

Remarkable book, made simple,
by a learned man



Paul Barnett speaking at the launching of his book, 'Is The New Testament History?' in the CMS Bookstore, Tuesday, February 11.

"Only a learned man can write something simply. Only a Christian man would want to write simply". With these words, the Principal of Moore Theological College, Dr. Peter Jensen launched the book, 'IS THE NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY?', in the CMS Bookstore, Sydney, Tuesday February 11.

"This book is definitely 'Barnettish'", claimed Dr. Jensen. "He makes it interesting and impressive, bringing to light little known facts of history which immediately grab your attention".

This is the latest book in the "CHRISTIAN BELIEFS" series. It is written by the Series Editor, Rev. Dr. Paul W. Barnett, M.A., Ph.D.; Master of Robert Menzies College; lecturer in New Testament History at the Macquarie University and part-time lecturer at Moore College.

It was while giving a series of lectures, in Perth, that the idea was born, to put "something" in writing. The waiting time in the airport lounge, as well as the time spent in travel to and from Perth, by

'plane' provided the time for note-taking.

The chapter headings include "Did Jesus Exist? Early Non-Christian References"; "Miracles and Modern Man"; "The Birth of Jesus"; "Is the New Testament Historically Reliable?" and "Who is Jesus?".

The book is written so that young people, especially those in their final years of high school, can understand the New Testament. "This is when people are at their peak of learning," according to the author, Paul Barnett. "In fact, the book could even be used in Religious Education classes, as it is set out systematically, in suitable chapters".

Margaret Hamilton, Director of Publishing at Hodder & Stoughton, the publishers, explained that Paul Barnett was "Aiming for an indigenous expression of Christianity, and he achieved this aim!"

"IS THE NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY?" is published by Hodder & Stoughton, with a recommended retail price of \$5.95.

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MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE

PROVINCE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Rev. Ben Wright became Archdeacon of Stirling on January 6.

Rev. Philip Hanlin, from Warren, Bathurst, will be commissioned Rector of N. Midlands on February 24.

Rev. Ron Noone has become Director of the Department of Religious Education for Perth Diocese.

Rev. Bill Robinson will be commissioned Rector of Lockridge on February 3.

Rev. Jeff Sturman will be commissioned Rector of City Beach on February 14.

Rev. Graeme Manolas will be commissioned Rector of Greenwood on February 11.

Rev. Geoff Newby will be commissioned Rector of Forrestfield on March 6.

Rev. David Beales becomes Perth's youth chaplain on March 1.

Rev. David Thorpe reiters as Rector of Beverley/Brookton on January 31.

In an exchange, Rev. David Russell goes to England for four months from March 22. Rev. Herbert Floate will be acting Rector of Darlingtn.

Rev. John Williams will be commissioned self-

supporting Rector of Gingin on February 16.

Rev. John Hewitson is to be co-ordinator of Wontulp-Bi-Buya College, an outpost of Nungalinga at Townsville.

Rev. Bryan Parnell has become chaplain to HMAS Stirling.

Rev. Alan Maddox became parish priest of Boyanup in December.

Rev. John Hewson has left Wagin to take up medical practice in Perth.

Canon G. Harvey became parish priest of Lake Grace on December 2.

Rev. John Meagher was ordained priest at St. John's Albany on November 30. He will be assistant priest in Albany.

Mrs Pam Penman, formerly Archbishop's secretary, has joined the staff of the Anglican Institute of Theology.

Mrs Robyn Fullwood has become Archbishop's secretary.

DIOCESE OF ADELAIDE

Rev. Robert F. Pearson will resign as Rector of Kangaroo Island as at 31st March.

Rev. Gary W. Hillman has been appointed Chaplain to Walford Anglican School for Girls.

Actor's pleading continued

"We (Christians) should be involved in the centre, and the life, of the city.

"A friend recently commented that he thought we made a terrible mistake, in the 70's, by making that assumption. We need to understand the principles of the Scriptures and live them as the Lord directs, right in the centre and life of the city", said a thoughtful James Fox, as he glanced at the city skyline.

James Fox had been in Australia for seven days, acting in a forthcoming film named "Comrades". The film, "Comrades", is about the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

The Tolpuddle Martyrs were six farm labourers who dared to ask for a shilling rise in their wages, when other tradesmen received a similar rise. Instead, their wages were deducted a shilling and the men were prosecuted and transported to Australia, in 1834. Their crime was that of organizing a trade union. They were later pardoned, in 1836, as a result of a strong public protest.

James Fox was converted in 1969. His story can be read in his autobiography, "COMEBACK — an actor's direction" (Hodder & Stoughton — \$5.95). "Religion meant very little to me, as a 16 year old, so I sought satisfaction in all the ways of the world. By the time I was in my late 20's, I realised the lack of satisfaction and the presence of a sense of guilt.

"Others had no answers! Life, with all its 'pleasures', is not all we want, as it has no answers!

"Then I met Bernie Marks, an actor, artist and illustrator, who had a personal faith in Jesus Christ."

Immediately after his conversion, he set out to find a group where he could study the Scriptures and learn the principles of a Christian life. He was so impressed with The Navigators that he joined the London staff, where he worked at their headquarters for the following ten years.

During that time he married Mary Piper, a member of the Navigator staff, and they now have five children. James is known for his love of his family and his commitment to his Lord.

He is still recognised as being a "full time Navigator staff worker" and is to be found learning Scripture texts, daily. His selection of text cards is never far from him.

The highlight, for James Fox the man, was the day he gave his life over fully, to his Lord and Master so that now he can serve Him, in the centre and life of the city.

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GOORPAROO: St. Stephen's, Brisbane, Cnr. Cavenish and Chatsworth Roads. Visitors welcome. 7.30 am and 9 am Holy Communion. 7 pm Sunday at Seven. Rector: Rev. Ken Baker.

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NSW Baptists in Disarray

Close vote on theological education with Roman Catholics

At the recent Special Assembly called by the General Council of the Baptist Union to discuss their involvement in the Sydney College of Divinity (SCD), it was revealed that a great many Baptists were very unhappy over the Executive Committee's action in affiliating with Roman Catholics in training men for the ministry.

It was an unprecedented step to hold such a Special Assembly.

It was somewhat ironical that the meeting took place in the James Wilson Hogg Memorial Hall at Trinity Grammar School, for it was Pastor James Hogg and the Stanmore Baptist Church that brought the whole issue out into the light in the first instance with the circulation of the booklet "Triumph or Tragedy?" This publication was circulated, at Stanmore's expense, to every Baptist church in N.S.W. prior to the Annual Assembly last year.

The booklet tapped a great deal of unease, and consequently the Executive Committee recognised it had a major crisis on its hands. At the Assembly the Stanmore Church moved the following motion:—"That because the Baptist Union of N.S.W., in accord with Scripture and history, has never entered into any official co-operation with the Roman Catholic Church until the incorporation of the Sydney College of Divinity, and that the Assembly has neither been furnished with all the facts nor invited to consider all the implications of such an affiliation, the Stanmore Baptist Church moves that this Assembly debates and comes to a conclusion regarding our involvement in an ecumenical association with the Sydney College of Divinity."

The motion was superseded by another which read:—

"That this assembly acknowledge that the question of our Theological College's membership in the Sydney College of Divinity is one that should have been determined by Assembly following the furnishing of adequate information to the Churches. In the light of what has occurred to date the Assembly directs that (1) The Executive Committee distribute to the Churches any reply to the booklet "Triumph or Tragedy?" issued by Stanmore Baptist Church by 16.11.1985 (2) If the Executive Committee does not issue a reply by that date the question be brought to the meeting of General Council to be held on 23.11.1985 for decision. (3) If the Executive Committee does issue a reply the Stanmore Baptist Church distribute any fresh material by way of reply or clarification to the churches by 1.2.1986. (4) The question then be brought to the meeting of General Council to be held on 22.3.1986 for decision. (5) If General Council is unable to reach a decision for or against by a majority of 2/3 or greater the question shall be referred to the next Assembly for decision or to a Special Assembly to be convened earlier for the purpose."

Motion endorsed

This motion was endorsed by the Assembly. Obviously the word "ecumenical" in Stanmore's motion caused alarm to some Baptists because it was precluded from the adopted motion.

The Executive Committee responded to Stanmore's initiative with a reply entitled "Co-operation without Compromise" which many Baptist ministers felt did not come to grips with the real issues raised by "Triumph or Tragedy?" At the direction of the Executive Committee, the General Council called a Special Assembly to be held on 22 February 1986.

In response to the Assembly's direction, Stanmore Baptist Church

produced a second booklet entitled "Ecumenism: a Serious Cause for Dissenting". This second booklet gave documented facts about how the Baptist Church became involved in the SCD without the Baptist churches of NSW being adequately informed.

As early as 11 October 1983, Pastor Hogg wrote to the Executive Committee seeking information about the negotiations, but nothing came from the Executive Committee until a letter dated 26 December, 1985. In part the reply read "At its meeting on 29.11.83 the Executive Committee considered your letter together with advice from the Legal Advisor that the Union should request changes to the Memorandum & Articles of Association which would protect the interests of the Union in its proposed association with the Sydney College of Divinity. It was as a result of these considerations that the changes unsuccessfully sought by Moore College were achieved."

Pastor Hogg was disturbed that the letter talked of a "proposed association", and yet before 29 November 1983 the Memorandum & Articles of Association had already been signed, and the Baptists been incorporated as members of the SCD.

The Day of Decision

The Executive Committee framed a "pro-forma" motion to assert its affiliation with the SCD. This "pro-forma" motion was printed and circulated to every delegate at the Special Assembly. It read, "That this Special Assembly endorses the Theological College's membership in the Sydney College of Divinity."

This motion was extensively amended at the meeting to "That this Special Assembly confirms and approves the membership of the Baptist Theological College of NSW and its representatives in the Sydney College of Divinity." The amendment continued, "on the understanding (1) there will be no exchange of staff or students with other Colleges without the endorsement, in each case, of the General Council; (2) no change to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Sydney College of Divinity be agreed to without the support of an Assembly; and that should any such change nevertheless be made the question of the continual membership of Morling (Baptist) College be brought to the next Assembly; (3) the Memorandum and Articles of Association be reviewed by a Committee, including the Legal advisor, set up by the General Council, to determine the need for any changes to ensure the ongoing autonomy of the Baptist Union and its College."

It was now widely conceded, even by earlier proponents of the affiliation with the SCD, that many safeguards were needed.

Some observations

The Public Gallery was packed and there was an air of expectancy. Many commented that the level of debate was stifled and inhibited. They felt that the real issues rarely seemed to surface.

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Bobby Limb launches Bible-a-Month Club (and gives his testimony)



Bobby Limb with the Rev. James Payne. Photo by Ramon Williams WORLDWIDE photos

The likeable entertainment and television personality BOBBY LIMB gave a personal testimony of his conversion to the Lordship of Christ when he launched the Bible Society's new "BIBLE-A-MONTH" Club in St. Andrew's House, Sydney on February 26.

Bobby is the Founding Member of the Club and paid his first subscription on the spot to the Society's Federal Secretary, the Rev. Jim Payne.

"It is a great privilege to become a member of a club involved in the distribution of the Word of God", said Bobby Limb.

"In the late 1960's, I went out to buy a Bible. I was staring opposite Yvonne de Carlo in 'No No Nanette'."

"My wife, Dawn, and I had broken up, and I was feeling low. While walking past the Bible Society shop in Bathurst Street, I looked in the window and there was a Bible, and moreover it seemed to stand out as though there was a spotlight on it!"

"I believe that the Lord was telling me to go in and buy the Bible, and I did", he said.

He went on to say that in 1967 he was diagnosed as having cancer, leaving him faced with the burden of a frightening disease and a broken marriage, to which was then added the stress of financial problems associated with a disastrous business deal.

"It was then that I started to read my Bible. Like Job, I started to talk to God!"

It is invariably a moving experience when someone sincerely speaks in public of their conversion experience. Bobby Limb spoke of his simply, and with conviction.

The 'Australian Church Record' representative was busy taking it all down, but there were doubtless a few moist eyes among the invited churchmen present.

"The turning point was when I was lonely and seeking. It was then that God spoke to me. I can identify with the seeking and the lonely, and these are the sorts of people who will receive Bibles through the Bible-a-Month Club."

"My main motivation stems from a deep sense of appreciation. I am grateful for my relationship with Christ, and I want to share it with others."

"I commend the Bible-a-Month Club, and encourage you to join with me."

The concept is that of a Book Club, where you don't get a book — you give one.

Each month the Bible-a-Month member donates the cost of one or more Bibles to those in other parts of the world who don't have one.

Details can be obtained from the Bible Society.

Rugby League Chaplains

The Sports & Leisure Ministry is praising the Lord for the new 1986 Sport Chaplaincy appointments in the Sydney Rugby League competition.

Seven new appointments in 1986 have been made, illustrating not only the blessing of God, but also the good name Sports & Leisure Ministry Chaplains have given to the role of "Sports Chaplaincy" in Rugby League.

SLM's Ministry Co-ordinator and founder, the Rev. Mark Tronson, said of these new appointments:

"Most of these chaplaincies have taken some 20 months or more to develop. It has been a matter of prayer. We operate on total dependence on the Lord Jesus. In finding the right people to serve, it has always been a case of seeking the Will of

the Lord", he said.

The new appointments are:

Rev. Ross Smith — North Sydney Team
Rev. John Hirt — Manly Team
Rev. Brian Galloway — Balmain Team
Rev. Stuart Grant — Western Suburbs Team
Rev. David Hogg — Parramatta Team
Rev. Peter Morphet — Eastern Suburbs Team
Pastor Allan Keeman — Penrith Team

The Rev. John Hirt, a Baptist Minister, is not new to Sport. For many years Mr. Hirt has been involved in Surfing and Swimming Ministry.

Rev. Brian Galloway is a Charismatic Catholic Priest. Inside his Parish Church at the very front for all to see is an enormous sign: "The Just Man Shall Live by Faith".

Rev. Stuart Grant, an Anglican Minister, recently moved to Merrylands in the heart of the Western Suburbs of Sydney.

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MARANATHA

Daily Labour

For most of us there is too much to do and not enough time in which to do it. One dimension of life encroaches on the other, taking over, exerting pressure, creating tension. One such dimension is work — and everyone is included in that: the worker or manager in his office or factory, the professional in his rooms, the housewife in her home, the student at his books, the clergyman in his vestry. It's all work.

God spoke, and creation sprang into existence, and its goal was rest: from formlessness and void, there is shape and content: from chaos and disorder, God brings form and order.

God creates that which is perfect and idyllic: everything has its place and function; everything is blessed in a relationship of mutual dependence with everything else. The very existence of the universe shouts of God's wisdom, power, grace and mercy.

Part of that "rest" is work: man is to bring the world under his control and in some sense to rule and use it; he is to do work that facilitates the growth of the garden in which God has placed him; he is to preserve, guard and care for it. Part of what it means to enjoy what God made, to be fulfilled in God's paradise, to live in that creation which glorifies God by its existence, part of our being, is to work.

Moreover, work is a partnership with God: man is God's regent who, under God, keeps the world as God intended it. That partnership is emphasised by the rhythm of the days of creation: "it was evening, it was morning, one day". We imagine that all begins with the daylight: but everything has started hours ago.

In the evening, God begins his creative work, without our help. In the morning, when we waken God says "Come, enjoy, join, share, develop what I have done." The strong initial pulse belongs to God and His creative word, His providential sustaining presence, His grace.

In the light of that, I need to recognize

that when I cease working, nothing essential stops. Indeed, the day is about to begin! Seen that way, our work settles into the context of God's work: human effort is respected and honoured, not as a thing in itself, but by integration into the flow and purpose of God's activity.

Moreover, my work is not, and cannot be, all: it does not all depend on me. The world, or my business, or my home, or my church will not stop just because I stop: God is at work! There is a time for me to stop, to move back, to move into other areas of responsibility.

Oh that it were so easy!

It was not long before things were not as they had been: man rebelled against God, and God imposed a curse on his creation. That curse made itself felt in a number of ways including the area of work. Work is harder: it is by the sweat of my brow that the earth yields its increase.

There is an ethical dimension to work: work involves competition and rewards, money and status, and when we are competing for them, there are subtle and powerful temptations to be unethical. We work in an environment that is saturated with ethical decisions. You either go under, or you determine what is right and do it, expecting to suffer.

We must strive for equilibrium: in God's garden, there was balance between all our obligations and responsibilities; that is what "rest" meant, the absence of struggle, the presence of peace and harmony. But in our fallen world we must strive for that balance, a balance, say, between involvement with our family at the expense of our church life, or involvement at work at the expense of our family, or the care for christian friends at the expense of those who are not christians.

That is now our fate, the fate of those who live in a fallen world, who strive for the rest of God, who strive for balance with a striving that never ceases.

Boak Jobbins

New course for Canberra College

'Certificate of Ministry' proposed

The College of Ministry, in Canberra, is to introduce a qualification which recognises spiritual leadership.

A college 'Certificate in Ministry' is to be brought in while proposals for a degree-level course, accrediting both theory and practice, are developed and put to the Australian College of Theology.

The course which the College of Ministry would propose would go beyond the present ACT Diploma in Ministry, which is at undergraduate level.

In the meantime, the 'Certificate in Ministry' will be developed under the direction of the college's vice-principal, the Rev. David Oliphant.

It will become a necessary qualification for ordination in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

The principal of the College of Ministry, Bishop Bruce Wilson, said the new certificate was a development of particular emphasis which characterised Canberra's college.

He said that while some colleges tended to put emphasis on academic and teaching areas and others put an emphasis on ministry training, the College of Ministry wanted to stress "spiritual leadership", developing the "holy person" for lay or ordained leadership within the Christian community.

Bishop Wilson said he believed the dominant stress in theological training was still academic, perhaps because it was the most easily assessable. Other aspects tended to be regarded as "asides to the main course" and so were treated less seriously by students.

(ANGELICAN NEWS)

"So we are of the opinion that there should be a term to recognise the development of mature skills in Christian leadership... perhaps something like 'Pastor in Sacred Theology'."

The bishop said he also believed that such an approach to training would mean that worship would have a more central place as a focus for the corporate and individual learning process.

In reply to suggestions that such a degree would be difficult to place within the mainstream of academic qualifications, Bishop Wilson questioned the need for the Church to place training within a university-type model.

"I believe we've gone about preparing people for ministry with too much of an eye for secular methods. I personally question the place of the university as the locus of theology. The Church is the locus of theology."

"We are more concerned to see someone come to Christian maturity rather than just get a degree... although we want them to get a degree as well."

Bishop Wilson said the college was growing, with about 25 students enrolled next year.

This meant the facilities at the college were fully utilised. Ultimately, it is thought the college will become a tenant in the planned national centre. In the meantime it would try to make do by making the best use of the present facilities.

However, if present growth continues there may have to be some development of the physical facilities.

Canon Michael Green to visit Sydney

Preaching and teaching tour in April

Canon Michael Green's gifts as a communicator and scholar have been ably demonstrated in his writings. "Runaway World", "Man Alive!" and "Jesus Spells Freedom", all have a popular appeal and an evangelistic thrust. "Why Bother With Jesus?" and "You Must Be joking" are in a similar style.

Other books, such as "Evangelism in the Early Church", "I Believe in the Holy Spirit", and "I Believe in Satan's Downfall", reveal a man with a breadth of reading and academic excellence. His book, "The Truth of God Incarnate" (a response to "The Myth of God Incarnate") shows an able defender of the evangelical faith.

"The Empty Cross of Jesus", published by Hodder and Stoughton in 1984, is a scholarly yet readable exposition of our Lord's death and resurrection, offered, "in the hope that it may help some Christians to a deeper awareness of what Calvary cost our Lord..."

A virile local church

St. Aldates, Oxford, where Michael Green is Rector, is filled to capacity each Sunday with some 1,400 people. Sharing in the strong evangelical witness at St. Aldate's are three curates and three full-time lay workers, one of whom is Branse Burbridge a flying ace from World War II and one of the heroes of the Battle of Britain.

In addition to the full-time pastoral staff there are seven top professional people who serve in a part-time capacity organising and leading prayer and study groups.

A student's prayer breakfast held each Wednesday morning attracts some 300

university and college students. The church prayer meeting, held on Wednesday evenings, is attended by over 300 people. All of which is a reply to those who think the church is dying.

In recent years Canon Michael Green has given considerable prominence to "the renewal movement" in his preaching. This emphasis has been received with varying degrees of approval in evangelical circles.

Canon Michael Green's engagements in Sydney will commence on April 8. At 7.45 p.m. he will give an address on "The Spirit and the Word — Friends not Foes." On April 9 he will speak at a luncheon meeting at Sydney University, and St. Andrew's Cathedral at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.

An "In Service Training Day" for clergy and lay workers will be held at the Chapter House, St. Andrew's Cathedral, on April 10. The studies will commence at 9 a.m.

Other engagements include three further meetings at Willoughby Town Hall, April 10, 7.45 p.m., and April 12, 2.30 p.m., and 7 p.m.

On Sunday, April 13, Canon Green will preach at St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Manly, at 10 a.m., 2.30 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Mrs. Rosemary Green will conduct "A Day for Carers" at St. Andrew's House auditorium, Wednesday, April 9, 9.30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mrs. Green is an experienced Christian counsellor and lecturer in her own right. She is a regular lecturer at Regent College, Vancouver, Canada, and exercises a valuable and widely appreciated ministry.

(NEW LIFE)

Wine by the tanker?

MP's 'bulk booze' option condemned

Adrian Cruickshank, National Party member for Murrumbidgee, wants to see a change in the state's liquor laws to relieve the glut of bulk wine in N.S.W.

He seeks amendments to the licensing laws to allow wine to be trucked into licensed clubs and restaurants in bulk

supply. The NSW Temperance Alliance strongly opposes any such action.

We are not talking about a substance as harmless as water. Wine contains up to 25 percent alcohol, and alcohol is a drug. Wine has 3 to 4 times, and in the case of some fortified wines, up to 8 times, the alcohol content of draught beer. The National Party member's suggestion puts profit ahead of people's welfare.

The rural crisis

Churches face changing circumstances

Poverty has a new face in Victoria in 1985. It is rural poverty.

Out in the Mallee, in Gippsland, in fact all over the State, there are hard-working farmers and their families who, through no fault of their own, have become the new poor.

Still struggling to pay back the huge loans they needed to see them through the last drought, many are left with less cash in hand than recipients of the dole or other social security payments. Some are worse off than when they first started on the land many years ago.

The churches in the country areas have no option but to listen to the plight of rural Victorians, because the crisis is beginning to affect them too. When the farmers have no money, then the amount of money in the collection plate begins to dwindle.

The number of viable country parishes, of all denominations, is also beginning to drop. In Gippsland alone, 14 Anglican parishes are in decline or even crisis, with a number only surviving with diocesan help.

The Baptist Union of Victoria reports that its Mission at Home Fund, which helps struggling churches, has seen its 1985 budget go through the roof. Clergymen are not only struggling to keep the churches afloat, they are also faced with ministering to the victims of the new poverty — heart-broken, depressed people who are beginning to suffer strain in their marriages and family life, and whose communities which have lost their morale.

Both the Baptist and Uniting Churches have seen the writing on the wall for some time now. The Baptist Church has set up a rural ministry fellowship to offer

support to its hard-pressed and often isolated pastors.

The Uniting Church has set up a State-wide rural task force to tackle the problems and keep abreast of developments. A member of the task force, the Rev. David Uren, presbytery officer in the Mallee, believes that the full impact of the rural crisis on the churches is yet to come. Another 12 months and some could be in real trouble.

The crisis has already forced the amalgamation of Baptist and Uniting Church congregations in the towns of Hopetoun and Rainbow. From next year, one Uniting and one Baptist minister will serve the two towns, making use of each other's buildings for services. At least the crisis is forcing the ecumenical movement to become a reality!

Clergy with a special concern for the rural ministry in the Anglican dioceses of Bendigo and Gippsland have recently met with their counterparts from three dioceses in rural NSW to set up a grass-roots task force along the lines of the Uniting Church one. They expect clergy from other country areas will join them in the new year.

They have already identified some long-term needs, such as special training for country clergy, and the need to clarify their understanding of country people.

As one member, Archdeacon Ray Elliot of Gippsland, said, they would also like to see city churches take up the rural cause. Not by providing food parcels and secondhand clothes, but by using their considerable lobbying power to encourage governments to provide long-term answers to the problems of their country cousins.

The Murray News

Person-to-person course

One year post-graduate programme planned

The Board of Directors of the Sydney Missionary and Bible College at Croydon have announced the establishment of a One Year Post-Graduate Course in Person-to-Person Ministry.

The first intake of students will begin studies at the College at the beginning of first term, 1987.

The Rev. John Webb will be appointed to the Faculty of the College as from 1st January, 1987 to have oversight of the course.

After graduating from Moore Theological College, Mr. Webb spent three years as Curate of Glenbrook, two years as Associate to Canon John Chapman at the Anglican Department of Evangelism, and then eight years as Rector of the Anglican Church in the Sydney suburb of Georges Hall.

The Principal of the College, Rev. David Cook, said "John Webb is uniquely qualified to teach this course in Biblical Counselling. In 1982 John completed his M.A. studies at Grace Seminary in the U.S.A., studying under Dr. Larry Crabbe. In mid 1985 John returned to the U.S. to spend twelve months as an intern under the direct supervision of Dr. Crabbe".

The course established at Croydon will pattern closely the course as taught by Larry Crabbe at Grace Seminary in the U.S.A.

The Directors of the College believe that there has been a lack of expertise in the church in the field of counselling and trust that this course will be used to equip many Christians for this vital ministry.

The College is restricting the intake of students to the course to 16 each year in order to allow for close personal involvement between lecturer and students.

Those eligible to enter this Post-Graduate course are:-

- Graduates of S.M.B.C.
- Graduates of an equivalent Bible or Theological College
- Fulltime Christian Workers

The course will be of one year's duration and will consist of 18 lecture hours per week.

Enquiries may be directed to the Office Secretary, Sydney Missionary and Bible College on (02) 747-4780.

Archbishop of Canterbury and Pope meet

Bombay talk 'takes breath away'

The meeting had been a private conversation — not a negotiation, stressed the Archbishop. Nevertheless, he saw it as a symbol of the Churches' willingness to work together and continue the process begun at their previous meetings in Ghana and

Canterbury. And he added: "By the end of the century I hope that something could be said about Christian unity that would move us to say 'Well, I would never have dreamt in 1986 that it would be like this'... something to take the breath away!"

(CEN)

HOW LOVELY ON THE MOUNTAINS ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS



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AMB 286

Growth in Ministry



The Male Mid-Life Crisis

Bill had been a dependable Church Treasurer for three years. He was a family man, conservative, well-liked, aged 40, with a happy marriage.

But his attendance at Church became irregular, he was late with the annual Accounts, he failed to nominate again at the Annual Meeting. He changed jobs. He grew a beard.

His wife was seen in tears a couple of times. When the Pastor inquired the trouble she quietly sobbed, "Bill's so different, I don't know what's happening to us. I don't know what to do."

In fact, Bill, like many men in, or absent from, our congregations, was having his Male Mid-Life Crisis.

What is it?

The MMLC is said to occur anytime between 32 and 52. Like adolescence, its start and end are vague, but there are a couple of hectic months, even years, in between.

It is only in recent years that the MMLC has been openly recognised. The "New York Times" printed a recent letter: "My husband was forty-six when eccentric behaviour began. An otherwise reasonable and family-loving man suffered rage, fatigue, incommunicability, suspicion, hostility.

"Every incident was my fault supposedly. I was the woman, and I was alleged to be in the change of life. Doctors, psychiatrists, men in general, have kept it under the rug where they have swept it themselves. They are in terror of acknowledging behaviour beyond their control, but which they readily ascribe to women without mercy." (Conway, p. 23)

What can the Pastor do about Bill? He must first of course understand Bill's situation.

Why does it happen?

Usually a man at Bill's stage and age experiences a host of pressures, all simultaneously.

By then he has come to realise whether he is on the promotion ladder in his career, whether his job is giving him any significance. His children are either teenagers or nearly so, and maybe not turning out quite as Dad hoped, and certainly becoming less dependent on Dad, again lessening his sense of significance. His finances are at straining point, due for example to school costs, and a house big enough for big children. Now and then he has begun to lose his sex ability, and with his home life producing increasing harassment, the girls in the office are looking very attractive, especially as a means of reassuring him he is still sexually able. His parents are sick or dying, and this makes him feel very vulnerable and alone. He has many fears about his adequacies and future.

So Bill is under many pressures. Some books on the subject provide indicators and check-lists to help men discover how they are coping with this onrush of stress.

A general sign of MMLC is any change that brings Crisis, especially lingering, not Growth.

What Can a Pastor Do?

So the Pastor can understand where Bill is at. He knows that Bill is compensating by his sudden beard, change of job, strange behaviour, for real or imagined lack of significance in his life.

He or his wife can talk to Bill's wife. She can be helped to:

- Ascertain whether she is committed to her marriage, her husband, his

feelings. Unless she really wants the marriage, she will probably not be able to live with the stress and sacrifice of the next couple of years.

- Alert herself to the signs and stresses of her husband, especially at the start of his MMLC, to help minimise problems. Many wives are unaware of a husband's fears about his job, sense of futility and discouragement, because they aren't paying any attention to him. A wife can encourage him to talk, without any ridicule, criticism or advice.

- Accept him as he is, unconditionally. She can adopt a no-nag policy, not manipulating with tears, sex or other means, but affirming and encouraging.

- Admit she may be part of the problem, maybe through sarcasm, flirting, ignoring her own growth and appearance.

- Activate practical aid — improve his diet, exercise with him, listen to him talk, invite friends home who affirm him, encourage his nostalgia, even his anger, though not of course if it is violent.

- Availability to change lifestyle, join new hobbies to be with him, take up biking even if muscles ache!

- Adapt habits, such as sexual and housekeeping, even career prospects, to provide relaxing and refreshing time together.

- Affirm him, especially when he is in the doldrums, and may give no indication that the positives she says about him are doing any good. But they add up inside, and when through his transition, he will openly appreciate her declarations of his value.

Can Bill be helped?

How can a Pastor help Bill?

Understanding and thus accepting him, and encouraging his wife, may be as close or as practical as is possible.

- A Pastor can talk publicly about MMLC, in sermons for example as asides, of its dangers, or as illustrations, mentioning signs and symptoms. This brings the issue into the open, and over a period creates a climate that facilitates talking personally.

- He can seek to draw alongside Bill, informally, regularly, at meals, at cricket, even if snubbed, with a long term view of enabling him to talk. Talking of and in his MMLC, about his fears, inadequacies, sense of insignificance, doubts about the value of life — talking to someone is of prime value to Bill. Maybe a Pastor can quietly guide a layman who he knows esteems Bill to make a special effort to be this "listener".

- A Pastor can affirm experiments that may bring Bill a new sense of creativity and purpose: a beard, a trip around Australia, a new course, new sexual or lifestyle habits. (This may prevent Bill being the one-in-five men between 35 and 50 who have outside affairs regularly or occasionally.)

- A Pastor can speak of changing attitudes, especially towards Bill's teenagers — instead of resenting them, he can begin to let them go, affirming them, praying for them in the promise of Philippians 4:6-7. And...

- And a Pastor of course can ensure that he is handling his OWN MMLC satisfactorily! Among other safeguards he can read about it from such books as: — **The Christian in Midlife**, by J. & M. White (Navpress). Discusses both sexes, including singles. Many Biblical texts, with a guide for Group Study. Charts and check-lists, especially for ministry. Timothy

Dutch doctrinal debate

Presumed regeneration and deterioration of reformed churches in the Netherlands

(Kampen, Neth.) In *Centraal Weekblad*, Editor Klaas Runia protests recent insinuations that the doctrine of presumed regeneration (veronderstelde wedergeboorte) must be regarded as the ultimate culprit of the deterioration of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN). He calls this view a false reconstruction of history.

The idea of presumptive regeneration, the teaching that most believers were already reborn as small infants or in their mother's womb, goes back mainly to Abraham Kuyper. He maintained that infants are baptized "as already regenerated"; sometimes he went so far as to see regeneration as the ground of infant baptism. This view of Kuyper was part of the doctrinal controversies which in 1944 resulted in a schism in the GKN.

Two writers, one in the Netherlands, the other in South Africa, have recently argued that this teaching is the root cause of the shift toward liberalism in the GKN in recent decades. In *De Reformatie*, the Rev. H. R. van de Kamp, a minister of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, Vrijgemaakt, the "liberated", suggested that in 1942 the GKN struck out in a fundamentally different direction. The doctrinal pronouncement of the synod of that year, according to van de Kamp, made the reliability of God's address in baptism dependent on human faith. A related culprit, according to van de Kamp, is the "correlation theology" of Professor Berkouwer who presided over the synod of 1942.

In an article in *Die Kerkblad*, the official magazine of the Reformed Churches in South Africa, Rev. Koos van Rooy goes even further than the Dutch van de Kamp. Asked how it can be explained that in the short time span of about fifteen years a conservative church could become a liberal church, he blames it all on the teaching of presumed regeneration. The effect of that teaching, according to van Rooy, was that the church became flooded with nominal Christians, even in theological seminaries.

Runia claims that this is turning history around completely. In the doctrinal disputes culminating in the schism of 1944 it was not the Reformed Churches that made the reality of God's promises dependent on the human response of faith. It was the "concerned" ("bezwaarden," later: "liberated") who, stressing that every baptism is a full baptism, maintained that God's promises always are on condition of faith. Precisely those siding with the synod of 1944 felt that this view made God dependent on man! For not only is salvation a gift of the covenant, but likewise, the faith with which this salvation is accepted.

Van de Kamp also misinterprets Berkouwer's correlation theology, says Runia. Though "correlation" means "relatedness," "involved in", never and nowhere in his theology does Berkouwer make salvation dependent on faith. In fact he strongly denies it.

Runia claims further that both in the teachings of H. Bavinck and of G. Ch. Aalders and in the preaching in the GKN in the 1930's already much stress was placed on the need of conversion. He does admit that not all is well in the GKN but finds a source of the decline in faith in another area: a vague doctrine of universal reconciliation. "It is believed that Christ has died for all people and there is no room in one's thinking anymore for the dreadful possibility that a person can perish because of unbelief. This current trend of thinking is much more decisive than the teaching of presumed regeneration."

(RES NEWS EXCHANGE)

Christian on American Porn Commission

Dr. James Dobson calls for prayer

Dr. James Dobson, Christian author and host of the popular "Focus on the Family" radio programme, has issued a call for prayer concerning his work on the American Attorney-General's Commission on Pornography.

Dobson said, "Quite frankly, this has been the most difficult responsibility I've faced in years. I've witnessed many wretched and depressing examples of pornography and its victims during the past 10 months. Words cannot describe the degradation and human misery that surrounds this industry; it preys on children, debases women, destroys families and mocks everything holy and clean."

Dobson said that during February and March the commission will be sifting through testimony taken from researchers, parents, citizen's groups, and pornography distributors. He noted that "representatives of the pornography industry, the ACLU and many liberal factions in our society are pressing us to whitewash the issue... as the first commission did in 1970."

The pornography industry has noted Dobson's involvement with the commission. A half-page photo of Dobson appeared in the January 1986 issue of *Forum* magazine (published by *Penthouse*).

Also, a current pornographic movie includes a recording of Dobson's voice. The scene depicts a man and woman engaged in an explicit sexual act; the man turns on the radio and an actual recording is heard from a "Focus on the Family" broadcast. The unauthorized recording has Dobson talking about his relationship with his wife, Shirley, and about "the beauty of sex when expressed in the way God intended." Dobson notes, "Obviously, the producer's motive was to ridicule the principles of morality which I endorse. These and related occurrences made it clear that we are under scrutiny by the purveyors of pornography."

(EPNS)

British-U.S. delegation to Nepal

Ample evidence of Christians persecuted

Kathmandu, Nepal (EP) — A delegation of British and U.S. officials on a private trip to investigate reported religious rights abuses here said it found ample evidence of outright persecution and torture during its six-day mission.

In a meeting with Foreign Minister Randhir Subba, the group asked the Hindu government of the Kingdom of Nepal to examine some specific problems. The foreign minister reportedly assured the group that the problems raised would be "thoroughly pursued by the government."

The group travelled more than 1000 miles across Nepal to conduct its investigation. Members interviewed more than three dozen individuals who have suffered religious rights abuses, attended Christian worship services in each of the communities visited, and discussed the situation with a wide variety of Nepalese Christian leaders.

"It is urgent that Christians throughout the world come immediately to the aid of the persecuted Nepalese believers," concluded Collins. He suggested writing to the Nepalese ambassador in Washington, and praying for increased religious freedom in Hindu-controlled Nepal.

(EPNS)

REVIEW

New Light on the Queen of Sheba

Archaeologists Dig at Marib

JERUSALEM, Israel (EP) — The visit of the Queen of Sheba to Israel's King Solomon, described in 1 Kings Chapter 10, has often been dismissed as historically impossible. Although evidence of the land of Sheba exists, archaeologists say ruins of that culture date back only to the 7th century B.C., three centuries after Solomon's rule in Israel.

But new archaeological evidence has indicated that Sheba may be older than previously believed. This support for the biblical account of the Queen of Sheba comes from Dr. James A. Sauer, an archaeologist at the University of Pennsylvania, who has headed a project in the area of ancient Sheba for the past five years.

Sauer's hypothesis is supported by an excavation in Wadi al-Jubah, a dry valley about 25 miles south of the remains of Sheba's capital city Marib. Archaeologists have discovered broken pottery near timber that is from the 13th century B.C., according to carbon-dating. Another dig has produced pottery and evidence of a copper foundry dating to the 7th century B.C., and researchers still have several yards to go before reaching the deepest and oldest layers of their site.

Sauer believes that further excavations will show that Sheba was a well-developed trading nation during Solomon's reign, and could have sent its queen to visit a neighboring monarch.

(EPNS)

Jews oppose Nuns near Auschwitz

Carmelite Convent causes concern

The establishment of a Roman Catholic convent near the site of the Auschwitz death camp has drawn objections from Jewish groups, who call the convent an affront to the memory of Jews killed there by Nazis.

An unused theatre just outside the death camp site has been the home of a group of Carmelite nuns since late 1984. During World War II, the theatre was used by Nazis to store poison gas for the extermination chambers at Auschwitz, where 2 million to 2.5 million Jews and 1.25 million to 1.5 million non-Jews (mostly Polish Catholics) died.

The presence of the convent was not widely known until a fund-raising appeal began in Europe by a Catholic group that wants to renovate the building for use as a place of prayer for all who died in the camp.

"We are not seeking a confrontation with the church," said Israel Singer, secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress. "We have no objection to a convent a mile or so from the camp. But we don't want it right there very close and visible. Auschwitz was mainly a Jewish death camp."

Markus Pades, president of the Coordinating Committee of Jewish Organizations in Belgium, said of Auschwitz, "We don't want it being perpetually fought over by rival religious groups like the holy places in Jerusalem."

Jewish groups have expressed concern over the Christian language of the fund-raising appeal. That appeal described the convent as "a spiritual fortress and a guarantee of the conversion of strayed brothers from our countries as well as proof of our desire to erase outrages so often done to the Vicar of Christ."

Pades said he believed the phrase "strayed brothers" was an "appeal for the conversion of Jewry."

(EPNS)

A fruitful ministry

Canadian Evangelists Home Call

Toronto, Ont., Canada (EP) — Dr. Oswald J. Smith, founder of Peoples Church in Toronto, and a leader in world evangelisation, died Jan. 25. He was 96.

Smith's Peoples Church developed a strong tradition of missions support; since it was founded in 1928, the Peoples Church has contributed more than \$23 million for world missions.

Smith also travelled as an evangelist, speaking to audiences in 80 nations around the world. In the 1920s he worked in Latvia, ministering to exiles from the Russian revolution. He spoke frequently at missions conferences throughout North America, introducing the "Faith promise" concept of giving to hundreds of congregations.

He authored 35 books, which were published in 128 languages. Their circulation is estimated to exceed six million copies. He was also a prolific hymn writer.

An overflow congregation of 2,800 crowded the Peoples Church for his funeral Jan. 30; Smith's longtime friend, evangelist Billy Graham, spoke at the funeral. Graham described Smith as "the greatest combination pastor, hymn writer, missionary statesman, and evangelist of our time."

Dr. Leighton Ford, Chairman of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation, observed, "Oswald Smith's impact in his generation for the cause of world evangelisation is almost beyond calculation. He had a great personal influence on my life. I was a boy of 14 at a Bible conference when his message made a deep impression. It was the same year that I began my own work of evangelism."

Smith was succeeded in the pastorate of the Peoples Church in 1959 by his son, Dr. Paul B. Smith. The congregation currently contributes to the support of more than 500 missionaries and nationals around the world.

(EPNS)

Church in Thailand sees explosive growth

Monash University graduate's vision

Bangkok, Thailand (EP) — The Hope of Bangkok Church, under the leadership of Dr. Kriengsak Chareonwongsak, is accomplishing what 162 years of Western missions couldn't, according to Christian Aid Mission. Starting with five believers in 1981, the church has grown to more than 800 faithful worshippers in three services. It also recently established a new congregation of more than 60 members in the northern city of Pahayao.

Kriengsak received his Ph.D. in economics from Monash University in Australia, and became a Christian while studying there. When he returned to Thailand he began a prayer cell with his wife and three other believers. Six months later the group had grown to 17, and after another 14 months the group had grown to 250 believers.

Kriengsak says his vision is to plant a church in every one of Thailand's 685 amphurs (districts) by the year 2000. The church in Phayao is the first step in that direction.

Kriengsak's work is even more impressive viewed in the light of other Thai churches, which generally average 25-30 people.

The church has also established Thailand Theological Seminary with 23 full-time and 150 part-time students.

(EPNS)

Christian community leadership

Diploma or certificate course planned

A group of concerned Christians in positions of influence in the community have come together to sponsor a consultation on a proposed course for Christian Community Leadership.

The idea was suggested at a meeting late last year at Youth With a Mission Canberra. Dr. Graham McLennan and Tom Hallas, National Director of YWAM, spoke on this theme.

The consultation will now take place on March 14th at the Youth With a Mission Centre Goulburn.

Tom Toogood, Riverina Coordinator of the Festival of Light, will act as chairman for the meeting.

Mr. Toogood said:

Discussions with many Christian leaders, parents, teachers and young people over the past five years (especially during many public meetings held during election campaigns with Fred Nile, Russian revolution. He spoke frequently at missions conferences throughout North America, introducing the "Faith promise" concept of giving to hundreds of congregations.

He authored 35 books, which were published in 128 languages. Their circulation is estimated to exceed six million copies. He was also a prolific hymn writer.

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(EPNS)

Thousands of children like Hansa must wonder about God. If He is as loving and bountiful as His people say, why are there so many people in the world who lack the essentials of life?

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Lesley Hicks

Which is the worse handicap — to be blind, or deaf from birth? Undoubtedly, from the point of view of meeting spiritual needs through the message of the gospel, in which verbal communication is so vital, the profoundly deaf person is far more severely disadvantaged. Even in the everyday secular world, in the long run a language handicap is more crippling to the richness of human life than never to have seen the beauties of the earth.

If deafness comes later in life, after language is established, it still raises embarrassing and isolating barriers which limit communication and can make the sufferer seem somewhat stupid.

I can write with some feeling on this, because I have a partial hearing handicap myself. In my case it's high frequency nerve deafness, present from birth, but not severe or progressive. My mother, who died last year, was much deaf, with sudden onset about the time I was born. It is thought that we were both affected by a pain-relieving gas anaesthetics were experimenting with in the thirties. Its use was ended smartly once it was found that it could cause nerve damage in both mothers and babies. But the harm was done. These days, no doubt, one would sue for colossal damages — as if money could compensate!

With deadening just of the nerves conveying higher frequency sounds to the brain, I've been able to get by satisfactorily, thank God, and few know there's a problem unless I tell them. I've always unconsciously relied on lip-reading to complete the pattern of meaning — I can't hear too well in the dark! I do not hear sibilants well — hence have always had trouble sounding 's's' correctly. Apparently my speech, though clear, has oddities which an experienced teacher of the deaf can recognise as characteristic of high frequency deafness.

I tried out hearing aids briefly and disastrously when about twelve. They magnified all sounds, including those which I could hear completely normally, and the result was a nerve-racking cacophony. One of these days I may try again, to see if electronic sophistication

No need to yell

has solved the problem. It may well prove to be so.

Of necessity, I learned well how to communicate with my mother, making sure she could see me clearly at close quarters, enunciating clearly but not necessarily loudly, rephrasing things not heard the first time, and giving well-defined indications of the topic of conversation and changes of subject. I learned patience, just as there are times when my family need patience with me.

Hazards and bugbears

For obvious reasons, books are more beloved to me than TV or radio, though I can appreciate both of them at times. News bulletins and orderly discussions are fine, but drama and dialogue is often difficult for me to follow. Background music in any setting is a bugbear, though I love good music on its own and can appreciate it fully, except for the top notes of the violin, which disappear completely from my register, and the top octave of the piano which is just a series of clicks!

I'm generally, praise God, able to hear well on the telephone; even Mum could hear better on her extra-loud special phone than on any other way. In church and meetings, too, I rarely have problems, so long as I sit near enough to catch added cues through lip-reading. Most preachers speak clearly and use their mouths well, and their audiences (unlike those of parliament) listen in reverent silence! Bushy beards, however, present problems to a lip-reader.

Books on deafness

All this is prompted by my reading two Christian books lately by deaf authors. In one, the handicap of partial deafness, obviously much more severe than mine, is in the background of the story. I referred in my last column to *A Question of Grief* by Elizabeth Heike, who lost her friend through cancer. Her deafness was an added element of hardship. Yet it was something she was able to accept, and even be thankful for, especially when her lip-reading skill enabled her to "hear" her dying friend when she was voiceless.

I cannot hear you but I can hear God

This second book (publisher Hodder & Stoughton, 1985, \$5.95) is focussed fully on the handicap of deafness. Its author, Phillip Hassall, is only 21 now, and has been profoundly deaf since an attack of meningitis at the age of four. By that age, fortunately, the foundations of language were laid, but being plunged into total silence meant that much was lost. He writes with childlike vocabulary and short simple sentences, yet succeeds in conveying what it's like to grow up in a silent, frustrating world.

More than that, this tall, aggressive English youngster came to accept Christ in the midst of a turbulent, often violent adolescence. It is this that motivated him to tell his story. He attended a youth camp some years later and writes "I felt God was speaking to me in a special way. He was telling me to write a book about my life. This seemed impossible. It was the hardest thing the Holy Spirit has ever urged me to do. Part of me felt elated, filled with the Spirit. Oh, Lord, it must be the hand of the Lord on me. When I start to write this book I will not be the author, as I cannot write neither can I remember the whole part of my life." (P119).

But he set to work obediently, and here it is in print. "I thought that if I was truthful and shared what my life was really like and showed how Christ eventually changed it, then readers too . . . might see that Christ can help them." (P121) I'm sure it will prove so, especially to other young people who struggle with the handicap of deafness.

Christians

"Thoughtfully planned to satisfy the unique demands of adult residents who desire the ultimate environment and a relaxed and secure life-style. Swimming pool, bar-b-que area, heated spa, library, dining room, private function room, arts and crafts areas, billiard room. Two bedroom self-care apartments which provide access to a five bed rehabilitation ward should you become temporarily incapacitated are priced from \$123,000."

"Easier living for the over 55's. All units include a lock-up garage, carpets, burglar and emergency alarms, 24 hour management service. Two bedroom units from \$98,000."

"Here is a development intended for those who want to maintain an active involvement with the rest of the community. It is for people who don't want to withdraw to a more isolated life on the fringe — for people who want to maintain their everyday contacts with established friends and have the opportunity to make new friendships with other like-minded folk — without sacrificing their privacy and independence."

So reads the material on glossy and newspaper advertising for the 'very special places' for those considering retirement. Recent reports suggest that some such places are now in financial difficulties as they do not offer full and terminal care.

"Life expectancy for Australians has increased from 47.2 years for men and 50.84 for women in 1881-1891 to 71.23 years for men and 78.27 years for women in 1982. Over the past decade it has risen by another 2 years because Australians are smoking less, eating less salt and more fibre and exercising more." (Sydney Morning Herald 4th January 1986)

Such statistics must mean that within the Australian community people are staying around for longer and that the whole issue of retirement is more pressing than ever. Greater opportunity for leisure and earlier retirement pose new problems and possibilities.

Over the last few weeks Christians now in retirement shared views in relevant areas.

1. Looking on to retirement

We use terms such as Senior Citizen, Grey Power, Pensioner or the Third Age Group to refer to those who are over 60. This refers to all who may feel perpetually young — at least in outlook — while others seem old before their time. Whether we like it or not we do grow older and deep changes are taking place in our bodies. How do you approach the idea of retirement?

Maturity to old age —	60 years
	70 years, the hoary head
	80 years, the time of special strength
	90 years, the age of bending
	100 years, as though already dead

Teacher: I looked forward to the cessation of lesson preparation, the marking of projects and exam papers and the like, even though I have always enjoyed teaching. My wife and I have found plenty to occupy and stimulate, and although never before keen gardeners, we have found that a new interest together, and as an immigrant many years ago, we are able to plan a visit 'home'.

Rector: My wife and I looked forward to travel and our own home (at last) somewhere in the country. Our initial concern was as to whether time would drag but this has not proved to be so. My long desire to delve into family history is at last being realised and it is now possible to read widely.

Clerk: Some of my Christian friends argued that retirement ought to be 'out' for Christians and in some ways that may well be true. Apart from the fact that it is now a matter of law in our society, it does provide an opportunity in a different way of life for Christians to discover new areas of ministry. No longer the need to catch that same train each morning, no more cut lunches, and overtime and the like. Our greatest hope that we would have the time to develop friendships in a deeper way.

Housewife: Colin and I looked forward to travel, extra time for reading and our love of gardening and bush walking. But that was not to be. Fortunately my husband had very carefully provided in all kinds of ways should I be left alone. Once I had adjusted to his death my days are ever so full within the local congregation.

"The glory of young men is in their strength, but the beauty of old men is their grey hair." Proverbs 20:29

2. Where to retire

Some who retire want to escape the city and find a cottage in the country: others a town house near the sea, still others prefer to stay right in the heart of the city. Certainly it is an important question and should be given careful thought well before retirement comes. No hard and fast rules can be laid down. Many people will have lived in the same area across many years and will not want to leave old friends and the right thing will be to stay put. For others who have spent a life-time of moving around it will mean that roots have never been very deep. What guides in the choice of a retirement home?

Carpenter: We decided, once the children were gone, to retire early and to get right away from the city to a country town where I could find sufficient work doing odd jobs to provide for a reasonable living. We now have about 20 acres and an old farmhouse which I have renovated. I wanted to work three days a week, give the local parish one day and Sunday, and 'potter about' the property for the remainder. It works out fine.

Nurse: I had no responsibility toward parents and decided to move right out of the city to a large country town where there was sufficient local interest with cultural facilities. At first I wondered just how I would survive in another Diocese having spent all my life in Sydney. Early suspicions on both sides are slowly being overcome.

who retire

Teacher: We belong to a church in which the use of our gifts is wisely exploited. My wife and I help in scripture teaching in schools. We assist in driving older folk to services and meetings and we help fill in those emergency 'odd spots' as advisers, baby sitters, etc.

Rector: We have come to appreciate in a new way the importance of friends. The Bible injunction about showing hospitality is now bringing its later reward.

Nurse: I have joined the local Senior Citizens group and often do shopping for the really old and assist in general medical care. I find that my own prayer times have been able to develop and I am able to spend not less than one hour each day. My own personal Bible study is used to good advantage as I share with greater time at my disposal.

'I am . . . rebuilding contacts with my children'

Rector: We are often asked how we manage to fill in our days. There is as much opportunity as we are willing to take up.

Electrician: Tradesmen have to be careful about using their expertise because of Union demands, but I know that full time tradesmen are just not willing to attend to some calls. My real joy is that I can now find time to help my children and grandchildren in so many ways.

Butcher: My workdays commenced in the early hours and apart from weekends I saw little of the complexities of family life. Now I am making up for all that and am rebuilding contacts with my children. My eldest son and I had hardly spoken to each other in any real way for years. Now very carefully we are moving toward each other.

Director: I still maintain some business interests but there is time for golf with my wife, we travel from time to time on business, and as I am able, I can help at our church. But the real benefit is that there is more time to minister within the family.

"Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days." Job 12:12

4. Within the local church

The local church is a kind of extended family and it is to be hoped that retired people would find real fellowship there. The choice of a retirement home ought to take into account the local church. We should make sure we are within reach of a church where we can be happy and useful. How do local congregations accept retired folk?

Teacher: People generally have been sensitive to the change in our life now that we have retired. Our congregation seems divided into age groups and ministry takes place in such. It's a case of peer to peers. We think it is a pity that there seems to be little attempt at giving practical help to needs outside one's own group.

Engineer: The minister sees us every few weeks and for this we are grateful even though he usually talks about parish problems. We have only recently moved to this area and apart from him there seems to be little attempt to get to know us on the part of other members of the congregation. Now that we have a bit more time to read more widely we are beginning to wonder if going to church ought not to mean more than worshipping. That is the traditional reason given for Christians meeting together but should the church be promoting such deliberate isolation one from the other when we meet?

Rector: Any pastoral care on the part of the Diocese across years of ministry has been sadly lacking and this seems to carry on in retirement. I guess a retired man is a bit of a threat to the local Rector but we are encouraged to share in ministry. We hear in a new way from

others in the congregation who are retired that the Rector is not really interested in them and that when he does call he does not appear to listen. We are also told that the congregation does not take any real interest in older people and apart from the Rector, no one else calls or even 'phones.

Teacher: We have a retired group meeting in the local church once each month and this is a useful opportunity to minister to one another. It used to be a service of Communion, but now is morning tea followed by a short and relevant Bible study and then a time for questions. Sometimes non-Christians have joined us and it has been good to see a few converted over the years.

Sales Lady: I am now in my eighties and not able to move around much and it is kind of Christian friends to call but mostly I feel they do not have the time to listen. The Rector comes about twice each year but does not stay long. He seems to find old people a difficulty.

Widow: My husband and I attended church together until he was killed in a motor car accident. From then on I found that the wives of married friends found me a threat and I was no longer welcome! Husbands were kept well clear. Widowhood is a lonely time but I realise now that congregations that I have attended have not really come to terms with 'singles'.

"Thus says the Lord of hosts: Old men and women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem each with a staff in hand for every age." Zachariah 8:4

5. Where to from here?

Now that you have retired there is always the temptation of aimlessness each day. It is said that life should at all times have a purpose and for young and old a daily purpose is essential. What sort of disciplines should be applied to live with purpose?

Widow at Mowl Village: How can I really have a purpose each day? My every care is taken over by others. I am now too feeble and rarely have the spirit even to pray.

Doctors: If only the local congregation could see the ministry of encouragement as of great significance. I have so many older folk who have so little to look forward to each day. Ministry to the aged may be difficult. It will require patience and courage, but as our society goes on living longer it is a ministry on the increase. It is a new field of evangelism even if the convert hardly won can make little contribution to the local congregation.

Widow at Mowl Village: The statement you make is too hard. Old age is so friendless. But when you come again just sit and listen.

"The youth will be insolent to the elder and the base fellow to the honourable." Isaiah 3:5b

6. The rainy day

Present-day pensions and the welfare provisions may not make it as vital to 'put something aside'. But most people would agree that it is wise to have a nest egg which can be drawn on in emergency. How do you feel about provision for the rainy day?

Clerk: In other days I was advised that 'the Lord would provide' and to make extra provision was to show lack of faith. I came to see that His gifts to me were to be used in positive ways and to prepare for an active and reasonable living in retirement was an expression of faith rather than a denial. Certainly the care taken along the way now gives me the capacity to be of practical encouragement to fellow believers.

Widow: My husband and I always shared financial matters. He reasoned that since, on the law of averages, I would be widowed, I must be prepared to carry on in such matters. While this was at first strange to me I now rejoice in his wisdom and also am so happy that his love is still seen in the wise investment of modest means.

"I am young in years, and you are aged, therefore I was timid and afraid to declare my opinion to you. I said, let days speak and many years teach wisdom." Job 32:6,7

"You shall rise up before the hoary head and honour the face of an old man."

Leviticus 19:32a

7. Essential ongoing commitments

One of the best known stories in the New Testament is that concerning the widow's mite. Retired people suffer a drop in income and so cannot be expected to give as generously as they used to . . . yet it seems that once a Christian has learned to be generous such a habit is continued. How do you find your level of financial support to Christian ministry?

Teacher: When my wife and I were both earning we gave sacrificially — we may not now give as much but we still know the joy of sacrificial giving. Our own needs are less with the house paid off and children now married. And we have more time to support Christian ministry prayerfully and extra time gives more time to be better informed as we pray.

Accountant: Careful investment across the years and our much simpler needs now means that we give more than previously. We try to make sure our giving keeps up with inflation. This means discipline, of course.

Rector: We are glad that modest but adequate stipends across the years trained us in a simpler life style. We now shop together and are constantly amazed at what people spend on what we would consider exotic foods. Our living standards are adequate and our giving may not be as widely spread, but perhaps we take the time to make it wiser.

"Do not cast me off in the time of old age, forsake me not when my strength is spent." Psalm 71:9

8. At the end of the day

Most people would believe that their estate should be left to their children — yet help along the way when they are setting up home could perhaps be of more use. What thought have you given to the disposal of your estate?

Wife: My husband and I found great joy in supporting our two children in education, marriage, setting up their homes, etc. We will certainly remember them in our wills. John insists that it is his

'extra time gives more time to be better informed as we pray'

duty to make sure I am cared for together with any dependent members of the closer family. But we both plan to leave some support for the work of evangelism.

Teacher: We have taught our children that because we have stood with them across the years that they ought not to assume that they will be the sole beneficiaries. We believe that Christians ought to step out of the normal worldly patterns at every point.

"A hoary head is a crown of glory, it is gained in a righteous life." Proverbs 16:31

9. In the day of my death

It is great to see a husband and wife growing closer together as they grow older. But when one partner dies . . . Do you share together about such matters — and about the final act of death?

Wife: It seems obvious that I will be the surviving partner. I know I will be so lonely but rejoice in two certainties — my husband loves the Saviour and will be relieved of considerable suffering. We rarely talk about death as such but often share together about the Christian's hope which becomes increasingly richer.

Teacher: Ken and I have not talked about death. We both know that our rest will be in Christ and that whoever survives for a time will not therefore be consumed by grief.

Wife: I long to see my husband come to faith and pray daily to that end. It seems that the older he gets the more blind to the truth he becomes. I often think about the words from Jeremiah, 'The summer is ended and we are not saved.' I so envy those where both partners believe the Gospel.

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— The South American Missionary Society of Australasia requires a suitably qualified person to work 16-20 hours per week as Federal Finance Officer. The work involves keeping the Society's accounts, budgeting, financial control, transfer of overseas funds for the payment of missionaries and their field needs. Sometime in 1986 we hope to place all our accounts on computer. Salary is negotiable but the applicant should recognize that we are a missionary society, not a commercial organization.

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S.A.M.S.

The Executive Committee of the SOUTH AMERICAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY AUSTRALASIAN ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED advises members that the Federal Annual General Meeting for 1986 will be held at 43 Bundabeh Avenue, St. Ives, on FRIDAY 14 MARCH at 7.30 p.m.

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need for further examination

Dear Sir,
I was pleased to see the ACR giving front page coverage to the proposed Bill of Rights which is presently before the Senate (ACR February 10th). The Bill raised a large number of important and complex issues which are deserving of a full and informed public debate.

I take issue however with Mrs. Anne Judd (who expresses 'qualified support for the Bill') as she merely repeats federal Government propaganda rather than looking critically at the major deficiencies in the Bill.

Probably the greatest fallacy contained in your Article is the suggestion that the Bill of Rights may give protection against arbitrary governmental action. The Bill in fact establishes a Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission with sweeping powers to conduct compulsory conferences in secret; impose 3 months gaol for persons who fail to attend; deny persons the right to legal representation and the right to avoid self-incrimination. It's hard to imagine more arbitrary governmental action than that!

Mrs. Judd stresses that the proposed Bill of Rights is directed only against governments and is 'therefore a shield, not a sword'. The question arises however — a shield for whose benefit?

Article 7 of the Bill, for example, guarantees to individuals the freedom of expression in very wide terms as being the "freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice".

Homosexual teachers may therefore be able to use Article 7 to defy directions from the Minister of Education prohibiting certain material from the classroom. Article 7 may also be used to protect purveyors of pornography from Government regulation.

The fact of the matter is that the Bill of Rights is a sword as well as a shield. The Bill of Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission to attack the policies and legislation of Federal, State and Local Governments, which the Commission deems to be inconsistent with the Bill of Rights. Such policies and legislation

may be those which we as Christians would want to uphold in the public interest.

Yours sincerely,
Tim Tunbridge
Bilgola Plateau

Dear Sir,

I usually admire the high standard of journalism of the **Church Record**.

However I was greatly disappointed by your front page article on the Bill of Rights (10/2/86).

You consulted just one lawyer (Mrs. Judd) who gives the impression that hers is an expert legal opinion.

You must surely be aware that other Christian lawyers (as well as humanist ones) are very disturbed about the implications of the Bill.

The Law Council of Australia has asked (unsuccessfully) for a delay in the debate because of serious misgivings about the Bill.

Mrs. Judd claims that the Bill gives us a right to privacy which we would not otherwise have. But what does "privacy" mean?

In America since the Roe vs Wade judgment it means that abortions can be legally carried out up till the day before birth if the mother wishes, because of her "right to privacy".

The so-called "right to privacy" can also protect criminals and child bashers. Do we really need a greater right to privacy than that which we already enjoy?

I am amazed that Mrs. Judd does not seem to have thought deeply about the implications of a vaguely worded Bill of Rights. I hope that your paper will soon publish an alternative view by a qualified lawyer.

Yours sincerely
(Dr.) David Phillips
Chairman, Festival of Light, S.A.

Dear Sir,

I'm sorry, Mrs. Judd of Social Issues Committee, I cannot be drawn to your defence of Bill of Rights (ACR, February 10). Plausible you read, but as for me and my

house we will cling to the Australian Constitution believing it to be spawned in and by a generation which reverently feared God; where even the uncommitted instinctively knew on which side their bread was buttered.

I would strenuously refuse even a lolly offered by Senators Evans, Bowen, Ryan, and Malcolm Fraser, because in no way is their ilk concerned with administering this land in righteousness; some of them are avowed opponents.

Mrs. Judd's conclusions are conceived through legal logic and precedent and therefore invalid (Isaiah 1).

However, there is precedent to be noted from God's word which is conclusive: disaster is the fruit of making alliances with the godless such as U.N. and Human Rights Commission. God has His rights, too: — Jesus.

"Woe to the rebellious children," declares the Lord,

"Who execute a plan, but not mine, And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit, In order to add sin to sin:

Who proceed down to Egypt, Without consulting Me,

Who take refuge in the safety of Pharaoh, And seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt!"

Isaiah 30:1

A. James Wilson

Buderim

Dear Sir,

While thanking you for the timely front page article on the Bill of Rights I am non plussed that neither your editorial comment or Mrs. Anne Judd can come down with a definite opinion on a piece of legislation which to say the least is a watershed in Australia's constitutional history.

God preserve us from legal eagles who confuse truth with legalities. Satan can outwit them every time. Has not God given us through Common Law the right to freedom until proven guilty by our peers? Is it not true that the Bill of Rights completely reverses the onus of guilt? Does not the whole basis of our Common Law rest on the belief that Christ was more concerned about the innocent than the guilty, therefore the power to assume guilt

must never be exercised within a Christ society?

The draconian powers of interrogation and negation of individual rights of the accused which are given to the Human Rights Commission under the Bill. The power given to this peculiar body to form a court which makes judgement on social attitudes, with power to enforce their own value judgements, destroys the whole principle of free and open discussion on vital social issues. I recall when the Professor Blainey and Hugh Morgan contributions to the Immigration and Land Rights issues were being ventilated, Mr. Peter Bailey of the Human Rights Commission stated had Australia a Bill of Rights they probably could have taken action against these gentlemen. Even if such was a flight of fancy on Mr. Bailey's part, under Common Law it could never become a reality.

But what I have said is nothing compared to the full implications of this Bill, so aptly described as a Bill of Wrongs. Satan would love it for the power that it gives man over his fellow man. Its imprimatur comes from those societies which have officially and legally rejected Christ. They want us to do the same. Yours faithfully,
Edward Rock
Greensborough

Dear Sir,

In view of the regrettable and confusing front page article on the Bill of Rights in the Church Record on the 10th February, 1986 I urge you to publish the enclosed learned critique of the Bill of Rights by Professor L.J.M. Cooray, LLB (Cey), PhD (Cantab), PhD (Col), Associate Professor, School of Law, Macquarie University.

Professor Cooray's article demolishes the superficial treatment of this important issue by (Mrs.) Anne Judd.

Surely such an important issue deserved more serious treatment than a mere Christmas-New Year holiday study by a solicitor, no matter how sincere.

Yours Sincerely,
Rev. Fred Nile, M.L.C.
Parliament House,
Sydney.

Huguenot History

Switzerland holds National Exhibition

(Lausanne) **Reformed Press Service** reports that the historical museum, situated in the old bishopric of Lausanne, is arranging a national exhibition which presents in detail the mass influx of Huguenots into Switzerland in the wake of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. In cooperation with the best Swiss specialists and the help of iconographic documents, artifacts, manuscripts (including the original of the Revocation of the Edict), maps and plans, the exhibition and its bilingual catalogue contain all the actual knowledge about this event.

The Edict of Nantes was signed by Henry IV in 1598. It guaranteed the Protestants in France freedom of

conscience and free practice of their religion. Eighty-seven years later, in 1685, Henry IV's grandson, Louis XIV, revoked the edict. In its wake followed destruction of churches and a mass exodus of Protestants who refused conversion.

Reformed Switzerland opened its doors to the refugees, where several cantons offered them asylum and aid, including the cantons of Geneva, Berne, Neuenberg, Basel, Zurich, Schaffhausen and St. Gallen. According to the latest estimates, arrived at by a team of Swiss researchers using computerised information, one quarter of the French Protestants (200 to 250,000) took the road to exile, of whom about 140,000 entered Switzerland.

Kirk in historic agreement signing

Scots union landmark

Following a joint celebration of the Eucharist in Edinburgh on February 3, leaders of the Church of Scotland and four other denominations in Scotland — Methodist, United (United Reformed) and Reformed (Congregational Union, United Free) — signed an historic agreement.

The agreement stipulated that "ministers of all these Churches may exercise all aspects of their ministries, including the celebration of the sacraments, in any of these Churches when invited to do so and in accordance with the recognised procedures of these Churches."

Calvinists to consider the nature of man

Amsterdam conference for 1986

In 1986 the Association for Calvinist Philosophy will have existed 50 years. As part of a program to celebrate this semicentenary the Association will sponsor an international symposium on "Anthropology in Christian perspective" from August 11-15, 1986 in Amsterdam.

The renewed interest in present-day philosophy in the question, "What is man?" led to the selection of this theme. According to the board of the Association, "The tension between the emphasis on human freedom and the exclusively scientific approach to man and the world . . . has . . . brought about in present-day thought the need for a fundamental reorientation on the age-old question: What is man?"

Major papers at the conference will be presented by Dr. Henk Geertsema, professor of philosophy at St. Olaf College (Northfield, Minnesota); Dr. Andre Troost, emeritus professor of philosophy at the Free University of Amsterdam; Dr. David Lyon, Senior Lecturer in Social Analysis at Bradford and Ilkley College; and Dr. Jacob Klapwijk, professor of philosophy at the Free University of Amsterdam.

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Editorial

'Domestic violence ... and the Church'

"Church structures reinforce the subordination of women and therefore foster an environment in which domestic violence can occur." (Australian Council of Churches Commission on the Status of Women, task group on Domestic Violence)

"Religion has become the camouflage for spy activities . . . During 1966-1969 anti-communists, with the help of the Bible, made attempts to influence the backward part of the population of the People's Republics. The Bible was one of the means of ideological struggle in the hands of anti-communists." (Religion and Ideological Struggle. Ministry of Education, Moscow, 1974)

Both the above quotes are guilty of logical fallacy which leads to confusion for the man in the street. The Soviets follow the argument that all spies are anti-Soviet; the Bible is an anti-Soviet book; therefore all Bible distributors are spies. Jean Gledhill, writing in the Australian Council of Churches publication 'In Unity', seems to follow the argument that structures in society based on authority lead to repression; the Church is an institution with an authority structure; therefore all churches are guilty of repression. It is not surprising therefore that she goes on to say that the Domestic Violence Task Group "believes that there is a power relationship embodied in the theology, structures, language and other symbols of the church which is the same as the power relationship expressed in domestic violence." Or again, "The church, in its structures, has readily adopted a hierarchical pattern of authority which puts women in a subordinate position . . . The Church has used sayings like, 'Wives be subject to your husband, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church,' to promote a set of relationships in the family in which husband rules his wife."

What is distressing is that the task group's findings shared at an Australian Institute of Criminology Conference in Canberra last year made no attempt to come to grips with the complexity of the issues involved. Not only was the Pauline passage from Ephesians 5:22-23 not exegeted, but it was blandly stated that the church has been preaching that a man should rule his wife, and that this has had a tremendous influence not only in the church, but in society at large. It is hardly surprising that such a superficial treatment of the issues leads the writer to conclude (without a shred of evidence to support it) that "the pattern of authority in the church, reinforced by language and other symbols which exclude women, all conspire to create a situation in which women can become the victims of violence."

Such a cavalier treatment of the subject needs to be exposed for what it is. It is unfortunate that the writer finds it necessary to uncritically quote an avowed feminist theologian to support her case, without any attempt to put the other point of view. While it is readily acknowledged that it has been convenient for some men to distort the Bible's teaching on the place of women, it is equally possible for those with a bias against what the Scriptures clearly teach, to allow their prejudices to influence their findings. The task group has fallen into this error when it presents its conclusions " . . . if the church is to cease being one of the social institutions which helps to perpetuate domestic violence, it has first to recognise how its structures, language and theology validate violence against women, and then act to change the situation."

What the writer appears to be asking the church to do, is to surrender the Bible as its ultimate authority in matters of faith and conduct, and embark on a radically different course to that taken by its founders. The general context of the New Testament's call for wives to 'submit to their husbands' (Ephesians 5:22), with its various imperatives, has behind it the single motivation — Christ. Reverence for Christ is the motivation for mutual subordination (5:21); Christ's headship over the Church is the standard of a wife's subordination to her husband (5:22-24); the Messiah's love is the ground and measure of the husband's love (5:25a); Christ's unity with his body and his care for the Church are the reasons why the husband who loves his wife, loves himself (5:28-30). As Karl Barth expresses it: "Paul appears intent on saying nothing to the two partners in marriage unless he can show a christological and ecclesiological reason."

The intention of Paul in this passage is to show that the 'grace of our Lord Jesus Christ' gives husband and wife the basis, the strength, and the example which they need in order to live in that 'peace to which God has called them.' (I Cor. 7:15), the peace of which he has spoken in Ephesians 2:14-16. This pattern gives a wonderful balance between liberty and responsibility to both partners in the marriage. The general sense of the word submit in New Testament exhortation is readiness to renounce one's own will for the sake of others, and to give precedence to others, and is therefore related to the Christian understanding of humility. It is instructive that the word, which originally belonged to the sphere of worldly order, is now harnessed as a term of order in Christian relationships.

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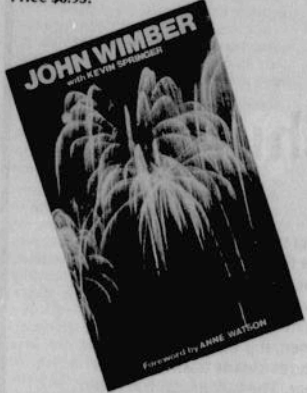
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generation unbeliever" at his first church service after his conversion should be read by all. "I anticipated training in spiritual warfare," he writes, "... I felt cheated."

Paradoxically, it is when dealing with the Holy Spirit that he leaves much to be desired. Baptism and filling are not handled as definitively as they might be, and although "the born-again experience is the consummate charismatic experience", there is no clear outline of conversion requiring the prior work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. One may almost infer that a person can actually be converted without the Holy Spirit.

His analysis of modern Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement is detailed and helpful, but he apparently is ignorant of Dallimore's biography of Edward Irving. He has read Packer's recent work on the Holy Spirit, but does not appear to have profited from Packer's dissection of the Methodist holiness, perfectionist and Keswick movements.

Wimber wisely upholds the need for a Biblical world view and deprecates the refusal by some Christians to fully accept the supernatural. However, his example of a girl being exorcised of forty-seven demons after seven hours of prayer may prompt some to question the validity of his claims. Perhaps he accepts the supernatural instead of rather than with the natural. This book needs to be read with reservation in the light of the early quotes in this review which come from David Watson's "Fear No Evil".

Deuteronomy 18:22 says: "If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him."

Donald Howard

LIVING STONES:

The Story of St. Stephen's, Sydney
by Graham W. Hardy, Anzea, 167 pp. \$14.95.

Telling the story of a particular congregation is always difficult. It can be written for the faithful, in which case the



endless listing of meaningless names can drive the outsider to absolute boredom, or it can be written to show the life of the congregation in the wider canvas of church and social life. The latter of course, offends Mrs. Smith because it does not mention mother's crocheting or Aunt's donation of some memorial or other.

Graham Hardy has had an advantage over most such storytellers. His subject is so famous that he can afford to mention many names knowing full well that they are known even to outsiders. So, having a Precentor who wrote Advance Australia Fair or a young girl chorister by the name of Joan Sutherland, mingled with the names of faithful church officers, makes the book interesting. In this area Graham Hardy has told the story well.

He has missed the opportunity to write the story against the larger backdrop. The early chapters are excellent but they owe their origin to a properly researched address given in 1899 and updated in 1942 where the larger concerns of history were dealt with. There are, for example, some interesting details of the splits within Presbyterianism last century although some of Mr. Hardy's own value judgments intrude unnecessarily.

What is sad is that the author has not

given us enough material to document the changing fortunes of a city church which loses its local congregation and thereby changes its personality. This is mentioned, of course, but it would have been helpful to have had the information properly dissected. For example the work done in the Rocks and amongst sailors in the port was probably ahead of its time and certainly the opposite to the socialite image that the Church later obtained.

Graham Hardy has told the story through the ministers that have served at St. Stephens. Here there is a tendency to try to partially whitewash the account. Reading between the lines it becomes obvious that some ministers were decidedly less successful than others yet all are portrayed as great servants of God. The Bible is not ashamed to show the failures as well as the successes of God's people — oh that modern Christian writers were more willing to do the same.

Probably the worst feature of the book is the final chapter. It is difficult for the current minister to write about his own time but, even given that difficulty, this is a poor attempt. The chapter is more like a sermon and, while some of the material is good to read (the emphasis on the pulpit ministry as the centre of St. Stephen's life is particularly encouraging) it does not fit with the style of the rest of the book. Of particular concern is the failure to give much detail on the decision of the congregation to join the Uniting Church — questions such as how smooth was the transition? How many people left? How did it affect the role of St. Stephens? All needed to be addressed but were not.

This book, then, is what is usually referred to as a "coffee table book". Well written, easy to read, glossy with some interesting pictures, it is of interest to those who attend or have attended St. Stephens (even those of us who used the Wednesday lunchtime services as a welcome break from researching at Mitchell Library) and to a wider audience as well. It is not going to be of great assistance to genuine historians.

D. Kirkaldy

NSW Baptists in disarray continued

The decision to join the SCD was variously defended. Some argued that the SCD degree could give Baptist students theological acceptance to do higher degrees. Further, the Australian College of Theology (primarily an Anglican body) B.Th. degree was not acceptable to Baptists because of the liberalism of some of the Examiners, although this body had been used in the past. It was also argued that membership in the SCD was not endorsing those doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church which were unbiblical.

It was noticeable during the debate that those who supported the motion to remain in the SCD often would not use the title of Stanmore church's publication. It was referred to as the 'red, white and blue' booklet. The Stanmore church was "thanked" for raising this important issue, but it was clear that the Stanmore church wanted more than "thanks"; they wanted action, they wanted withdrawal, they wanted the Baptist Union of NSW to uphold the purity of the gospel and not be involved with a false gospel and with what one speaker defined as a "heretical cult".

When the amended motion was put to become the actual motion, it won by a substantial majority on a show of hand. However, when the motion was eventually put, it was by secret ballot.

It was a point of contention that delegates from many churches were instructed how to vote by their church meetings.

In reply the Assembly was told that some churches had given their delegates freedom to vote if additional information was presented that could change their opinion.

During the afternoon tea break the ballot was counted, but the Assembly was not immediately informed of the result. The Acting Chairman was visibly moved as he said: "We're not out of the woods yet!" It was announced that the motion passed by only 14 votes (343 For; 329 Against; with 2 Abstentions). The Stanmore Baptist church felt vindicated in the stance they had taken to affiliation with the SCD.

At this point a senior member of the governing board of the Baptist College stood up and declared that the College Council would now investigate alternative possibilities for academic affiliation. With the vote so close on such a contentious issue, the Baptist College would not allow itself to be the cause of division within the Baptist Union.

It is clear from the intensity of the debate and the closeness of the vote that much work still needs to be done in order for the Baptist Union to come to a common mind accurately reflecting the biblical foundations upon which the denomination stands.

Editorial Comment

There are two principal issues involved in the alliance between the Baptist College of New South Wales and the Sydney College of Divinity.

(1) The Historical Issue

In terms of Baptist history and heritage the Baptists come from Reformation stock.

Historically, they embraced the mainstream doctrines of the Reformation and rejected the doctrines of Roman Catholicism.

The origins of Baptist Churches in Australia are to be found exclusively within the Reformation heritage.

At the very first Baptist Association meeting in New South Wales, in 1868, the first president of the Baptist Union, Rev. Allan J. Webb affirmed the historic roots and protestant heritage of the Baptists. He stated:

"We cannot forget that for 700 years our brethren swelled the ranks of 'the noble army of martyrs', now with God, in protesting against the errors of the papacy, and prelacy."

In terms of the present debate it is obvious that there has been a dramatic shift in attitude.

The Assembly confirmed the worst fears of many denominational observers. The lines of demarcation between Baptists and Roman Catholics, once held strongly by Baptist forefathers, are in danger of being erased.

The Baptist Union now operates so that

major decision-making is to be the prerogative of Assembly committees. Committees are now seen to be determining Baptist practice.

The initial affiliation with the SCD was a fait accompli without any conferring with the churches. Such a major decision was merely retrospectively endorsed by the assembly.

Historically, the issue at stake is: What has happened to the baptistic doctrine of the autonomy and independence of the local congregation?

(2) The Theological Issue

The question is a simple one. Can those Baptists who profess to be faithful to the apostolic gospel have an official liaison with these that deny that gospel?

How can Baptists engage in what purports to be a co-operative enterprise with those who implicitly or explicitly deny the necessity of the new birth? If a Roman Catholic claims that grace is channelled via the sacrament, he is by

implication denying the necessity of the new birth.

The supreme issue in the whole matter is the integrity of the gospel of Jesus Christ; which is essential to maintain, not only because its maintenance is vitally important to those who desperately need to hear and know its message, but also because the gospel is God's testimony to Christ. It is Christ's glory, therefore, which is at stake. To tolerate, by official link, either an explicit, or an indirect dilution of the gospel is to dishonour the Christ to whom the gospel points.

Any denomination can, and should, adapt or change its traditions to suit contemporary needs. But all change must be shown to enhance the clear proclamation of the Gospel, not detract from it.

It is important for all Christians to encourage and pray for the Baptist Union of NSW as they seek to remain faithful to the Bible in the matter of theological education for future generations of their Pastors.

Moody's multi-image programme

Takes International Festival Award

Moody Bible Institute's multi-image programme "Reaching to Touch the Sky" received an award at the New York International Film and Television Festival. Moody's program took the bronze award in the Documentary Multi-Image category. It was the top U.S. production in its category, with gold and silver awards going to programmes from Switzerland and Japan. "Reaching to Touch the Sky" tells the story of the birth and growth of Chicago and D.L. Moody. The program, which uses 49 projectors and 23 hexagonal screens, is shown weekdays at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Moody Bible Institute's Chicago campus.

(EPNS)



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CHURCH, WORSHIP AND THE LOCAL CONGREGATION:

Monday 19th May		
6.00 pm	Registration and Dinner	
7.00 pm	"The Doctrine of the Church: Towards Conceptual Clarity"	Rev. Graham Cole
Tuesday 20th May		
9.00 am	Bible Study Paper "I have opened my mouth to Yahweh: The Story of Jephthah" (Judges 10:6-12:7)	Dr. Barry Webb
11.00 am	"The Lord and his church: implications for worship"	Dr. Peter Jensen
1.00 pm	Lunch	
3.30 pm	"The Biblical Concept of Praise"	Rev. Mark Harding
4.45 pm	"The Biblical Concept of Edification"	Dr. David Peterson
6.00 pm	Dinner	
7.00 pm	"The Biblical Concept of Fellowship"	Dr. D. Broughton Knox
Wednesday 21st May		
9.00 am	Bible Study Paper: Romans 12	Rev. Michael Raiter
11.00 am	Concluding Plenary Session Chairman: Dr. Bill Lawton	

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