Spirit works to convict (*John 16:8-10*), but this seems different from 'receiving' as He may be rejected. When we come to being 'born of the

Spirit' in *John 3*, we find water there again (*v.5*).

We have caused problems by separating belief and baptism, but true trust and obedience can never be separated, and a New Testament believer was assumed to be a baptised believer.

Is this the usual fulfilment of the promise to 'baptise with the Holy Spirit'? We never read of anyone after Pentecost (*Acts 1:5*) being 'baptised with the Holy Spirit': The Holy Spirit comes when one is baptised.

Yours sincerely,

David C. Marwick

51 King Harold Street, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0EQ

(If the signs of the Spirit's presence were as present with us as they were with our New Testament predecessors, perhaps we should have less need to debate — the answer would be obvious! — Ed.)

Textual Criticism

From Mr Clive Govier

Dear Mr Coad,

Dr. Alan Duthie, in 'Translating the Bible — Which documents . . .' (*October*), suggests that the translators of the *King James Version* have in principle contravened *Rev 22:18* in the alleged harmonising of *Eph. 1:7*, *Col. 1:14*, *Acts 9:5-6* etc. At the same time he proposes that the modern translator should relegate *Mark 16:9-20* to the margin as unauthentic.

However, the issue in the latter case is the more serious. The supposed harmonisations amount to repetition of doctrine or event (and Scripture is replete with repetition in both Testaments), whereas the relegation of *Mark 16:9-20* to the margin throws doubt on seven facts unique to Mark's account. These are:-

1. Mary Magdalene was the first to see the Risen Lord, *v.9*.
 2. It was He who had cast out from her seven demons, *v.9*.
 3. The men to whom she brought the message were 'mourning and weeping'.
 4. These same men not only did not believe her, but when Cleopas and his friend reported their own experience, 'neither believed they them', *v.11*.
 5. The Apostolic Commission of *vv.15 and 16* was 'to every creature'.
 6. The announcement of the signs that were to follow them that believe, *v.17*.
 7. After His ascension, the Lord sat down at the right hand of God, *v.19*.
- On similar criteria *John 7:52-8:11* (The woman taken in adultery) would also, presumably, be lost to the margin, and with it the precious statement in *v.11*. All

of which shows the importance of a single verse of Holy Scripture.

As someone who would encourage young people to take up the *NKJV* (now described as 'The Revised Authorised'), a version free of major archaisms, may I correct Dr. Duthie's statement in connection with *1 John 5:7*? The marginal note referred to asserts that the manuscript evidence for its inclusion is unusually late. Some would thus doubt its genuineness, but the issue is not in fact a closed one.

A well-known European textual critic admits that the science of N.T. textual criticism is in serious disarray: 'It is clear that the situation with which our present day method of establishing the New Testament text confronts us is most unsatisfactory. It is not at all the case that, as some seem to think, everything has been done in this field and we can for practical purposes rest satisfied with the text in use. On the contrary, the decisive task still lies ahead'. (Kurt Aland, quoted in Wilbur Pickering's *The Identity of the N.T. Text*, p. 163). As long as that is true, the words of Alfred Martin, of Moody Bible Institute are apposite:-

A Bible believing Christian had better be careful what he says about the **Textus Receptus**, for the question is not at all the precise wording of that text but rather a choice between two different kinds of text, a fuller one and a shorter one.' (*Which Bible?* 5th Ed. pp. 149-150)

John Wenham's review of Pickering's book (*Evan. Quart.* Jan-March '79) describes its effect as 'a shock to the system'. Some American evangelicals have recently formed a 'Dean Burgon Society'.

'For ever O Lord thy Word is settled in heaven' (*Ps. 119:89*). What, however, are we doing with it?

Yours sincerely,

Clive Govier

14, Christ Church Road, Folkestone, Kent.

Genesis One Pattern and Parallelism

From Mr. E. L. Lovering

Dear Mr. Coad,

May I be permitted to make one further contribution to the subject of 'Theories of Creation'?

In his book *Creation Revealed*, Dr Filby observed that the account of Creation might have been given in one of three ways — scientific, straightforward historical prose, and poetry. Had it been written in scientific language no one

would have understood it and it would have to be rewritten every generation to conform to the new language of science. A straightforward historical account of the facts must inevitably suffer from the limitations of human language, for 'man is compelled to use figures of speech to describe the actions of the Almighty Creator in words which he uses for himself'. The third possible method was that of poetry and he notes 'poetry, especially Eastern, relies upon the twin forms of rhythmic order or pattern of words or ideas and highly coloured figures of speech'. *Psalm 104* is a particular example of such a description of Creation.

Genesis One provides an account in language simple enough for all men in all time. Dr. Filby writes, 'using only 76 different words fundamental to all mankind, arranged in a wonderful poetical pattern yet free from any highly coloured figures of speech, it establishes all that men really need to know of the facts of creation'. He makes the interesting observation that the structure of the record is based upon a *Mathematical pattern* (as indeed is the structure of molecules, lattices of crystals, leaf arrangement on stems, processes of cell division, the Universe etc.). This pattern

is discernible in music, architecture and poetry. He notes that *Genesis One* is based on a scheme of three numbers, three, seven and ten; but that 'although the designing mind behind *Genesis One* is obviously that of a mathematician, the facts are not distorted in any way to make them fit the scheme'. He further sees in the record 'a clear indication of a *form of parallelism*'. Briefly, Days 1,2,4 deal with sky and light; 3(a) and 5 with water and life in it; and 3(b) and 6 with earth and life on it.

Finally, he makes two interesting observations; (i) 'the Hebrew writers frequently enclosed their poems or paragraphs in a kind of "envelope", an opening phrase and a concluding phrase to balance it'. So it is here. In vv. 1-2, 'In the beginning God created' and 'His Spirit moved'; in chapter 2:1-2 at the end 'God finished' and 'God rested'. (ii) The use of the Hebrew word for 'and', just one letter, a tiny hook, but a 'little hook that links the Bible together'. *Verse 4 chapter 2* is a tablet summary and the next section commencing at verse 5 is provided with the opening 'and' to join it to the previous section — every section not only of *Genesis* but of the *Pentateuch* is linked by 'and' to its predecessor and even beyond this it is true to say that

every fresh historical section of the Old Testament begins with the Hebrew 'vâw' (and).

'The Bible is indeed a complete account — it not only had to have a beginning, *Genesis One*, but all the rest is actually linked on to that beginning, one might say 'hooked' on by the little word 'vâw'. As one who was privileged to know Dr. Filby over many years, may I recommend his book as the work of a prayerful and devoted student of the Scriptures and a meticulous researcher.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

E. L. Lovering

'Style Close', Marlborough Road, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8JP

Erratum

Mr G. K. Lowther writes to point out an error in the October *Harvester*. On p.4 (middle column, middle paragraph) 'flock' and 'fold' have been interchanged. It is KJV following the Latin Vulgate and enforced by King James himself that gave 'one fold and one shepherd'. 'It should read', writes Mr Lowther, 'as all other versions I know: *one flock.*'

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NEWS PAGE

Argentina

The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students reports that Christian witness in the universities in Argentina has extended from five to nine of the major cities and helpers are needed. There is fine student leadership, a few young graduates who could become staff workers and a growing group of 'Friends' Prayer is needed that the Holy Spirit may work in knitting the hearts and minds of these Argentinians into a national ministry team. There is to be an important national congress and training camp in January when 40 student leaders will meet for Bible study and training.

Belize

Assemblies in Belize are experiencing both encouragement and times of testing. Their radio Gospel witness, now in its 18th year, inspires a substantial response from listeners who are saved or helped by the messages. However, the cost has gone up by more than 25%. Their summer activities reached over 500 children and young people with the Gospel and there were many professions of faith in Christ. But migration to the USA and elsewhere is a constant problem especially since independence was achieved towards the end of 1981. As a result, some assemblies are not increasing numerically as they should.

China

The October visit to the UK by delegates from the China Christian Council was an immense encouragement. Nothing quite like it had happened for a generation and it offered proof positive that there is still a thriving Christian presence in China. The delegates were able to report also that Chinese state-owned printing presses were printing Bibles and New Testaments with Psalms. By the end of 1982, one million

will have been produced and 300,000 more were planned for 1983. In some cases, local councils of churches were funding production and in others, individual Christians have paid in advance of production for their copies. However, there is also evidence of tension between the CCC and independent house churches and evangelical groups in China. When delegates were faced with questions about such matters at a meeting with representatives of the Evangelical Missionary Alliance, the answers given were not altogether satisfactory. An example of the sort of thing that causes concern is the document printed below which has been distributed in at least one Province among the house churches apparently with the backing of the CCC.

TEN DON'T'S:

- (1) Do not organize a church without the government's approval.
- (2) Except for government-approved clergy, nobody should baptize.
- (3) Do not have contacts with foreign religious bodies or buy books from abroad. Violators will be prosecuted.
- (4) Do not print or reproduce Bibles or other religious books without approval.
- (5) Do not travel from commune to commune to spread religion.
- (6) Keep religion to yourself.
- (7) Do not pray every day, only on Sundays.
- (8) Do not convey religious thought to persons under 18 years of age.
- (9) Do not sing religious songs to youths under 18 years of age.
- (10) Do not solicit contributions for promotion of religion, increasing believers' burdens.

Counties Evangelistic Work

The Annual Rally held on October 9 at Westminster Central Hall focused on a 'Task Force' theme. Afternoon events included three seminars: the one on children's work was led by David Liffé and Mike Hencher; that on pastoral work by Victor Jack and Rod Chilvers and the

one on leadership and evangelism by Dennis Pierce, Dr. H. Darling and Bob Telford. The evening rally included reports from evangelists and a talk on the work of regional fellowships by Brian Adams, a new member of the Executive. There was music from John Hall on piano and Alan Wakefield on the organ. The closing message was a challenge from Brian Tatford especially to young men to become 'fishers of men'. Twenty-four evangelists reported by interview or individual address and it was encouraging to hear of remarkable cases of conversion. Michael and Janet Hencher were interviewed by the chairman, R. J. Bolton, as new workers concentrating on North Avon and Gloucestershire. 'Captain' Stephen Gillham took up the National Maritime Year theme and conducted a Sea Ventures Rally for the children. This included a presentation of Paul's shipwreck. Throughout the day in various venues 16 teams, each of four boys and girls, aged 10-14, battled out the eliminating rounds of a national Bible quiz. The final, staged in the evening, was between Michael Jack, Andrew Jack, Ruth Hartley and Lisa Homes from West Road Church, Bury St. Edmunds and, the eventual winners by half a point, Andrew Martin, Rosalind Blake, Rebekah Richardson and Jeremy Grosvenor from Sladebrook Chapel, Bath. It was appropriate that Brian Tatford should present the winners cup and individual certificates since they will have the opportunity to compete in a similar quiz in France.

Stephen Gillham has continued to find opportunities in schools and reports that 'almost without exception there was a great interest and response from both children and teachers'. The Dorset Adventure Time Camps which he had anticipated would be small in 1982, turned out to be larger than ever with 168 children

at camp during the three Camps. In spite of numerous difficulties, there were conversions and three very encouraging Saturday night Grand Finales with parents and children packing the marquee. Stephen will value prayer for a schools tour from December 1 to 20.

Eastern Europe

The name of Stuart Hine is familiar to many *Harvester* readers. Some will have read *Parts One and Two of Not You But God*, the story of his ministry in Eastern Europe and of his life from 1899 to 1939. Now he has written a third part — 1939-1982 — about his experiences during and after World War II and containing information about the hymn 'How Great Thou Art', the complete volume of *Parts One to Three* can be obtained for £1.95, or post paid, for £2.40, from the author at Carpathia, Coast Road, Berrow, Burnham on Sea, Somerset, TA8 2QS.

Evangelism

January 1, 1983 will see the 157th anniversary of the founding of the Glasgow City Mission by David Nasmyth who later established similar missions in London, Edinburgh and other cities. He had wished to become a foreign missionary but his application was rejected. However the work that goes on today is missionary in the fullest sense of the word. There are five centres each under the charge of a missionary. Apart from conducting services and varied activities in the halls, most of their time is taken up in visitation. Not only is he able to sit down and talk with the people visited — he can note if practical help is necessary. Groceries, furniture and clothing can be supplied. There is still considerable spiritual and material need. Today, more than ever, the mission is fighting against strong forces which seek to occupy the minds and hearts of those who are void of spiritual things and who spend their time

and energy trying to fill the vacuum with temporary and unsatisfying material pleasures. The Secretary is willing to speak and show slides on the work of the Mission. He can be contacted at Glasgow City Mission, 23 Royal Exchange Square, Glasgow G1 3AJ, Tel: 041-221-4402.

Railway Mission Tracts. 'The Locomotive Enthusiast' and 'Watch that Signal!' are two tracts recently produced by the Railway Mission. They include three British Rail photographs and copies are available for free distribution by sending a large s.a.e. to The General Secretary, Railway Mission, 69 Billingbank Drive, Leeds, LS13 4RX.

Luis Palau. During his recent Crusade in Asuncion, Paraguay, Luis Palau addressed a crowd of 25,000 people during the final meeting. During the nine days of meetings, more than 10,000 responded to the invitation to commit their lives to Christ. Readers will remember that Luis Palau intends to join with British evangelists in leading a series of area-wide campaigns in September/October 1983 throughout Greater London. This is to be followed by a four-week campaign in the Queens Park Rangers stadium in Shepherd's Bush, West London, during June 1984. More recently, he has conducted a ten-day Crusade at Woodhouse Moor in Leeds.

Billy Graham. Preparation is actively proceeding for *Mission: England* which will include the visit of Billy Graham in 1984. But local churches are being challenged now to ensure that at least three out of every ten members of each church are enrolled in the 'Prayer Triplet' scheme which has been devised to provide prayer support for the mission. The scheme is simply that three people agree to meet for prayer regularly, each sharing the names of three others so that the group is thereby committed to pray for nine people who would not consider themselves to be Christians. The group will pray for all the known needs of the nine and especially that they may discover the reality of the Life of Christ. The group will also pray for each other in their relationships with the nine as well as for the progress of

Mission: England and for the 1984 visit of Billy Graham. It would be helpful if each church appoints a prayer secretary who will be kept informed of national and regional *Mission: England* prayer needs. Obviously this should be somebody who is not already over-burdened! The contact addresses are as follows:
North West:
Mr. J. Williamson,
Mission England,
North West Regional Office,
PO Box 1984,
Liverpool. L7 0NB
Tel: 051-263-4170

Midlands:
Mr. Phil South,
Mission England,
Midlands Regional Office,
PO Box 587,
Sutton Coldfield. B72 1NQ
Tel: 021-354-9937/8

North East:
Rev. Ray Skinner,
Mission England,
North East Regional Office,
St. Matthew's Newbottle,
Y. & C. Centre,
Houghton-le-Spring,
Tyne & Wear. DH4 4EP
Tel: 0783 843244

South West:
Mr. Anthony Bush,
Mission England,
South West Regional Office,
Friary House,
15 Colston Street,
Bristol. BS1 5AP
Tel: 0272 24616

East Anglia:
Mr. Wilf Betts,
Mission England,
East Anglia,
21 Conyers Way,
Great Barton,
Bury St. Edmunds. IP31 2SW
Tel: 028-487-790.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones
Readers of the *Harvester* will be glad to know that a Trust has been established to preserve and distribute tape recordings of the preaching of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Ray Gaydon (Crick House, Barcombe Mills, Nr. Lewes, East Sussex. BN8 5BJ) writes: 'We are continuing to make good progress in cleaning and transcribing the original reel masters to cassettes. Already the series on the Acts of the Apostles has been completed (125 cassettes) and we hope to include them in the first catalogue to be released about

Easter time 1983.' However, there is a problem: The Trust needs a base from which to work and while it has secured planning permission to erect its own premises at Barcombe, they will need £20,000 for materials and fittings although the members of the Barcombe Baptist Chapel are prepared to do the work themselves. If readers can help or would like further details, they should contact Pastor Gaydon (tel: 0273-400625).

London Bible College
September 28 saw one of the largest intakes of students in the history of the College. 235 from all over the world makes London Bible College a mini-United Nations. Thirty-seven nations are represented in the student body. In spite of the world-wide recession, applications reached an all time high.

The Lord's Day Observance Society
Readers will be interested to know that the LDOS is concerned not only to defend the Lord's Day but also to spread the gospel. It now visits agricultural shows, city and town centres and conventions. Readers are asked to pray for the work over the winter months as plans are made for next summer. The Society will be pleased to co-operate with Christians in any part of the UK especially in areas where there are no Christian bookshops and at shows where there is no Christian witness.

Muslim Awareness Seminar
The Gairdner Trust is holding a seminar at Hildenborough Hall on January 7/8. This is a comprehensive training programme in evangelism intended to help develop abilities to communicate the gospel to Muslims in the UK. The cost of the weekend including the seminar is £21.00. Anybody interested should contact Ron George, Box 26, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, or phone 0892-22729.

Physically Handicapped
The Christian Home for the Physically Handicapped (correspondence to 58 Purbeck Road, Hornchurch, Essex. RM11 1NA) has now received recognition by the Charity Commission. To achieve its purpose of accommodating eight residents, two for short-stay care, seems likely to cost around

£300,000, of which only £6,000 has so far been raised. When the Home is established it is believed that it will be the only independent one of this type in the Greater London and Essex area. Anyone interested in helping in any way or requiring additional information should contact Mr. Albon at the address given above.

Singapore
The Fellowship of Evangelical Students reports that measures have been taken to introduce the teaching of Bible knowledge, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islamic studies and Confucianist ethics to students in secondary schools. All students will be required to study at least one. In the 1980 census 22.9% of those who had received a secondary school education and 35.8% of those who had received tertiary education declared themselves to be Christians. However the proportion of the general population claiming to be Christians was just 10.3%. How the new education policy will affect these percentages in years to come is open to much discussion. It is obvious that the role played by Christian teachers is crucial. Attempts are being made to motivate these teachers and to encourage them to look upon their profession as a God-given calling. Responses from students and teachers have so far been encouraging. But more prayer is needed.

South Africa
The main task of Tear Fund South Africa, according to its director, Howard Cooper, is to get Christians there to change their attitude towards those in their own country who are deprived. 'I don't see Tear Fund South Africa as primarily a fund-raising organization', he said. 'There is so much apathy, blindness and prejudice in people that our major role is to get Christians to see they have a responsibility, not just to give money, but to change their attitudes.' By way of example he quotes the case of a lady in Cape Town who rang him up following a television news report about starving children in Uganda. She urged that something be done to help them. He had just come back from a visit to Crossroads, the squalid shanty town for blacks on the outskirts of the city where conditions for some

people were little better than they were in Uganda. 'That's all very well, lady', he responded, 'but there are children not five miles from you in desperate need. What about them?' She replied that it was the government's responsibility. He pointed out that the government was doing nothing about it, so it was as much her responsibility as was the situation in Uganda. She could not see the connection, went ahead with an appeal in her church for Uganda and raised £500. In writing to thank the church for their generosity Howard Cooper reiterated the point he had made about Crossroads being on their doorstep and offered to go to speak to them, but he heard no more.

Soviet Union

Christian Solidarity International reports that during the past months, the harassment and arrests of believers in Russia have again reached alarming proportions. Evangelical believers have reported new arrests. Early this year, the KGB staged a raid in Moscow and 12 Orthodox Christians were arrested as more than 50 homes were searched simultaneously. According to the German mission 'Friedensstimme', six women members of the Council

of Prisoners' Relatives were arrested at a conference held in Losovaya near the city of Kharkov. This Council of Evangelical Christian-Baptists was founded in 1964, and its members are composed of wives and mothers of imprisoned believers. Their aim is to help families whose breadwinners are in labour camps or jail as in the USSR there is no social security system comparable to ours. Private welfare is forbidden, and the punishments of believers consists not only of the husband and father being sent to detention camp, but also depriving the rest of the family of its livelihood.

Until her expulsion to the USA in 1979, Lydia Vins, the mother of Georgij Vins, was head of the Relatives Council. Now Mrs. Alexandra Kozorezova is her successor and during the last 20 years, she has been subjected to several investigations. In August 1981 she was sentenced to three years in a labour camp. Two Swiss Christian solicitors agreed to represent CSI in order to defend Mrs. Kozorezova's legal rights. Her husband, Alexej, was also sentenced to three years in prison and the couple have 10 children who must now be supported by their grandmother. Readers who wish to write to the Council of Prisoners' Relatives to

express Christian fellowship and encouragement should send their letters to: CCCP 349340, Voroshilovgradskaya obl., Gor. Krasnodon, Ul. Podgornaya, 30, Galina Rytikova. Letters should be registered with the red reply slip obtainable from the Post Office.

Sponsorship

Two Tear Fund supporters from Dungannon, Northern Ireland, returned home last month after completing a round-the-world cycling trip which took them through 16 countries in just over a year and has already raised more than £25,000 to aid Cambodian refugees in Thailand. John Hanson, 27, a sociology graduate, and John Rodgers, 21, son of the Rev. Andrew Rodgers, minister of Dungannon Presbyterian Church, left their home town on September 15 last year having raised £6,000 to pay for the trip, most of it coming from local businessmen, their families and themselves. The 25,000 raised so far for Tear Fund came from individuals, youth groups, schools and churches who sponsored the two cyclists for each mile they travelled. Other fund-raising efforts were undertaken in Dungannon by the organizing committee.

The Bishop of Durham has not

made any recorded comment on this particular enterprise. but in his diocesan letter for November, he suggested that 'it might be more sensible if those who organized sponsored events chose to do something useful rather than merely odd . . . there are a great many better things to do than sitting for a week in custard'. He describes some sponsored efforts as 'outrageous', 'bizarre' and 'disgusting', and suggests that attention might be given to firing people's imaginations with a view to engaging in a more worthwhile activity such as sponsored rubbish clearing or caring for the handicapped.

Home Call

Mrs. C. Duncan on July 29, aged 96. Saved quite young, she associated with the assembly at Tillicoultry for more than 80 years. Her latter years were spent with her daughter at Greenock where she was mainly confined to home. She and her husband, the late William Duncan, were called in early life to full time Christian work, labouring chiefly in Scotland for 19 years until his home call. They worked as pioneers using a vehicle known as 'God's Way of Salvation Car'. Mrs. Duncan sought to testify for the Lord right to the end.

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THE ERNEST LUFF HOMES FRINTON-ON-SEA

have just published an illustrated Leaflet about their new
specially designed building for Elderly Residents.

It is hoped that this will be completed by the autumn of 1983
but because of the lack of funds the building will not be as
large as originally planned, and the Homes will not be able to
accommodate as many residents from their long Waiting List
as the Committee would have liked.

Phase 2 plans are ready for implementation as soon as the
financial position permits.

A copy of the Leaflet is available from:

The Secretary, The Ernest Luff Homes Ltd., The Bible Depot,
Connaught Avenue, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 9PS

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 October amounted to £488.28.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:
12 Cleveland Crescent, North Shields, NE29 ONP. Gifts and legacies received for the month of October amounted to £3,068.32.

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, B.:
Falmouth 1-31

Clifford, D.:
Miami, Florida; Poulner; Haven School of Evangelism; West Moors.

Galyer, W.S.:
Teddington 1; Ewell 2, 9, 16; Northampton 5; Evangelists Conf. 6-8; Croxley Green 16; Kingston 14, 21, 28; Welling 15;

Sheen 19; Wandsworth 26.

Gillham, S.:
Dorset Schools Tour 1-22; Flandford 2; Senior Camp Reunion 3/4; Heatherlands Church, Parkstone 5/6, 12/13; Merriott 11; West Moors 12 (a.m.), 18, 25; Charminster Chapel, Bournemouth 19.

Grimsey, A. W.:
Potters Bar 5; Middlesborough, Cleveland 12.

Loader, G.:
Tiverton 5; Nailsea 8; Swindon, Mission England 11; Bristol 12; Birmingham, Mission England 16; Bristol 19; Falkirk, Scotland 31.

Lowther, G. K.:
Grimsby, Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire and Humberside.

Phillips, C. F.:
Bush Hill Park, Enfield 1, 8, 15, 19; Hemel Hempstead 2, 9; Elmfield, North Harrow 5, 12; Chingford 5; South Ruislip 6, 13; Maidenhead 7, 14.

Pierce, D. H.:
Coleford 5; Swanwick, Evangelists Conference 6, 7, 8; Ashford 12; Barnstaple 13-20.

Short, S. S.:
Bristol 1, 3, 7, 8; Weston-super-Mare 2, 9; Wokingham 5; Bath 6, 19; Kendal 11-16; Aberdeen 26.

Stringer, D.:
Bournemouth 1-7; Warwickshire area 8-9; Wantage 10; Swindon 11-14; Rugby 15-27; London Colney 28; Tile Kiln 29; Enfield Town 30; Greenford 31.

Tryon, G. C.:
Tooting 1, 8; Wandsworth 5;

Kingston 7, 19; Tolworth 12; Loughborough Junction 13, 26.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Brierfield:
Hebron Hall, Walter Street, Saturday Evening Rally, 7 p.m. December 4. Speaker: D. Dixon, Dereham.

Carlisle:
Hebron Hall, Botchergate. New Year Conference, January 1, at 2.30 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. Speakers: J. Hislop, Bridge of Allan, and S. Collins, USA.

Colyton:
The Gospel Hall, The Butts. Monthly Bible Study, December 18. Subject: The Respectable Man (Romans 2:1-16). Speaker: T. Proffitt, New Haw.

Cowdenbeath:
Union Hall. Annual Conference, West Parish Church on Monday, January 3, 1983 at 3pm. Speakers: J. Baker, B. Cook and A. Leckie.

Edinburgh:
Bellevue Chapel, Rodney Street. Conference on Saturday,

January 1 1983, 2.00 p.m.-4.00 p.m. Speakers: A Frame (Eaglesham) and P. Maiden (Carlisle). After Church Rally on Sunday, January 2, at 8.15 p.m. in Bellevue Chapel: P Maiden will speak on Operation Mobilisation. Ministry meetings Monday-Wednesday, January 3-5, at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: P. Maiden.

Maiden:
Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road, Monthly Conference, December 4, at 6.30 p.m. 'The New order' (Matt. 5:17-48). Speaker: A. Carew, Tooting.

Motherwell:
Roman Road Hall. New Year Conference, Saturday January 1 1983. In the G.L.O. Centre, Muir Street, 12 noon till 4 p.m. Speakers: Fred Stallan — 'I will build my church'; Adam Prentice — 'I will send my Spirit'; Hedley Murphy — 'I will come again'.

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