

## "Marriage like gardening" says Flo Bjelke-Petersen



L to R: Mrs. Diane Stein (HMS Women's Auxiliary Sec.), Mrs. Bernie Duchesne (Chairperson), Sen. Flo Bjelke-Petersen, Mrs. Robinson.

"Marriage is like gardening — it takes time, care, nourishment and love," Senator Flo Bjelke-Petersen told 500 people at the Anglican Home Mission Society Women's Auxiliary luncheon in Sydney.

Senator Bjelke-Petersen told her audience that 1984 in Queensland is "The Year of the Family", and that she is patron of the year's events. The theme of the year is "Hug a Mum".

## MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE

### DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

The Rev. Garry Harch has been ordained as a Deacon.

### DIOCESE OF RIVERINA

The Rev. Phillip Alstin was inducted as Rector of the parish of Broken Hill in May.

The Right Rev. Donald Shearman, Bishop of Grafton announced his resignation from the See on 31st May last.

### DIOCESE OF SYDNEY

Ven. D. F. Wann will resign as Rector, All Saints' Albion Park on 3rd September, 1984 to become Rector, St. James' Turramurra.

Rev. D. C. Woodbridge will resign as Rector, St. Stephen's, Port Kembla to become Rector, All Saints' Nowra on 13th September, 1984.

Rev. J. S. H. Bootle died on 8th June, 1984.

### DIOCESE OF GIPPSLAND

Rev. F. Morrey of Moe has been installed as a Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral.

### DIOCESE OF THE MURRAY

Rev. J. Stephenson from Ingle Farm (Adelaide) is to be Rector, Morphet Vale as from August, 1984.

Rev. P. Miller will resign at the end of August from Berri-Barmera to take up duty in the parish of Glenunga (Adelaide).

Rev. G. Bennett, Rector of Loxton will become Rector, Aberfoyle Park in mid-September.

### DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Rev. J. C. Baldock resigned as Asst. Curate, St. George's Malvern on 1st June, 1984 to become Asst. Curate, St. Matthew's, Cheltenham.

Rev. F. L. Cuttriss resigns from St. Philip's, Avondale Heights on 28th July, 1984 to become Archbishop's Chaplain. He will continue as Archdeacon of Essendon.

Rev. D. J. Baldwin from the Diocese of Colombo, Sri Lanka, became Asst. Curate, St. George's, Malvern on 1st June, 1984.

Rev. R. W. K. McKinney from the Diocese of Southwell, U.K. became Maynard Lecturer at Trinity Theological School on 1st July, 1984.

Rev. A. R. St. John will resign from St. Mary's Chadstone to become Rector, Holy Trinity, Kew on 18th September, 1984.

### DIOCESE OF CANBERRA — GOULBURN

The Reverend Hugh Symes-Thompson of North Goulburn parish, has announced his engagement to Elizabeth Pratt, a member of the parish of Harlow, Essex, England, where he last ministered. Hugh and Liz plan to be married on September 15 at St. Paul's Church, Harlow.

The Reverend John Nicholls, ARC chaplain at Kapooka, has been authorised to officiate in the Diocese.

Archdeacon Ian George went on long service leave from May 14 to September 10. Added to this long service leave period is his time as an Anglican Consultative Council representative in Lagos, Nigeria.

The Reverend Bill Devonshire will be acting rector of St. John's during Archdeacon George's absence.

The Reverend Gerald Farleigh of St. Peter's, Weston, went on long service leave from May 18 to September 3 and The Reverend Thory Bonney is relieving at St. Peter's, though continuing to live at his own home in Duffy.

The Reverend Allan Bosser died peacefully at home on Friday, May 4. Allan was originally ordained in Ballarat in 1950, and after 10 years in that diocese served as assistant priest at St. James' King Street. He then came to this Diocese, serving as rector of Batlow and Braidwood, and then filled in in many parishes during long-service-leave vacancies. He retired from the ministry in 1976. He had been living at Wheeler Heights, Sydney.

## Australian incredulity cont.

### Birth narratives less important

Rev. Dr. John Gaden, Canon Theologian of the Diocese of Melbourne and Archbishop's Consultant Theologian, was unwilling to comment directly on the reported poll conducted by London Weekend Television. This, he said, was partly due to the distance between us and Britain, and also because he had knowledge of the English bishops' beliefs from their writings, and from personal contacts. "It is actually hard to believe that they said what they were reported to say".

"If I was asked, 'Is Jesus God?'", Dr. Gaden continued, "I would not be able to give a blank, unqualified 'yes'. I would have to qualify my affirmation with a trinitarian statement about the Father and the Holy Spirit also being God."

"Indeed, in the New Testament, there are only two texts where Jesus is spoken of as being 'God'. Usually in the New Testament, he is described as the 'Word of God', or the 'Son of God', or the 'Image of God'; that is, in functional or instrumental terms."

Dr. Gaden thought that David Jenkins may have been set-up. Jenkins' comments from Matthew and Luke's Gospel about the virgin birth are widely accepted amongst scholars. The birth narratives have comparatively less importance than those about the resurrection, John Gaden concluded.

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## Eddy Waxer, pro-tennis and christian

Eddy Waxer of 'SPORTS & RECREATION THROUGH THE 20th CENTURY CHURCH' from Miami Florida, USA, visited Sydney in June and met with a number of the Australian Christian Sports Fellowship.

Waxer 38, has been set aside by his home church, the Key Biscayne Presbyterian Church, to minister to sports people throughout the world.

He is a man who has been given a 'vision' of God to utilise sports as a means to bring people into a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

A former international tennis circuit player, Waxer ministers in three areas: on the tennis circuit, the golf circuit and that of 'vision for lease' — sharing with sports Christians around the world, sharing his vision, so they too might see the potential for ministry.

Eddy Waxer presented the meeting with four models currently in ministry form for the reflection of the gathering.

Model 1: A local church in Acire Atlanta has set aside Fritz Klaus, a member of their Pastoral team, to minister to the professional tennis players on circuit.

The Christians in the 'pro-tennis circuit' assist with the stipend, attend weekly Bible studies, and encourage others to meet Fritz, and utilize him as the 'Pastor', and Priest.

Model 2: Video Tape Ministry is being developed from the local church base in such a way that many thousands of people can witness with the aid of this new technology.

A local church with the aid of a leading sports star in a particular sport, video tapes a 'coaching technique' with that star's personal testimony of their relationship with the Living Christ on the end.

Model 3: International sporting stars are being invited into Christian homes whilst on tour, instead of 'motel' living.

This move is seen as valuable for four reasons; it keeps temptations at bay from the motel syndrome; it provides community contact; family relationships and spiritual relationships and bonds.

This ministry has already begun in Sydney, and for information as to how you might assist in this ministry, please contact as a basic starting point:

'Sports & Leisure Ministry'  
Rev. Mark Tronson (047) 73 8594

Model 4: Local Churches are inviting top level sporting personalities and coaches to conduct a sporting clinic in that particular sport.

The local church advertises this, and as well as the clinic, the Christian sports person shares his faith in Christ.

## The Australian



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# Increase Gospel, by popular demand!

An evangelistic mission on the campus of Sydney University — that protector of Australian secularism — has been extended from two to three weeks because such large numbers have kept coming to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ explained.

One of the reasons that the organisers decided to extend the series of public lectures into a third week is that responses, both in terms of inquiry and of positive commitment to Christ, increased over the first two weeks. On the Friday of the second week (what would have been the last of the public meetings) about 35 people indicated that they wished to be 'followed up' in some way.

### Prayer versus 2GB

The mission was organized by the Evangelical Union, with the support of other Christian groups. St. Barnabas' Church, Broadway was heavily involved, the Rector, Robert Forsyth being one of the main speakers, and evangelistic services being held at St. Barnabas' on the Sundays of the mission.

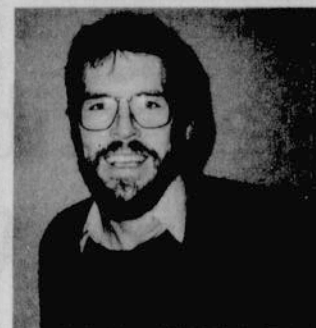
The original plan was to hold nine lunchtime and four evening meetings. The first of these, on Monday 2nd July, was a lunch time music concert on the front lawn, outside the main University Library, designed to make as many

people as possible aware of the mission. The night before the concert the congregation at St. Barnabas' Broadway was informed that the 2GB weather forecast was for heavy rain the next day. The congregation prayed for fine weather. Monday was fine, and the concert a success.

### Christianity becomes an issue at Sydney University

Asked why the mission was being extended ACR was told that there is a "strong momentum on campus. Everyone is talking about Christian things. Non-Christians are asking Christians what is going on. Christianity is an issue on campus." This high level of awareness of the presence of active Christians on the campus has aroused a certain degree of antagonism and resentment, but it has provided an excellent context for evangelism, and negative reactions do not seem to have been dominant.

How has Christianity become an "issue" on Sydney University campus?



Robert Forsyth

The level of energetic Christian activity of a visible, public nature has obviously been important. A great deal of energy has been spent on: chalking the mission slogan, 'KNOWING GOD', on pavements all over the campus; placing large numbers of KNOWING GOD posters wherever posters can be placed; distributing KNOWING GOD handbills wherever people move; making KNOWING GOD announcements at the beginning and end of lectures... and so on.

In addition to all this a letter was mailed to all 3,000 university staff (both technical and academic) informing them of the programme of meetings and inviting them to attend. One of the many pleasing features of this mission was the way in which a number of members of staff were to be seen at the lectures.

The usefulness of this intense activity has been obvious to those involved in the mission as the impossibility of keeping it up for ever! What must also be clear is that such activity is severely limited in its usefulness unless Christians on the campus also commit themselves to being faithful to Christ in words, actions, and relationships day after day, long after this mission is over.

### Unexpected

A significant contribution to Christianity being an "issue" at Sydney University came from an unexpected source. A strongly Charismatic group from the USA, known as 'Maranatha', has begun to work on the campus, with twenty full-time staff. In contrast to groups like Student Life, and Navigators, which also have American connections, Maranatha has a patently aggressive approach to evangelism which involves a high public profile. Speakers address passers-by on the footpaths through megaphones. Outside the University Library there has been a table and chairs with a large sign: "Are you going to Heaven? Two quick questions will give the answer." Although some of the methods of Maranatha, and aspects of their message are not endorsed by those involved in the KNOWING GOD mission, and although some have confused the two evangelistic efforts, there is no doubt that Maranatha has contributed to making Christianity an "issue" at the University of Sydney.

### Overflow crowds

The last EU mission on Sydney University campus was in 1981. Since then evangelistic activity has been going on in a number of ways, but generally without a high public profile. Groups like Student Life have been very active in personal evangelism, and occasional evangelistic public meetings. However for three years there has not been a great deal of 'large scale' evangelism. This means that the phenomenon of the KNOWING GOD mission — the chalking, the posters, the hand-bills, the announcements in lectures, the packed out lunch-time lectures — is a new experience for most of the present undergraduate population.

The public lectures, given by Phillip Jensen, Anglican chaplain to the University of New South Wales, and

Continued page 2

## Losses and gains for Moore College



Rev. Dr. Peter Jensen at his Sydney press conference.

In a week of change Moore College saw the appointment of a new Principal and the confirmation of the appointment of its Vice Principal, Rev. Dr. Bill Dumbrell, to Regent College, Canada.

After a year's teaching at Regent College during 1982-83 whilst on sabbatical from Moore, Bill Dumbrell was asked if he would take up the appointment of Academic Dean and Professor of Biblical Studies by Regent's Board of Management. Although, after long consultation Dr. Dumbrell accepted the appointment in December last year, it has taken up to this time for the details of his new position to be finalised. Bill Dumbrell, an Old Testament Scholar of international repute, has been a lecturer at Moore College for twenty-two years, ten of them as Vice Principal. His appointment to Regent not only opens up new horizons for himself and his wife Norma, but also for Regent College. As well as normal lecturing duties, Bill Dumbrell will be responsible for inter-staff and student development.

Approached by the ACR, one of Dr. Dumbrell's colleagues at Moore College commented that a great change had taken place. "In my time the College has lost its three greatest thinkers. Donald

Robinson, an outstanding New Testament man, resigned to take up the Bishopric of Parramatta. Broughton Knox, who has perhaps one of the finest Christian minds in the world, resigns the Principalship after twenty-five years. And now, Bill Dumbrell, a man who has continuously stimulated our academic thinking is off to Canada. In a sense, the 'Age of the Giants' has gone."

### Peter Jensen to be Principal

In what ended up being a blaze of media coverage, over his off the cuff remark about Australia being "a pagan country", the Rev. Dr. Peter Jensen has been appointed as the next Principal of Moore Theological College. The Trustees of the College announced his appointment on July 9 after consultation with the Moore College Committee.

The Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev. Donald Robinson stated, "Dr. Jensen takes up his new position at a time when we are reviewing the whole manner of preparing men for the Ministry, and when the demands of that ministry, in our growing city, are great."

"Dr. Jensen is a member of the General

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### Newest Title

The last title to be released in the I BELIEVE SERIES is "I Believe in Satan's Downfall". Written by the series editor, Michael Green, it attempts to deal with the modern trend in theology to disregard the idea of a personal Satan. At the same time, however, there is an increase in the interest of our age in the occult.

Michael Green addresses himself to the Biblical material about Satan and evil and, in particular, to the guaranteed downfall of Satan. Since Christians are continually engaged in a spiritual warfare this book is of great importance and we thoroughly recommend it.

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Dr. Leon Morris and Miss Barbara Darling, Librarian and Lecturer at Ridley examine the detailed floor plans of the Library. For both people the new Library is the culmination of many years of hard work and dedication.

# Ridley Opens Library, Bookshop, Lecture Rooms, Common Room

July 1st was one of the most significant moments in the life of Ridley College. The Principal, the Reverend Maurice Betteridge, officially opened the new Leon Morris Library and the Alfred Stanway Lecture rooms. Together with a new Bookshop and Junior Common Room, these represent the completion of a building programme extending over 20 years.

For College staff the Opening means the culmination of years of hopes, planning and effort. For students it marks the end of a year's disruption and coping with makeshift teaching, library and communal facilities. For non-residential theological students — the vast majority at Ridley — there is now space to study on campus.

A feature of the Opening was music. University students provided singing and a jazz combo, while the theological choral group gave two contemporary and one traditional item. An organ recital by students took place in the Chapel.

The highlight of the formal proceedings was when the Principal invited Dr. Leon Morris and Bishop Alfred Stanway to

open the doors to the library and class rooms named in their honour. The new buildings were then open for inspection. Also open was an exhibition of old photographs of past students and memorable events in the life of the College. Many old Ridleyans enjoyed finding photographs of themselves and their contemporaries in former days.

The opening was attended by more than 500 enthusiastic friends and supporters of Ridley. University of Melbourne representatives included the Chancellor, Professor Emeritus Sir Roy Douglas Wright and Lady Wright, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor D. E. Caro and Mrs. Caro, and the Deputy Chancellors Dr. J. D. McCaughey, and Dr. R. G. Downes and Mrs. Downes. The Diocese of Melbourne was represented by Bishop David Shand, who gave the prayer of Thanksgiving for the new buildings, and pronounced the Blessing. Former Archbishop and Ridley student, Bishop Robert Dann was present with Mrs. Dann. As well, there were a host of clergy, most of them being old Ridleyans.

Short speeches told of different aspects of the building programme. Mr. Alan Kerr,

Chairman of the Appeal Executive, outlined the current status of the Appeal. He stressed that the project had been completed with the forecast costs and original planning guidelines. In this day and age of industrial unrest and rising costs this was very gratifying. The Reverend George Pearson, Appeal Director, expressed the College's thanks for all that had been accomplished. But more remains, especially in refitting Cumnock. It is an old building needing much work before it can be used for staff offices as planned.

Mr. James Earle of Earle Greenway Taylor Pty. Ltd. was the architect responsible for the project. He thanked the foreman and staff of Stosius Constructions (the builders) and Hardcastle and Richards (project engineers). He said:

"The interest of the staff in the finer details of the plans means that the building is finely tuned to the needs of the College, both now and in the foreseeable future. The finished



Bishop and Mrs. Stanway together in Stanway, the larger of the two new Lecture Rooms.

supported the College, especially the Appeal Committee (headed by Sir James Darling), the architect builders and College staff.

Particular mention was made of the two people being honoured in the naming of the new building. Leon Morris and Alfred Stanway have been intimately involved in the growth and vision of Ridley. Equally important, both have contributed immeasurably to the mission of the wider church, in Australia and overseas. Mr. Betteridge concluded:

"Now is certainly no time for complacency. Our whole Australian society is in a state of change. I believe that we in this College must adapt to new situations. Therefore there remain before us many challenges and many opportunities in the context of Australia for the future."

If the enthusiasm which students have shown in the recent use of the building is any indication, we can be sure the new Library, Junior Common Room and Lecture Rooms will be of immeasurable benefit to theological and university students alike.



The Principal, the Rev. Maurice Betteridge is all smiles after inviting Dr. Leon Morris to officially declare the new Library open.

## Increase Gospel, continued

Robert Forsyth, rector of St. Barnabas' Church, Broadway, were all at packed houses of up to about 500 people. The largest suitable lecture theatres on the campus are in the Carlaw complex. Each lecture saw a Carlaw lecture theatre full, and there was usually a large overflow crowd in a nearby theatre to which the addresses were relayed. This sustained

level of interest in the Christian gospel was one of the most striking features of the mission. Certainly a large number of those present were Christian believers. But the presence of unbelievers was apparent, and as the meetings became known Christians were, more and more, inviting their friends. This was another factor in the decision to extend the mission.

## TAKING THE WORRY OUT OF RETIREMENT

A retirement village has set up a plan that allows potential residents the chance of cash in hand or long term capital gain.

The offer applies to the 10 remaining one bedroom units in the St. Erme's Court Complex at 5 Isis Street, Warrington.

The village has reduced its lease price by \$10,000 for residents prepared to surrender their share of the units resale value.

Mr. Irwin, the Manager of the U.P.A. said the arrangement gave residents the option of paying the normal price and reaping the benefit of 50 per cent of the net capital gain on transfer of the Lease or foregoing the capital gain in preference to having cash in hand.

"It is simply a case of enjoying your money now when you need it most," said Mr. Irwin. We believe the scheme to be an attractive venture which would assist many people who would like to live in the Warrington Village for a reasonable outlay.

This new Lease or purchase option allows prices to be reduced by \$10,000 to \$67,000 or \$72,000 for a single bedroom garden unit.

**PRIVACY** St. Erme's Court is a small Retirement Complex situated in Warrington close to public amenities offering a high standard of housing and the availability of ongoing care when required. The design of each unit maintains privacy and independence — set in well landscaped gardens with many common garden areas which are the responsibility of the caretaker. This new scheme which should assist some who have no need for long-term capital gain but who would like to spend their retirement in pleasant surroundings. The Lease Agreement is a registered document which guarantees the financial security of every resident having been properly drawn up by Solicitors.

We invite all who are looking for a secure future, free from worries about future care when unable to manage on their own to make an inspection of the St. Erme's Court and have a confidential interview with Mr. John Peberdy at Isis Street, Warrington. Isis Street is now accessible via Cam Street. Please Phone to make arrangements (487 1337) to suit your own personal plans. Enquiries to P.O. Box 273, Warrington 2076.

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## "Atheists are stupid"

The lectures themselves tended to present the gospel in a challenging manner. Frequently the message about the Lordship of Jesus Christ was set in a context which challenged the reasonableness of alternative views. The first lunch time lecture, by Philip Jensen, was entitled "The Stupidity of Atheism, but Agnosticism is Cowardice". Philip began by saying that he had wanted to call it "Atheists are Stupid and Agnostics are Cowards", but had been told that that would be impolite! The address then argued that atheism is against reason ("you cannot know that God does not exist unless you know everything") and that agnosticism is very often a refusal to investigate the evidence: the evidence surrounding Jesus of Nazareth. In this context the news about Jesus was explained. People were given a twofold challenge. Those who were unsure were challenged to investigate further, and offered free copies of the New Testament, urged to read *A Fresh Start* by John Chapman, and invited to do a series of 'Investigative Bible Studies' with a

Christian at a time and place of their choosing. Those who knew these things were true were invited then and there to pray a prayer in which they would turn back to God, and acknowledge Jesus Christ to be Lord.

One of the very significant evening meetings was held at International House, a residential college for overseas students. About 90 overseas students (many of whom were not residents of International House) came to this meeting. It was one of the lessons of the mission that many more overseas students were prepared to come to this meeting than came to the other evening meetings which were held in Wesley College. Robert Forsyth spoke on the question *Why Christianity when there are so many other faiths?* A question time followed, and the meeting was later described as "very profitable".

The mission at Sydney University has been a powerful reminder that evangelism (not just high profile evangelism like this, of course) is "the power of God for salvation".

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## 'Land rights and greed', Principal of Nungalinga

In a recent letter, the Principal of NUNGALINGA College, Darwin, Rev. Tony Nichols, told friends of the College about aboriginal attitudes to land rights. Nungalinga College trains aboriginal students. Mr. Nichols wrote:

"The Land Rights debate has hotted up again. The head of one of Australia's biggest mining corporations has led the assault by claiming that Land Rights go back to paganism while Christianity is on the side of the miners.

The Aboriginal attitude to the land did originate in a pre-Christian world view. They believed the land was apportioned to their clans in the Dreamtime. The land was the place where father's family lived and hunted. The land had messages in its rocks, trees, and waterholes. The land was like a cathedral where sacred ceremonies were held. It was also the place where loved ones were buried. There were no boundary fences or title deeds but each clan owned a recognisable stretch of country and, by mutual agreement, had access to the country of other groups. Their nomadic movements did not reflect some arbitrary and irresponsible urge for walkabout as Europeans often assumed, but were rather intelligent journeys that enabled them to be in the right place in the right season to tap vital food resources.

Then came the white conquest which brought complete demoralization to these original inhabitants. Aborigines who were initially prepared to share their land found themselves quickly dispossessed. The white man did not

recognize their bond with the land. Rather the Aborigines had forfeited any rights by virtue of their failure to cultivate and "improve" it. So for nearly 200 years their land has been steadily stripped from them by governments, settlers and mining companies without negotiation or compensation.

Christian missions from the beginning sought to provide protection from massacres, starvation and rape. Without their efforts aboriginal populations would not have survived. But although white Christians frequently stood against the greed and self interest of their contemporaries they seldom questioned the prevailing assumption that Aborigines must abandon their ways completely and embrace British "civilization".

Today there are proportionally more Aboriginal Christians than white Christians in Australia. Many Aboriginal Christians are reappraising their culture in the light of the Bible. As to their precious land — it is seen as a trust from the Creator God. They recognize that the gift of a tract of land to a particular people brings special responsibilities. But they remain unconvinced that it is more Christian to surrender it to those who treat it as mere real estate to be exploited for material gain.

The past cannot be undone. Nor are there any easy, universal solutions to the problems we have inherited. However, for white Christians, Jesus' description of the final judgment of the peoples in Matthew 25:31-46 is salutary."

## CCCOWE's 40th Committee founded in Perth

The newest District Committee of the Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism has been founded in Perth, bringing the total number of CCCOWE's DCs to 40.

The formation of the Australia West District Committee was largely due to the recent visit of Rev. Thomas Wang, General Secretary of CCCOWE, to the Perth Chinese Christian Church, Dr. Hip Seng Chan, one of the leaders of the church and vice-chairman of the Committee, told CATW while he and his wife were vacationing in Hong Kong recently.

In a series of messages to the Church over the Easter weekend, Rev. Wang shared the burden and mission of evangelizing the Chinese, particularly those in Western Australia.

Perth alone has a population of about 850,000 people and around 12,000 people of Chinese descent.

"God's timing is perfect in sending Rev. Wang to share the vision and mission of CCCOWE with us. It's really a time of great blessing and renewal, for we haven't grasped the vision of outreach ministry before," Dr. Chan said.

The weekend meetings were very well

attended and a special sunrise service was arranged on Easter Sunday when 20 members gathered from all over Perth on a hilltop at King's Park overlooking the lovely city at 6:30 am to watch the sun rise.

At this meeting with the leaders of the Perth Chinese Christian Church the vision and burden of evangelizing the Chinese particularly in West Australia was shared and the challenge taken up.

Further, Dr. Chan said that the Perth Chinese Christian Church was planted only about four years ago and the present attendance of Sunday services average about 120.

"The service is conducted in Cantonese. In the meantime, however, we're thinking of starting a bi-lingual service (Cantonese/English) to meet the needs of the local-born Chinese and the younger generation," Dr. Chan added.

When asked whether there is race discrimination in Australia, Dr. Chan said, "Most of the Australians are friendly and willing to help. We enjoy the friendship with them and we don't see any serious problems at all."

CATW

## Lift Drinking Age to 21

"There is an urgent need in Australia, in the light of continuing high death rates upon the roads, to lift the minimum age to 21 years for the legal sale of alcohol," said Rev. Gordon Moyes, Superintendent of Wesley Central Mission, Sydney.

"The United States Congress and Senate have just overwhelmingly legislated to enforce 21 years of age as the minimum age to which young people can purchase alcohol, drink on licensed premises and for which automatic cancellation of driving licences for driving is applied.

"The United States' legislation provides for states not enacting the minimum requirements to have automatic reduction of federal government funding for highways applied," Mr. Moyes said. President Reagan declared this week, "The slaughter by drunken drivers hurts us as a people. It tears at the fabric of society by bringing grief to families, guilt

to friends, and loss to the community."

Mr. Moyes said that in the United States there had been an amazing swing in attitude from the 1970s when most states had a minimum age for drinking of 18 but research has shown that his has led to great increases in deaths. Over 5,000 teenage lives are lost through drink driving in the US per annum.

"In Australia it is estimated that 25% of all alcohol-related accidents involved drivers under the age of 21 years of age," Mr. Moyes said. "The lifting of the minimum age for drinking to 21 would within one year save more than 1,000 lives and hundreds of millions of dollars in lost production and hospital and court-related costs."

Mr. Moyes stated that Australia's Prime Minister knew personally the ravages of alcohol and had shown tough personal commitment in adopting an alcohol free lifestyle.

## Quick Cuts Graveyard Chess

I remember years ago when my son was about 4 years old, travelling somewhere in the car and passing a cemetery. It was one of those places where there is a full array of white monuments of all sizes and shapes. The little lad, all innocent at that stage of any knowledge of the existence of cemeteries, cried out involuntarily, 'Look Dad, a big chess board'.

Now apart from the fact that there weren't any black pieces, that wasn't a bad observation. You can guess at once that for me there was a deeper meaning in it than my four year old could see. Ever since I first learnt chess, at primary school, I have been a loser. Whoever taught me — it must have been one of the other kids — obviously left out all the tips about strategy and tactics that even the ordinary chess player seems to know. All I discovered was how the pieces moved. Consequently I am a complete pushover for any mildly competent seven year old. To my mind therefore, ever since I was a kid, chess has meant weakness, catastrophe, humiliation, despair, impotence, defeat. To say that a cemetery is a chess board struck just the right note. Despite the grandeur of the

monuments it is a testimony in our very midst to the defeat of the human race. We flourish for a season; we wither and die.

But wait! Not everyone thinks of chess in those terms. For a start there are all those kids who have thrashed me over the years. Then there are all those competent players who really understand what K to Q R 3 really means (if it means anything). There are those for whom 'end game' doesn't mean the place of defeat but the place of victory. Can a cemetery remind us of winners rather than losers? Too right it can! Christ turned defeat into victory; all his supports had left — he alone remained. But the grave did not hold him — he rose triumphant. Death was demolished. For Christians, death is not the last word. It is a horror that is turned to glory. Because Jesus has risen — so will we!

Game, Set, Match! No, wait a minute... check-mate!

Peter Jensen

(We suggest that you might like to use this article in your Parish Paper)

## Bible Soc. Leader in N. Qld.

The Australian General Secretary of the Bible Society, the Reverend James R. Payne, undertook a program in North Queensland recently.

In Townsville, Mr. Payne preached in Anglican, Presbyterian and Uniting Churches. He also addressed the students of the Rhema Bible College. Mr. Payne was the speaker at a Clergy luncheon and

he later had discussions with military Chaplains.

He was invited to meet the Commanding Officer of HMAS Cairns, Commander John Delaney, and other officers.

Mr. Payne said that he was encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment of so many Bible Society supporters in North Queensland.



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## Lesley Hicks

Like Alan Gill (Sydney Morning Herald Weekend Magazine, July 1) I have found Doug and Helen Parker's book *The Secret Sect* fascinating in its history and analysis of this deliberately obscure, nameless and yet still apparently flourishing sect.

The Rev. Doug Parker who is the Anglican rector of St. Mary's Pendle Hill in Sydney's western suburbs, was associated with the sect in his youth. He started asking awkward questions as to its origin and history, a practice much discouraged by its leaders. The book, published privately, is the result of some thirty years of research and correspondence by Doug and his wife Helen, and traces the founding of the sect by Scot William Irvine at the turn of the century and its growth, initially mainly in Northern Ireland, and eventually all over the English-speaking world and in many other countries as well.

### Cooneyites

All this despite a studied lack of visible organization and documentation — these were among the things Irvine and its other best-known leader Edward Cooney repudiated as worldly. The latter's name became associated with the group and it was as the Cooneyites that they were most readily known at least in the early years of the century. But as in most common with authoritarian sects, leadership squabbles led to splits and numerous excommunications, and both Irvine and Cooney were rejected by later leaders, who then, with remarkable success, insisted that they had existed "from the beginning" and were the only true Christians, in direct descent from the disciples of Jesus in the first century.

Mr. Parker tells me he heard from one woman who, after reading Alan Gill's article *The Most Secret Society in the World*, phoned him to insist that they were from the beginning — she simply could not believe the evidence to the contrary. He says however that it is unlikely that many of its members would read that article, much less his book, as newspapers and the media in general, together with all books other than the Bible, are frowned upon. But others will be helped to recognise the sect by its teaching and practices.



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## Dissecting a sect

### Structure of sect

Three main strands distinguish the movement's structure. These are house churches; annual conventions, held largely under canvas or in barns (in the Sydney area, at Silverdale near Warragamba); and itinerant "workers" or preachers, both men and women, usually travelling in same-sex pairs on the model of stripped-down austerity suggested in the account given in Matthew 10 of the mission of Jesus' disciples to Israel's "lost sheep". This became the sect's chief distinguishing feature and heretical trap — justification by austerity, it seems — "following Jesus" in living hand to mouth, house to house, penniless and dependent on others for hospitality.

### Exclusiveness and financial ambivalence

This feature reminded me of the wandering couple Michael and Kate, whom I've mentioned before in this column. They were, however, as far as I could gather, alone in their mission of austerity and exclusiveness, rejecting and judging all the churches and clergy as utterly worldly in their owning of property and living on a stipend. That was one of the chief strands of Irvine's teaching — a denunciation of all the recognized churches.

Exclusiveness, claiming that they alone have the truth and that no other so-called Christians are truly saved, is another sect trademark. Michael Green in *I Believe in Satan's Downfall* (Hodder) notes it as a characteristic of counterfeit religion, and in a study of the heresy of St. Paul warns against in the letter to the Colossians (Ch 2). Green shows how subtly Satan deceives "even the elect" with counterfeits.

The fierce denouncing of materialism, demanding that all money and possessions be yielded up to the leaders as people became workers, or that generous donations for the work be given by ordinary members, is another characteristic of this sect and many others. In this case the result was often desperate poverty for some of the dedicated young preachers, and an exploitative lifestyle for the overseers. I wonder how this anti-materialism works out in practice for the Rappville Christians, who profess to reject money altogether — they glue it to city pavements, or publicly burn it!

### Sheep-stealing

Another sect characteristic is an evasiveness about identity, and a tendency to hover on the edges of mainstream missions and conventions in order to "steal sheep".

### Misdirected commitment

It is probably true to say that all sects enshrine distorted glimpses of important truths — often truths neglected either in teaching or in practice by the main churches. Most who join sects are young, deeply earnest, confused and ill-taught. It is tragic that they should be trapped into a legalistic set-up which requires them to work their passage to heaven, as most pseudo-Christian sects do. They step onto a treadmill of self-justification, missing the liberating heart of the gospel, justification through the finished work of Christ.

The sects show us the tremendous potential for deep, tough, sacrificial yet misdirected commitment on the part of adherents. The challenge to us in the churches is to win and channel the love and devotion of young people in an equal passion for the truth, not error.

## Melbourne, the three R's of Christian Community Development

Black U.S. civil rights activist, the Reverend Dr. John Perkins, told Australian Religious Press Association members and friends recently that he believed justice "just might be God's only concern."

Dr. Perkins was speaking at the ARPA luncheon in Melbourne during his visit to Australia at the invitation of World Vision Australia and World Vision South Pacific.

"It's difficult for us in a free enterprise, Capitalist society to think in the terms that justice might be God's concern because we think to individualistically. We can't think in terms of God's overall ownership of us," Dr. Perkins said.

"We think that justice is always an economic issue — understanding who owns what. But the Biblical understanding of justice is that God owns us and that represents our worth."

"I think that God is a god of justice and he wants us to be involved in working for it. I think that the way we can do that better is through leadership development," he said.

"I still think that God is a god who ordained leadership."

Dr. Perkins is meeting with Aboriginal leaders during his Australian visit to discuss their situation and problems and to lend his experience of overcoming prejudice, poverty and injustice in the American Black community.

He expounded his theory of the "Three R's of Christian Community Development", which he believes will enable minority groups such as American Blacks and the Australian Aborigines to improve themselves.

"The first 'R' is relocation. The fact is that the communities in need of bettering their lives don't have the people with skills to do it.

"What we've got to do is get the young folks to come back to their villages after they're been away to get the skills.

He said the second 'R' was reconciliation — that people had to understand this to be the purpose of the Gospel.

"The purpose of the Gospel is to reconcile people to God and to each other and to do that across racial, cultural, social and economic barriers," he said.

"The third 'R' is redistribution. People are basically poor because they don't own anything. The real cause of poverty is not social first — it becomes social.

"We've got to come up with a better system of redistributing the fruits of the earth to the have-nots. I think we've got a good system of production but not such a good system of distribution.

"Minority groups do not suffer from a lack of income but they suffer from a lack of assets."

## Flood at Scripture Union's Adelaide Bookshop

In the early hours of Thursday, June 14, Scripture Union's Adelaide bookshop was flooded as the result of a burst water main. The water level reached a depth of one metre.

This annoying event became the focus of all kinds of support and practical help from the Adelaide Christian community.

A Scripture Union staff spokesman told the story graphically . . .

"There's nothing like hearing the news on the early morning radio that your premises had been flooded out: it helps beat those sluggish winter morning starts! And then to come to work with rubber boots to discover that 'hip boots up to your eyebrows' were needed! That morning was weirdly comical as we surveyed the damage, met with radio and TV reporters and joked with surprised customers about going into liquidation.

There will be many cameo events which will be remembered for some time . . . like seeing several dozen copies of Colin Urquart's new book 'Holy Fire' floating around the shop."

"The damage could have been far greater. In two days we planned to carpet the store throughout. Only two weeks earlier all the shops vital records had been relocated up to the second floor of the building."

"Our phones ran hot Friday when our plight was viewed by concerned Christians who watched Thursday night's TV news. We have been so encouraged by people's willingness to help."

On Friday, June 29, the bookshop reopened for business in a temporary premises on the ground floor of the same building. On Monday, July 9, they went back into full operation.

### Losses and gains for Moore, continued

Synod Doctrine Commission, where he has already earned the respect of his fellow members for his keen mind and his positive and conciliatory approach in theological discussion.

"At 41, Dr. Jensen is about the same age as his two immediate predecessors at the time of their appointment. I warmly commend him to the diocese and to the Australian Church."

Converted at the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade, Dr. Jensen attended Moore College himself from 1966-70. He was responsible for a range of subjects at Moore College from 1973-76 and since 1983 has been the Head of the Department of Theology and Philosophy.

At the Press Conference held to announce his appointment, Dr. Jensen was asked about his politics, his opinion on the recent ordination of Bishop David Jenkins in England and the role of women in training for the ministry.

"The Gospel is all the Gospel," said Dr. Jensen. "The importance of the New Testament is obvious. I don't think it is possible to believe the stories and the Gospels are not true, and still preach the apostolic gospel. As for Bishop Jenkins, we have no direct report from the man

himself, only media statements. I prefer to hold back my opinions until the facts are known."

Dr. Jensen will head up the College which has an enrollment of 150 students at present. Dr. Broughton Knox, the present Principal, will remain in that position until February 18, 1985. Then on March 1, the new Principal will step in.

Dr. Jensen publicly stated that he is looking forward to Dr. Knox returning after his twelve months leave of absence to apply himself to the ministry of writing and teaching within the College.

Dr. Jensen and his wife Christine have five children, Michael (13), Elizabeth (11), Stephen (5) and twins Anna and David (3).

Dr. Jensen has a distinguished academic background and is looking forward to his new appointment, which he believes is "of the Lord".

Ramon Williams & ACR

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## "Drugs the main cause of Child Prostitution"

Drugs and family breakdown were given yesterday by the Anglican Home Mission Society's general secretary, the Rev. Allan Whitham, as major causes of child prostitution in the King's Cross area of Sydney.

"Other causes are the so-called 'new morality' with its emphasis on 'personal rights' and avoidance of responsibility, plus too easy access to drugs," he said.

Mr. Whitham was commenting on reports that Civil Liberties Council president John Marsden had blamed the increase of child vice at King's Cross on the failure of church groups to offer accommodation to children who leave home.

"The churches are doing more now than at any time in their history," Mr. Whitham said. "But our caring agencies estimate there are at least 20 times as many children under the age of 16 leaving home today as there were 30 years ago.

"That's the real difference between today and the 1950s which Mr. Marsden recalls so fondly.

"We learned many years ago that the most effective course for children who leave home is to bring about a reconciliation between them and their parents — not stick them in large institutions which can give them little more love and personal attention than they had in the situation they're running away from.

"The institutions of the 1950s have given way to programs of emergency refuge and group home accommodation, where small groups of young people receive Christian caring and understanding.

"If, after counselling of both children and their families, we are unable to bring about an immediate return to the family, the young people are given fostering by specially-trained foster-parents.

"The Church of England Homes cares for more than 200 children a year in this way at an annual cost of more than \$1 million, in addition to the counselling and temporary group home services provided by this society's Care Force division, which has a budget this year of \$1.7

million, largely directed to family support work."

Mr. Whitham said this was in line with the policies and programs being developed by Youth and Community Services Minister Frank Walker and his department.

Mr. Whitham said those who are campaigning for government relaxation of the laws prohibiting the sale and use of marihuana were guaranteeing an escalation of the child prostitution problem in their recommendations were acted on.

"The real solution is to create family environments which are secure and free from stress which can lead to drug abuse.

"Our problem is that the poorer sections of the community often do not know how to go about obtaining guidance and help or even where to come for it. The well-to-do are often too ashamed and afraid that the neighbours might find out.

"The result is that parents wait too long to seek advice and wake up one day to find their adolescent children are firmly hooked into the drug scene.

"By the time they are aware of the gravity of the situation, it's too late. The kids have left home and the work of reconciliation is ten times as hard as it need have been."

Mr. Whitham said the root cause of the problem was the shift in social values to consensus morality and the basic insecurity in adult relationships this has created.

"The old cliché that the family which prays together stays together is as true today as it always was. The only full and permanent answer to the drug problem and child vice is in the Bible.

"There we are told of God's infinite love and mercy and His laws which govern human happiness and ensure the best opportunity for children to grow and flourish."

"That — not making marihuana freely available — is the way to keep vice out of King's Cross."

## Mission director tours "Wild West" to study programmes

Merle Hurcomb, the Director of Sydney City Mission Australia, is on an extensive study-tour of the United States to visit projects in America aimed at helping the "kids that nobody wants" — young people caught up in the criminal/drug scene.

She'll be visiting eight states in America and living on campus with hard core criminal young people.

Her objective in making the tour is to bring back "ideas, information and inspiration", which will enable the Mission to establish a "Wilderness Project" for similar kinds of young people south of Sydney, on 80 acres of land at Tallong.

She will confer with Dr. Robert Schuller of the Crystal Cathedral, California, who is setting up Family Renewal Centres throughout the United States.

In San Diego, Mrs. Hurcomb will speak with Judges and study that State's legal system and meet with the State Youth Authority.

In Tucson, Arizona, she will study the "Wagon Train Project", where young people from the Courts are taken on a wagon train trip across America as an alternative to prison.

She will head further out West to Silver City and Santa Fe to live with young people in the desert.

At Lake Erie, Pennsylvania she will live out in the wilderness in the lakes district with the young people.

At Elkins, West Virginia, she will celebrate the 4th of July with 150 hardened criminals who will be graduating from the project.

## ACC elects South Australian President

The Rev. Harold D'Arcy Wood, former Moderator of the South Australian Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia has been elected President of the Australian Council of Churches to succeed Bishop Gabriel Gibran.

D'Arcy Wood is lecturer in theology at Parkin-Wesley College in Adelaide and is a former staff member of the ACC.

On the role of the ACC, Rev. Wood says that "Amid the tragic divisions in our society, the ecumenical movement stands as a sign of hope, of justice and reconciliation".

On the uranium issue, the General Meeting has called for a deferment on the mining and export of uranium and for substantial investment in alternative energy research.

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## Alan Craddock

## Ambivalence

There are times when we find ourselves locked into competing sets of emotional reactions. We are being impelled to act in one way, and yet at the same time we're being impelled to act in another, contradictory fashion. This can be a frustrating, helpless, confusing and unproductive situation. We find ourselves sometimes reduced to ridiculous alternations in our thoughts, feelings and actions.

After a while we no longer accurately know the real nature of the arguments for and against our alternatives. We also lose touch with exactly what the alternatives are and what might be their consequences. The main feeling is confusion, uncertainty and of being out of control of our situation.

Let me share two examples of what I mean, one light and humorous, the other weighty and damaging. The first example involves a dilemma I found myself in some weeks ago. For some time I have been thinking of buying a new stereo to replace a rather cheap unit I bought as a stop-gap because I couldn't really justify the expense of a better unit at an earlier time.

The TV commercials did their job and got me thinking about what I could purchase and motivated me to think of the advantages of an end-of-financial-year bargain. Positive feelings were aroused but they were initially overwhelmed by negative feelings stemming from an awareness of higher-priority financial obligations.

However, I continued to hanker after the stereo. I found myself in the vicinity of the shop, when in just to take a look and saw exactly what I wanted. But my reluctance to spend money which was really needed elsewhere helped me to walk out of the shop and leave the stereo behind. My victory lasted ten minutes and I was back — not buying but still looking! I went out of the shop again (can't you hear victory trumpets at this stage?) and returned to my car waiting for my wife to return from her shopping.

When she arrived I told her of my temptation and victory. She was very understanding of my disappointment and told me that it was entirely up to me (a dangerous reaction if ever there was one!) We drove off and headed for home. A few kilometres away I stopped the car and said that I wanted it and I was going to have that stereo! I turned round and went back to the shopping centre.

By the time we got there I was feeling all the doubt and guilt which I had experienced earlier. You guessed it — I didn't even stop, I turned round again and headed, this time successfully, for home. My wife and I saw the funny side of this ambivalence.

But is it always so funny? My ambivalence did not involve a highly significant decision, nor did it involve powerful and deep feelings. It could quickly be reframed into a rather hilarious battle between feelings and beliefs concerning different sets of financial goals, none of them really involving significant sums of money or monumental purchases.

The second example, by contrast, is one which involves powerful feelings and significant issues. Helen is a Christian woman who has been married to Tom for seven years. When they were first married Tom was a Christian but three years into their marriage Tom renounced his faith and began to live a very different lifestyle.

Over the last four years the marriage has deteriorated rapidly. Tom uses a great deal of drunken physical violence in

order to "control" his wife and young children. There is little to like about Tom now and a great deal to fear.

Helen is uncertain of how to deal with this situation. Her sense of commitment to her marriage and her understanding of her obligation as a Christian impels her to stay with Tom and to take what he does with a forgiving attitude. However, she is also being impelled to emotionally and physically withdraw from him. Her fears and pain block her attempt to stay and to be forgiving. Her anger and sense of injustice become great in the face of the abuse of their small children.

Helen feels contradictory feelings. She believes incompatible things about her situation and its future. She receives competing forms of advice from friends and from books she reads about Christian marriage. Helen is confused and ambivalent. She feels out of control as is everything else which surrounds her. It's all too confusing and she can't see a way out.

How can this kind of ambivalence be managed? It is clear that we need to be able to step back from the chaos of the conflicting and swirling beliefs and feelings in order to more peacefully consider the issues and their consequences more rationally. We also need to identify our feelings more accurately and to check out whether these feelings are appropriate or not. Many emotions are immediate and when we check them out, and link them to what we are sure about in our circumstances and our goals, we find that those feelings change or even disappear.

The key is being able to step back, to become calmer and thereby to gain greater insight into the rational and emotional issues which are involved in our struggle. This isn't easy, but Christians have an important resource to bring to bear on ambivalence, and that resource is prayer.

When faced by ambivalence we need to pray that God will grant us peace in our emotional storm, that we might be guided and given insight as we think through the issues involved on both sides of our dilemma and that we might see the way in which He wants us to act so that we might honour Him in our living. In other words we pray for God's help to be able to think and feel in the way that He desires for us.

Our double-mindedness leads to instability (James 1:8) and the Biblical injunction is to seek wisdom from God "... who gives generously to all without finding fault". (James 1:5) The person I am calling Helen found comfort in this process. Like King David, in Psalm 69, she was feeling that the waters had come up to her neck while she sank into mire depths and could find no foothold (v.1-2) but she found, through prayer, a stability in God who is like a "rock that is higher than I" (Psalm 61:2).

Helen found the strength to stay. She found new ways of reacting to Tom These ways proved more helpful. She became more open and expressed herself with greater strength and conviction. She made it clear that changes were needed and she wasn't going to put up with anymore "garbage". She also made it clear that she wanted to love and respect Tom but that he had to find some self-respect and start thinking of her and the children's needs as well as his own.

Helen's solution will not necessarily be someone else's solution to a similar dilemma. Whatever our reactions, we can make no better start than to tell God what is happening and to seek His guidance as we think and feel our way through a process of resolving our ambivalence.



ACR We are now going to move on to the next issue. Now, John and Susan, who wants to start first on headship?

Glover John would you like to?

Woodhouse Not particularly, I am always happy to bat second, but no doubt we will interchange several times. Do you want to make an opening gambit? I think that you want to deny that there is such a thing apart from "in Christ" himself?

Glover Actually with due respect to Charles and yourselves, I don't find that 1 Corinthians 11 is Trinitarian at all.

Sherlock Oh no, not directly.

#### Bag of tricks

Glover Right, it is not at all. And I think, that when you import the whole bag of tricks with the Trinity, and then incorporate that into human relationships, you are stretching analogies to the point of not making even analogies in the end.

In other words, you are taking analogical statements literally, and you are trying to impose them on relationships between men and women that can't bear the brunt of that.

And I think that if you do your church history the doctrine of the Trinity is a historical accumulation over many centuries from arguing backwards and forwards on texts. A lot of it is very much a compromise on language. Thus, imposing the doctrine of Trinity on human relationships in this way, our whole conception of language about God is really up for grabs; and our whole conception of our background and experience and the way we communicate in language is also up for grabs. I really think that the Trinity is most helpful for this argument.

Further, I think 1 Cor. 11 has its background in creation. Christ is there not as the Son of the Father in the sense of Trinity, but in the sense of source of creation because what you have got there is an order of creation in which Christ is there as the agent of that creation. Paul uses a number of arguments here, and the trouble with it for us is that he takes seemingly very heavy theological material to make in the end what seems to be far lesser points. That was your point earlier Robert, "using a mallet to crack a mosquito". He does the same with slaves. He says to slaves, "Obey your masters like unto Christ!" Now, you can't get more heavy or theological than that either, and yet we want to say well, that's just not on any more. Unless...

Forsyth Let me say if I was a slave today I would still say the same thing.

Glover That you would obey your master? You see, it is a cultural feeling, you have just admitted it. Otherwise you don't see that there is something inconsistent in slavery with the doctrine of God. When you talk about a doctrine of God and launch into the Trinity you are launching into metaphysics and into areas which are really not as related as we think to human experience and to our understanding.

When I read Dr. Knox's article (in preparation for this debate) he begins with the doctrine of God. But he begins with very selective aspects of the doctrine of God. Although it is no longer the thing to do, systematic theology anymore, in the old theological books, in the section on the doctrine of God you have other aspects which are far more related to human relationships than the Trinity. As Dr. Knox brought up, you have the question of "will", and "power", and "initiative"; but you also have "love", and "justice", and "mercy". That is, those kinds of things, coming through the Old

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## MOW debates women's ordination Part 4

At our invitation, knowing that the ACR is a positional paper, the Movement for the Ordination of Women kindly agreed to discuss the theological issues raised by their current moves to have women ordained for christian ministry on the same basis as men. By agreement, so as to enable critical questions to be raised and answered by all concerned we set up the discussion in the form of a debate. We are presenting the debate in four parts.

The ACR wishes to unreservedly thank the participants for the generous way in which they gave not only of their time, but also of themselves.

Testament in particular, that have tremendous input into what we really consider the nature of God to be. When we relate to God, we really don't relate to him in the Trinity. In our experience we relate to him in "relation terms" that have to do with those latter kind of categories.

So, what I am really saying is that when we look at the New Testament in terms of the relationship of men and women, and we start importing trinitarian metaphysics into it, we may actually be taking Paul's words and reading far more into the structure of what was really an argument to achievement a particular point.

Woodhouse I want to accept that we need to be careful not to read into biblical statements a whole, the mass of...

Glover Especially the whole Chalcedonian Doctrine.

Woodhouse Absolutely right. But that the New Testament statements are speaking about the relationship between Christ and the Father is all that we have really been talking about. Charles has given us a lot of helpful information about what has gone on in the early church, and further reflection on these things is no doubt relevant for us to consider, but the biblical texts themselves are the heart of the issue. The relationship between Christ and the Father which they speak of is one which I don't want to see dismissed as irrelevant metaphysics.

Glover But you see, if you now come back to me with particular texts regarding women, I can't see that that is what the stress falls on.

Woodhouse I want to maintain that the relationship between the Son and the Father has consequences for the way in which human beings relate to one another. This is what personal relationships are meant to be like; they are meant to be like the way in which the Son and the Father serve one another. But there are a number of places in the New Testament, it would seem to me, where the relationship in the Godhead has to do with relationship between men and women.

I come back to 1 Corinthians 11. I am not quite clear on the problem you had with the treatment of 1 Cor ninthians 11.

Glover Do you want me to clarify it?

Woodhouse Yes, that would be helpful.

Glover My problem is that you have three different strands of argument. Paul doesn't use just one argument, he uses about three in that particular passage. In the end, the point he is trying to make is that women retain some kind of covering or veil, or whatever, in the congregation. If you look at that passage, or what women are doing, and what men are doing, the function of what they are doing is precisely the same. But women are to have some kind of covering on themselves.

What I see in the passage, in the creation aspect of it, is that Christ is chiefly there in the capacity of the agent of creation, not so much in the capacity of his trinitarian relationship to God the Father. That's probably where we differ.

#### Consequences of the relationship between Christ and God?

Woodhouse Are you saying that the relationship between Christ and God is not at the heart of what Paul is saying when he says, "I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God." The heart of this argument is not the relationship between Christ and God?

Glover No, because I think that that is the first argument he uses. You agree that there are a number of arguments here?

Woodhouse I am not wanting to say that that's the only thing that is said in this passage. All I am wanting to affirm is that the relationship between Christ and God in Paul's thinking has consequences for

the relationship between men and women.

Glover It has consequences for the way women dress in the congregation, that is what it says.

Woodhouse Yes, and I am fully willing to say that that has all sorts of cultural ties that are no longer relevant. But what is being said here, is that there is a difference between the way in which women should behave and the way that men should behave, and it has got to do with the relationship between Christ and God. Is he saying that?

Glover Yes, you have turned to the question of the meaning of the word "head".

Woodhouse Yes, but is this what he is saying? "The relationship between Christ and God, the head of Christ is God — that has consequences for the way in which women and men relate in the congregation, or behave mutually in the congregation"?

Glover No, it says dress in the congregation.

Woodhouse That's a form of behaviour isn't it?

Glover Yes, but you see, the behaviour is precisely the same, the functions they perform are precisely the same in that passage.

Woodhouse Yes, but they are to do them differently.

Glover No, they are to dress differently for whatever the cultural reasons happen to be. And that is why you have to go back behind the text, sorry Robert, to get out the cultural differences.

Woodhouse Yes, but whatever the differences between our culture and theirs, all I am affirming is that in our culture we are not wrong to say that the relationship between Christ and God will mean that there will be a difference within the congregation. Maybe we haven't got it all worked out yet, but...

Glover Then you have to talk about the meaning of the word "head".

Sherlock Can I ask a question?

Woodhouse Alright.

Sherlock What I hear you (Susan) saying is that assuming women are ordained, they perhaps would wear a different style of clerical collar, otherwise it may cause offense in society around. Whereas I think what you (John) are saying is that the difference in behaviour is that they shouldn't preach in the first place.

Woodhouse Well, I haven't said that yet.

Glover No, no

#### Examining the context

Glover What I am actually saying is that here again you have what is seemingly very heavy theology brought in to support what becomes in the end a matter of cultural differences, and you have to ask yourself "why?" First of all you have to ask, what on earth is happening that Paul has to make the point in the first place? You have got to ask a question on background. You have got to ask yourself, why on earth are the Corinthian women not wearing the veil, or whatever covering it is? What is actually happening in Corinth that creates this kind of thing, that they are actually casting off the veil? And you then ask yourself, what on earth is Corinth all about? You see, Corinth was perhaps the most licentious city that Paul had to preach in. He had to talk about how Christianity relates to that kind of situation. But you want to pin me down on the heavy theology about the relationship between the Son and the Father...

Woodhouse I just want to pin you down on whether that is relevant for the way we...

Glover No, I am saying that where you make it a large relevance, I see as a small part of a lead up. I see that the real focus there is not God and Christ, the real focus there is man and woman. If the emphasis

falls on the wrong place you start to get a kind of distorted picture of the whole. I read "headship" there as saying that in the order of time God was there, Christ was the agent of creation, Adam was created first, then Eve was created second, and thus you have an order of origin stretching back to the beginning. Right? And that he is not making any heavier kind of statement than to say just that. If you read on he goes on to say in verse 11 that man and woman are not independent of each other in a new creation. So that kind of thing (the order of origin) is kind of counter balanced by the last statement, and you can't dismiss that. That is why I say it is totally in creation, because when you go back to Genesis 2 you have the statement about man and woman being one flesh, and there is your clue to the fact that man and woman are not independent in the Lord. It is a concept again of one flesh, and the concept again of new creation. Right?

Thus my understanding of "headship" is governed by the part that Paul, like so many of the arguments he uses and the way he writes, comes along almost like a bulldozer and stops them, without developing or bringing out the consequences of the argument. But we quite happily supply the consequences.

So that is my difficulty, that is why I say that that not one passage in the New Testament can bear the weight of this trinitarian theology that you bring up as so crucial.

Woodhouse No, when we point to one it does not mean that there is only one passage in the New Testament.

Glover But even when the whole is conflated together, because you are lifting it out holus-bolus out of the text, out of the context, and I mean including history...

Woodhouse That is certainly not what I am trying to do. I am trying to understand it within its context. I am simply trying to say that within its context this text (and it is not all that there is and we will have to turn to some others) in this text Paul argues from the relationships within the Godhead to significant conclusions for his own context. We can't quite work out that significance with confidence now, and I agree with all that, and I don't want to base my whole case on 1 Corinthians 11. But he does draw conclusions that are different conclusions for men and different conclusions for women, because "the head of Christ is God"

Now, we have to come over to "headship". You talked about headship as source? Glover As origin.

Woodhouse Absolutely right, however, it is not simply that is it?

Glover In different places it is used differently.

Woodhouse That's right, but whenever it is used it has consequences for the relationship between persons, doesn't it? And it's got consequences for this phrase that we have been using, "an asymmetry of relationship." It is not simply the affirmation of order of origin. It would simply be of historical curiosity that man was created before woman, so what!

Glover That is what John Calvin says, doesn't he?

Woodhouse Does he say "so what" or...

Glover He virtually says "so what". He said that that kind of argument about priority falls flat because one might as well say that John the Baptist had pre-eminence over Christ in the same...

Woodhouse Absolutely right; that is why I think headship must mean more, because Paul does draw consequences for an asymmetrical relationship from the notion of headship.

Glover That is where you and I part company, because where you see it as a permanent expression, I would see it as a localised expression in the context of time.

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Woodhouse I'm sorry, the Trinity or ...?

Glover Headship. One of the things that Paul did was that he took the given structures of society and altered their content.

Woodhouse Yes.

Glover You get what I meant? That is why I can't incorporate the Trinity, that is why I think it is a red herring. Now, Paul takes the structures of family and alters their content, insofar as he takes the relationship between husbands and wives and says that their content in Christ is altered. Their structure is still the same. Man is still if you like top dog, and woman has to submit, right? That is say, given that as the basis, man also in his relationship to his wife is not to overrule, his response is also to serve.

The gospel came into an existent society, and in that society Paul changes the content of those relationships without changing the structure of them. Do you follow what I am saying?

Woodhouse I follow what you are saying. I can't go along with it, but I will come back...

Glover Alright. Paul changes the content because many different things were happening. But you will say this is again reading in the background of the text, but I can't see how you can exegete without knowing the historical circumstances.

Woodhouse That is not what Robert was saying earlier.

Glover Alright. So I am saying that given the patriarchal structure of society in those times, when the gospel comes to that situation you have women reacting differently than what was usually expected in their social-political context.

It is a very radical thing to come to a group of women and say, "You are sons of God", which is a phrase Paul uses in Romans. And to say to slaves, "You are free in Christ", "You are sons of God". It is a very radical thing. No way are they going to spiritualise this and say, that is just in my inner-self, or in my inner-soul.

No way are they going to say, that hasn't got political and social ramifications to it. Given that kind of context you can understand why Paul has to deal thus with men and women and slaves.

That is, he doesn't change the givenness of their situation, but he sets up different ways of behaving. That is what I mean by changing content, different ways of behaving within those structures. Now, the difference between us is that I will say that they are given ways to behave in their society, alongside of which you have theological directions, (or if you like, a "timebombs", to use Gordon's earlier phrase); breaking down in a long term way those very structures and even redefining them. That is what I mean when I talk about radically altering the content.

#### The conditions of contentment

Woodhouse I just going to ask one small question for clarification before we get on to the more major issues. Are you saying that a slave in the 1st century could not receive and believe that he was free in Christ without trying to escape from his slavery?

Glover I am saying that given, yes...

Woodhouse He couldn't be content in his slavery?

Glover I am saying that he could be content in his slavery with a spiritual message, that "you are free in Christ", if that is the only freedom that is available to him. Now, given opportunity to avail himself of a greater freedom, he will say then that freedom in Christ also means my freedom out here.

Woodhouse Yes, yes, but he can be content within that structure?

Glover Only content the same as anyone is content given the fact that there is no other possibility for being content.

Woodhouse Right. Now, it seems to me that there is a great difference between

the sorts of things I read Paul saying about the relationship between men and women, husbands and wives, and the way in which you are telling me that he is simply accepting the present structures. He actually builds up a theology of the relationship between men and women in terms of "headship". He doesn't just take it as a given, but he takes it as "Christ and the church." I take it that that would...

Glover That is what I mean, that's the content, that he radicalizes the content without breaking down structures.

#### Slaves and wives on the same footing?

Woodhouse But in that way giving the most strong endorsement, such that he never gives to slavery, of course. The most powerful endorsement to the relationship of husband and wife being understood in terms of headship.

Glover Well, I think you then have to go on and define headship. I would say that once you talked to slaves in terms of "being obedient to your master like to Christ", it is the same way as saying to a woman "you will be obedient to your husband as unto the Lord." There is no difference.

Woodhouse Yes, but there is a lot more that is said.

Glover There is a lot more that is said, indeed.

Woodhouse And he will say "be obedient to Caesar as unto the Lord," he will say exactly the same thing, the given structures of society are...

Glover And that is pretty heavy material isn't it? And we could take that...

Forsyth I don't think you have understood the point that John is making.

Woodhouse Can you re-word it then?

Forsyth He never says, "Slaves are as to the master as is Christ to the Church". You are right, even in unjust situations he says "as unto the Lord". But I think the institution of slavery, and/or the Roman Empire, is never given the kind of theological endorsement and importance that marriage is given.

Woodhouse You never get the impression that slavery is in the creative purposes of God, and is tied back into the creation narrative. You never get the impression that the statements in Genesis 2 actually have to do with the relationship of slavery. But you do get the impression, inescapable impression I take it from Ephesians 5, that the marriage relationship (great mystery that it is), has to do with Christ and the church. There is the model for what marriage ought to be, or, there in marriage is the model for your understanding of the relationship between Christ and the Church.

Here it is working the other way, Christ and the church is the model for what marriage ought to be. Now, surely you have there the notions of subordination. I don't talk about servility, and don't hear my words as a caricature of what I intend them to be. Subordination has not got to do with ontological inequality in my view, we have already thrashed that one out.

To my satisfaction we have established that subordination does not require ontological...

Sherlock Voluntary subordination.

Forsyth Yes, voluntary subordination.

Woodhouse Voluntary subordination. Of course it is always voluntary subordination, yes, I think that that is right.

Glover Well, I think that that is no longer voluntary when it is laid down as mandatory.

Sherlock Exactly. Can I ask a simple question of John? I completely accept that the relationship between Christ and the church has enormous theological and pastoral relevance to marriage, but what has it got to do with excluding women from the presbyterate?

Woodhouse Well, we are actually

working further back than that. But, would you dispute that there is such a thing as headship within the family?

Glover Yes, I don't believe that it exists there either.

Sherlock Even if there is...

Woodhouse We hear you saying that there is a difference among you, there are differences among us too. But I'd like to explore this for it seems to be important. If some people are saying that women ought to be ordained because there is no such thing as headship anymore, I want to debunk that. You may want to say that women ought to be ordained even though there is such a thing as headship.

Sherlock Well, we have a different understanding of what it means.

Glover Right, in the Ephesians passage, I think again one of the difficulties we face is pressing analogies too far.

In the Ephesians passage what we often do, is that when the word Christ is linked or applied in a given place, we take it to refer to the whole connotation of Christ. What is happening in Ephesians is that the analogy is not being made to "Christ in glory," not "Christ in his pre-incarnate life," but "Christ in his ministry of sacrifice and atonement." So that what is being placed on the husband as the chapter starts off is a kind of mutual subjection. What's being impressed on the husband is that his relationship of the wife is as the relationship of Christ to the church in his utter service.

Woodhouse Absolutely right.

Glover And that to take this aspect and to say that this act of service is therefore now "a right" and "a power", (even though you call it "responsibility"); and "because I give my life for you and lay down my life for you therefore you cannot do a, b and c;" or "thus you are not equal to me;" is misleading and misexegeting the text.

Woodhouse That of course is not a distinction...

Glover That's the consequence you draw out in terms of both the family and the question of women's ministry.

ACR Okay, John.

Woodhouse The distinction between Christ on the cross and Christ in glory ought not to be pressed because I take it that what Christ was to us on the cross he is to us in glory. He still isn't saying "You do this", lordship it over us. I mean, we are free and we submit to him only voluntarily. And I take it that that is the way I exercise my headship in family, I do not have powers of coercion over my wife and...

Glover And then you use that to say, "therefore I will then limit your capacities to either serve or give or whatever," you see. It becomes no longer an act of love, it becomes an act of power, because by saying you have the right to do this, you are therefore saying to the other person you have not the right to do something.

Forsyth No.

#### Persuasion or coercion?

Woodhouse In the end this sort of argument reminds me of Christian action within society moving for legal changes. I take it we are in the business of persuading Christian people across the board of the right way of ordering congregations, the most helpful way of ordering congregations. I don't think a man or woman has the right to say "I have a ministry over you, as a congregation." I take it that that is the congregation who invites a person to have a ministry to them.

Glover That's fine John provided you don't put it on a sexual basis.

Woodhouse There is no need to accuse me. I don't draw up any laws or any rules. We have got a system that may be an inadequate one, it may be a male dominated system, but it is not an entirely male system. I am sure that I would agree that there ought to be more women

Synod members, and all that kind of thing.

I am involved in trying to persuade congregations, I can't coerce them, but persuade congregations that the most appropriate way to order their life would be to have as their presbyter, a man. Now, I can't coerce them, but I can be engaged in the activity of persuasion, and if the congregation chooses, and I can persuade them that this is the most appropriate way to order things according to "headship", you can't keep accusing us of clamping down on women.

Glover I am not accusing you. I am saying that the particular theology which takes headship as the right, as the right to exclude anybody else from an act of service is not even being true to the doctrine that is here.

Woodhouse I hereby publicly repudiate that view.

Glover But it is not even true to the structures in which Paul used the word. Less so it is true for...

Forsyth He is not fighting for it, he's denounced it.

Woodhouse I denounced that view.

ACR Will you please talk to each other.

Glover But then you see we don't talk about headship...

Woodhouse Yes.

Glover When we talk about headship as a theology that excludes women in some capacity, then we are doing that. That is an inescapable conclusion.

Sherlock Why can't a congregation invite whom they like as minister?

Woodhouse I am saying that a congregation ought to be free to do what they like. A congregation ought to be free to invite whomever they want in. But if we are going to work within a denominational structure the debate will have to go on and the denomination will have to work out ways in which it is going to arrange itself. I would be arguing with the congregations, and with the denomination, and a female presbyterate would be an unhelpful and an unbiblical way in which to structure their life. But I again say that I can't coerce them.

Sherlock But it is unlawful?

Woodhouse If you like, of course, a congregation can do it. A congregation can do anything they like, and they will not cease to be a Christian congregation. They can withdraw from the church building, and meet anywhere, they are still the congregation and they can elect whom they will. The notion that they are being coerced is a nonsense it seems to me.

Glover When I look at headship in here I can see that Paul's arguing for a headship of man over woman, but the content is radically different from the way we experience it. And it is certainly not used to say to women, "you therefore cannot serve in the congregation either as a presbyter or as the lady who does the flowers." In other words there is nothing here that limits ministry in any capacity, but...

Woodhouse Do you think all the things Paul says here about men, he could equally change it all round and through the whole paragraph we could read "wives" instead of husbands?

Glover Look. If this was a matriarchal society I am sure the whole thing would have been reversed. That is, I say it is not permanent. But the thing that disturbs me is that headship has been used to demean women, right?

Woodhouse Yes.

Glover That is why it has become for me a dirty word.

#### Asymmetry, cultural or theological?

ACR John, can I ask you to state why you think headship must mean a certain "asymmetry"? Susan has made her point very clear. Would you like to put your case?

Woodhouse I think I need to come to

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# Editorial

## Women's ordination — the sad finale

The debate with MOW over the Theological implications of their call for the ordination of women on the same basis as men has finished on an unresolved note. I Corinthians 11 was not even looked at in detail. Any in-depth discussion on this passage, or any other, was shipwrecked on the shoal of "How to Interpret the Bible".

### Context no help

Throughout the debate there has been an appeal to the context in which any particular Bible passage appears. Not that context within the Bible itself, but the extra-biblical context of the surrounding society. It was felt important to show how the biblical writings related to their extra-biblical culture. Having done that, a "seed" of revelation was thought to be discernable. This seed could then be lifted up and transplanted into our own cultural context, which in this case, is the way women are so often demeaned in our church society. When this process has been completed it is felt that we then have God's revelation for to-day. That is, it is believed that God's true word is only grasped when it has been examined against two extra-biblical contexts — the extra-biblical context of Paul's day, and the extra-biblical context of our day.

But, to make the true meaning of the Bible depend on background factors outside of the Bible is to totally disregard what the Scriptures say about themselves. Deuteronomy 31:26 makes it clear that when God's words were written down, or enscriptured, they remain in that form a perpetual and clear witness to the people of God. Their meaning does not depend on the historical context within which they are either written, or read. 1500 years after the event Jesus himself can say to his contemporaries, speaking on Exodus 3:6 "Have you not read what was said to you?" The Bible, because God is its Author from cover to cover, is always a contemporary Word whose meaning is clear from its own biblical framework. Knowledge of the extra-biblical context does not change the Bible's meaning but only illustrates it.

In fact, if the meaning of the Bible can only be properly discerned from an appeal to its extra-biblical context then we can have no certain knowledge of God at all. Why? Because the specific details of any extra-biblical context are purely hypothetical. For example, we have no more specific details about the direct context in which Paul wrote his letters to the Corinthian Church than those in the New Testament itself. That is just a matter of historical fact and commonsense! There are no other details about the day-to-day life, or individual backgrounds, of the members of the Corinthian Church in Paul's time other than what we have in the New Testament. There are no Church Rolls, Baptismal Registers, or even biographical accounts of members of the Corinthian Church. Any extra-biblical context is just then a matter of "hunch". And at that level, my hunch can be as good as your hunch. If that is the case, then in the end there is no sure and certain knowledge of God to be found in the Bible. If Paul's commands about the relationships between men and women are not to be understood within the biblical framework, in the clear and direct way we read them, but as somehow not quite what they seem because of their supposed historical context (and therefore directly contrary to a plain reading), then we can't be sure of anything which St. Paul wrote, or Jesus said. If interpreting the Bible depends on knowledge of its extra-biblical social context, then we cannot understand the Bible with any certainty at all.

The New Testament writers, Paul, Luke, Mark, Peter etc. stood in the same relationship to the Old Testament as we now stand to the New. The New Testament writers had less historical tools than we have to try to understand the extra-biblical background of the Bible as they then had it, that is, the Old Testament. Yet, they both knew the Old Testament and trusted it as the Word of God, and used it as such. Old Testament scholars of our own day now fairly widely recognise that the meaning of a text as it stands cannot depend on the extra-biblical context. The meaning of what the Bible says is clear in its own terms, as indeed is most literature.

From our point of view, it is sufficient for Jesus to have said, "Have you not read (Exodus 3:6) what was said to you?"; or as Paul put it, "The words ... were written not for him alone, but also for us" (Romans 4:23).

### Summing up

The major points emerging out of the total debate can be summed-up as a set of differences. The differences are those which emerged during the course of the discussion and do not necessarily apply to any one or all of the participants as a whole. Further, even if one participant can be identified with any given point of difference, it has to be remembered that the difference arose in the peculiar context of the debate. In a different debating circumstance, with other points of view brought to bear on the subject, a participant might well modify a particular point.

- (a) The Bible, as is, is the Word of God. It is God's revelation now as then.
- (b) The Bible is only revelation now if we transfer a seed discerned from a reconstructed original extra-biblical context to our own context.

- (b) The language of the Bible is direct. It speaks directly about God because God is a relational being (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) who speaks in relational language to creatures made in his own image.

- (c) The meaning of the Bible is clear. When Paul is just accommodating what he says to a limited situation (e.g. circumcision), it is clear from the surrounding biblical context. The Holy Spirit applies the plain word of Scripture to the believer's conscience, and relates the believer directly to God in fellowship through the forgiveness of sins.

- (d) God is in Himself as He is towards us in Jesus Christ. We know no Christ except Christ clothed with His gospel.

- (e) Fellowship, love and obedience is to all of God. Through the life and work of Jesus Christ we have been invited to directly share in the life of God himself, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- (b) The language of the Bible is analogical. God can only be spoken of by way of analogy.

- (c) The meaning of the Bible is not necessarily clear. To recognise every occasion when Paul is accommodating what he says one needs "prophetic insight". The Holy Spirit gives to the interpreter prophetic insight from his or her own surrounding cultural context. Currently, this context is the liberation of human personality from demeaning situations to self-fulfilment. The Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the conscience of the believer after prophetic insight has released that word from its relative obscurity in the Bible.

- (d) Knowledge of God, or theology properly understood exists at two levels: a summary of the Bible's statements then; and our growing understanding of the doctrine of God, which accumulates throughout history from each new revelatory situation.

- (e) Fellowship, love and obedience is to that aspect of God which the new revelatory situation points up as the most significant.

### MOW not the enemy

The pain in this debate is clear, that we often demean women in the church is beyond question. The differences apparent in the discussion do not necessarily spring from the analysis of the problem, but from the solution which is being put forward. The solution offered by MOW is based on sharp points of disagreement on basic Christian doctrines. The differences summarised above mark a watershed, a parting of the ways between "the Gospel alone", and "the Gospel plus human tradition". The points taken together, and even separately, have marked similar watersheds. Some of these have been cataclysmic. At the time of the Reformation, Martin Luther and John Calvin walked down the left hand side of our summary table, while the rest of the western church continued down the right hand side. There are only tears and heartache in these observations. To our friends caught toe-to-toe on the question of Women's Ordination we can only plead: If you are at any point relying on the traditions of men, please think again.

Will women be ordained to the Presbyterate on the same basis as men? In all likelihood, Yes! But that will not make MOW the enemy. With all the very basic and painful differences we have had with MOW, they have acted in a Christian way. They have openly, and without guile, publicly debated the issues involved. The Gospel is not a restricted document subject to private political deals behind the scene. In the Gospel, God has for eternity gone public. All discussion about the Gospel needs to be as open and frank as the original.

Perhaps we are too pessimistic, but the ACR feels that the real enemy will be the rest of us who for the sake of a quiet life disdain open discussion, and instead lead Synods to conclusions by bland and comforting statements without public accountability for their content. Any decision to ordain women which does not in an obvious way honour "the Gospel alone" approach must be firmly rejected as thoroughly out of keeping with the revealed mind of God.

### Logic, beauty and MOW

Dear Sir,

I must respond to the editorial "agreement at last" accompanying the third section of the MOW debate. Might I begin by saying the debate is accurately reported, although the flow of arguments is sometimes lost in the transition to print. I can understand many Christians opposing the ordination of women. What I find terrifying is the reasons given for it in the debate. The price paid for keeping a male presbyterate often seems to mean the demolition of the catholic faith. It is with this concern that I want to comment on your editorial.

1. It is rather 'below the belt' — MOW was associated with gay rights in your previous editorial. Now it is linked with Nazism! Guilt by association is not a christian way of arguing — I had hoped for higher standards from ACR given the accuracy of your editing of the debate.

2. You argue that MOW supporters are shaped by the philosophy of secular feminism rather than the Bible. In my opinion, feminism has its roots in scripture, despite its having taken an anti-christian turn in recent decades. What you failed to see is that it is the technological, mechanical philosophy of our day which seems to dominate your own exegesis. Why do we have to be so coldly logical in interpretation? Why is exegesis so wooden, lacking beauty as well as the ring of truth? In this sense I have to say that like my reading of the Arian controversy your exegesis is still like fitting together propositions into a jigsaw rather than shaping them in the light of the main thrust of scripture.

3. I was glad to see you using the Fathers. But you use them to try and make the sort of 'code behind the Bible' deal which you repudiate. In my opinion the real code in this debate is the world view of an hierarchical creation wherein males sit nearer the top than females. I could take up your point from that Basil and Augustine but space forbids it. Suffice to say, that I believe the Fathers, both in the patristic and the medieval and reformation times would be horrified to see what you are trying to do with their argument.

4. This brings me to the key issue, subordinationism. I did not and do not accept 'Permanent voluntary subordination', and frequently said so in the debate. Let me put it as directly as I can. Permanent subordination means that 'person' (a) is set under 'person' (b). This means that (a) and (b) are different in kind. Applied to God and Christ, this means that they are not 'of one substance'. Applied to humans it means that women are less than human. Voluntary subordination is possible only between equals. Applied to God, we can (and must) say that the Son subordinates himself to the Father 'for us and our salvation'. He can do so only because He is equal to the Father fully, wholly and without qualification. This the Arians (equals Jehovah Witnesses today) denied. Applied to humans it means that one person may choose to submit to another. This cannot be imposed, however, or its voluntary character is removed. By excluding all women from ordained ministries the voluntary nature of the subordination is taken away. (See J. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*, chapter 9). Subordination can be either permanent or voluntary it cannot be both, as I said in the debate. I find the neo-Arianism of some opponents of women's ordination horrifying.

What I became aware of in the debate, and see reflected in your editorial, is that I seem to be living in a different evangelical christian world. Mine understands the Bible in the light of its main thrust, interpreted by the classical creeds. It is open to new discoveries and insights, seeking to keep logic and beauty, truth and love in balance. The alternative, sadly, seems to me to be marked by technological, precise exegesis which leads to undermining the catholic creeds, is concerned with maintaining influence and power, and sees life solely in terms of winners and losers.

This issue is not one of 'the Bible or not the Bible'. Rather it concerns the framework within

which we read it. Is that framework going to be modern technological man, or the classical christian heritage?

In christian fellowship,  
Charles Sherlock

### MOW questioned

Dear Sir,

I question whether Suzanne Glover (9.7.84) has really met the point raised by the editorial of June 11. The editor asked if the Bible's commands about women's role in the church could be set aside, why not its commands about practicing homosexuality?

We know something is wrong because God speaks about it in that way. The Bible says that women should not become teachers in the church. It also makes it clear that practising homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God.

If I've understood the debate properly, MOW is saying that I Timothy 2:12 is not a command of God but only an instruction given by Paul to meet a temporary situation. The question raised by the editorial was, why cannot the verses speaking against active homosexuality be treated in the same way? A person only sins when they break a command of God, not when they put aside a limited instruction by Paul or anyone else.

I would be interested to know why Suzanne Glover thinks that the Bible's teaching about homosexuality is still a Word of God and not a word of man, especially in the light of the call by some homosexuals for liberation.

Yours sincerely,  
Edna Beechy

### Open letter from CMS

Dear Sir,

May I take advantage of the courtesy of your Letter Column to address an Open Letter to all your readers, to say how much we in CMS rejoice to hear of the Archbishop's appeal for millions of dollars to establish an adequate Christian witness in the neglected areas of new growth, especially in the Western suburbs of Sydney. This is part of the missionary outreach of the Church and, as such, it is dear to our hearts. Certainly we must never neglect our task of preaching in Jerusalem in order to preach at the ends of the earth, for that would only weaken our home missionary base. But it is equally true that we must not forget the ends of the earth while rightly remembering Jerusalem. In other words, we do not regard this appeal as an "either-or", but as a "both-and", and we greatly hope that the whole church will see it in the same light. It is right for charity to begin at home, but it would be disastrous if it ended there: the world outside would never hear the Gospel. We shall all of us have to dig deeper into our pockets, that is all, to meet both needs at the same time.

Yours sincerely,  
Alan Cole  
Federal Secretary  
Church Missionary Society

### Orange Lodge and T. C. Hammond

Dear Sir,

I recently had the honour of being invited to a lecture on the Life and Teaching of T.C. Hammond at Moore College.

I listened with interest, the address given by Rev. Carl Hammond and Dr. D. Knox, and was amazed that neither of these speakers mentioned the fact that he was a member of the Loyal Orange Institution of N.S.W., and at the time of his death was the Grand Master.

In his address, the Rev. Carl Hammond spoke of the "Red Book Case" at Bathurst of which his father played a very important part

in its success. What your readers may not know is that it was the Loyal Orange Institution of N.S.W. who financed that court case.

Yours in the Master's Service,  
John H. Gowans J.P. (Grand Master: L.O.I. of N.S.W.)  
Subscriber to The Australian Church Record.

### Band-aids and bucks

Dear Sir,

I wish to commend Mr. Edward Rock's concern (ACR June 25, 1984) that Christians in Western countries do not appear to be as obedient to Christ as they ought. Also, I agree with his perception of the Festival of Light as really a "Band-Aid" service, after all band-aids eventually come unstuck, yet it seems to me to be true as well that they do serve as a temporary treatment while the root cause of the disease is worked at.

However, I must disagree with Mr. Rock in what he defines as "the root of all evil" — "The root lies in the power structure of finance and government". Why is it that so many people, Christian or not, want to claim that the social, political and economic structures, especially in Western societies, are the "real baddies"? This is really another band-aid treatment dealing only with "the superficialities of the disease".

The root problem, God tells us, is the egotistical self-centredness of sinful human beings, like you and me, which uses whatever structures there are to selfish ends without any regard for the well-being of other people. Only the application of the gospel — of God's judgment on this attitude in the death of Jesus Christ — to sinful creatures can remedy the real evil. It is as the gospel takes effect in a person's life that eventually the structures will be reformed and purified, or at least, used, even in their existing forms, selflessly.

Please, let's stop "passing the buck" of responsibility for the mess our world is in from ourselves to the structures that we have made and which we use (or abuse). Instead, let's get on with the task of declaring God's gospel unashamedly and wholeheartedly; and let's apply band-aids while we pray for the gospel to have its powerful effect.

Yours sincerely,  
Mike Geeves

### Editorial provocative, ludicrous

Dear Sir,

Your editorial on "The Twin Evils of Apartheid" (ACR 28 May, 1984) will certainly allow you to describe the paper as provocative. Whether it continues to be wholly evangelical may be another matter.

You rightly state that various governments in Australia "have now at last granted Aborigines unequal land rights" and then attempt to justify this by some pseudo — christian interpretation of various sections of the Bible. Using the same verses, it could be argued that the deportation of Jews to Belsen (for example) also fulfilled some divine plan that "made from every nation of men to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation" (Acts 17:26-27). Both examples are, of course, ludicrous.

Insult is added to injury when you continue to argue that anyone who objects to Aboriginal land rights does so "more from sinful self-centredness than from biblical principle". We, and many other Australians, have some misgivings over the present course of existing land rights legislation and your gratuitous vilification of our motives is hypocrisy under the guise of righteousness.

The Constitution of Australia is based upon the principle that all its citizens have equal rights and responsibilities under the law. However, a vocal minority (many of whom are not Aborigines) is calling for, and obtaining, laws which provide them with more rights than are available to the great majority of their fellow citizens. That some Australians wish, at least, to question this trend is simply dismissed by you as sinfulness. On the contrary, some christian Australians believe in non-discriminatory laws in harmony with the view that governments have been established by God for the equal benefit of all citizens who obey the law.

The issues of apartheid and land rights are complex matters and too lengthy to debate fully in a letter. But you are treading on dangerous ground with this line of advocacy. We believe that most people who read your editorial are in profound disagreement with it.

Yours faithfully,  
Guy & Bernice Manuelli

### Full agreement

Dear Sir,

I am in full agreement with the whole of Edward Rock's penetrating letter (ACR 25/6). Certainly, true Israel "is not limited to racial or genetic origins, but is found in whatever race who apply the truths which build the kingdom of God." These, of course, are spiritual Israel, sons of Abraham by adoption. My original query, however, referred to historical Israel, actual descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It may seem irrelevant considering the universal decadence and moral rot throughout the world. But how can we contemplate that not only ancient Israel failed, but God failed? Despite appearances, we know that the Abrahamic Covenant WILL be fulfilled through 'the One Seed Christ. God's faithfulness is at stake how ever we may gloss over those tremendous promises which even staggered Paul, for they were to "children not yet born, neither having done any good or evil that the Purpose of God according to election might stand" (Rom. 9:11).

Not only in Genesis, but the prophets confirm these people were to be His Servant Nation to missionise the whole world. Despite their failure then, Hosea's erring wife becomes a parable of erring Israel. God deals with her, "and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said to them, Ye are not My people (Gentiles), there it shall be said to them, 'Ye are the sons of the living God' (Christians). (Hosea Chap. 1:10) So many, many wonderful passages, but to cram the whole of Scripture into 350 words is an impossibility, so will make one vital point. Theologians continue with the wildly untrue tradition that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were Jews. They were Hebrews, and the word "Jew" does not appear in the Bible until 11 Kings 16:6 when the Jews were fighting the northern Kingdom of Israel. We can never understand Scripture unless we are accurate, and realise that Judah and Israel are separate entities, the Kingdom of Judah consisting of Judah, Benjamin and Levi, and the Kingdom of Israel of the remaining tribes. The word "Israel" on a few occasions covers Judah also, but Ephraim-Israel were NEVER Jews in Scripture. The traditions of men are apparently more powerful to hide the truth, is all this irrelevant to today? Not at all. Once we get our historical details straight, then the whole Bible opens up in a remarkable way — and when that happens there will be no more apostate churches. The faithfulness of the Living God will be vindicated.

Yours sincerely,  
Phyllis Creasey

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what Susan has just said, and say that I think you are absolutely right, and Robert and I have talked about it, and we agree that within our own congregation we see signs of it, and we hope and pray that those things can in time be dealt with and disappear. Chauvinism, and all sorts of things where women are put down etc. etc. should be dealt with.

To a certain extent, we are not disagreeing with your analysis of the problem, we are disagreeing with the solution that you advance and the necessity of that solution.

Why does headship imply asymmetry? I can only say that everywhere it comes up in the New Testament it does. And I want to challenge the view that the New Testament (which is so radical in so many ways) should have as such an integral part of its teaching this asymmetry only incidentally. I would have thought that the notion of patriarchal society is vastly exaggerated. There were models around, as Robert mentioned early on, there were models of women priests and all sorts of things. It wasn't unknown in the ancient world by any means.

**Glover** No it wasn't unknown John, but it didn't come out of a Jewish context. This came out of Jewish context, which is patriarchal.

**ACR** Let John have his say.

**Glover** But he must admit to that.

**Woodhouse** Oh, yes, I admit to it coming out of a Jewish context. I just find no leg to stand on in the New Testament for a move in your direction. I jump off on it because of something that I import. I can jump on it because I want to come to those conclusions; but the New Testament itself nowhere drives me in that direction.

#### Can theology be objective?

**Glover** But you have it every Sunday when you preach. You preach in the context of your society, and you preach to the people on how they relate to Christ in the context of your society. That is one of the difficulties we are having here to day. We read theology from our own particular backgrounds, and always have done, there is no escape from that. So you can't come to the Word as you would like to have it, as we would like to have it, in any objective sense.

**Woodhouse** Of course. We are influenced by the feminist debate, by the . . .

**Glover** But you are also influenced by past exegesis, you are influenced . . .

**Woodhouse** So what hope is there for us then, do you think?

**Glover** The hope you have is always having radical elements that are going to challenge established thinking, so that we rethink again.

**Woodhouse** I couldn't agree more. We want more and more of that.

**ACR** Can I just ask one final question, then I'll ask each of you to sum up your positions. My one question is this Susan: Can theology be at all separated from the context in which we do it?

**Glover** No it can't. Ultimately it is always in the context of where we do it. I think that is the whole beauty and challenge of theology, otherwise it would have no relationship to us at all, if it was something totally out there. It is the relativity to us which makes us all part and parcel of it.

**ACR** How do you decide what is right and what is wrong in theology if in the end you can't separate it from the context?

**Glover** Well, you can't separate from their context all these issues that we are talking about. I think that all theology starts from the doctrine of God, and from your understanding of the nature of God. And I think that that is the **givenness**, the givenness in the gospel; the givenness in revelation is the doctrine of God, and the relationship of God to man is the givenness. How that works out is always the challenge of living day to day in a Christian life in a given world.

My concern is that when you take revelation as a fixed data, in some kind of eternal unchanging way, without seeing that both our exegesis changes and people change and societies change and all the rest of it, then really the whole movement of the New Testament towards some kind of eschatological fulfilment is in question. What you do in this debate is that you **freeze** that movement in an embryonic state. The relationship

between men and women has an ongoing movement, an eschatological direction that has been frozen exegetically in its embryonic state, and this concerns me for what we are ultimately trying to defend is after all the Word of God.

**ACR** Right, now one last question on the doctrine of God.

**Sherlock** It's the third "last".

**ACR** Can the doctrine of God be arrived at free from context?

**Glover** I think it is always given in context, as revelation was given in context. In that respect it can't be freed from it. You can't free it from context other than by having some kind of "other" world, where we are no longer human beings who relate to each other in our own context. I think that what you do to move from the givenness of revelation is to continually ask what are the implications. You then measure them against that givenness, and work from that to what are the implications now. And I think that if you don't have a challenge to established thinking you fall into a static pattern, of feeling that we have moved so far, and no further.

#### Summing Up

**ACR** Alright, summary time, Charles, in 25 words.

**Sherlock** When we restrict the ministries which adult, capable Christians may exercise we compromise the freedom which the gospel brings, they way that freedom is perceived in our society, the doctrine of God, the doctrine of the image of God, and all the rest of it. Further, when this involves you building structures of authority and headship and all those sorts of things which **oppress**, it seems to me that is just a price too high a price to pay. And I believe that is the way the Bible sees it too.

**ACR** John

**Woodhouse** We agree that the doctrine of God is at the heart of this discussion. We on this side of table disagree with you because we find that the New Testament, and the Bible as a whole, speaks to us of a Godhead in which there is an asymmetrical relationship, which is not inappropriate to see, indeed it is **demanded** that it be seen in the family, because of the nature of the family. That asymmetry of relationships has consequences which I don't think we have yet fully explored, — how this extends into the congregation. But it certainly is not *a priori* inappropriate because of the doctrine of God that there should be distinctions and differences in function and relationship within the congregation. There I think is the heart of our difference.

**ACR** Thank you, Gordon.

**Preere** I would say that the image-of-God idea ought to be basic in our understanding of male and female relationships. Further, our God-language incorporates God's characteristics, characteristics of male or femaleness, even though he is above both because he is Spirit, I'd also see as important the way Paul seeks to bring about mutuality within his society, mutuality between male and female. Paul's general strategy is to leave the ladder of social structures intact and to counsel Christians to stop climbing that ladder, and so therefore, to revolutionize the relationships from within. Thus, their ladder of male/female relationships was basically left intact for what Paul probably saw as a fairly limited time. I think his principles of mutual submission, of equal sexual rights as male and female, the authority that the female has over the male's body, that those things have now worked their way into our society to the point where social structures enable us to express in our own church structures the full implications of equality of male and female. Finally, today, having structures that **don't** do that is actually causing a scandal to the gospel.

**ACR** Robert:

**Forsyth** I would like to make a comment on the debate as a whole. There is a pain in the debate which we have expressed in various ways. That it is a very deep pain shows that there will not be an easy answer to this question. No side is foolish and no side is stupid, no side is deliberately wishing to be either unbiblical or oppressive. I just reaffirm that has always been my position. I feel

Concluded back page

## England — Second marriage — the next step

The next chapter of the remarriage saga began recently as the Church of England House of Bishops published their new proposals for deciding which divorcees may and which may not get married in church.

However, these proposals — to be debated by General Synod in July — have already been condemned as "in conflict with the doctrine of the Church of England" by three of the Church's five official legal advisers.

The story so far: In 1981 the General Synod agreed that there were "circumstances in which a divorced person may be married in church in the lifetime of a former partner" . . . which left them with the task of working out just what those circumstances were.

In July 1983 Synod was presented with seven possible options for a selection procedure and plumped for the seventh — 'Option G' — whereby each application was processed by the local vicar, a multi-diocesan panel and the bishop.

But come November those believing that marriage is not dissoluble had got themselves organised and united with those who felt Option G was bureaucratically unworkable. The measure passed through the second of its three Synod sessions, but there was so much uneasiness that each bishop was asked to talk to his clergy to allay their fears. These cosy chats, in January this year, turned into an overwhelming public rejection of Option G.

Consequently the House of Bishops asked the February Synod for permission to scrap the lot and look for some alternative. Synod agreed, and today's draft regulation is the result.

The new procedure is simpler than its predecessor, but retains a number of its characteristics. Gone are the complex application forms and though the advisory panels are still there in a simpler shape they are only to be used if anyone along the line thinks the couple should not be granted permission for a second marriage.

One change is that the clergyman will be furnished with a new service of prayer and dedication to perform after a civil marriage if he and the couple feel such a course is appropriate.

The major development is the provision of guidelines. For the first time in this long process the General Synod have on paper some suggestions for how to choose which applicants would be allowed to remarry.

For example, your application is unlikely to be granted if you accept no responsibility for the breakdown of your previous marriage, if you're still bitter and unforgiving, if you display no penitence, if your children are not cared for, if you've been divorced more than once, if you don't understand the Gospel, or if you take no part in the life of your church.

Naturally, these proposals cannot expect to escape the criticism which plagued their predecessors. As one of their composers, the Bishop of Chester pointed out at his recent diocesan synod, "as they are proposals for how remarriage could take place, they cannot satisfy those who would rule this out altogether."

Controversy has been fuelled by the legal advice which the archbishops sought about the proposals. Following questions in Synod about whether Canon Law permitted any sort of marriage after divorce, they asked five lawyers — the Dean of the Arches, the Vicars-General of Canterbury and York, the Church's legal adviser and its standing counsel.

Three of the lawyers rules that allowing second marriage was in conflict with the Church's doctrine in that it was inconsistent with this Canon and "contrary to the Church's present discipline on marriage." Canon Law would need to be changed, they said. The other two felt that the words "in the nature of" formed a let-out, but still recommended a change in the Canon for clarification.

## The Church in Vietnam

News has just come through that PHAM THI SON (Scripture Union's staffworker till the fall of Saigon) and all those living with her in the Church compound have been evicted by the government.

The buildings have been confiscated by the government. THI SON lost most of her books and some of her few possessions. She is grateful to the Lord that no one living in their compound was arrested. In the past six months six pastors have been arrested and pressure against the Church is building up.

#### HK proposals, cont.

The draft was further revised on March 26 after more consultations with local church leaders.

On April 16, the document was presented to more than 80 key church leaders, who further refined its wording and almost unanimously affirmed the importance and necessity of publicising the declaration.

The declaration gained more support from a wider scope of the local ministerial community on April 30 when more than 250 pastors, para-church organization workers, seminary staff and students met to exchange their views over the declaration.

To really convey the significance of the declaration to the grass-root level, the drafting committee further organized a "laymen rally" on May 20 when more than 3,000 mostly young Christians attended.

Each participant paid HK\$10 (about \$1.5) for the two-hour rally, receiving a free booklet containing the 10-point declaration with a 44-page commentary written by Dr. Carver Yu, lecturer of the China Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong.

Rev. Philip Teng, renowned church leader in Hong Kong, preached a message on the main themes of the Book of Revelation — the throne of our Lord God, believing that God is the Lord who creates, redeems, judges, and controls the development of history.

He asked Christians to seek God's will and guidance in calmness, trusting in our Almighty God who will never forsake us. He urged the participants to pray hard or even fast for "we're in a time of crisis. We can't wait to pray and spread the Gospel."

The next speaker, Dr. Carver Yu, shared with the believers his inner fear about the future of his family. "Only recently some friends of mine are leaving here for good while some are applying for immigration," Dr. Yu said "but these friends have never disclosed that they will leave . . ."

Dr. Yu asked the believers to put aside the idea of immigration and stay in Hong Kong, although there is a price to pay.

"We should grasp the opportunity to serve the Lord here, witnessing God's love in the midst of our neighbours," Dr. Yu said.

CATW

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#### Church Services

NEWCASTLE: St. Andrew's Mayfield Church Street, off Maitland Road. Sundays — Holy Communion 7.30 and 9.30 a.m., Evening Service 7.15 p.m. Visitors welcome. Rector: Paul Watkins.

MELBOURNE: St. Jude's Carlton. Near city centre, cnr. Lygon and Palmerston Streets. Sundays 10 a.m. Holy Communion, 7 p.m. Evening Worship. Minister, Peter Adz. Visitors welcome.

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

#### Positions Vacant

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# REVIEW

## 160,000 attendance at Palau London Crusade

After 25 days, Evangelist Luis Palau's Mission to London has so far attracted crowds approaching the 160,000 mark.

London has not seen anything like this for a quarter of a century and when you consider that only 1 percent of Londoners regularly attend church and 47 percent of churches around the city have fewer than 60 members, the result is even more remarkable.

With over 8,000 decisions for Christ being confirmed (60 percent of them by persons under 25), the Mission displays evidence of the power of God moving in a wonderful way.

The Emmanuel (Anglican) church at Northwood has some 670 people on the membership's electoral rolls. Every Sunday morning their congregation numbers around 400, with an estimated 300 attending evening.

Strong home fellowship exists, with 24 house groups meeting regularly for prayer and Bible study. Four ladies' fellowship groups also meet throughout each month, providing a real nuclear for Community involvement.

Three major youth groups bridging the 13 to 25 age ranges have a combined membership in excess of 200. As always, success breeds success, and with skilled direction and Christian leadership, this base is continuing to show exciting growth.

Co-operating with Emmanuel in the Mission to London is the Evangelical Church, Norwood Hills, with a smaller membership of 120, but one that is also showing positive growth patterns. They also have a strong youth group and within the next few months will be considering plans to build a new church and community facility to accommodate new families coming to their fellowship every week.

In three weeks more than 600 persons have come to the stadium rallies for the communities of Northwood and Northwood Hills, and many commitments have been confirmed.

Derek Osborne, the Vicar of Emmanuel, with his wife Hilary, have only recently been appointed to Northwood, but they have been the catalyst behind the church's organisation and support.

"The Spirit of God is moving in such a wonderful way," said Hilary. "We are now in the midst of a real revival, and we are very much in prayer for Luis, his team, and for those who are responding."

"Every day we receive more referrals from the Mission and at this stage after three weeks, our total would be around 50," she estimated. "Some will be numbered amongst our future leaders, so you can see we need the clear direction of God as we seek to build his church in Christ's Name."

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## Third Chinese pastor martyred by Burmese communists claim

A Chinese pastor was captured and tortured to death by Burmese communists in June last year while he was ministering for the Gospel at the Sino-Burmese border, Rev. Yan Ta-an, pastor of Chinese Christian Church, Lashio, Burma, said recently.

Believed to be the third Chinese Christian martyr to die in the hands of Burmese communists, Rev. Cheung left behind his wife, a son and three daughters, Rev. Yan said.

His wife, Mrs. Cheung is teaching English and Burmese at a Bible school in Lashio. Rev. Yan asked Christians to pray for Mrs. Cheung and her children.

The Bible school was established on July 5, 1982, with five female and four male students who will graduate in April 1985, Rev. Yan said.

There are about 7,000-plus Chinese Christians among the 700,000 to 800,000 Chinese in Burma, a country with a total population of 34,000,000.

CATW

## South American Archdeacon

The Rev. Stephen Barrett, SAMS missionary in the Diocese of Northern Argentina since 1975, was collated as Archdeacon of that Diocese on 27 May 1984 and will assume his responsibilities in Salta in September. At present he is fully involved in the theological education of Matabo Indian pastors through the Bible Institute in Mission Chaqueña near Embarcacion. Stephen and Judith have three children, Andrew (12) and Anthony (10) at boarding school in Cordoba, and Alison (7). Prayers are requested for the Barretts as they move house and commence work co-pastoring an English-speaking congregation in Salta, administering the Diocese and overseeing its theological education programme.

## S.U. appoints second Fiji staffer

A high school teacher, **Solomone Vakaruru**, has commenced as a staffworker-in-training in Fiji. He is known as **Solo**, but he doesn't work on his own yet! At present he is concentrating on the thirty-five school with Inter School Christian Fellowship groups within a 30 mile radius of Suva. This allows him to be in constant contact with Mesulame, Scripture Union's General Secretary. Later this year he will go further afield and start to visit some of the other ISCF groups in Fiji.

David Claydon, Scripture Union's Pacific Area Secretary commented recently:

"Solo's appointment has been on the basis that his salary will rise to a normal level as his team support builds up. At present the salary is very low. He and his wife eat rice cooked in coconut cream for breakfast and the evening meal consists of Cassaba or Dalo (root vegies) and Bebe (like spinach). If Scripture Union friends would like to make an extra gift to support Solo during this year, they are invited to send their gift to their nearest Scripture Union Office. Supporters are asked to pray for Solo and Mesulame and the 70 Inter School Christian Fellowship groups in Fiji."

# MARANATHA

## The Message of True Religion

GALATIANS 4

GOD'S TRUTH — SONS NOT SLAVES

Paul has argued his gospel is God's gospel and that it was by faith in Christ not by works of the law the Galatians had been blessed. By faith they had received the Spirit (3:2), been declared right with God (3:6) and entered life (3:11). In Christ they were sons of God (3:26), one family (3:28) and Abraham's offspring (3:29).

The thrust of chapter 4 is a call for them to remain in this gospel whereby they have all the blessings, especially sonship and not return to law keeping which is slavery.

#### Consider What God Has Done (4:1-10)

Before the Galatians were Christians they had worshipped idols, trying by religious rules and rituals to win the favour of their gods. They had in fact been in slavery to "elemental spirits" or demonic powers (v. 8-10).

Before Paul, a Jew, was a Christian he too was a slave to the "elemental spirits". Even though he had all the promises and oracles of God, the good Law had been used by the demonic powers to enslave him. He had been deceived into thinking he could win favour with God by zeal for the law. Paul likens it to being a child heir with a guardian. He may have all the promise of immense wealth but until he reaches that date set by his Father he is like a slave under his guardian's control (v. 1-3).

Well the date set by the Father has arrived. His Son has come and by his death became a curse so that those under the curse of the law could be freed from their slavery. Both Jew and Gentile by faith in Christ have become sons. As God sent his Son so also he sent his Spirit, aptly called the Spirit of sonship. This Spirit affects believers so deeply that like Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, they call out to the God of the universe as "Father". (v. 4-7).

Paul is astounded that having experienced God's initiative in their lives, they are now thinking of going from sonship back to slavery (v. 9).

#### Consider What They Are Doing (4:11-20)

Paul passionately calls upon them to resume their old friendly relations with him and half apologises for his intensity but he doesn't know how they are responding so he continues his strong words (v. 11,12,19,20).

In the past they received him like Christ himself. He was God's messenger with God's gospel for them. This, in spite of the fact that he was ill and a burden to them. They didn't reject him. On the contrary they would have given him their

right eyes if that would have helped. (v. 13-15).

In the present they treated him now as an enemy. Behind this change was the Circumcision Party. It is an old trick of religious people to pretend they have something extra and thus say your experience is not sufficient. By so barring the door the people make a great deal of the teachers. It was no good reason for which the Galatians made much of the new teachers and spurned Paul. (v. 16-18).

What had become of the satisfaction they had previously felt with Paul and his gospel? (v. 15).

#### Consider What the Law Does Say (4:21-5:1)

Paul pleads with them to read the law with proper Rabbinic exegesis.

The story of Abraham and his two sons (Gen. 16,17,21) is an allegory concerning two covenants. Ishmael the son of Sarah's slave, Hagar, was conceived by natural means, "according to the flesh". They represent slavery, flesh, Mt. Sinai (where the law was given) and Jerusalem (the city representing law keeping). (v. 24-27).

Isaac was born when Sarah (90 years) and Abraham (100 years) were old. This birth was "according to promise" — so Sarah and Isaac represent freedom and promise. Jerusalem above is the city representing faith — and many will be there (v. 24-27).

The same stories give lessons on how the law keepers, represented by Ishmael, will persecute the people of promise, represented by Isaac. But even when this occurs there is also a lesson of hope. The law keepers, represented by the slave Hagar and her son born according to the flesh, will not inherit with those of faith (v. 28-31).

It is in this way that the stories are to be interpreted by the Rabbi says Paul. He concentrates on the same passage and uses the same method of the Circumcision Party.

#### What Lessons Are There For Us?

Firstly, there will always be new teachings. Reflect well upon their emphasis and ask the question, "does it maintain the freedom we have in Christ?" Always stand fast in Christ's freedom (5:1).

Secondly, there will always be the temptation to think our first experience of God's grace was rather immature and we need to go on to higher things. Check to see whether we are moving from God's grace to human effort.

Reg Piper

#### WELFARE WORKERS

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