

Ridley gathering launches new book

'The Overcoming of Satan'



Dr. Charles Sherlock together with Principal Maurice Betteridge at the book launching. Student Dr. Richard Thornton (centre) looks on.

"The Overcoming of Satan" by Dr. Charles Sherlock was launched recently at a Tuesday lunch hour gathering at Ridley College. A dramatic presentation picking up the theme of the book was presented by students before

the book was officially launched by the Principal, the Rev. Maurice Betteridge. The book is the latest title in the Grove Spiritua'y Series published by Grove Books in England.

"What price Peace?"

Spring Conference for Sydney

A National Committee for Peace, Freedom and Justice was formed in March, 1986 to sponsor two major events during the 1986 International Year of Peace and to produce suitable Resource Materials.

Two major events have been organised including the "National Conference on Peace, Freedom and Justice," 3rd-6th October, 1986 and the "International Festival of Peace," Sunday 19th October, 1986.

National Peace Conference:

1. The "National Conference on Peace, Freedom and Justice" will be held from 3rd to 6th October, 1986 at the NSW Baptist Theological College, Herring Road, Eastwood. It will be held on Labour Day holiday weekend to assist country and interstate delegates to attend this important Conference.

Festival of Peace:

2. The "1986 International Festival of Peace" will be held at 2 p.m. on Sunday 19th October, 1986 at Paramatta Park, Sydney. It is hoped that similar Festivals will be held in other cities.

During the Festival speakers will be supported by musical groups representing the

Captive Nations in their national costumes, who will also present their folk music.

These Captive Nations groups include: Latvian, Polish, Lithuanian, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Vietnamese, etc., who fully value our freedom in Australia because their nations are no longer free.

Leninist Peace:

The National Committee Chairman, Rev. Fred Nile, E.D., M.L.C., said "It is vital that Christians fully understand the relationship between 'Peace', 'Freedom', and 'Justice' and the USSR's 'Leninist Peace'."

"The Communist sponsored 'Peace Movement' is being used to recruit into its ranks idealistic people including Christians," said Fred Nile.

"These idealistic Christians do not fully realise that communist or Leninist 'Peace' is totally different from our Christian view of peace," said Fred Nile.

Article 28 of the USSR Constitution states, "The USSR steadfastly pursues a Leninist policy of peace."

"According to Soviet leaders, 'Leninist Peace' will only be finally achieved when all the world is under the authority of the Communist Party of the USSR," said Fred Nile.

MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE

DIOCESE OF ADELAIDE

Rev. Francis Bourne has tendered his resignation as Chaplain of the Westbourne House Complex as from the end of August.

DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

The Rev. Alan Nichols was collated by the Archbishop as Archdeacon of Melbourne at St. Paul's Cathedral on July 6.

Rev. Canon Barry Smith was collated by the Archbishop as Archdeacon of Geelong at St. Paul's Cathedral on July 6.

Rev. Victor Haste, Incumbent of the parish of Holy Name, Vermont South, will be inducted by the Archbishop on August 11.

Rev. David Morrison will retire from St. Andrew's Aberfeldie, on February 8, 1987.

Rev. Lawrence Reeve, Incumbent of St. Peter's Brighton Beach, will be inducted by Bishop John Wilson on August 28.

Rev. James Reynolds will retire from the parish of Bellarine on January 1, 1987.

Rev. Geoffrey Taylor retired from Christ Church, Essendon, on May 18, 1986.

Rev. Christopher Thomas died on March 21, 1986.

DIOCESE OF RIVERINA

Rev. Philip Anderson, Rector of Berrigan, has accepted the parish of Corryong, in the diocese of Wangaratta. He will take up the appointment in August.

Rev. Max Cowle left the parish of The Rocks after acting as locum tenens.

Rev. Dallas Hinds has resigned as Rector of the Parish of Coolamon and will live in Barrooga.

Retired Bible College principal move

A 'locum tenens' in Perth

The Rev. Raymond N. Wheeler, recently retired Principal of the Sydney Missionary and Bible College, has accepted the invitation of the Archbishop of Perth to be locum tenens at St. Matthew's Church, Shenton Park, in Perth, for a period of twelve months.

The Rector of the Parish, Dr. David Secombe, will be Guest Lecturer in New Testament at the Union Theological Seminary in India for the next three months before proceeding to Germany for nine months study leave.

St. Matthew's is a large congregation, including university students, and is known as a centre of Bible teaching ministry and evangelism. The School of Christian Ministry forms part of the ongoing life of the congregation and Mr. Wheeler will be continuing the Bible teaching for which he has become known. At the same time he will be seeking to develop a programme of theological education in the congregation in association with the School of Ministry.

International Family Project

Consultancy in Kenya

The Rev. Alan Nichols, Coordinator of the International Project on Family and Community, announced today that the project's second consultancy is to take place in Nairobi, Kenya throughout July 1986.

The key theme of the consultancy is to be "Rural-Urban Drift and its impact on Traditional Family Life".

The visiting consultant will be Mr. John Rea from Scotland. The local consultant will be Mrs. Penny Serwanga with some assistance from the Rev. David Gitari, Bishop of Mount Kenya East.

For the past 10 years Mr. Rea has been Divisional Director of Child Care with Dr. Barnardo's Organisation in Edinburgh — a

large international child and family care organisation. Mr. Rea will be carrying out the consultancy as part of his three month sabbatical leave, with the sponsorship of the Barnardo's Organisation.

Mr. Rea is an active member of the Scottish Episcopal Church. He was involved in the 1981 "Partners-in-Mission" consultation in Scotland and is currently a member of the Diocesan Social Responsibilities Commission, which is presently involved in establishing a day rehabilitation project for young adults.

The key local consultant, Mrs. Penny Serwanga, is a social worker with African Evangelistic Enterprise, based in Nairobi, and is working with aid and development projects in connection with Anglican parishes.

Bishop Gitari is a consultant theologian for the Anglican Consultative Council and has built up an international reputation on matters relating to traditional African cultures, polygamy and indigenous theology, among other issues. As such, he will be an important resource person for the consultancy.

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Church Services

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 Adam. Visitors welcome.

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

CANBERRA: St. Matthew's Wanniasse (Cnr. McBryde Cree and Laurens St) Services: 8.15 a.m. 10 a.m. and 7.00 p.m. All welcome. Rev. Paul Watkins.

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Black ministers in despair and fear

Bp Foord of South Africa on Australian visit

Bishop Dudley Foord and his wife Elizabeth will be returning to Australia for five weeks from late July until the end of August.

In November, 1983, Dudley Foord, Rector of the Sydney Parish of St. Ives, was elected to be a bishop of the Church of England in South Africa.

While in Sydney, Bishop Foord will undertake many speaking and preaching engagements. He has also agreed to an in-depth interview with the Australian Church Record.

Before returning to Sydney the Bishop will have attended the Billy Graham Conference on world evangelisation held in Amsterdam.



Bishop Dudley Foord.

Writing from his home in Newlands before leaving South Africa, the Bishop spoke of the country as a "bubbling cauldron."

"South Africa represents a fascinating mix where three great world cultures meet — the western European, the black African (consisting of at least nine tribal groups with pronounced hostility one to the other), and the eastern Asia-Indian culture," he said.

"The whole situation is fragmented and volatile. Unrest is too mild a word for the naked aggression, the violence, beatings and death."

"In Natal alone there are 15 murders a day."

"Violence escalates and will determine the destiny of the nation."

"The more pressure exerted by the Government seeking to maintain law and order, the more the violence is provoked. Astute observers are saying that the Blacks demand the full cake or nothing. It seems clear that the political situation will get worse until there is some sort of Black power sharing at the top echelons of Government."

"What will happen is impossible to predict," Bishop Foord said.

The Bishop went on to say that many people had expressed to him the feeling

of not knowing "what to think" about the political/social situation in South Africa.

"You are part of the majority!" he said.

Government committed to one citizenship

"The Government has stated that it is committed to equal education, one citizenship for all South Africans, the rule of Law."

"These developments mean different things to different people. Most whites in South Africa will at least concede that they are significant."

"Older Blacks tend to recognise that the circumstances in which they find themselves are immeasurably changed from what they experienced when they were in their teens. Younger Blacks see current reform as a mere tinkering with a system that they reject in its entirety, while foreign governments and media are not only confused about the substance of South African reform but often choose to disbelieve its sincerity of purpose anyway", the Bishop said.

Bishop Foord said that violence in black towns has now reached such a pitch where it cannot be seen just as a form of political protest with a defined objective. It has almost become a way of life.

"A number of our Black ministers are despairing and frightened — finding it almost impossible to continue ministering in the face of intimidation and pressure that is exerted when they will not become involved in violence."

"One thing is clear. The Gospel is being hindered because of the unrest and violence," Bishop Foord said.

While visiting northern Namibia recently Bishop Foord and his wife visited the leader of the Ovambo churches who is also the Chief Minister of the Ovambo Administration.

"Two days ago a landmine was discovered in his driveway. How we thank the Lord for His providential care of Mr. Kalangula (AND of us)," Bishop Foord writes.

He said that Peter Kalangula needs the prayers of Christians as does the Ovambo church struggling in a situation of unrest.

"The first night we were there a power station was blown up just a few kilometres away."

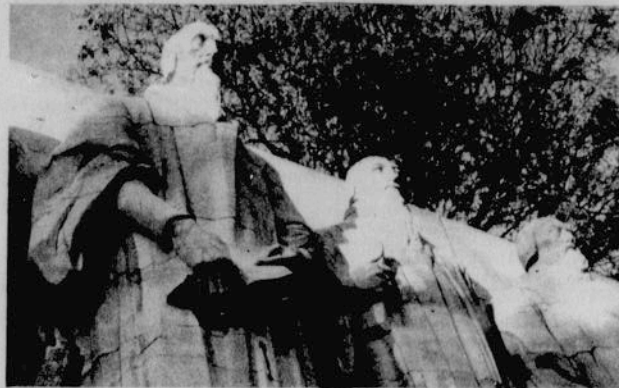
Bishop Foord spends about 50% of his time in travel.

"This can be very wearing and exhausting. We are, therefore, exposed to high risk and danger. We are thankful for God's kindness in protection," Bishop Foord said.

Calvinists unite in Geneva

Celebrating Reformation

Representatives of Reformed Churches throughout the world gathered at the invitation of the National Protestant Church of Geneva to join in its commemorative celebration of the 450th anniversary of the Reformation there.



John Knox (right) shows solidarity with Theodore Beza and John Calvin (left) at the centre of the Reformation wall-monument in Geneva.

The decision of the Genevans in 1536 to "live according to the holy Gospel" was followed almost immediately by the first call to John Calvin to fill the vacancy at the cathedral. There also followed the systematic teaching and leadership which created the distinctive "Reformed" style among Protestant Churches and which decisively influenced many countries — not least Scotland and England.

Compassed about by an even greater cloud of witnesses, the delegates joined several thousand Genevan and other Swiss Protestants for two great ceremonies, a Whitsun Communion service in and outside St. Peter's Cathedral and an evening act of commemoration at the Reformers' monument on the old city wall, dominated by the statues of John Calvin, Theodore Beza, the Swiss Reformer William Farel, and John Knox.

Before the evening ceremony there were services in the local Genevan churches, including one in the *Auditoire* (where Calvin lectured) for its present tenants, the Scots, Dutch, and Italian Waldensian congregations. The Very Rev. Professor Tom Torrance preached there on the theme of grace, which he described as God giving Himself freely and unconditionally in Jesus Christ. At all the services and ceremonies the honours due to Calvin were set in his own context of giving all glory to God.

Professor Torrance was also one of the ministers from several countries who shared in presiding at the Lord's Table on Whitsunday in the cathedral and on the square outside, at the service which

began with the Old Hundred sung to its Genevan French words: "Vous tous qui la terre habitez..."

During the week of celebrations the international delegates visited the neighbouring Swiss canton of Vaud, also celebrating its Reformation anniversary, and took part in a World Reformed Forum in the Geneva Ecumenical Centre.

Too sociological

There the themes included dialogue with non-Christian religions and attempts to relate the teaching and theology of Calvin to modern themes of social justice, women's rights, and ecological stewardship of God's creation. Although some delegates found the approach rather too sociological for their taste, Asian and African Church representatives took the lead in ensuring that modern concerns were set in the context of the Gospel and Scripture.

However delegates also heard several times during the week from the Rev. Allan Boesak, World Reformed President and South African radical leader, of the need to identify with struggles of the oppressed. He told them that Reformed Christianity "had never been a peaceful religion".

In all about 300 delegates attended from about 120 Reformed Churches and from organisations. They came from about 70 countries, with (apart from the other Swiss churches) the largest contingents being from Indonesia and Korea. There were also numerous

Continued page 12

Archbishop of Sydney joins Bishop of London

Joint Chairman of the AAM

The Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev. Donald Robinson, has agreed to join the Bishop of London as joint chairman of the Association for the Apostolic Ministry, in which Anglican Catholics and Evangelicals campaign together against the ordination of women to the priesthood.

The announcement was made on Tuesday, when the AAM welcomed the publication of the correspondence between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Vatican — and especially of

comments by Cardinal Willebrands. The comments were "extremely illuminating," said a statement signed by the steering committee chairman, Mr. Maurice Chandler, and the joint secretaries, the Rev. Roger Beckwith and Mr. Arthur Leggett.

They "constitute a clear and consistent theological position with which many of the members of AAM would want to identify," the statement said.

(CHURCH TIMES)

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MARANATHA

Mary's Song of Joy

Luke 1:46-55

Who experiences most joy at Christmas? Children. Why? Why does the joy of our childhood Christmases wear off as most of us become adults?

Can we recapture the real joy of Christmas?

Take a lesson from Mary in this passage. Her so-called "song" which is actually a poem that she said, has the keynote of JOY. (v46-7)

And so it should, you are probably thinking! After all she was to be the mother of our Lord and had everything to be joyful about. But in fact her words go much further than herself. They have the key to the real joy of Christmas for any and everyone. Consider first:-

The setting of the song

Mary is:-

- visited by the angel to announce the conception — fear and questions

- told that Elizabeth, her relative, was miraculously pregnant also

- went to visit Elizabeth and received an unusual welcome (v41-45). Elizabeth burst out into prophecy and even Elizabeth's unborn baby jumped for joy.

When Elizabeth calls Mary "the mother of my Lord" and thus confirms the angel's word to her previously, Mary responds with these words.

The substance of the song

Overall it focuses on who God is to Mary — "my Saviour" (v. 47) and what He has done, not only for her but others too.

i) for Mary herself. (v. 48-49.)

God has taken special notice of her even though she was a nobody. He didn't choose a great one, but he chose her.

He has done great things for her. Her song may well have been "To God be the glory, great things He has done!"

ii) for others who fear God like Mary does, i.e. they believe his word and live their lives by it. (v. 50-53.)

God has done mighty deeds of deliverance ("arm" of the Lord often refers back to the Exodus) (v. 51).

He delights to fend for those who are disadvantaged (v. 52,53).

iii) for the nation of Israel, i.e. God's chosen people. (v. 54,55) God is sending someone to help his people because he is faithful to his covenant promises; this is not a recent decision by God, but something He promised 2000 years earlier to Abraham.

But is the key to real joy to be found simply in what God has done for us or others?

Many people may be impressed with God's great deeds but theirs is not necessarily a response of joy. They rather think, "That is what God is there for — to provide our needs, keep us safe from harm, heal us from our ills, keep the world going smoothly. And if he doesn't he's letting us down."

In other words, they expect, even think that they deserve all the good that God can turn on.

But this is not Mary's attitude. This brings us to

The significance of the song

If goes further than what God has done, and so must we if we would recapture the real joy of Christmas. The KEY to joy is RECOGNISING GOD'S MERCY & GRACE in the things he has done.

Not the reference to God's favour or mercy in each of those 3 sections.

for Mary herself (v. 48)

for others (v. 50 refers directly to God's mercy)

for Israel (v. 54 does the same.)

Mary doesn't just consider God's great deeds, but realises that they are undeserved.

This is the aspect we too easily lose when we change from children to adults. Children know their dependence on others, and that their presents come by favour and are not really deserved, hence their joy.

But we adults can become so burdened, even enslaved, to the expectations of buying presents, sending cards, cooking meals, and 101 other jobs that need to be done that we think anything we might receive is what we deserved anyway. And there is little or no joy in receiving only what you deserve, or think you deserve.

Of course most of us take time each Christmas to think about God's great gift of his Son Jesus, but if we would know even greater joy we must go that extra step. Take time to stop and meditate not just on the greatness of God's gift but on how undeserved it is, i.e. focus more on God's mercy.

Just as an undeserved bonus gives more joy than the weekly pay packet, so a fresh realisation of the mercy of God in sending us His Son to save us from the awfulness of eternal hell will rekindle real joy in our hearts.

Robert Mirrington

Sydney's Maori community filmed

New Zealand TV documentary produced



Left to Right: Public Relations Executive for Television New Zealand Colin Hindson, producer of the programme Naomi Trigg, Archdeacon Kingi Ihaka and Canon Allan Whitham, General Secretary of the Home Mission Society.

TELEVISION NEW ZEALAND presented a preview of their documentary on the MAORI COMMUNITY IN SYDNEY recently. It was organized and conducted in a typical Maori fashion. The chaplain to the Maori community in Sydney, The Ven. Kingi M. Ihaka MBE, welcomed everyone.

Special guests included representatives from the Home Mission Society, the General Secretary, Canon Allan Whitham, the Communications Manager, Mr. Stephen Blatchford, and the Field Officer, the Rev. Brian Watt, accompanied by their wives.

Television New Zealand was represented by Colin Hindson, the Public Relations Executive, and Naomi Trigg, the researcher and producer of the documentary. Maureen McInerney, who was the Executive Producer in charge of Religious Television with the ABC in Sydney, at the time of the filming, was also present and able to view the final production.

Naomi Trigg explained that, following a year's research into the Maori Church in Sydney, she was able to come and personally visit the work for three days last December. The actual filming followed, after negotiating with Maureen McInerney of the ABC, and consultation with the Church. The documentary was filmed in four days but the finished production was screened in half an hour.

After the guests were seated, Colin

Hindson spoke on the significance of the occasion. This was the first time in Australia that a film from Television New Zealand was ever presented at such a preview. He explained that Maori programmes are very important in New Zealand and this is just the start for Australia. With a New Zealand population of over 30,000 living in Sydney, the interest and need is here.

Naomi Trigg explained her appreciation for the helpful assistance from the Home Mission Society, right from the start of the project.

Then the video was screened. It told of the Maori's ceremonies, unique to their culture and tradition. Interviews with both Canon Whitham and Archdeacon Ihaka told in detail the commencement and need of the work amongst the Maori population.

The Maori Church in Redfern is a haven for many of all denominations, where they meet together as one. In New Zealand tribal ancestries may have kept many apart but here, in a new land, Archdeacon Ihaka hopes to find a way through such cultural barriers.

The sensitivity and years of experience in the religious life of the Maoris by Naomi Trigg comes through in all its clarity, without dodging any of the issues that confront Archdeacon Ihaka, his congregation and the Maoris of Sydney.

(RAMON WILLIAMS)

Commonwealth Games 'Sports Ministry'

Christians come together for outreach

Australia's Sports & Leisure Ministry has been kept informed of developments on 'Sports Ministry' for the Edinburgh Commonwealth Games commencing on July 24th.

Ministry Co-Ordinator the Reverend Mark Tronson revealed that Kenyan Bishop the Reverend Davis Gitari is the official Chaplain for these Games.

Sports & Leisure Ministry's sister body in the United Kingdom "Christians in Sport" will be providing athletes and officials with "sports ministry".

Director of "Christians in Sport" the Reverend Andrew Wingfield Digby from Oxford will be chief assistant to Bishop Gitari along with the Edinburgh Scotland "Christians in Sport" team led by the Reverend Simon Cunningham.

Bible Society

The Bible Society of Scotland will be providing the focal point of the Christian welcome — an excellent leaflet "Winners Every Time" has been produced — their press release states:

"The comparison between athletic effort and prowess with the Christian life is developed through appropriate Biblical passages"

The text is clear with great action photographs and the leaflet contains a message for believers and non-believers alike.

The Bible Society have also produced a pocket sized edition of the "New

Testament" for presentation to all athletes and officials who would like one.

"Christians in Sport" have provided for that New Testament an insert — "the readers guide for athletes".

Other Activities

Local Christian churches of all denominations are providing "hospitality" for visiting athletes and officials who desire Christian fellowship.

Numbers of other groups such as "Youth with a Mission" will be there ministering.

On July 20th four days prior to the commencement of the Commonwealth Games a Tent Mission Open Air Rally will be conducted with guest speaker the Reverend Ian Leitch — a well known open air evangelist.

In Princess Street Gardens (Edinburgh) Christian athletes will be giving their personal testimonies of Christian Faith & Commitment to Jesus Christ at 3.00 p.m. Sunday July 27th.

"The Commonwealth Games are the 'friendly games' and this is nowhere more to be seen than in the Christian witness that Jesus Christ is Lord. Missionaries have been instrumental in much of the development of the nations that make up the Commonwealth — in areas of education and medicine — health — and the message of the King. It is fitting that Commonwealth Games officials recognise this and endorse such Ministry" Reverend Tronson stated.

Rome and Canterbury exchange letters

Don't let MOW come between us

The full text of the correspondence between the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury on the ordination of women has now been published. We print the full text of the letters.

To the Most Reverend Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury

The long but necessary task of evaluating the Final Report of the first Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission, in which both our Communions are now engaged, is a vital part of that journey of faith on which we have embarked together in our efforts to re-establish full ecclesial communion. It has been a joy to learn how seriously this task is being taken in so many countries, and how this study is frequently associated with joint action and common witness which express, as far as possible, the degree of communion which has already been brought about between us by the grace of God.

This degree of communion, indeed God's very call to us to be one, also bids us face frankly the differences which still separate us. While the Catholic Church must always be sensitive to the heritage which she has in common with other Christians, she must nevertheless base frank and constructive dialogue upon clarity regarding her own positions.

It was in this spirit that, in an important exchange of letters in 1975-1976, Pope Paul VI affirmed to Archbishop Coggan the position of the Catholic Church concerning the admission of women to priestly ordination, a step at that time being considered by several Churches of the Anglican Communion. The reasons that he then stated briefly for the Catholic Church's adherence to the long tradition on this matter were set out at length by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in the Declaration Inter Insigniores of 15 October, 1976. This same position was again stated clearly by observers from the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity during the hearing on this subject at the Lambeth Conference of 1978.

I know that Your Grace is well aware of the position of the Catholic Church and of the theological grounds which lead her to maintain it; indeed I am grateful that, in

the recent debate in the General Synod of the Church of England, you referred to the implications of this question for Anglican relations with the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. But the outcome of that debate prompts me to reaffirm with all brotherly frankness the continuing adherence of the Catholic Church to the practice and principles so clearly stated by Pope Paul VI.

With his well-known affection for the Anglican Communion and his deep desire for Christian unity, it was with profound sadness that Pope Paul VI contemplated a step which he saw as introducing into our dialogue "an element of grave difficulty", even "a threat". Since that time we have celebrated together the progress towards reconciliation between our two Communions. But in those same years the increase in the number of Anglican Churches which admit, or are preparing to admit, women to priestly ordination constitutes, in the eyes of the Catholic Church, an increasingly serious obstacle to that progress.

Pope Paul VI stated that "obstacles do not destroy mutual commitment to a search for reconciliation". We too were "encouraged by our reliance on the grace of God and by all that we have seen of the power of that grace in the ecumenical movement of our time" when we set up the new Commission, whose task includes study of "all that hinders the mutual recognition of the ministries of our two Communions" (Common Declaration, 29 May, 1982, No. 3).

It is in that same hope, in the charity that "hopes all things" (1 Cor. 13:7) but which seeks the unity of Christ's Body by "speaking in love" (Eph. 4:15), that I write these words to you, my dear Brother, as we celebrate the Birth of the Lord who came in "the fulness of time to unite all things" (Eph. 1:10).

From the Vatican, 20 December, 1984.
JOANNES PAULUS II

Archbishop's reply

Lambeth Palace London SE1 7JU, 11th December, 1985.

Your Holiness,

The Churches of the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church are fully committed to the quest for full ecclesial unity. No one, however, anticipates that the path towards unity will be without difficulties. One such difficulty, I fully recognise, is the difference of thinking and action about the ordination of women to the ministerial priesthood.

The receipt of your letter of December last year on this question therefore prompted me to confidential consultation with the Primates of the autonomous provinces of the Anglican Communion throughout the world. They also judged your letter to be of great importance and by various means themselves sought the counsel of their own Provinces. Accordingly it is only now that I am able to make a substantive reply to your letter in the light of the responses I have received from the different parts of the Anglican Communion.

Before all else I want to thank Your Holiness for the constructive and frank character of your letter. The question of the admission of women to the ministerial priesthood is a divisive matter not only between our Churches but also within them. It is surely a sign of both the seriousness and the maturity of Anglican-Roman Catholic relations that we can exchange letters on a subject surrounded by controversy.

I read your letter as an expression of that responsibility in pastoral care for the unity of all God's people which is part of the office of the Bishop of Rome. You may be certain that I received your letter in the same spirit of brotherly love with which it was sent and also intend this reply to reflect that "speaking the truth in love" of which your letter spoke.

In this fraternal spirit I am bound to report that — although Anglican opinion is itself divided — those Churches which have admitted women to priestly ministry have done so for serious doctrinal

reasons. I have therefore felt an obligation to explain this more fully in a letter to His Eminence Cardinal Jan Willebrands, President of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, whose recent letter to the Co-Chairman of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission now raises the discussion of the reconciliation of ministries to some prominence in the theological dialogue between our Churches. I fully realise what a serious obstacle the actual admission of women to the priesthood appears to place in the way of such a possibility.

I would therefore propose to Your Holiness the urgent need for a joint study of the question of the ordination of women to the ministerial priesthood, especially in respect of its consequences for the mutual reconciliation of our Churches and the recognition of their ministries. Indeed such a study seems already implicit in the mandate of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission expressed in our Common Declaration at Canterbury of the 29th of May, 1982.

Though the difficulty is grave, to face it together would, I suggest, give real substance to the hope expressed at the end of your letter. While neither of us can underestimate the seriousness of this obstacle, I know that we are both convinced that our two Communions ought to maintain the mature trust in each other which has been built up over recent years.

Because we have a grave responsibility to continue and intensify our co-operation and dialogue in everything which promotes our growth towards unity, there is a special obligation to tackle such a potentially serious difficulty. In this I believe our two communities will be sustained by their hope and confidence in the Holy Spirit, who alone can bring unity to fulfilment — a fulfilment we need to strive for without wearying and to receive in humility as his gift.

Your Holiness' Brother in Christ,
ROBERT CANTUAR,
Archbishop of Canterbury
(CHURCH TIMES)

Only a Goddess will satisfy feminists

They want a lot more than ordination

The Sydney Morning Herald recently ran the following report of comments made by Dr. Phyllis Trible, a United States theologian currently visiting Australia, on feminists' attitudes to theology.

CANBERRA: Theologians were developing the study of the goddess, or feminine form of god, according to a visiting United States theologian.

Dr. Phyllis Trible said the ordination of women on its own would not bring about the equality of women in the Church.

Despite hundreds of women priests in the Episcopal (Anglican) Church in the United States, some women theologians had become so fed up with the male-dominated church they had given up the traditional idea of God, she said.

Dr. Trible, who is Professor of Old Testament at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, addressed the Australian Council of Churches general meeting in Canberra at the weekend.

She said women's ordination must be done, but Christian feminists were calling for a lot more than that. They wanted genuine "repentance" from men.

"If not, changes like ordination for women can be perverted to perpetuate what you are trying to change," she said.

Post-Christian feminist theologians were developing what they called "theology" — the study of the goddess, Dr. Trible said. They were women who were fed up with the patriarchal male church.

"They think that the Bible is so hopelessly patriarchal that they are ignoring it and approaching theology on the grounds of women's experiences and women's stories," she said.

"I understand those who think there is no hope, but I love the Bible and I refuse to give it up to patriarchy. I'll stay with the scriptures and I'll wrestle with them and say that I will not let you go until you bless me."

Dr. Trible, who is on a lecture tour of Australia, spoke to the Council of Churches delegates on feminist interpretations of the Bible, particularly the story of "Eve and Adam".

Careful study of the original Hebrew revealed that woman was not created to be subordinate to man, and that Eve did not tempt Adam at all, Dr. Trible said.

"The man only rules over her after they disobeyed God, but the Church used that portion as its justification for male domination," she said. Feminism had to be born to correct that misinterpretation.

ACC tackles the status of women

Church language criticised

The Australian Council of Churches' Commission on the Status of Women presented a comprehensive report to the General Meeting on several important issues facing women in the Church. The statistics for 1986 indicate that three times as many women as men live below the poverty line and 800,000 children depend on them. Yet, while society refuses to make adequate provision for women and their children, it continues to define women in terms of motherhood. Consequently, infertile women feel they have failed as women and are now under enormous pressure to subject themselves to new technologies of invitro fertilisation. The rate of success here is extremely low and those women who do not conceive see themselves as having doubly failed in their womanhood.

At the bottom of a great deal of the structural poverty, injustice and oppression of women is the power relationship between men and women. Here the Church had played its part in reinforcing the common view that women were subservient to men and of less value to God and to society. From this flowed lower wages (on average about two thirds of men's pay), lower self-esteem, lesser influence on the structures and decisions that affect their lives and, most devastatingly, the increasing violence of

men against women throughout society.

The Women's Commission presented an audio-visual programme demonstrating the effect of domestic violence on women at all levels of society. The programme emphasised the negative role played by many church people and pastors.

Church language, in hymns, prayers and in our speaking about God, reinforced women's sense of exclusion from the human race, the Meeting was told. Professor Phyllis Trible, visiting lecturer from the United States of America where she is Professor of Sacred Literature at Union Theological Seminary, explained that much of this language and imagery stemmed from a patriarchal interpretation of scripture. Using examples from the Books of Genesis, Judges and Ruth she demonstrated how a closer scrutiny of the Hebrew and a willingness to see the context of the Biblical stories revealed that God has created men and women equal and that women were responsible for new beginnings and creative understandings of history in which hope for the future of the world could be found. "Feminism had to be born," she said. "It is the prophetic voice of our time, calling us all, women and men, to our true creaturehood."

A change for a City Bible study after 18 years

Everything changes in a dynamic city like Sydney — even the Friday Bible studies. It has been a regular feature at lunch time on Fridays in the City of Sydney for the past 18 years in St. Andrew's House.

Not that it has been meeting for all that time in St. Andrew's House. It began in the Lower Chapter House of St. Andrew's Cathedral in September 1968. Bishop John Reid led the initial studies with a series on Mark's Gospel. Bishop John Reid and Canon John Chapman have been the "anchor" men who regularly took series themselves using guest expositors from time to time. Over this period of time studies have been given on almost all the books of the Bible.

In the earlier days many obstacles had to be overcome including noise — the traffic in Bathurst Street, the Choir School who were replaced in time by the noise in the building of St. Andrew's House. But when St. Andrew's House was completed the Bible studies, now known as Bible

Talks, moved to a more ideal spot — St. Andrew's House Auditorium.

Because many of the regular attenders found difficulty in getting to the Cathedral end of town, three other similar groups were begun. They meet at: The University Law School, cnr Phillip & King Streets, 1.15 Thursdays, Scots Church Hall, Margaret Street, 1.15 Fridays, MLC Building, Miller Street, North Sydney, 1.05 Tuesdays.

The numbers attending these four groups average about 350 on a given week.

For several reasons, which are mainly administrative, it has been decided to change the time of meetings at St. Andrew's House Auditorium from FRIDAYS to THURSDAYS. This will take place from AUGUST 7th. The first series of 6 talks from that day will be on COLOSSIANS given by CANON JOHN CHAPMAN. So that's St. Andrew's House Auditorium, Sydney Square 1.15 Thursdays. All welcome!

New home for missions to seamen

Move to Pyrmont planned

The Sydney Bethel Union Trustees announce the purchase of the building at 51 Murray Street, Pyrmont known as the "Exhibition and Design Centre" as a future home for the Missions to Seamen and as an investment.

The Chairman of the Bethel Union Trust, Mr. J. G. Denton, said "The property, which overlooks the Darling

Harbour Scheme site, is in a convenient location for seamen visiting the Port of Sydney."

The Sydney Bethel Union is a Trust dating from the 1850s, authorised by an Act of the NSW Parliament and exists for the welfare of seafarers. It contributes substantially to the income of the Mission.



Lesley Hicks

I remember once discussing with a wise and godly Christian one of those perennial thorny issues amongst us — the free-will/predestination controversy, I think it was. He quoted a mentor of his: "Whatever side of the boat you're on, I'll be on the other side keeping the balance." I've always found that helpful. I tend to be like that in arguments — with ardent exponents of one side I take the other, and vice versa, if you know what I mean. In other words, I can be an intolerable fence-sitter!

There are many books on the Holy Spirit; no longer could the Spirit by any stretch of imagination be called the neglected member of the Trinity. Jim Packer's **Keep in Step with the Spirit** was published by IVP in 1984, (\$10.50) I have just got round to reading it. It is full of good things — niddle-of-the-boat, biblically balanced material as one would expect from an evangelical theologian of his stature.

Like all Packer's books it is primarily a study book, and if I had taken time to look up every reference I would have been further enriched. But not all readers will agree with all he says, inevitably. For charismatics and Pentecostals, in particular he has, besides warm tributes, some strong warnings and doctrinal disagreements. He is fundamentally generous towards the movement,

In step with the spirit

though. He applies to it the two basic tests of whether a movement is truly of God — the credal test and the moral test: "the Spirit's constant task is to make men discern and acknowledge the glory of Jesus Christ. So the credal test, for charismatics as for all other professed Christians, is the degree of honour paid by confession, attitude and action to the Son whom the Father has made Lord.

"The moral test is given by statements such as those of John, that he who truly knows and loves God will show it by keeping his commandments, avoiding all sin and loving his brethren in Christ... When we apply these tests to the charismatic movement, it becomes plain at once that God is in it... Its main effect everywhere is to promote robust Trinitarian faith, personal fellowship with the divine Saviour and Lord, repentance, obedience, and love to fellow Christians... plus a zeal for evangelistic outreach that puts the staid sort of churchman to shame." P185. Packer also says: "The charismatic movement is a God-sent gadfly to goad the whole church into seeking more of totality before the Lord than most Christians seem to know. Face the challenge!" P232.

He proceeds to draw up a credit and debit balance sheet for the movement — 12 plusses and 10 minuses. Christ-centredness heads the first list; elitism the second. He also includes an historical survey of holiness movements, including Wesleyan perfectionism and Keswick "higher life" teaching, and a consideration of the interpretation of Paul's experience in Romans 7, and leans to the Augustinian doctrinal approach.

Packer, like John Stott and Billy Graham, is generous towards the strengths of charismatics without declaring himself one with them. I respect that; I suppose that is my own position. It hurts me, even though I have never received the gift with scorn — "like a lot of chooks cackling", one said it sounds like. Packer doubts whether modern glossolalia correspond to New Testament tongues. But he accepts that they have spiritual value. He questions modern prophecy too, except as biblical exposition.

On the whole, in keeping with my middle-of-the-boat principle, I'm inclined to think card-carrying charismatics ought to read fair but cautionary books like Packer's, while anti-charismatics would do well to read one like Rob Warner's **Rediscovering the Spirit** (Hodder & Stoughton, 1986, \$6.95). Rob Warner is a former Religious books editor of Hodder in England. Michael Cassidy has written an enthusiastic foreword to his book.

The books have much in common doctrinally. Warner has read Packer and quotes from him; both use the same metaphor of the work of the Holy Spirit as the one who spotlights Christ, like the lights unobtrusively placed to illuminate the magnificence of York Minster.

But Warner identifies with the charismatic movement personally. He expresses most of the same cautions as Packer, but having received the gift of tongues himself, after initial hostility, he cannot denigrate it; nor does he regard it as mandatory, any more than St Paul does. But people like the one who compared tongues-speaking to cackling chooks are in danger of despising not only the gift, but the Giver.

Michael Cassidy said in his introduction that he found the chapter on the gifts of Spirit especially useful. He also commented that the book is likely to unify rather than divide God's people. Recommended.

Meditative prayer:

Meditative prayer is "in". Just walk a Christian bookshop and look at the shelves. The books on meditative prayer, meditation itself and the great Christian mystics take up space they didn't do even ten years ago.

Why the Change?

Some suggest that, at last, the Christian church has re-awakened to the resources found in its mystical tradition. Nearly 2,000 years of rich Christian experience is now being drawn on. Julian of Norwich, St. Theresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross, not to forget Brother Lawrence (who has never quite gone out of vogue) are being read enthusiastically by Protestants.¹ The Catholic tradition, of course, has never forgotten these saints.

Still others point out that we live in a distracted, fragmented world. Too much noise and too little time to oneself. It is all too easy, therefore, to become split personalities without a unifying core. The Bible becomes dull to read and prayer as empty as a used can of Coke. There is no sense of presence — the Presence. But, through meditative techniques, through contemplation and other experiences (e.g. charismatic) Christians are finding depth again.² They are learning to be still and know that God really is God (Ps. 46:10).

A more cynical approach argues that meditation is a practice indulged in by non-Christian religions, as well as the Christian one. Moreover, this century has seen the spawning of many new religious movements in the West, despite so-called secularization. Some of these new movements draw on the meditative, mystical traditions of the East (e.g. T.M.). Whether the meditation is Eastern, Western or a blend, certain features are common: the search for an experience that brings the sacred into one's life and beneficial changes into one's personality, in the context of a supportive group and by means of clearly defined techniques.³

The aim of this article is to examine Christian meditative prayer in the light of

preferred distance to closeness. Ultimately God came in the person of His Son to invite us to intimacy once again. Jesus provides the model of such intimacy: he is the Son who always hears the Father, always obeys. Through the Holy Spirit we can join in his intimacy that Jesus continued to provide as the risen Lord.

Foster sums up the biblical evidence:

"... the wonderful news is that Jesus has not stopped acting and speaking. He is resurrected and at work in our world. He is not idle, nor has he developed laryngitis. He is alive and among us as our Priest to forgive us, our Prophet to teach us, our King to rule us, our Shepherd to guide us."⁴

Furthermore, Foster maintains, "all the saints" bear witness to the on-going reality of the risen Christ still speaking through experience. From Catholics to Protestants, from Eastern Orthodoxy to Western Free Churches the testimony remains the same. Christians may "live in his presence in uninterrupted fellowship".⁵

"unlike Eastern meditation... the journey undertaken is never inwards, but outwards"

How, then, does meditative prayer fit into this scheme? Foster argues that meditative prayer establishes inward fellowship with the risen Christ, who desires a perpetual Eucharistic Feast in the inner sanctuary of the heart.⁶ Christ is standing at the door knocking, seeking entry, desiring intimate fellowship with every believer (Rev. 3:20).

What then is involved in opening the door? Foster suggests that meditative prayer has three steps. First: "centring down" involves the believer spending time with the Lord, letting anxiety and tension drop away. The use of the imagination is important here. He recommends visualizing the presence of Christ seated in a chair opposite you as a means of focussing your attention.⁸

The experience of "centring down" will lead to repentance, the confession of sins, as well as the next step which is "beholding the Lord". (In mystical parlance, according to Foster, this is "the gaze of the soul"). The use of tongues may be one means by which the believer so beholds the Lord. However, using scriptural texts is often the best way. Through reading the Scriptures with the heart as well as the head, the believer sees the holy within the Bible and is initiated into the reality, of which the text speaks.⁹

This special way of reading the Bible he describes as "divine reading" and his description has its roots in a practice of the Western church that goes back to the early church itself. (Eastern Orthodoxy has never abandoned it.) In keeping with this tradition (*lectio divina*), Foster recommends using some of the Christian classics, as well as the Bible. He suggests Augustine's *Confessions*, A. W. Tozer's *The Pursuit of God*, St. Theresa of Avila's *Interior Castle* and Bonhoeffer's *Cost of Discipleship*.¹⁰

The last step in meditative prayer is "the prayer of listening". The Christian in meditating experiences unifying grace from God and finds his or her "spirit on tiptoe alert and listening". The goal is "an inward attentiveness to the divine

A critical look

Graham Cole



Graham Cole is an Anglican clergyman, lecturer at Moore College in Christian Thought and has a wife and three children. Amongst his interests are reading, writing poetry and seeing films.

whisper" and possession of God in great tranquility (Brother Lawrence).¹¹

Foster is aware of the practical difficulties with such praying (questions of the when, the where, the how, the how long and so on). These he addresses with much wisdom. For example he points out how posture affects prayer. He is also aware of the reality of the devil as a deceiver and recommends praying a prayer of protection as one meditates.¹²

Overall, Foster clearly argues his case for meditative praying. He both illustrates and applies his material with a view to deepening our Christian lives. His great desire is that other Christians join "the adventure of the inner sanctuary of the soul".¹³

But ought we?

Foster's presentation examined

The aim of this article is not to lambast Christian meditation. As shall be argued, the Bible itself speaks of the activity of meditation. However, the question must be asked as to whether Foster's approach, with its roots deep in the Christian mystical tradition is advocating a biblical way to pray. Is it explicitly taught by the Bible writers and exhibited in their lives and those of biblical characters?

Let's start with the Old Testament revelation. Surprisingly, Foster leaves out the Psalms in his biblical survey. For the Psalms speak of meditation. The very first psalm in Israel's songbook tells the reader that the man who meditates of God's law is blessed (Ps. 1:1). This psalm, in fact, illustrates one of the principal objects of meditation — the law of the Lord. Other objects of meditation in the psalms are God's mighty works (Ps. 77:12) and God Himself (Ps. 63:6). Often the activity of meditating is paralleled with that of remembering what God has done for His people in history (Ps. 77:11-12).¹⁴

Meditating in the Psalms is a kind of thinking. And unlike Eastern meditation or Foster's own suggestion, the journey undertaken is never inwards, but outwards: the focus is on God and not on experiencing God in the depths of the soul. J. I. Packer sums up the biblical approach in fine fashion:

Meditation is the activity of calling to mind and thinking over, and dwelling on, and applying to oneself, the various things that are known about the works and ways and purposes and promises of God. It is an activity of holy thought, consciously performed in the presence of God, under the eye of God, by the help of God, as a means of communion with God.¹⁵

Thus, Packer rightly distinguishes meditating from communion with God. The former is a means to the latter. Biblical meditation is not praying, although it may and ought to lead to prayer.

"Jesus... gave no techniques, ... instead he gave petitions about the Kingdom"

What then is biblical prayer?

As Foster rightly points out the Christian looks to Christ as the teacher and the prayer model. But significantly, when Jesus was asked by his disciples to teach them to pray, He gave no techniques, offered no steps to follow, nor mentioned the pursuit of any particular experiences. Instead He gave petitions about the Kingdom (e.g. Matt. 6:5-15 and especially, Luke 11:1-4).

Petition is the defining feature of biblical praying. Petition (asking God for those things consistent with His character and Kingdom purposes) is our proper acknowledgement of His sovereignty over us, His fatherly concern for us and our availability to His purposes.

Moreover, in the biblical perspective, communicating with God in such a way is no search for "unifying grace". Instead, it is the product of the already established union between Christ and the Christian. Mystical, meditative, praying works towards union. But biblical praying works from union, as does the Christian life itself (Col. 2:6-7).

Indeed, if meditative praying, as Foster defines it, is biblical in character and needful for a deep Christian life, then it is very strange that Jesus Himself didn't teach it to His disciples when they asked to be taught to pray. For Jesus, on this view, neglected to teach His disciples how to keep deeply in touch with Him.

Conclusion

Meditative prayer as taught by Foster, amongst others, and practised down through the ages lacks the biblical support one desires of a Christian activity — especially, an activity that claims to relate us to God. Meditative prayer is a confusion in terms. Meditation in the Bible is the activity of holy reflection; not speaking to God.

More importantly, biblical meditation leads the practitioner to look outside of

himself or herself to the Creator, Redeemer God and His Christ. The journey is outwards, not inwards. Much writing on meditative prayer today simply points in the wrong direction.

(Reprinted from SALT, the national magazine of The Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students, with permission.)

1. A good introduction to these writings and others can be found in F. C. Haggard, *Mysticism: A Study and an Anthology*, (Middlesex, 1975).
2. Technically, meditation is a form of mental prayer as opposed to vocal prayer. It is an activity of mind that uses words and images. Contemplation is usually regarded as a higher stage in the mystical life and leaves words, images, and even reason behind. See the articles on "Contemplation" and "Meditation" in Gordon S. Wakefield (ed.), *A Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, (London, 1983).
3. See John Coleman and Gregory Boum (eds.), *New Religious Movements*, (NY, 1983). This article doesn't examine the Eastern approaches to meditation. For useful introductions see Colin Bevington, *New Light From The East*, (London, 1974), and R. D. Clements, *God and the Gurus*, (London, 1974).
4. Richard Foster "Meditative Prayer", in *TSE Bulletin* March-April, 1985, pp. 13-14.
5. *Ibid.* p. 14
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.* p. 15
9. *Ibid.* p. 16. He recommends passages such as Is. 6:1-8, Rev. 1:12-18 and 19:1-16.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.* Foster carefully points out that the order of the three steps is logical, but in our experience God may graciously dispense with some of them.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. A useful presentation of the biblical material is found in Edmund P. Clowney, *Christian Meditation*, (Leicester, 1978).
15. J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*, (London, 1973) pp. 18-19.

A Balmain church celebrates

St. Marys is 140 years old

St. Marys Anglican Church Balmain celebrates its 140th birthday over the weekend 23/24th August.

St. Marys, like many inner-city churches, has seen many ups and downs, wars, depressions, industrialisation, and now, gentrification. The rector with the longest service in the parish, Mervyn Archdall, who stayed at St. Marys for 25 years, was instrumental in two important organisations in the diocese.

He founded Deaconess House, initially in St. Marys parish in 1891. This was partly through the good influence of his wife, who, being German, knew of the great work of the German Deaconesses. He was also moved to start an evangelical work by Deaconesses as a reaction to the visit to Sydney of the Kilburn Sisters, who were not of the evangelical persuasion, and whose visit added fuel to the fire of the ritualistic controversy of that day.

Mervyn Archdall's Deaconess House was to be the place where 'ladies could learn to become like Phoebe, handmaids of the church, and engagers in Parish, evangelistic and rescue work, nursing and teaching.'

Archdall was also the moving spirit behind the Protestant Church of England Union. The PCEU was a fiercely independent, protestant union, and was the forerunner of the Anglican Church League, which has been so influential in the life of Sydney Diocese.

At St. Marys on Saturday 23rd August they are having a time of fellowship, reunion, entertainment and tea. On Sunday 24th Bishop John Reid will preach at the Thanksgiving Service.

For information please contact Norma Hunt 810 1476 or John Cashman 810 2794.

ORGANIST

Required for the Anglican Church at Rozelle, to play for the 9.30 am service.

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Christians in the Middle East under pressure

As Islamic laws are strengthened

A further news release from Christians concerned for the Middle East provides an update on the trial of the four Christians arrested in Cairo last January and news of further arrests in Cairo and Alexandria. The report states:

The prisoners, **Miss Eman Mustapha Mohammed Tawfiq**, **Miss Nagwa Mustapha Mohammed Tawfiq**, **Mrs. Ibtisam Mustapha Mohammed Tawfiq** and **Dr. Samir Abdul Bari**, all of whom were arrested in January 1986, had a second hearing on May 17.

They were represented by a prominent defence lawyer, **Abdul Maguid Amer**, whose line of appeal was:

(i) Under the existing constitution and emergency regulations they should have been given the second hearing or been released before May 17, and

(ii) There is no compulsion concerning one's personal religion in Islam, and this case is a disgrace to the Muslim community.

The court hearing apparently ignored the normal judicial process. Instead the prisoners were questioned about their understanding of Islamic theology. One by one the four were asked to recite the Islamic "Shehada" (The "Confession" of all believing Muslims). They were told that if they recited this they would be set free. They all refused and therefore were sent back to prison for another two months; they can appeal for a third hearing on or after June 17, and the hearing should be held within one month of the date of appeal.

Further arrests

In a seemingly related incident two other converts from Islam were detained in Cairo during May 1986. Police arrested **Mr. Anwar Teleb Ibrahim** at his home on the night of May 15. Anwar converted to Christianity and was baptised (into the Coptic Evangelical Church) in April 1978. Anwar is about 56 years old and is the director of a department in the Egyptian Taz Authority. Two nights later, on May

17, his daughter **Hala Anwar Teleb**, also was arrested. Hala, about 24 years old, is also a convert to Christianity (1978) and an employee of the American University in Cairo, where she works as an editor/proof reader in their print-shop.

As with the four converts detained in January, no charges have been formally made but both Anwar and Hala are being accused of "despising Islam" — a charge which can be levelled at any convert who has "rejected" Islam in favour of belief in Christ. "Despising Islam" is a charge for which the penalty is currently a two-year prison sentence. However, converts to Christianity could face life sentences with hard labour if the new draft law on the Defamation of Islam gets approval from the Egyptian Parliament. The final draft of this proposed law got approval by a Parliamentary Committee of the National Assembly in early May 1986.

And at Alexandria

Four North African converts from Islam have been arrested in Egypt's second largest city, Alexandria.

On April 24, two Moroccans, **Mr. Hassan Zerhouni** and **Mr. Adbul Hadi Haija**, and two Tunisians, **Mr. Fathi Ben Nejma** and **Mr. Ali Hammami**, were arrested by the police. The four had been in Egypt for several months and were students at a "Campus Crusade for Christ" leadership training school.

Tougher restrictions and penalties!

Further difficulties and limitations for Christians and their freedom to witness for Christ are foreshadowed in the drafting of a new law by a parliamentary committee. The newspaper, "Al Akhbar," Egypt, May 6, 1986, carried the following statement:

"A Parliamentary Committee of the National Assembly finalises a draft law, which will make defamation of the Heavenly Religion (=Islam) a full crime.

(NEW LIFE)

Kirk dissociates from clause in confession

The Pope is no longer Anti-Christ, says Assembly

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, which has wrestled for years over the place of the Westminster Confession of Faith, (the Kirk's principal subordinate standard) agreed, with little dissent, to a petition presented by a recently ordained elder, that certain clauses in the Confession were "offensive to Christians in this modern age".

Dr. Kenneth Stewart, an obstetrician from Stirling, who had worked with a Roman Catholic mission in Zimbabwe, told the Assembly he was astonished to find offensive statements about Roman Catholics when he read the Westminster Confession shortly before becoming an elder. The 17th-century document had been written at a time, he said, of seething unrest, civil war and hatred.

"That belongs to the past," he said,

"Times have changed. The Pope and the Roman Church have changed. So also has the Church of Scotland."

The Assembly agreed with Dr. Stewart that the Kirk should dissociate itself from sections of the Confession such as the belief that the Pope is "Anti-Christ — a man of sin and son of perdition" and that followers of the true reformed faith should avoid marrying "infidels, Papists or other idolaters".

Dr. Stewart acknowledged that the preamble to ordination includes the "liberty of opinion" Clause, but felt that the clauses he specified were beyond modification except by their exclusion. The Assembly approved Dr. Stewart's call by an overwhelming majority.

(LIFE AND WORK)

Fighting a 37 year war

The forgotten Christians of Burma

The Australian Council of Churches has given \$10,000 for the relief of Karen refugees in Thailand. For 37 years the people of the Karen Province in Northern Burma have fought a war of independence against the Burmese government which has its origins in the Second World War when the Karens were allies of the British against the Burmans and the Japanese. At the end of the war thousands of Karens were slaughtered but they have continued their fight for an independent state.

Since 1983 the Burmese Army has intensified its drive against civilians in an attempt to cut off supplies to the Karen National Union. As a result there has been a growing number of refugees seeking asylum in Thailand. The Church of Christ in Thailand has been to the fore in ministering to the refugees and the ACC's donation will go towards buying food, blankets and medicines for this work.

LETTERS

Bonds of marriage

Dear Sir,

I am thankful for the opportunity presented by your correspondent Mr. Foster (ACR Letters June 16) to comment further upon the view expressed by me that Article 13 of the Bill of Rights currently before Federal Parliament, could be interpreted so as to permit bigamy and marriage within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity.

It should be emphasised that because the Bill of Rights is expressed in terms which are ambiguous and imprecise, one cannot be certain as to how the legislation will be interpreted in practice. The courts may adopt either a conservative or a radical approach depending upon the philosophies of the Judges involved.

Article 13(a), as presently worded, confers a right to marry upon every man and woman who is of marriageable age and who marries a person of the opposite sex. Article 13 (b) specifically provides that no marriage shall be entered into without the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

However, there is no specific requirement in Article 13 that the right to marry so conferred is to be limited by being monogamous or outside the prohibited degrees of consanguinity.

Such limitations may be implied, of course, if one takes a traditional view of the nature of marriage and what is best in the public interest.

Nevertheless, what we as Christians may regard as essential in the public interest may not be so regarded by others who have a different set of values.

If enacted, the Bill of Rights will create uncertainty where none presently exists.

Mr. Foster quoted the decision of the European Commission of Human Rights in the case of *Hamer v United Kingdom* (1979) EHRR 139 in support of his views. He failed to mention however that that decision is not binding on Australian courts. Moreover the remarks of the Commission in relation to bigamy and consanguinity were *obiter dicta* only.

Yours faithfully,
Tim Tunbridge,
Bilgola Plateau, NSW

Protection of human life

Dear Sir,

Senator Harradine's amendments are designed to make the Bill of Rights provide the rights for the unborn that are provided in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Declaration on the Rights of the Child on which the Bill of Rights was supposedly modelled.

Strictly interpreted these amendments should protect the right to life of every human being at every stage of life.

The specific amendments are:

Clause 8, article 14, after para (d), add — "(e) every child is entitled to special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth and (f) special care and protection shall be provided both to the child and to the mother, including adequate pre-natal and post-natal care."

I am dismayed that the government has persisted with a pro-abortion Bill of Rights. I hope that Senators will be able to have a conscience vote on Senator Harradine's amendments.

These amendments would ensure that unborn children could enjoy the right to life and other rights set out in the international human rights declarations which the government claims it is trying to implement in the Bill of Rights.

Yours sincerely,
L. Cusack,
San Remo, Vic.

Invalid use of Bible

Dear Sir,

The logic the proponents of MOW use is not only invalid, but destroys the very foundation of our faith, i.e. the inspiration and reliability of the Bible as the word of God. The argument allows cultural concepts to determine whether or not the Bible is "true". Truth, therefore, becomes subservient to culture.

Their argument surely runs as follows:

a) Our culture allows, even demands, that women should teach in church.

b) The Bible, clearly, says women shouldn't teach in church.

c) Our culture is superior to the Jewish culture of first century Judea.

d) Therefore the Bible is wrong and women can, or even must, teach in church.

A similar argument is used by those who claim homosexual acts are not condemned by God — even though the Bible clearly teaches that homosexual acts are sinful.

However cultural bias can be claimed by a multitude of other groups. Fornicators and adulterers will surely claim that only cultural bias is responsible for the Bible's condemnation of their acts.

For those of us who are still old-fashioned enough to believe the Bible means what is written then the "progressive" elements will have to re-examine the Bible's culturally biased, statements on human sacrifice. What better way to deal with such old fogs could be found?

The MOW movement is only one group using the cultural bias argument. That that argument undermines the Christian faith is obvious. One supporter of female ordination let the side down when she admitted, in a speech reported in the "Sydney Morning Herald" on Monday, 7th July, that "God" must become "goddess". Forward, or is that backward, to Diana of the Ephesians?

Yours in Christ's fellowship,
P. Fyfe,
Uralla, NSW

Barth and the Bible

Dear Sir,

How the mighty are fallen! Karl Barth celebrated by the Record! When I studied at theological college some twenty-one years ago Karl Barth was one of those "nasties" inhabiting the theological universe. True, he was a little to the right of Rudolf Bultmann, not in the same bed mind you but living in the same room. If my memory is correct the main objection then was something to do with his doctrine of scripture.

Fashion and fads change. Barth is now a jawbone in the hands of fundamentalists, smiting all of the Lord's enemies on the theological horizon. Not being theologically illiterate I think I know how Barth would have felt about that.

Yours,
Colin Dundon,
Paddington, NSW

("For faith, God and Holy Scripture are not two things but one. We believe that Scripture is the Word of God", Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I. 2.5-12. Ed.)

The subject of schism

Dear Sir,

In your editorial of 30th June you state that the Anglican reformers "were involved in schism" and that "they recognised that they could not continue to exist within" the church of that day and needed "to begin their own church". Can you refer us to any historical authority for those statements?

Undoubtedly the official attitude of the reformed Church of England has always been that no new church was formed at the Reformation or at any time since. The Prayer Books have all unmistakably regarded themselves as the voice of the continuing church. It was the Pope who called his followers out of the Church of England and so began the schism. The view, fostered by the Roman Church, that the Church of England was started by Henry VIII, is contrary to the historical facts.

There has been exhaustive discussion and controversy on this matter ever since the Reformation, and perhaps it can be regarded as academic and trivial in 1986. But it seems to me to have both logical and historic importance and to be relevant to the present situation. You quote Bishop Ryle's view, which has so far been accepted by virtually all groups in the Anglican church. But now there is a re-emergence of the debate on schism, and the whole subject is again before us.

Yours etc.,
W. A. Dowe,
Lakemba, NSW

Inter-faith dialogue

The Anglican mission society, Missions to Seamen, at its recent biennial conference, enthusiastically affirmed its commitment to inter-faith dialogue.

Today two-thirds of all seafarers are believed to come from Asian or other 'Third World' countries, and the mission chaplains' ministry is largely to Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims. The conference, which brought together the mission's UK

and European staff, agreed that some traditional ideas of mission and responses to people of other faiths need to be reviewed.

The conference also resolved that Missions to Seamen should look at ways of preparing for, and engaging in, dialogue with people of other faiths and try to help seafarers in multi-faith crews engage in similar dialogue on board.

Editorial

Miracles and the christian life

Once again Dr. Jenkins, the Bishop of Durham, has got himself into the media spotlight. At the recent English General Synod he made an eloquent appeal for the miraculous to be removed from the christian religion, and especially from the Bible. For, Bp Jenkins said, we should see belief in miracles in our age as morally incredible. Although no doubt in the more credulous age of the first century belief in the miraculous, and especially the New Testament "signs and wonders", was a powerful way of arguing for the truth, it is not today.

Why? Because it is morally offensive to understand, say, the resurrection of Jesus as an intervention by God into the processes of the world when faced with the horror of a Dachau or a Belsen. Since God did not exercise his supposed miraculous power to rescue the tortured humanity of the Nazi concentration camps, to have a literal belief in the biblical miracles either makes God out to be capricious, or places the christian faith in the realm of fairy stories.

Of course, the Bp of Durham's statements on this matter were brought to shocked prominence by the media because he made them. In fact, he only represents an opinion which, sadly, is held by many. But for all that, he has raised a very serious problem, why must christians assert a literal belief in the New Testament miracles, and especially the bodily resurrection our Lord, when clearly God does not act on that scale today? What is the place of the miraculous in the christian life?

The clear answer is found in Paul. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul determines to know nothing else amongst them but "Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:1-5). By "the cross", Paul also especially includes the resurrection, as the following chapters show. Often in the New Testament letters either "the cross" or "the resurrection" is a shorthand way of describing the entire Christ event, and especially its central

focus, our Lord's death, resurrection, ascension, and heavenly reign. Peter in his first letter, the writer to the Hebrews and John in his Revelation do the same. It is on a parallel to John's way in his Gospel of describing the proper response to Jesus as "belief", whereas the other gospels and Paul elaborate on it as "repentance and faith".

What is the point that Paul is trying to make in insistence on knowing nothing except "Christ and him crucified"? The Corinthians had made other things their main focus, including eloquent preaching, philosophy, and their own ability to perform miracles and manifest miraculous signs like speaking in tongues. But Paul says NO, the events of Christ's life, death and resurrection are to be the only focus for a true christian. Why? Because God has determined to know us in the Cross of Christ, and only in the Cross.

This is where Bp Jenkin's statement fails to understand how God deals with us. To the world the "cross is foolishness", and in the light of the immeasurable tragedy of the concentration camps and current human misery, this is quite so. But what is foolishness to us is "the wisdom and power of God" for our salvation.

Therefore we **must** assert an undiminished, literal belief in the New Testament miracles of Jesus.

Of course, it is also possible to over evaluate the miraculous as the Corinthians did. Modern day charismatics search for, as a matter of first importance, contemporary miracles to show that God still acts to intervene supernaturally in our world. But Paul's reply to his like minded Corinthians is not to be overly concerned whether miracles happen locally or not, but to assert that **the miracle** of the death and resurrection is absolutely everything in the christian life; for in the cross, and only in the cross, God has saved us, knows us as his children, and we know him as our Father and Saviour.

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Quick Cuts

Trusting people

There had been a great theft; now everyone was bewailing the fact that precautions had not been taken. But, as one of the victims said to the radio reporter 'We were trusting in the basic honesty of people'. Now why would anyone do that, I wonder? There are two reasons why I would take a very different point of view myself.

The first is the teaching of the Bible. Nothing could be more clear in the Bible than that we as a race are disposed to commit sin — i.e., to break the law of God. As soon as Adam and Eve made that choice on our behalf, human nature became corrupt; corrupt nature produces corrupt deeds, and corrupt thoughts. Evil flows from evil people.

The second reason is experience. Time and time again I have seen human beings succumb to temptation. Even relatively good and decent human beings when confronted with temptation, especially in the area of money, are prone to break the rules. As the old saying goes 'Every man has his price'. Christians don't deny this — both the Bible and experience prove that it is true.

I don't, of course, need to look at others to test the validity of this — I need only to investigate my own heart to know what I am capable of.

'We were trusting in the basic honesty of people' — crazy isn't it? And yet, there is a further point to be made. It is true that we are not all totally corrupt all the time. There is such a thing as decency and goodness, even if the best of people



fall too from time to time. There are still towns where you can leave your car and house unlocked. But — and this is the sad thing — even this state of affairs is passing. When we collectively set our face against God we departed not only from the Christian God but also his law. His law is what protects us from each other; the incidence of theft and dishonesty in the community is simply alarming. The answer is not, however, tougher laws, more police, or better education — it is a return to Jesus Christ and a new beginning in his service.

Peter Jensen

(You might like to use this in your parish paper)

American Christians get involved

A Manifesto of the Christian Church launched

Washington, D.C. (EP) — Recently at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., Christian leaders publicly announced a Manifesto of the Christian Church.

The manifesto is a brief summary of 17 "Worldview Documents" written by more than 100 Christian leaders. These documents call for Christians to occupy and influence all areas of life including law, medicine, government, science and technology, arts and communication, economics, business, education, psychology and family, areas of religious concern such as evangelism, discipleship, counselling, and moral activism.

The manifesto is sponsored by the Coalition on Revival, which includes such noted Christian leaders as Dr. D. James Kennedy (television evangelist), Dr. Tim LaHaye (American Coalition for Traditional Values), Dr. Jack Van Impe (Baptist evangelist), Dr. Harold Lindsell (editor emeritus of Christianity Today), Dr. Adrian Rogers, president of the Southern Baptist Convention; and Edith Schaeffer, wife of the late Dr. Francis Schaeffer.

Organizers say the purpose of the new manifesto is to answer the Communist and Humanist Manifestos with a Bible-based view of the Christian's responsibility in and to society.

The document advocates that Christians become active citizens by

participating in volunteer civic and governmental affairs. In addition, it stresses the necessity of Christian commitment to personal holiness, obedience, and love and unity of the Church at the local level.

By following strategies laid out in A Manifesto of the Christian Church, leaders of the coalition hope to rid contemporary society of current moral and social ills including abortion on demand, pornography, sexual abuse of children, preferential treatment of homosexuals, deficit-based economics, hunger and homelessness, racial discrimination and religious persecution.

According to Jay Grimstead, director of the Coalition on Revival, "We believe God's Word, the Bible, is relevant for today for all life situations for Christians and non-Christians alike. From the Bible, Christians must learn how to live, how to prosper, how to influence culture and how to govern. In our long absence from several of life's strategically important arenas, the enemies of God have had a strong influence. Chaos, immorality and untold human suffering have resulted. We intend to change the world by serving the deepest needs of our fellow men through biblically obedient action in law, government, medicine, science, business, in every area of life. The Christian impact on American society in the coming decade will be unmistakable. Nothing can stop us."

(EPNS)

Protestant 'main liners' down in West Germany

More women than men leave the Church

Hanover, W. Germany (EP) — The number of West Germans who have dropped their membership in main line Protestant churches has risen sharply. According to the latest statistics (for the year 1984), the number of church withdrawals amounted to 127,000, an increase of 12.4 percent over the previous year. Church-quitting was strongest in large cities, and more women (58.2 percent) than men turned their backs on the church.

In 1984, membership in the Protestant Churches in Germany (EKD) totalled 25.3 million, down 0.7 percent from the previous year. EKD church membership has dropped by 3.2 million since 1970. During this period, more than two million Protestants abandoned their church.

Attendance figures for Sunday worship remain constant. An average of 1.4 million Protestants attend church weekly; this represents 5.5 percent of total membership. On Christmas Eve attendance rises sharply; nearly 7.3 million attended Christmas Eve services in 1984.

(EPNS)

The Evangelical Reformed Church of France

Combatting the results of Huguenot persecution

(Grand Rapids) With only 12,000 members, the Eglises Reformees Evangeliques Independantes de France (Evangelical Reformed Church of France) is only a tiny church in predominantly Roman Catholic France. Most of the leaders of the ERC are Calvinists. The church subscribes to the Confession of La Rochelle (1559) and the Heidelberg Catechism.

Recently this church was visited by two pastors of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), the Rev. Tymen E. Hofman and Dr. John Timmer, who were sent to investigate whether the CRCNA should enter into ecclesiastical fellowship with the ERC, and to see how the French denomination views the French broadcast of the Back to God Hour. Hofman and Timmer found an active church that puts its priority on reaching out to the unbelieving world at its doorstep. The church concentrates its outreach in the Paris area.

Most of the churches and leaders of the ERC are in the Cevennes region in the South of France. It was there that between 1685 and 1789 French authorities killed or imprisoned thousands of Huguenots, of which the majority who survived sought refuge in the mountainous areas of Cevennes.

According to Timmer, the persecution of the Huguenots did more than decimate those people. It also killed God in the souls of the French Roman Catholics. "Secularism in France today is the result of Huguenot persecution."

The ERC supports the Faculte Libre in Aix-en-Provence where six professors and ten associate professors teach about 70 students, who come from a variety of denominations and countries.

While highly appreciative of the Back to God Hour's program "Perspectives Reformees," ERC leaders would prefer a program originating in France to the one now produced in Chicago.

(RESNE)

Explosive growth of pornography in the US

Dr. James Dobson calls for citizen action

The explosive growth of pornography in the US will be curbed when citizens demand action, according to Dr. James Dobson. Dobson, noted Christian author and family therapist, served on the U.S. Attorney General's Commission on Pornography during the past year. In a letter to his supporters, Dobson reflected on his involvement with the Commission and called for action against obscenity.

Calling his Commission involvement "the most difficult and unpleasant experience of my professional life," Dobson said he was exposed to pornography "far more perverse and wicked" than the "air-brushed nudity in today's men's magazines."

"Indeed," he wrote, "the mainstream of explicit material sold in sex shops today focuses on rape, incest, defecation, urination, mutilation, bestiality, vomiting, enemas, homosexuality and sadomasochistic activity. Even child pornography, which is illegal and not available over the counter, continues to thrive in a multimillion dollar black market. It is produced by pedophiles for use by other pedophiles in the sexual exploitation of children. Obscenity is a wretched business, top to bottom."

Dobson cited eight dangers of pornography that he had come to recognize during his year-long study of obscenity: widespread depictions of women as victims of violence leads men to believe women really want to be abused; the use of pornography seems to be "addictive and progressive" in nature; pornography is reaching children who "may never enjoy healthy attitudes about sex" as a result; pornography is "degrading and humiliating to women"; it is used by pedophiles to "soften children's defences against sexual exploitation"; outlets for obscenity attract sex-related crimes, as well as prostitution, narcotics and street crime; "so-called adult bookstores often become cesspools of disease and homosexual activity"; and pornography is damaging to the family.

The Commission's report includes several hundred pages of specific recommendations, said Dobson, but "aggressive action against pornographers will not occur unless our citizens demand the response of government. . . our Commission report will either become another expensive dust collector on bureaucratic shelves or it will serve as the basis for a new public policy. The difference will be determined by the outcry that accompanies the report — or the deafening silence of an unconcerned populace."

(EPNS)

How's that for growth!

Church passes 500,000 members

Seoul, Korea — Dr. Paul Yonggi Cho's Korean church is continuing to grow. Membership now stands at 503,590; the church is led by 600 full-time pastors and 50,000 home cell-group leaders.

A new sanctuary seating 25,000 has been completed. The church holds seven services on Sunday, three on Wednesday, and an all-night prayer meeting each Friday night.

Cho's church will next focus its attention on establishing congregations throughout Korea.

(NEW LIFE)

REVIEW

Hungarian Police break up service

Worshippers' identity cards taken

A worship service of the 30 member Faith Christian Fellowship (A hit gyulekeze) congregation in the western Hungarian town of Zalaegerszeg was broken up by plain clothes police recently. According to a reliable source, the police declared the service illegal and temporarily detained the pastor, TIBOR LEVAL, for questioning. The worshippers were required to hand over their identity cards to the police, and were warned that employers would be informed of their involvement. The Faith Christian Fellowship is a network of several zealous charismatic congregations. The largest is the 500 strong Budapest congregation under the leadership of SANDOR NEMETH. The Fellowship proclaims loyalty to the Hungarian state, but rejects as unscriptural state interference in internal church affairs.

Replying to questions about the incident at Zalaegerszeg, a spokesman for the State Office for Church Affairs said that the Fellowship has "no right to worship in Hungary" because it is an unrecognised body. The State Office, the spokesman continued, has turned down one application for recognition and is now considering a second. He attributed the Fellowship's unrecognised status mainly to the opposition of other recognised churches that believe their own interests are threatened by the Fellowship's activities. The spokesman emphasised that the State Office was working to bring the Fellowship's problems to a satisfactory solution, and suggested that this will not be helped by "outside interference."

(KESTON COLLEGE)

New hope in Uganda

7000 respond to Christ.

In Uganda today new hope beats in thousands of hearts in the final weeks of a year long mission in the capital city, Kampala.

To the theme of "SEE HOW GOD LOVES KAMPALA", literally thousands of people have found a new dimension in their lives following their response to the redeeming love of Jesus Christ.

For a number of years AFRICAN ENTERPRISE has been laying the foundations for a major Christian outreach to Kampala.

The assassination of John Wilson, the main organiser, last March did not deter African Enterprise or the churches — on the contrary, it made them all the more determined.

Even the Muslim College of Kampala opened their centre for a rally. The team leader, the Rev. James Katarikawe of Kampala said that the college authorities were receptive to the presence of the mission and to the preaching of the Christian message in their college and schools where about 30% of the students are now Christians.

In the Central Prison 60 men among those on death row awaiting execution gave their hearts to the Lord, as did seven women prisoners.

In the final major thrust of preaching African Enterprise Team Leader Michael Cassidy from South Africa arrived to join his colleagues from Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Malawi and others from South Africa.

On Sunday, 22 June about 5,000 people attended the Kampala City Centre where Michael Cassidy called his multi-cultural South African team to the stage and, amid cheers, said, "Jesus makes us colour blind".

Beijing hosts Religion and Peace Conference

"No prisoners of conscience in China," delegates told

Religious leaders from 30 nations and 11 world religions began meeting in Beijing on 26 June. The World Conference on Religion and Peace was meeting in a socialist country for the first time, according to its general secretary Dr. John Taylor. Taylor commented that this meeting was in a country "where the recent history of religious freedom has gone through a great change. . ." Taylor said the conference was being hosted by the five Chinese associations of Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism. The themes of the conference were disarmament, economic development, human rights, and peace and education.

Taylor noted that the conference brought together participants from some of the world's trouble spots, such as Buddhists and Tamils from Sri Lanka; Jews, Muslims, and Christians from the Middle East; and Sikhs and Hindus from India. The *People's Daily* overseas edition (25 June 86) also noted that there were three bishops sent from the Vatican to participate. A special invitation had also been issued to Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa.

Reporters at a press conference raised the issue of whether the conference would discuss the matter of imprisoned Jesuit priests in China. Taylor replied, "We are aware there are questions of human rights in every country in the world." He said there would be "sufficient opportunity both informally and formally to take the opinion of the Chinese on these matters." Han Wenzao, the general secretary of the conference reception committee and the vice-Chairman of the China Christian Council, said that sometimes there was not complete adherence to the policy of religious freedom. He said, however, that there are no prisoners of conscience in China. "I believe there are religious believers in prison now, but I also believe that they are not there for religious beliefs or political reasons," he said.

(CNCR)

Indian Christians "Mobilize to Evangelize"

As doors close on foreign missionaries

Madras, India (EP) — Over 2,200 Indian pastors, evangelists, and church workers gathered in Madras June 2-6 for the first All-India Christian Ministers Conference, sponsored by Samaritan's Purse and organized by the Evangelical Church of India. Participants came from across the Indian subcontinent to share in five days of intensive training, fellowship and worship, conducted by Christian leaders from both the United States and India around the theme "Mobilize to Evangelize."

"The believers who attended this conference are India's hidden missionaries," declared the Rev. Franklin Graham, president of Samaritan's Purse and son of evangelist Billy Graham. Noting that foreign missionaries cannot obtain visas for the largely Hindu nation of 800 million people, Graham said, "God has raised up a mighty force of nationals to do the work of evangelizing India. They are winning people to Christ and planting churches, yet most have never had the opportunity to receive any training for ministry. This conference helped fill their need."

Growth in Ministry

How many can a Pastor pastor?



It is generally accepted that an ordained clergyman ought to have the Gift referred to in Ephesians 4:11 of "pastor-teacher". He is to teach congregation members, and also to pastor them, in the sense of taking a long-term spiritual responsibility for them.

How many members can a Pastor pastor at a given time?

A maximum of 150

"Research by the Urban Church Project (in UK) has shown that one Pastor can by himself never shepherd more than 150 — 175 at the most. Thus a large church with a staff of four may see the congregation grow to as many as 600; but nearly always there is a levelling out at that number (a maximum ratio of 150 to 1)" (I Believe in Evangelism, by D. Watson, H & S, 1976, P.121).

"A professionally-trained, full-time minister who has the gift of pastoring can usually handle something between 50 — 100 families, depending on the extent of his gift and on the other responsibilities in his job-description" (Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow, by P. Wagner, Regal 1974 P. 148).

Implications

Here are three of the many implications of this research and observation:

1) **Most Congregations plateau out at 200.** Because a clergyman with the gift of pastoring loves to use it, he spends most of his time visiting members, remembering their names and needs and meeting with groups and social activities. His sermons emphasise relationships. He is people-oriented, not task-oriented.

He is so busy enjoying the coping with the 150 — 200 maximum that any Pastor can handle (he has neither the time nor mental energy to cope with more) that he spends little time if any on Growth Goals beyond his 200, or on structuring for the pastoring of more than the 200. So additional people (if any) have no attention paid to them, and thus go elsewhere, or nowhere, and the congregation levels out at 200.

Realising this principle will save the pastor-type clergyman from worrying about why there is no growth — he can settle down with freedom to minister to his 200.

2) **Deliberate Strategy is needed to Grow Beyond 200.** Just as research has shown that in Growing Churches 10% of members have the Gift of Evangelism, so it has been found that about 4% of members have the Gift of Pastoring, and that they can handle up to about 20 people each. (Wagner, P.147-148)

So a wise Pastor will discover in his congregation of 200 the eight members with the Gift of Pastoring, train them (by discussing, for example, monthly a chapter of "Encouragement" by Crabbs), and then quietly or otherwise allocate new members to them for Pastoring (the new members having been found by the evangelists, or by other Growth Strategies).

From the approximately 150 additional folk being pastored, new pastors from among them can be found, trained and similarly unleashed. So pastoring needs are continually catered for beyond the clergyman's 150-200.

Groups can achieve a similar result. By training the Home Group Leaders in pastoring, or by allocating a pastor to * each Home Group, and then encouraging members into the Groups, a thinking clergyman can ensure that pastoring is effected beyond the 150 — 200 that he can cope with.

3) **Additional Staff.** In a new suburban area where Growth occur anyway, or where a congregation is structured for Outreach and new folk are coming to Church Services and Meetings, an additional Staff Member would help pastor up to 150-200 new members. This is useful where a congregation can afford him, and where its lay-pastors are not yet structured or unleashed.

Where Growth and Outreach are not occurring, an additional Staff Member would need to have the Gift of Evangelism rather than Pastoring, for otherwise there would be no additional members to pastor!

Thus . . . staff such as Curates need to be appointed, not only with regard to their own Gift-mix, but also with regard to the size of a congregation, not primarily with regard to the population of a parish, for nominalism and mobility have made parish boundaries and populations largely irrelevant. As David Watson continued his above quotation:—"the size of a parish, or the density of population surrounding the church, makes not the slightest difference" to Church growth these days.

One wonders at some Curate and Clergy appointments which seem to take no notice of these factors, with the result that large congregations are often understaffed, or new areas with small congregations have clergy with the gift of pastoring appointed rather than with the gift of evangelism.

TIMOTHY

As Hillsdon's Pty. Ltd. have now ceased operations, I have transferred to **FAIR DEAL CAR SALES** at 65 CHURCH ST, PARRAMATTA




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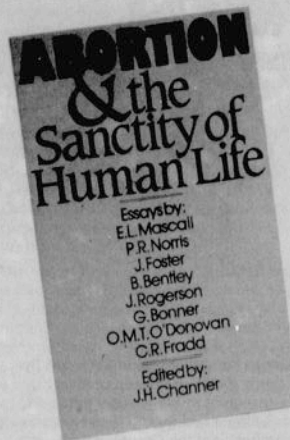
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THE GOOD READ

Abortion and the Sanctity of Human Life

Ed. J. H. Channer (Paternoster, 1985) pb, 151 pp.



There is wide agreement amongst Christians that one of the greatest blights upon our modern Western society is the way that millions of human lives are aborted before birth with abandon.

Christians need to continually raise the alarm against this awful practise. Often our statements are not informed or well-expressed. This criticism cannot be levelled at the contributors to this excellent volume of essays. These 7 essays have been written by distinguished Christian scholars from the fields of medicine, theology and philosophy.

The book is worth buying just for the foreword! E. L. Mascall, one of the leading theologians of our day, goes beyond the abortion question to the deeper issues it presents. He argues that the real issue is "the loss of any firm conviction of the inherent value of human nature." He goes on to remind us that the abortion issue can only be understood in the context of a society where moral issues are viewed purely subjectively.

The first three essays examine "the

issues". P. R. Norris discusses the medical aspects of abortion. Arguing from within the medical fraternity, he is less than complimentary to his colleagues who have forsaken their calling ("This surely must be one of the most blatant examples of the abandonment overnight of a time-honoured ethical principle by any professional body.") J. Foster in "Personhood and the Ethics of Abortion" speaks for all the contributors when he argues that abortion is morally wrong. Indeed, the case he argues is that it is tantamount to murder. Once again his presupposition is the intrinsic value of human life.

Two essays examine the "Christian Witness". J. W. Rogerson looks at what the Bible has to say. He warns against literalist text-quoting in the light of the fact that the Scriptures have little to say explicitly about the issue. His essay is particularly helpful in what it says generally about the use of the Bible in ethical debates.

As we would expect the writers do not always agree. For example, Foster argues that abortion is prohibited even in the case of rape. G. R. Bentley, however, does allow for abortion in this situation, although his reasons are unpersuasive ("the embryo is an aggressor continuing the aggression of the rapist" and in abortion "the sin of the father is visited on the child") and, I believe, inconsistent with other statements in the essay.

The high quality of this volume of essays warrants its careful study. The enormity of the issue demands it.

M. Raiter

Abortion: A Woman's Birthright?

by Noreen Riols (Hodder & Stoughton, 1986) pb, 140 pp.

Unfortunately, I cannot endorse **Abortion: A Woman's Right** with the same unreserved enthusiasm. It is the account of one woman's abortion as told by the woman herself. After suffering post-natal depression following the birth of her 4th child, and being hospitalized in a psychiatric institution, she decides on an abortion when she again falls pregnant. Carrying an enormous burden of guilt she recounts very openly how God pursues her until she finally surrenders to Him.

The book is not without its virtues. It is honest and readable and affords a good insight into the complex set of emotions that such an act must trigger off. The

author can speak with authority when she says, "this relatively simple operation goes much deeper than most people realise, perhaps even deeper than the medical profession realises . . . The consequences and ramifications burrow into areas way beyond the physical sphere and can cause long-lasting and devastating havoc in the psychological make-up of a woman."

However, features of the book disturb me. Noreen's Christian friends encourage her before she is converted, and while she's depressed, to express her trust in Jesus by throwing away her medication. She does so and finds salvation. Such advice is dangerous and irresponsible if I'm to generalise from the writer's experience. Later the author recounts her conversation with a mature Christian lady who tells Noreen that the answer to her persisting sense of guilt is to understand the efficacy of Christ's atoning death (the theological lingo is mine, not hers).

Nevertheless, the book leaves me with the impression that this really isn't enough. Noreen is given visions of Jesus, the climatic one being a scene of the Lord with Noreen's aborted child, now a young girl seen skipping happily towards Jesus. Such visions which heighten her spiritual walk lead her to reflect on Paul's words in 1 Cor. 13 "for now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." Paul's "then" is eschatological, but for our writer it is her present experience. I cannot gainsay her experiences, but she is representative of an unhelpful emphasis, popular today, that wishes to claim for the here and now spiritual blessings that are explicitly futuristic in the Scriptures. The author's vision of her daughter with Jesus provided for her "my final healing". Those who do not receive such visitations, and are left only with the word of forgiveness must, I take it, settle for incomplete healing.

M. Raiter

Test the Spirits: The Charismatic Phenomenon

by C. S. Butler (Evangelical Press) pb, 159 pp.

Another sub-title might well be, "Fourteen Years With The Charismatics — And Why I Left" — as this was the author's experience.

Butler gives a very useful potted history of the movement up to the present day. He tells of tongues amongst Mormons and more extreme non-Christian groups, and the influence of Andrew Murray and

other higher life teachers.

There is a remarkable prophecy to Armenian Christians three generations ago which caused many to flee before the Turkish persecutions. Some of the survivors and their descendants have had a strong influence on Pentecostal trends in the US.

The second part of the books deals with charismatic teaching, detailing weaknesses such as doctrinal indifference, emphasis on modern progressive revelation and various "phases" which occur, eg, water baptism (is there any other sort?), exorcism and discipleship, the last also being used in modern evangelical circles in an unscriptural way.

He sees a low view of God and of His Word by modern evangelicalism leading to interest in the charismatic teaching,



and is encouraged by many of its followers coming to an increasingly Biblical position.

The author's final plea is for an outpouring of God's Holy Spirit in reviving power. May we all add our "Amen!" to that.

A useful and reasonably objective work, easy to read for those not prepared for more detailed treatments.

P.S. The author has read Dallimore's biography of Irving, a must (in my opinion) for any understanding of today's charismatic movement.

Donald Howard

Oral Roberts' 'City of Faith' crumbling

Half empty and losing millions of dollars

Tulsa, Okla. (EP) — Nine years ago Oral Roberts said he received a command from God to build the City of Faith, a world-class medical clinic, in Tulsa. Today, the \$150 million, two-million-square-foot complex is about half empty, and the under used facility is draining millions of dollars away from other ministries backed by Roberts.

"It's like a big dark hole," William Brunk, former director of development at Oral Roberts University (ORU), told the New York Times. "You could keep pulling up with truckloads of money and keep dumping it in the hole and you would still never fill it!"

Unforeseen problems have hurt the financial condition of the three-building, 110-floor medical complex. The collapse of oil prices and the resulting crash in Tulsa's economy have hurt the clinic's finances, as have changes in Federal health-care regulations that favour out-patient care.

The facility is built for 777 beds, and licensed for 294, but has struggled to keep its patient count in the 110-140 range, while keeping almost 100 doctors and over a thousand staff members on its

(EPNS)

Agony and ecstasy in student evangelism

A report on J. John in Australia

What's five and a half-feet tall, has a broad English accent, energetically cracks jokes, impersonates the twelve disciples and proclaims the gospel in an effectual international ministry.

You guessed it, it's Yaggannis Uarnou.

Well, how about J. John (the English translation) for short. This Greek born, British evangelist from St. Nicholas' in Nottingham has been in Australia during June. Church Record covered J. John in a previous issue and had a chance to catch up to him during his recent mission. He was here to conduct missions and follow up meetings in Wollongong, Sydney University and Coffs Harbour. This was an invitation given him by a number of Christian groups who combined to organise his visit. They were St. Michael's Pro Cathedral in Wollongong, Student Christian groups at Sydney University, Coffs Harbour Anglican, St. Barnabas

Tony referred to this as a "softening up process" and would encourage his church and others to organise for the widest possible impact to the gospel when John Chapman held his mission. J. John's time in Wollongong saw over 100 people referred back to their local churches having become Christians or wanting to know more, after having spoken to over 5000 people.

Sydney University harder

The mission on Sydney University was harder. Results were less immediate, people perhaps more apathetic, while J. John himself seemed tired. Yet when



Centre: J. John flanked by Phil and John. Left is Ruth. Right is Ron Bedles.

Broadway and the Anglican Youth Department.

Nothing flippant

J. John is an evangelist with an engaging, yet serious method of presenting the gospel at evangelistic reachouts. He is a clever actor with superb comic timing and uses these gifts to illustrate events in the ministry of Jesus. He intersperses his evangelistic addresses with skits, mime and fast oneliners. People listening find themselves laughing as J. John acts out exaggerated reactions by each and every disciple to the words and actions of Jesus. However, these comic retelling of gospel accounts are used to bring the person listening to a point where he/she is brought up against the relevance of Christ in their lives and the importance of submitting to him in faith. There is nothing flippant about J. John's ministry.

The visit of J. John and his team, Rod Bedles, Phil, Ruth and John took in two missions. The first was to Wollongong and organised by St. Michael's for a week. Seminars in high schools along with evangelistic breakfasts and meetings culminated in a Friday night rally at Wollongong Town Hall. Over 1000 attended, mainly teenagers. Tony Monlyneux, chairman of the organising committee and pastoral worker at St. Michael's described J. John's mission as an example of God's wonderful timing and provision. He said that St. Michael's set out to use the visit of J. John for three things:

1. To witness the community.
2. To train people in evangelism.
3. To enthuse people for evangelism of various types.

Tony said that God met these goals and added another one. That was to prepare the Christians and the Wollongong community in general for a mission by John Chapman to be held later in 1986.

Church Record went to his meetings in Wollongong or on Sydney Uni campus the same care was taken with direct and simple presentation of the gospel by J. John and his team.

Church Record had the opportunity to speak to J. John after one of the evening meetings held at Sydney University. He was warm, serious, open and despite being tired spoke to us at length about evangelism and his work as an evangelist.

"On Sydney Uni campus . . . people were unwilling to ask their good non-Christian friends . . ."

J. John started off with talking about the difficulty of convincing non-Christian people of their sinfulness and need for God in a thirty minute address. He felt the concept of "planting seeds" was a cop out and what was needed was a constant and credible witness by Christians to non-Christians round about them. On the Sydney Uni campus he found people were unwilling to ask their good non-Christian friends but rather invited a whole range of non-Christian acquaintances. These acquaintances were never sought out by Christians at any other times and so felt no reason to come to a one-off meeting. The question from this was whether Christians on campus had any non-Christian friends or whether they kept in cliques. This was a problem J. John had seen on campuses throughout Britain. It limited the use of inviting evangelistic speakers like himself. "We

ought to be living out with non-Christians so as to be a credible witness. Then when people like me come along then Christians have got a whole range of people to invite, people they already know. We can't do that if we are stuck in endless campus Bible studies. Bible studies are all important but they are absolutely wasted if we use them as a refuge from getting to know people so we don't have to witness to them."

Five key points

J. John spoke of what he sees as five key points for evangelism.

1. Prayer — "Pray that God will show you his view of those you're trying to reach. What will he show you? He will show you a heart of compassion. And he will show people who are empty, like sheep without a shepherd."
2. Love — "You have to love them to bring them the gospel. Convey the fruit of the Spirit. What's that but love, what comes out of that but patience, kindness, goodness and these qualities. They're the sort of things we should be sharing."
3. Knowing non-Christians — "Do they want the four spiritual laws shoved down their throats? No! What they want, they want you to be their friend!"
4. We are the bait "not those you're trying to evangelise. There's a tendency in religious circles to set people up . . . er would you like to come for a pizza, and by the way what do you think of God . . . I mean, that doesn't flow, that's unnatural!"
5. Feed non-Christians on a needs basis — The moment a non-Christian opens up a little bit we shove the four spiritual laws, E.E. and everything we've learnt and then if they're not responding we shove hell in and everything else. Then when they go away what happens? Blah!! They just spew up! You see, because we've overfed them."

"If I ever write a book on evangelism, though we certainly don't need yet another book on the topic, I'd call it "Natural Evangelism". Be yourself, show non-Christians that the church is full of real people. We've got a cultural barrier to cross with non-Christians. Look, a non-Christian comes to church and what's the first thing we do, we shove a whole lot of paper in their hands. That assumes they can read. Lots of people can't. If we have only middle class bishops and clergy and we are middle class ourselves how can we relate to someone from a working class background?"

"To be an evangelist, is like going through agony and ecstasy. On one hand there's agony from saying wrong things, seeing people turned off. Loneliness, I

mean it gets really depressing. But then there's the other extreme of ecstasy when you see God turning people to Jesus and you can be involved in that wonderful thing."

"To be an evangelist is like going through agony and ecstasy"

J. John sees himself as very ordinary and counts this as a gift for his evangelistic ministry. And this comes across at his meetings. After finishing an energetic evangelistic address, he would



J. John Daytime Mission Meetings, Sydney University.

naturally wander up to people milling around talk to them on anything. When finishing talking with Church Record after his evening meeting we were told of one young student who had just committed his life to Christ. The young man had just wandered by the meeting, looked, began listening, stayed and then with the meeting over had sought out one of the counselling team. After talking he became a Christian. When J. John was told he immediately went over to congratulate him. Not as a statistic, nor like a new member of a church congregation but like a friend with genuine interest and sensitivity.

Well, this man is young and has many years of work ahead of him and some more things to learn. While he has strong speaking gifts, J. John lacks the knowledge and experience to speak on a wider teaching basis. At present he expresses much of his theology in throw-away lines something hopefully he will reconsider as he goes on in maturity. Church Record sees him as a person to encourage and get alongside with his ministry and pray that God will use him in the coming years.

International Director for Evangelism Explosion

Presbyterian's appointment

The International Board of Evangelism Explosion (EE) Ministries has appointed **Dr. Cecilio (Woody) Lajara** as senior vice-president and international director of Evangelism Explosion International. In addition to supervising the EE ministry in the 63 nations where it is already operational, Woody will be working with the staff to introduce the ministry in the other countries.

Hired five years ago as EE's vice-president for Latin America, Woody introduced EE to Mexico and soon to every Spanish and Portuguese speaking country in Central and South America. He moved quickly into Spain and Portugal. In 1986 32 clinics will be held in those areas.

Birth and training

Before joining the staff of Evangelism Explosion, Woody organised the First Presbyterian Spanish Congregation at the Druid Hills Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, Georgia, USA; was Professor of Theology at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico and served as the director of the School of Theology at the Mariano Galvez University in Guatemala.

The national centre for EE ministries has operated in Australia since February 1983 and can be contacted via the national director, Mr. Rod Story, PO Box 168, Port Kembla, NSW 2505.

(NEW LIFE)

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Church Services

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 Adam. Visitors welcome.

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

CANBERRA: St. Matthew's Wanniassa (Cm. McBryde Cress and Laurens St.) Services: 8.15 a.m. 10 a.m. and 7.00 p.m. All welcome. Rev. Paul Watkins.

SYDNEY Holy Trinity ("The Garrison Church"), The Rocks. Services 11 pm Thurs., Fri. & Sat., 10.30 am & 7.15 pm Sunday. AAPB & BCP. Crying Room, S.S. Kids & Youth Clubs. BYO Sleeping Bags overnight accommodation in Hall. (02) 27 2864.

TEA GARDENS/BULAHDELAH: St. Andrew's, Cnr. Witt & Ogden Streets, T.G. Holy Communion 2nd & 4th Sundays (8 a.m.) Other Sundays (10 a.m.) Minister-in-charge: Rev. Ian Copland B.A., Th.L. (049) 97 4264.

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