

Harvester

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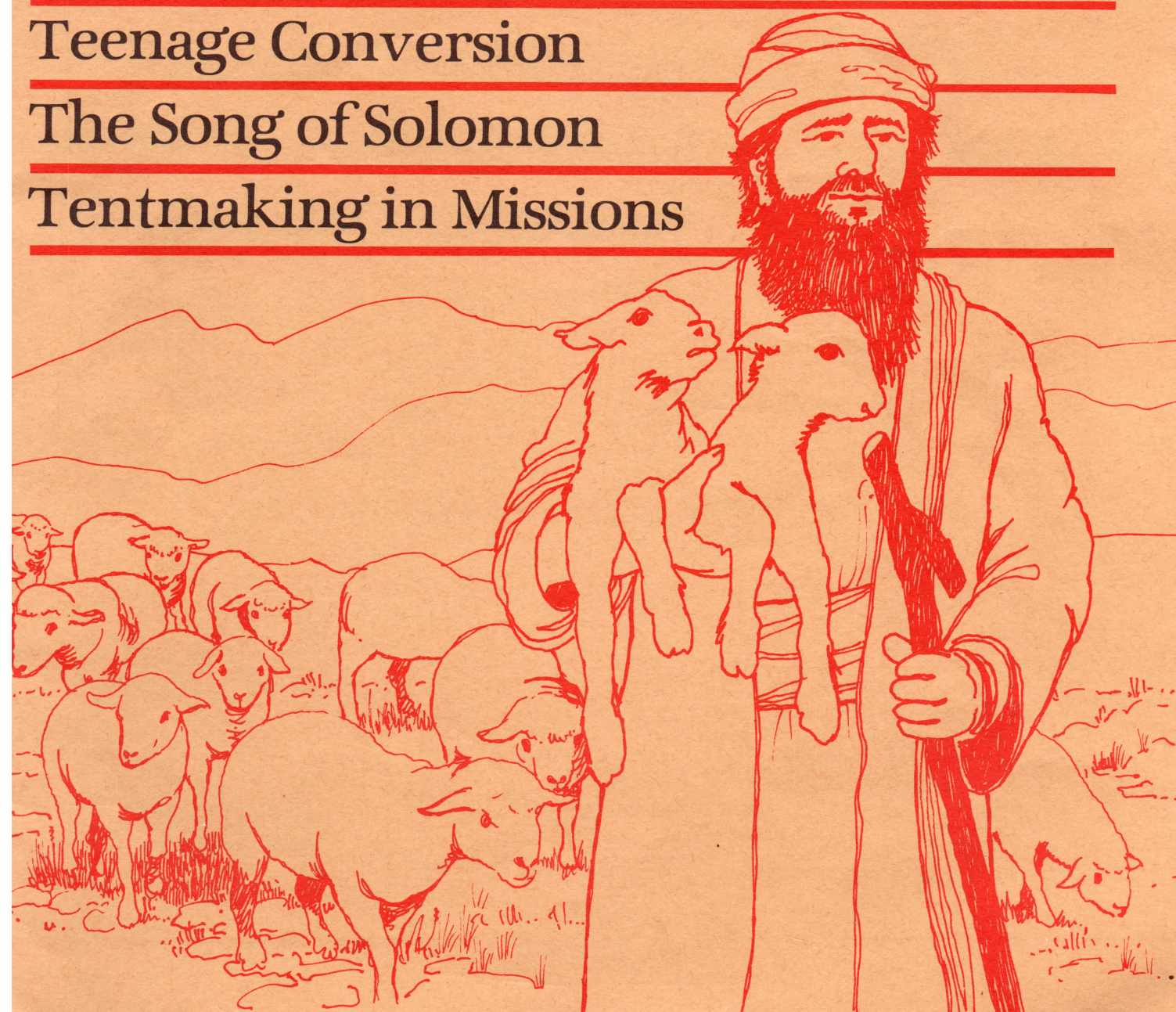
THE ELDER AS PASTOR

Arnold Pickering—A Tribute

Teenage Conversion

The Song of Solomon

Tentmaking in Missions



'It says here the Government wants to put VAT on books.'
THAT'S RIGHT.

'They'd never do it.'
WHY SHOULDN'T THEY?

'But it would mean an extra twenty pence in the pound on Bibles . . . and hymnbooks and Sunday School prizes!'
SO . . . ?

'But little Joanne's school already has them sharing one set of tatty books between three classes!'
TOUGH!

'But they want people to be literate . . . educated . . . thoughtful. Don't they?'
YOU RECKON?

'I doubt whether that little bookshop Charles runs could keep in business.'
PROBABLY NOT.

'I'd better protest to my MP, hadn't I?'
YOU DO THAT THING.

'People should be writing to the papers!'
GOOD THINKING.

'Why doesn't somebody organize a petition?'
SOMEBODY HAS. SIGN IT AT ANY BOOKSHOP.

"It is terribly important for the success of the campaign that the protest is seen to come from ordinary people as much as from within the trade itself. I hope everyone will continue to get petition forms signed".

*(Lady David, Chairman,
National Book Committee)*

**Don't tax
reading!**

Comment

LOOKING AHEAD

We are pleased to begin by conveying warm good wishes for 1985 to all our readers! And a special word of welcome to new subscribers—we're glad you've joined us and hope you benefit from (and contribute to) our pages over the coming months.

With some exciting new developments ahead we have once more expanded our editorial team, this time with the addition of Mrs. Barbara Baigent. At last a pretty face at the editorial meeting, and some sorely needed female wisdom. Barbara is taking responsibility for the new quarterly world mission bulletin, *AWARE*. As announced in December, this will be a four-page centre spread in *HARVESTER* (also available in quantity for separate distribution) aiming to provide up-to-date news on God's work around the world. It will also include news and reports of conferences, book reviews, training opportunities and much else. Should you have items to contribute to the bulletin, please contact Barbara at 6 Windmill Road, Wandsworth Common, London SW18 2EU. Look out for the first issue in March.

AWARE is being published in two parts. In addition to the world mission bulletin there will be a quarterly UK News bulletin, providing a round-up of developments across the country, news of regional activity, local and national evangelism, announcements of forthcoming events etc. Again, we'd like your contribution. Please write to John Polkinghorne, who is kindly editing the bulletin, at 6 Stonelands Park, Dawlish, Devon EX7 9BJ. First issue in April.

During 1985 *HARVESTER* is aiming to provide a good mix of those features which are proving more and more popular: help for local churches at a practical level, encouragement in personal spiritual growth, applied biblical exposition, comment on national and world issues from a Christian perspective, reader response, stimulating ideas and information for youth leaders, not to mention a relevant news service, review pages and all sorts of interesting snippets! Over the next few months Neil Summerton will be continuing his valuable review of the responsibilities of elders; we shall be publishing a series of articles on the work of the Holy Spirit, including some assessment of the contribution of the charismatic renewal, and our reaction to it; and, appropriately enough, a two-part series starting next month on handling differences—how can Christians who disagree with one another still enjoy fellowship?

We are very pleased to be gaining new subscribers of various ages and from different parts of the country. But we're sure there are many more in our churches who would benefit from reading *HARVESTER*. May we ask you to encourage them to take out a subscription? They may be youth leaders, elders, other office holders, young Christians, friends and neighbours . . . do spread the word!

Thank you for your support. We trust you will

know God's rich blessing throughout 1985.

JONATHAN LAMB

OF FIRST IMPORTANCE

Throughout 1984 I followed with much interest the correspondence columns in *HARVESTER*. I was struck by the obvious integrity and strength of feeling of people's views on a host of theological and procedural matters. At times, too, I felt that personal prejudice prevented a rational discussion of the issues.

With these thoughts in mind, I was reading one day I Corinthians 15:3 when the NIV translation of this verse leapt at me from the page: 'For what I received I passed on to you of first importance'. The last two words here are a corrective to some of the matters we sometimes get hot and bothered about.

What, then, is of first importance for us? *Corporately*, Paul gives us a clue: it is to present the essence of the gospel to our congregations, uncluttered by what Professor Bruce calls 'expendable material' (*HARVESTER* October 1984). It is to preach that the gospel has to do with our Lord's death (because and for our sin), burial (for he was really dead), and resurrection (the evidence for which is overwhelming). Such a gospel is to be put forward prayerfully, dynamically, and lovingly, in language that is devoid of cliché and redundant jargon. In a world of secular atheism, liberal theology, and vast human and social need, it is a sublime message; it is the only message. Perhaps in 1985 we can all agree to make evangelism, on a systematic and continual basis, one of our main priorities.

Individually, it is of paramount importance how we treat our fellow Christians. All too often our assemblies and churches are led by people who are quite clearly authoritarian instead of being authoritative: the two attitudes are distinct and different, although frequently confused in our minds. In this context, some words by Goethe are helpful: 'Love does not dominate, it cultivates'.

How are we to cultivate each other? The Bible is perfectly explicit. We are to love one another (John 13:34). It is a giving, sacrificial love. It is reaching out to serve each other. Ultimately it is God working through us and involving us. True fellowship is a sharing of life: it is not selective or partial, nor is it an external process. It is a commitment which flows from—and can only flow from—our relationship to and with God. It is an exhilarating process in the freedom of the Spirit.

Now if we truly love, we will be prepared to forgive, forbear, pray for, exhort and comfort each other. If we truly love, our assemblies and churches will be transformed, which is something I'm sure we all desire. When this happens, we shall rightly discern what is of first importance, and only then.

JOHN PETERS

FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY . . .

As Christmas 1984 approached, many commentators remarked on the contrast between the skinny, pot-bellied children whose pictures were appearing on television and the Christmas crowds queuing for superfluous food and drink. The feverish interest in the sale of British Telecom shares in December was, in its way, no less significant.

This was the biggest operation in the history of the Stock Exchange. Brokers stood to make unparalleled sums in commission. The public was wooed by every means, including the offer of special reductions in shareholders' phone bills. From one point of view this was an unequalled opportunity to acquire an interest in a vital—and growing—sector of the economy. From another, it represented a demand that some members of the community should pay in order to acquire an organisation which already belonged to tax payers as a whole.

Regrettably, it was also the most remarkable state-sponsored appeal to sheer greed that Britain has ever seen. Underlying the promotion was a general expectation that the shares would show a massive profit very swiftly and that many shareholders—if not most—would sell their shares and pocket the profit.

At one time the 'Brethren' tended to disapprove of investing in stocks and shares. Those days are past, but Christians have good cause to be less than enthusiastic about the BT sale. One reason for this unease is quite straightforward but the other demands a little thought because it calls into question something fundamental to our society.

This fundamental—and ultimately unbiblical—belief is that a person is justified in setting out to make money without offering any sort of service in return. In the Bible, by contrast, money is to be accepted either as a gift or else in return for work done.

In our society, providing money for business use is, not without reason, regarded as rendering a service and so it is possible to present a Christian argument for investing capital in a business with the expectation of taking a share in the profits. The money invested represents (in theory at least) work already done by the investor. By lending it, the investor enables the borrower to provide some benefit or service to the community which would not otherwise be available. The investor further contributes to the stability of society both by keeping his money in an enterprise which is healthy and also by withdrawing it from one which is badly run or failing to supply goods or services which are actually in demand.

But these sophisticated arguments have little to do with the sale of BT shares. This enterprise was already in existence and most people who acquired shares were not at all interested in benefiting society. They wanted, as the phrase goes, to make 'a fast buck'. And the government of our apostate nation spent £150 million encouraging them in this intention.

The other reason why Christians must have reservations about the exercise is the way in which it appealed to covetousness. The love of money is the root of all evil, according to Scripture. Paul's warning forbids Christians from embarking upon a project simply because it will make money for them.

Conversely, it requires them to be on their guard against what Tennyson called 'the narrowing lust for gold'. No less than sexuality or the use of alcohol, the profit motive can ruin individuals and families.

'Don't let the world squeeze you into its mould', is Paul's advice in Romans 12:2. The British Telecom episode may serve to remind us how immensely strong the 'squeeze' can be.

PETER COUSINS

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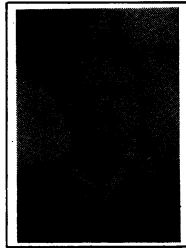
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SHEPHERD THE FLOCK

The Elder as Pastor

Neil Summerton

The importance of pastoring

In the course of church history there have been varying perceptions of the main task of those taking spiritual responsibility in the local church. In the medieval church, the priest's main function would have been considered to be the performance of the central cultic act, the saying or singing of mass on behalf of the people and those departed. The Reformation brought a decisive shift, at least in Calvinist congregations, so that the minister's main task came to be seen to be the preaching of the word, and the layout of church buildings was adapted rigorously to reflect that emphasis. Despite the title of 'pastor', many nonconformist groups in the Anglo-Saxon world continue to see the minister's function as principally that of preaching.

Such a heavy emphasis seems to lead to a distortion of the five-fold responsibility of the elder which was proposed in the preceding article. But before jumping to criticize other non-

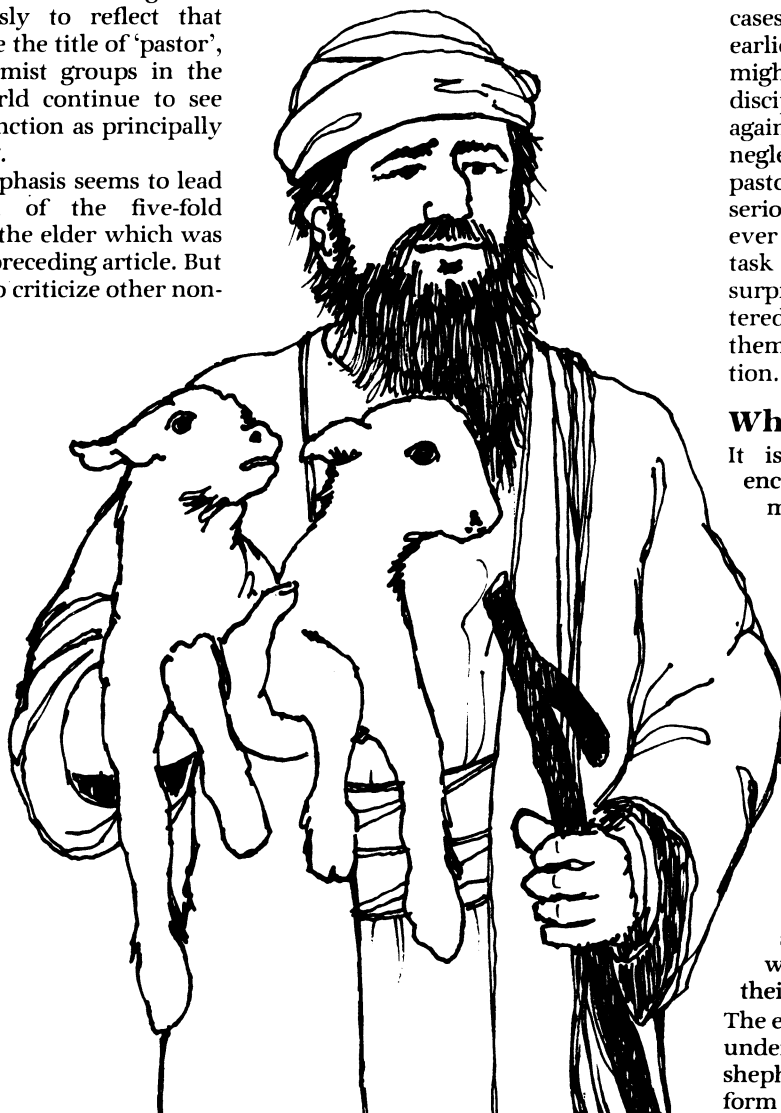
conformists, we should note the unique distortion to be seen in the Brethren tradition of oversight. If we set aside the propensity to concentrate on the day-to-day minutiae, we should have to acknowledge that the Brethren distortion has been to emphasize the task of discipline to the exclusion of the others: the elders' function has been seen to be the correction and elimination of supposed doctrinal error (usually judged against a distinctive system of dispensational interpretation, or against certain touchstones, *e.g.*,

principles of gathering or prophetic interpretation); and the maintenance of certain externals of piety (*e.g.*, attendance at the 'morning meeting'). The exercise of doctrinal and pastoral discipline are among the obligations of elders. But there would be widespread assent to the proposition that, while attending sometimes with excessive zeal to these matters, Brethren oversights have in general left undone the task of pastoral care. It is the cry of the people that, even more than failure to feed the flock from the word, pastoral care has been superficial, dilatory, or simply neglected. For their part, elders often have to admit that they have to deal with cases as matters of discipline, when earlier and sensitive pastoral action might well have averted any need for discipline. The prophetic strictures against the shepherds of Israel for neglect of the fundamental task of pastoral care need to be taken seriously in our generation. Whatever our doctrinal correctness, if this task is neglected, it will not be surprising that the sheep are scattered and so many congregations find themselves on the verge of extinction.

What is pastoring?

It is a bold man who seeks to encapsulate the nature, requirements and mechanisms of pastoring in a few hundred words. Courses of ministerial training devote many classroom hours to it, and there are many useful textbooks available—the tragedy is that there is in the Brethren an inclination to hold that Christian service can be undertaken by direct divine light without the need to develop the gift which God has given, or to reflect on the nature of the elder's responsibilities. The inset to this article suggests some further reading for elders who are concerned to improve their pastoral performance.

The essence of the pastoral task can be understood in the metaphors of the shepherd and shepherding which form the title of this series of articles.



Peter exhorts elders, 'Tend the flock of God that is in your charge . . . willingly . . . eagerly . . . being examples to the flock.' (1 Peter 5:2-3.) In this image, Peter was drawing upon a deep vein of Old Testament metaphor in which the priestly leaders of the old Israel were viewed as shepherds (see especially *Jeremiah 23:1-4* and *Ezekiel 34 passim*). Peter went on to invoke the chief Shepherd, who had himself taken up the image and applied it to himself (see *Psalms 23* and *Ezekiel 34, 11 & 23*), both in respect of the flock at large (*John 10:1-18*) and individually (*Luke 15:2-7*), and who had commissioned Peter to the same task (*John 21:15-17*—'Feed my sheep'). From this we are to understand that the pastoral care of God's people entails protecting them, feeding them, healing them, rescuing them, restoring them, and carrying them spiritually, the whole being done with loving care and gentleness, even when exercising the legitimate authority inherent in the elders' right to rule the flock. The task can be grasped succinctly from scripture as the precise opposite of Ezekiel's devastating condemnation of the spiritual leaders of his day (and which can apply to today's congregational leaders too): 'Should not shepherds feed the sheep? You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the sheep. The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the crippled you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd; . . .' (*Ezekiel 34:2-5*).

Both in its objects and methods, the task is to be contrasted with the approach of the counsellor who works within the framework of liberal humanism which so often informs secular counselling in the West today. For such counsellors the objectives and solutions are largely the client's business, worked out within the framework of his own value system. The counsellor's function is to listen, to seek to clarify, and to help the client to work through his difficulties in so far as he is able, in order to permit him to continue to function with reasonable effectiveness as a person. The Christian pastor may find some of the techniques of the secular counsellor useful; he must listen carefully; and his help will only be effective if emotionally the person pastored freely recognizes its value. Moreover, it should be acknowledged that some Christians do suffer from mental and emotional conditions which require specialist care. But temptation, sin and its consequences remain to some extent pervasive in every Christian's life, to say nothing

of the pressure of outward circumstance.

The pastor is charged to give positive help under the guidance of the Holy Spirit with the objectives of comforting and strengthening those under pressure from the circumstances of life (including the Satanic buffeting to which we are all prey); and of bringing repentance, and amendment and improvement of life, to those whose problem lies within themselves (circumstance and inner life are often reciprocally linked, of course). In short, the pastor's task is in the best sense the spiritual strengthening and direction of his charges. Those who

He will need above all the talent to teach, often unobtrusively and always sensitively, in pastoral conversation, from a position which is alongside the pastored, not above him.

seek the pastor only to indulge in a species of personal exhibitionism without any real desire to make the changes required to meet their spiritual needs are likely to find Christian pastoring irksome.

The humanist counsellor usually works within a framework of relative truth on the one hand and relative morality on the other. By contrast, the Christian pastor employs the twin instruments of instruction, and correction and reproof (see *2 Timothy 3:16-17*) within the framework of the absolute truth and morality of scripture. In these respects, the pastor must grasp that his task is indissolubly linked with the tasks of preaching the word (a point on which more will be said in the next article) and of pastoral discipline. That this is so may be seen in Jesus's dealings with, for example, the woman at the well (*John 4:7-26*), his constant work with his disciples, and in his resurrection appearances, e.g., to the two on the road to Emmaus (*Luke 24:13-35*), to Thomas (*John 20:24-29*), and to Peter (*John 21:15-19*). Similarly, pastoral methods can readily be seen throughout the epistles, which are all pastoral in character, especially *1 & 2 Corinthians*.

The requirements of the pastor

To define the pastor's task and method so positively would be presumptuous, but for scripture. It is an

onerous responsibility and, if undertaken in the flesh, is open to serious abuse, as can be seen from contemporary and earlier church history. The pastor needs to have a close personal walk with God and *spiritual* rather than natural gifts, e.g., those of the pastor, of discernment and of knowledge—there will be times when, like Peter confronted with Ananias and Sapphira (*Acts 5:1-11*), his perception of personal needs and problems will have to be supernatural.

He will also need the pastor's heart: that loving concern and anguish for individual Christians and the congregation which Paul displayed when he admonished the Ephesian church with tears (*Acts 20:31*) and when he wrote to the Corinthians 'out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know of the abundant love that I have for you.' (*2 Corinthians 2:4*). Like Moses, he is charged, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries the sucking child' (*Numbers 11:12*). The pastor also needs the ability to listen carefully and perceptively rather than to do all the talking (the real problem may not be the one which has been raised), and to command confidence and to encourage others to unburden themselves. To that end, he will need to devote time to the task, and to be patient with the limitations and foibles even of the best. And he will need above all the talent to teach, often unobtrusively and always sensitively, in pastoral conversation, from a position which is alongside the pastored, not above him.

Formal and informal pastoring

Except in disciplinary matters, the pastoral tradition of the Brethren is informal in character. The assumption is that pastoral work is to be done in the ordinary course of fellowship in the church. It is a valuable tradition: much pastoral work *must* be done in that way, for even the best ordered and most diligent eldership will not find it possible to arrange more than a handful of pastoral interviews with each member of the congregation in the course of a year. At all times, whether in meeting members individually or socially or at church meetings, the elder should seek to be open and available to the flock (in particular, the temptation to transact business between elders should be resisted as far as possible); he should take an interest in the spiritual and practical concerns of church members; and he should be alert for the signs of need (he should be on the lookout, for example, for the unusually silent, or those who seem

troubled). In the process, valuable opportunities for pastoral conversation may arise, though the elder should remember that the deeper and more sensitive matters should not be discussed with a third party listening in.

The *advantage* of such continuous and 'informal' pastoring is that it profits from relations of confidence built up in the give-and-take of ordinary fellowship: people are more likely to be relaxed and unable to strike poses as they might in a formal situation. The *disadvantages* are however that it is easy to slip from informal pastoring to doing none at all, *i.e.*, it is simply neglected, and hard questions are ducked. There are many matters, particularly serious ones and those which may turn into disciplinary cases, which are better dealt with formally because it is then easier to get to the nub of the matter. Apart from these considerations, some require definite visitation: the elderly, the shut-in, the sick and the bereaved. Formal arrangements are needed too for those contemplating marriage — it is an unhealthy tradition in Brethrenism that engagement and marriage are regarded as purely private matters with the arrangements at the disposition of the couple and the family, rather than of legitimate pastoral concern to the elders and the congregation. It would also be a desirable development in many churches for the elders to adopt the practice of finding out the addresses of those visiting the church for the first time and, if they live in the locality, to arrange to call on them at an early date: in some instances there would be evangelistic opportunities: if the person is already a Christian but without definite church connexion, the care and interest signified by a visit from an elder might well cement the relationship with the fellowship. The great advantage of formal arrangements for visitation, *as a reinforcement to informal pastoring*, is

that it should ensure that no one is neglected, as is all too easy in the informal system. Secondly, formal arrangements should help the elders to keep their pastoral obligations and objectives firmly in view. And beyond personal and spiritual needs, they enable the elders to consult church members in a systematic way about matters of common interest in the fellowship, and to discuss the personal contribution of the individual to its life.

Organization for pastoring

Where pastoral work is being done by a plural eldership, some kind of organization and co-ordination is needed if, on the one hand, some needs are not to be neglected and, on the other, confusing duplication and triplication of activity is to be avoided.

The precise arrangements will have to be adjusted to the needs and circumstances of the particular fellowship. The following are only some suggestions which may be useful at least in part.

Neglect can be avoided if the eldership make it a practice to review the needs of each member of the fellowship at regular intervals, for example, by systematic consideration of the list of members. A further step is to allocate to each elder monthly an individual whom they are to visit. (Incidentally, there is no reason why most pastoral visitation may not be done singly—if the tradition of pairs is followed, the burden of the task will be doubled.) An alternative is to divide the congregation between the elders by area so that the resulting group form a sub-flock which is the special responsibility of one or two elders who are charged to visit formally each individual in the group, say, at least once a year. Where the fellowship meets in home or area groups for bible study, prayer and fellowship,

those groups can form natural pastoral units for the elder or elders in each group.

Whatever the arrangement, it is desirable to have some form of reporting back to the eldership so that all are aware of the more important matters and so that all the elders are kept up to the mark in the task. The elders may also find it helpful to charge one suitably-gifted elder with the task of co-ordination of the elders' pastoral work: such an individual can act as a point of contact for the church members when emergency action is needed; he can draw into pastoral work appropriate people with pastoral gift outside the eldership, particularly women; and above all he can see to it that whatever pastoral arrangements have been adopted are being properly executed by the elders.

In any case, it is to be expected that a considerable portion of time each month will be spent by the elders in considering pastoral needs together and in praying about them. Whoever prepares the agenda for such meetings should try to help by identifying particular individuals who may need to be considered. All pastoral work needs to be prepared and reinforced in prayer on the part of the elder personally and of the eldership as a body. It should be undertaken equally systematically, with the list of members in hand.

The prize of pastoring

If the elderships of Brethren assemblies were to give greater thought to the practice of pastoring and to arrangements to achieve a major improvement of pastoral care in their churches, there is a very great prize to be grasped: nothing less than the consolidation of their flocks as effective units for spiritual growth and outreach — the very opposite of the scattering which will flow from its continued neglect.

Further reading on pastoring

The one book on pastoring which every elder should own and study is R. E. O. White, *A Guide to Pastoral Care*, Pickering and Inglis, 1976. As its sub-title says, it is 'A Practical Guide to Pastoral Theology'; it is comprehensive in scope and deals with the practice of pastoring as well as the range of problems likely to be encountered at the various stages of life. A similar one-volume, comprehensive, non-technical introduction is Gary Collins, *Christian Counselling*, Word Books, which can, we

understand, be obtained from the bookshop of London Bible College.

Three basic introductions to counselling are:-

Myra Chave-Jones, *The Gift of Helping*, Inter-Varsity Press, which would be worthwhile reading for many in addition to elders.
Roger Hurdling, *Restoring the Image: an introduction of Christian Counselling*, Paternoster Press, by a theologically-alert psychiatrist who was formerly a medical practitioner.

Evelyn Peterson, *A Handbook of Christian Counselling*, Paternoster Press, which looks at different types of counselling.

Three popularly-written books on important areas of pastoring, all by John White and published by Inter-Varsity Press, are *Eros defiled: the Christian and Sexual Guilt*; *Parents in Pain*; and *The Masks of Melancholy* (on depression and suicide). (John White is a former IFES staff worker who teaches psychiatry in Canada.)

Jonathan Lamb
and Neil Summerton

ARNOLD PICKERING (1908-1984)

F. F. Bruce

One Saturday evening in the early 1940s I spoke at a public meeting in Worksop, Notts. The meeting was attended by the late K. G. Hyland (then resident in the neighbouring town of Retford); he approached me at the end and asked, 'Have you had a letter from a man called Pickering?' I had not. Up to that time I was acquainted only with one Pickering family (well known in the world of Christian publishing) and this man evidently did not belong to it. But his letter arrived a few days later: he wrote as secretary of the North Midlands Young People's Holiday Conference inviting me to speak at it the following Easter weekend. I accepted the invitation, attended the conference, and was co-opted on to the committee, of which I remained a member for some thirty years. This was my first association with Arnold Pickering, the beginning of a close friendship destined to last until 1984. It was there that I first learned to appreciate Arnold's rare combination of organizing skill, irrepressible humour, devotional and practical exposition of Scripture, and Christian humility.

Arnold was born in Stockport, six miles south of Manchester, and lived there all his life. His parents took him at a tender age to the Brethren church which met in Crescent Road Hall from 1910 to 1974, when it moved to become Brinnington Evangelical Church. This was the only local church to which he ever belonged. He was baptized at the age of twelve, and soon became an increasingly active member of the church. At the age of nineteen he succeeded his father as church treasurer, and occupied this office and (for many years) the secretaryship until his last illness. But, valuable and efficient as his administrative services were, it was in his pastoral and counselling care and his spiritual ministry that he made his greatest and most enduring contribution to the welfare of the church. When in 1933 he married his childhood sweetheart Elsie, they opened their home in Stockport to young people for weekly Bible study, and not a few of the participants bear the marks of it to this day, to their own blessing and that of others.

When my wife and I moved to Buxton in 1960, we joined the fellowship at Crescent Road, Stockport. This provided an opportunity of closer association with Arnold. To have been linked in church fellowship



with such a man for nearly a quarter of a century, and for a good part of that time in the responsibility of eldership, has been in itself a means of grace.

Arnold's professional services as an accountant were appreciated both in Stockport and farther afield. In Stockport he was, among other things, secretary of two leading local charities — Sir Ralph Pendlebury's Charity for Children and the Ephraim Hallam Charity. His expertise, coupled with his spiritual wisdom, was put at the disposal of many Christian organizations, including *Echoes of Service* (of which he was an editor from 1959), the Müller Homes for Children in Bristol (of which he was a trustee), the J. W. Laing Trust (which he served as secretary), Stewards Company Limited and Continental Lands Company Limited (of both of which he was a director and also, for some years, secretary). In 1955 he became a trustee of THE HARVESTER.

The benefit of his experience as an organizer of the North Midlands Young People's Holiday Conference was sought by the promoters of other conferences, such as the Wessex Conference, the Young Men's Bible Teaching Conference (as it was in its earlier days) and the Swanwick Conference of Brethren. His ministry at such conferences was greatly valued, as well as his gift for making the announcements almost the most enjoyable part of any session! One sample of his devotional ministry has recently appeared in print — a series of studies in the Sermon on the Mount entitled *The Radiant Life*, published by *Echoes of Service* in 1984.

His prime ambition was that Christ should be magnified in his life and

ministry. He stood fast in the liberty with which Christ had made him free, and encouraged his fellow-Christians to rejoice in that liberty as much as he himself did. The only constraint he would impose on his liberty was the constraint of brotherly love: he would readily forgo his liberty for the sake of those weaker or less mature than he. He liked to render the last part of 2 Cor. 3:17, 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is flexibility.' Flexibility is an essential element in spiritual liberty: any one who doubts that may consider that its opposite is rigidity (which, where the Spirit of the Lord is absent, manifests itself as *rigor mortis*). It is largely because of his almost lifelong example and influence that Brinnington Evangelical Church in Stockport is a place where true liberty is enjoyed in exceptional measure.

His first wife, Elsie, died in 1972. In 1974 he married Doreen Glenham, who had been a member of the office staff of *Echoes of Service*. She contributed greatly to his happiness, comfort and effective ministry for the last ten years of his life. In the latter part of 1982 he became seriously ill, and we all thought his days were numbered. But he recovered and enjoyed a remarkable respite for most of 1983. Then his health began to decline again. On Christmas Day, 1983, he attended the communion service at Brinnington for the last time. After ten months of increasing weakness he passed peacefully into the Lord's presence early on Sunday morning, October 14, 1984. His many friends will all miss him sorely, but his passing will be felt most keenly by Doreen, by his son Gordon with his wife and two children, and by his elder sister Marjorie, who has known him longer than any one else. We commend them to the comfort of God.

In private and public, in church life and business life, Arnold was consistent throughout. In him grace and patience were joined with efficiency and dependability. He was the most unassertive of men, but in his quiet and unselfconscious way he exercised a profound Christian influence on many. For my own part, I owe him a greater spiritual debt than I owe to any other man of my own age-group, and many others could bear similar testimony. The aroma of Christ was present in all his ways, and will continue to make his memory fragrant.

TENTMAKING IN MISSIONS

A Closer Look (2) Andrew Dymond

The first part of this article presented the biblical case for a stronger emphasis on tentmaking missionary work, based on the apostolic example in the early church. The modelling of self-supported Christian service was argued to be an important factor in the growth and maturity of local churches and the replication of strong national leadership. This part examines some lessons of history and the practical difficulties of tentmaking in the world today.

Following the Apostolic Tradition

If there are strong biblical and cultural reasons for tentmaking ministries in missions and in church leadership, were they taken seriously in history or considered practical? The scriptures are silent regarding the means of support of most of the apostles after Pentecost. If their example and teaching on work was dissimilar to Paul's, would we not expect to see a different pattern emerge and dominate the scene? History, of course, points to a rising clerical professionalism and growth of ritualistic and legal observances; however, there is strong evidence that this was in spite of and not because of apostolic tradition. The Pauline example remained a live issue and has fostered renewal movements and missionary endeavour throughout history.

Roland Allen, in his book *The Case for Voluntary Clergy*, which presented a radical solution for the Anglican community in 1930, assembles substantial documentary evidence from early historians to show that from the apostolic age to the sixth century, the shepherds of the church practised secular trades widely and that they used the Pauline arguments themselves to urge the young men of their churches to work diligently. Certain kinds of trades, occupations and professions were encouraged as suitable for those who sought to labour in the ministry of the Church, while others were judged unsuitable

on account of their ensuing entanglements. These documents clearly show the concern of the Church fathers to display a sound moral, responsible lifestyle for the purpose of counteracting prevalent misconceptions and values of the day.

There is every reason to believe, therefore, that the practices in the early churches were an imitation, in the Pauline tradition, of the apostles and missionaries who initially carried the Gospel far afield.

We have immense untapped resources in our churches, especially young people with secular skills and spiritual gifts. They should be exposed to the full range of possibilities which God's call and Christ's commission might include.

Later Examples

Various subsequent missionary thrusts and spiritual movements which can be traced from the Nestorians through lesser-known periods to that of modern missions have modelled a tentmaker approach. Some of these are listed by J. Christy Wilson (*Today's Tentmakers*) and E. H. Broadbent (*The Pilgrim Church*). We also know that national churches have on various occasions needed to be freed from strong foreign ecclesiastical and paternal links in order to experience growth in their home turf. The Eastern churches outside the Roman Empire, for example, were given a greater liberty in the Persian Empire after receiving the stigma of 'Nestorianism', since they were no longer perceived as allies of Rome or Constantinople. More recently, some churches which have experienced the forceful severance of

ties with Western missionaries and organizations for political reasons have grown in isolation, while others were ill-prepared and have fared less well.

The ability of churches to survive such traumas and grow indigenously can certainly be shown to depend on their capacity for producing and replicating strong, responsible national leaders. Our earlier examination of the biblical evidence led us to conclude that the modelling of tentmaking ministries by people with a missionary zeal would contribute towards that end. Even in countries where the church is more established, the need to respect, support and encourage the development of local leadership might mean that tentmakers would provide the most appropriate form of fellowship. Whether the need is for biblical teaching or other forms of ministry, the placing of full-time missionaries may not be our best response.

Recent Economic Influences

There are other external factors which we should also consider. We do not need reminding of the natural economic trends which have today made emigration and overseas employment the only option for many who are not prepared to accept unemployment at home. Large Asian communities of migrant workers in the Middle East include Christians whose life and witness has become a significant factor in the spread of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit used the pressure of religious, political and economic circumstances to direct His work from the first century onwards. However, until recently the Western church has tended to view its own expatriate members overseas almost as highly paid mercenaries, despite the successful efforts of many of them in spreading the Gospel and supporting local churches.

As circumstances change at home, we now recognize both the economic

sense for some committed Christians to move overseas and the desperate need for their skills, which are wasted at home, to be put to work productively in less developed economies. The Lord may be forcing our hand to take a broader view of the world and, in so doing, to work more creatively for His kingdom.

Finding a Correct Balance

It is probably true to say, however, that with some notable exceptions, most of the greatest gains in translation work, Christian literature and theological material have been accomplished by full-time missionaries. Their work has ensured consolidation and cannot normally be undertaken by tentmakers. We should not therefore advocate a total replacement of full-time by self-supporting ministries, rather a vigorous expansion based on opportunity and the open doors available to us. There remains an enormous need for the specialist ministries to continue. We might conclude that for countries where the church is small or almost non-existent, an ideal mission strategy would consist of seeking to identify and send tentmakers who are prepared to shoulder spiritual responsibility for witness, church planting and discipling of believers. A smaller number of the more traditional full-time missionaries engaged in translation, Bible and literature distribution, writing skills development and other vital 'infrastructure' ministries would provide important specialist support. This, of course, represents a considerable shift from classical mission strategies and much groundwork is necessary to build up the strength and calibre of tentmaking ministries; however, there are strong reasons for so doing. We have immense untapped resources in our churches, especially young people with secular skills and spiritual gifts. They receive only one view of mission activity; only one mode of operation is ever promoted. They should be exposed to the full range of possibilities which God's call and Christ's commission might include.

Facing the Practical Difficulties

At this point, we are faced with a dilemma. Strong biblical and historical arguments and the challenge to take up a largely unfinished task point out the necessity of embarking on a more active mission strategy in which tentmakers should play a major role. Among other things, it is often not practical to think in terms of the traditional approach for those countries most in need of a Gospel witness today. However, it may be argued that past experience has shown that relatively few tentmakers

do in fact achieve the kind of language skills and cultural 'at home-ness' which are rightly considered basic to effective missionary endeavour. This can most often be attributed to work pressures, culture shock, inappropriate life-style, and the existence of sizeable English-speaking expatriate communities in the major urban centres of the world. Hence, would-be tentmakers are usually struggling to identify with an ideal which is unattainable in practice.

Most of the difficulties can be solved in the long run, but this will depend on our acceptance of the need for a broader missions awareness and for setting up a home support structure geared to serious tentmaking recruitment, training and ministry. Most churches are relatively inexperienced in this, though some mission agencies have already instituted some interesting programmes and are leading the way towards a more comprehensive involvement by the whole evangelical community

One of the most essential requirements is for effective preparation, orientation and prayer support to be provided for those who sense God's call to work as tentmakers. Allied to

this, churches (and Bible colleges) need to be familiarised with the possible arrangements which can facilitate the kind of spiritual, educational and even supplementary financial support which may be necessary for successful tentmaking service. For example, some missions offer 'associate missionary' agreements to tentmakers. These might include specific financial arrangements as well as a statement of ministry objectives, prayer and fellowship in the field. 'Bridge financing' in the form of gifted support or loans might be appropriate, on a case-by-case basis, for some tentmaking individuals or families to undertake preparation prior to assuming field responsibilities, or to pay for home leave where this is not otherwise provided. Income between jobs, child education, pension schemes or other needs may also not be provided by the secular employer. It should be recognized that not all overseas secular employment involves a high salary or attractive conditions. Often the most suitable opportunities for Christian ministry provide few of the benefits normally associated with overseas contracts and may leave the tentmaker less

Practical Steps for Local Churches

- Find out more about those missions which have 'associate missionary' or similar arrangements for people whose job may take them overseas, or which actively recruit tentmakers for overseas placement.
- Appoint someone with an interest in missionary work to prepare country profiles on needs and opportunities. Focus on both the economic issues and the church situation. Select a few countries of special interest and bring them to the attention of the church in prayer meetings, house groups, etc.
- Use general missionary publicity to summarize the type of work the various missions are involved in and the type of job skills they are looking for in applicants. One example—an Evangelical Missionary Alliance brochure on Africa — provides data on 22 mission agencies and lists opportunities for secretaries, mechanics, electricians, builders, accountants, administrators, doctors, nurses, lab technicians, engineers, agriculturalists and teachers.
- Invite representatives of mission agencies which have a tentmaker focus to speak to church gatherings.
- Invite people with personal experience of self-supported or relief and development work overseas to speak at missionary meetings. Give opportunity for them to answer questions about the problems encountered. Even though many may feel their ministry was limited or their experience discouraging, the learning process requires an honest sharing.
- Keep in touch with members working overseas. Attempt where possible to put them in touch with missionaries for fellowship reasons. Encourage them to see and use their spiritual gifts for the Lord. Pray for them regularly.
- Encourage young people to go on short term assignments for witness, English language teaching or development projects to see for themselves the needs and opportunities. Provide financial assistance in some cases; 'invest' in those with spiritual gifts and aptitude for cross-cultural ministry — many become future missionaries or tent-makers after a short-term exposure to a foreign country.

well looked after than full-time missionary families.

Tentmaker Missions

Fortunately, more and more Christian agencies engaged in relief and development now also offer secular type opportunities, employing engineers, technicians, administrators, agriculturalists, health and welfare workers in development programmes. These are ultimately aimed at transferring technologies, skills, and trading opportunities to groups of Christians in the Third World, but also have a wider influence and impact in the local economy. They provide a setting for witness and spiritual ministry alongside local churches. Tear Fund is one of the best known of these missions, though an increasing number of the traditional

interdenominational missions are becoming involved in this type of service. Christians working in this way are there in a tentmaker relationship with the local churches, while retaining a more traditional link with their mission and home church as regards their manner of support and preparation for service.

Our Rational Response

Whether the employment is gained directly through an interdenominational mission, via a secular development agency or the open job market, there will be a continuing trend for Western Christians with missionary callings to go to work in the economically productive sectors of the developing world. A number of Christian 'employment agencies', many of them computer-based, are

now providing a valuable free service matching global job opportunities to all levels of skill and qualification. From the very poorest rural areas of Africa and Latin America to the richest and most sophisticated cities of the Middle and Far East, the opportunities are unlimited. However, home churches and Bible colleges need to join the move already begun by some of the interdenominational mission agencies to strengthen the hand of those called to work and witness in this way. As we have seen, this would be a logical extension of our understanding of the biblical teaching on Christian life and ministry to the work of overseas mission and would help to improve the breadth and depth of our involvement in the work of worldwide evangelism and church growth.

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The Song of Solomon

How do we interpret it?

Hugh Williamson

A few months ago, Professor Bruce posed a thought-provoking question to readers of *HARVESTER* concerning what was involved in being 'well taught in the scriptures'. To me, his question implied a dichotomy: on the one hand, there are those with a good knowledge of the Bible in much the same way as one might have a knowledge of Chinese literature — familiarity with the language, awareness of the historical and cultural background in which each book, play or poem took shape, appreciation of the literary conventions of that society, and so on. On the other hand, there are those who may lack such knowledge and even deem it to be irrelevant on the grounds that a book which is divinely inspired must be spiritually interpreted; this in turn may mean either that a passage can speak directly to me in my present situation, so that I read the Bible like someone sitting beside the 'phone, waiting for it to 'ring', or it may mean that I can engage in a form of interpretation as someone who has been initiated into a secret set of rules, unknown and unknowable to those who are 'without'. To someone who is himself 'without' in this regard, the rules appear to be primarily (i) an odd use of the concordance, whereby any verse can illuminate any other provided both have a word in common, and (ii) a general approach to what a book must mean and into which everything in the book can be made to fit even if the book does not itself make clear that this was a legitimate approach in the first place. It is likely that most Christians would put themselves somewhere between these two extremes, grateful for what information the experts can supply, but not so enslaved to it as to be frightened off reading the Bible 'for myself'. And this is just as well! For the history of Biblical scholarship shows time and again that today's 'fresh light' may be no more than tomorrow's standing joke. Nobody will want to set the clock back to the

Hugh Williamson, who teaches in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Cambridge and is a member of Panton Hall, Cambridge, provides a review article in which he raises important questions of biblical interpretation.

I have never heard a sermon preached on the Song as it stands, despite its obvious relevance to the most powerful of all human relationships over which there is so much confusion in today's world.

days before the Reformation when, by and large, the Bible was the preserve of 'experts' alone. Nevertheless, I believe the dichotomy I have outlined with conscious exaggeration accurately highlights two separate approaches that still persist in Christian study of the Bible, and nowhere (unless perhaps with regard to Daniel and Revelation) is this more apparent than in the case of the Song of Songs. Picture me, if you will, in two different settings. One is my place of employment where I am seeking to teach a class of advanced students the Hebrew text of the Song of Songs. I have to point out to them that this short book contains many words whose meaning is at best uncertain: 10% of its total vocabulary occurs nowhere else in the Bible at all. Thus, even after we have spent many wearisome hours reviewing how a word has been understood from ancient times to the present, what light other related languages may shed upon it, what makes best sense in the context of the passage and of the culture, we may still have to conclude that we are unsure as to detail. Then again, in order to understand the force of some of the imagery, we may turn to other

love poems of the time—from Egypt, maybe—and there find our suspicions confirmed that much of it is purposely ambiguous, with erotic undertones scarcely concealed (e.g. 4:15-5:1, and especially 5:4 when the euphemistic use of 'hand' is borne in mind and when it is realized that the word often translated 'latch' in modern versions is, quite simply, 'hole'). Then again, we may struggle for a considerable period with problems of overall interpretation: is this a collection of unrelated poems, or should we take the repetitions seriously as suggesting that the poem tells a story? And if a story, who says what, and to whom? Perhaps, we may conclude, whilst a general development in the relationships can be perceived, we do best to read this for what it is—poetry that evokes rather than narrates. 'Then why was it included in the Bible?', a perceptive student challenges. 'Ah well', I reply, 'you have only to read the earliest Jewish interpretations to realize that they included it because they saw it as the story of God's dealings with Israel from the time of the Exodus, and so used it as a set reading for the Passover festival; but obviously from our point of view that is quite fanciful . . .' Picture me now the following Sunday morning at the Lord's Table as these same passages are given a 'devotional' reading in terms of Christ and the Church or Christ and the individual believer. I find it hard enough when a word whose meaning I pronounced 'uncertain' a couple of days before is now used to link with other passages where the English suggests a similarity; it is comparable to the puzzlement others may have felt when the comparisons do not work as between, say, the Authorized and New International Versions. And what happens to such a devotional reading if, as the commentary under review maintains (though of course I am not yet fully persuaded!) 'his banner over me was love' (2:4) should be translated 'his intentions were to make love'?

But beyond that, I cannot stop myself asking, how have we arrived at this whole line of interpretation, and how can it be justified? First, there is not, so far as I am aware, any quotation from the Song in the New Testament that could give us a lead, and the description of the Church as 'the Bride of Christ' is hardly a warrant for a detailed application of the physical aspects of the marriage bond, despite *Ephesians 5*; indeed, most would find the suggestion grossly offensive, if not blasphemous.

Second, then, is the Song an allegory? In an allegory, the 'story' is not real, but fictitious. The reality is that alone which the allegory is written to illustrate and explain. Though scripture is extremely reticent about the use of the *genre*, there are occasional examples (such as the Song of the Vineyard in *Isaiah 5*), so that the suggestion is initially possible. However, the fact that interpreters do not agree as to how the Song should be applied allegorically rather suggests that this is a false trail. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, for instance, points the way to its own interpretation by its tell-tale names, while *Isaiah* makes clear what the Song of the Vineyard is all about. Not so with the Song of Songs: the places named in it are real places (En-gedi, Sharon, Tirzah etc.) and the characters too appear genuine enough; nor do we find the kind of distinctive actions which characterize an allegory. Since there is no equivalent stated anywhere that could get us started on an allegorical interpretation, we must accept that scripture itself does not permit such an approach. It can only be imposed by some external 'secret' knowledge.

Thirdly, our thoughts may turn to typology. In this method, the 'type' is real and must be taken seriously in its own right. Beyond it, however, a parallel is found in its 'antitype', the New Testament event or character to which the type relates. The difficulty that this approach poses for the Song, however, is similar to that already encountered above: there is no New Testament warrant for it, so that we are again at the mercy of the interpreter's fancy. Worse, however, we cannot now 'spiritualize' the erotic passages (as an allegorist might do), but must reckon with them seriously at face value in our application — which we have seen to be unacceptable.

Now, whilst I have no wish to denigrate the value of the devotional meditations to which the Song has given rise in themselves, it sees to me clear that we have no scriptural warrant for claiming that they are in any sense a justified interpretation of this book. They are, in short, an imposition on the text from some extraneous, not to say esoteric, alternative source of knowledge. More than that, they blunt the reader's awareness of the 'natural' sense of the text. (One can hardly speak of a 'literal' sense in the case of a book that is so full of vivid imagery.) The truth of this may be judged by the observation that I have never heard a sermon preached on the Song as it stands, despite its obvious relevance to the most powerful of all human relationships over which there is much confusion in today's world.

This outburst on my part, it is now more than time to state, has been prompted by my reading, with considerable appreciation, of the latest

addition to the series of Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries. Its author, Lloyd Carr, has studied widely in this type of literature in the ancient near East, and he writes as one who, in his own words, 'stands under the judgment of the Word of God and must lead every thought captive in obedience to Christ' (p.9). Several of the points that I have made, and many more besides, are developed with much fuller detail in the Introduction. The commentary proper gives full attention to the obscurity of much of the Song's vocabulary, though regrettably the transliteration of the Hebrew words is frequently inconsistent and sometimes plain wrong. Carr also makes a moderate suggestion concerning movement in the Song's 'plot', but he always gives attention to the proposals of other scholars. Finally, whilst he does not regard it as his duty to offer a contemporary application, he gives us plenty of hints along the way which stimulate further reflection.

Here, then, is a commentary which may be generally characterized as 'sensible', leaving no doubt as to the many areas in which even so basic a task as translation is surrounded by uncertainty. I do not necessarily agree with all its conclusions (notably the date which Carr proposes), but I wholeheartedly endorse its underlying approach to interpretation. It would make excellent reading for all who aspire to be 'well taught in the Word'.

The Song of Solomon. An Introduction and Commentary G. Lloyd Carr (Inter-Varsity Press). 175pp. £4.75 casebound; £3.95 paperback

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Shepherding and Serving

A CBRF Seminar Report Chris Bocutt

The Autumn seminar, which was held at London Bible College on October 20th 1984, was on a very topical subject. It was well supported with some participants coming from a long distance. The papers by experienced 'shepherds' raised many relevant issues. Unfortunately, in the time available, it was not possible to do more than skim the surface.

A New Vocabulary of Shepherding

Jim Harris, a full-time church worker in Staines, gave the first paper. He said that every new development in society created its own special vocabulary. The renewal movement, with its emphasis on the processes of leadership and pastoral care was no exception. So he began by defining four concepts: community, restoration, covenant and kingdom life. The church was more than just a group held together by various ties; it was a spiritual organism. But the organism had a structure which he illustrated with two biblical models; the Body of Christ and the Family of God. These models showed that 'cell-life' was a means of maximising the contribution of each member. The contemporary rediscovery of the need for a return to clear biblical patterns and the original intention of God for the Church, a characteristic of the start of the Brethren Movement, bound us to one another, within a framework of delegated authority. This structure required us to show unswerving loyalty and commitment not only to Christ but also to all believers, including those in the wider church. In this context, the church could show to the world the feasibility of living under grace and not under law, of expecting the supernatural to be normative in the church, of bringing human affairs successfully within the sphere of God's rule, and seeking to implement God's rule in the world by community action. He described the caring and communicating roles within the church; apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors/teachers. These 'enabling' para-church ministries were found today in such groupings as 'team' ministries. Spiritual leadership at the local level was

exercised by elders in 3 ways: shepherding, parental, and counseling. As they cared for the family of God, they were recognized by their dynamic leadership, their experience, the effort they put into the work and their reputation. In the renewal movement they were often released to work fulltime.

Shepherding had a sound scriptural basis (e.g. *Ezekiel 34*, *John 10* and *Acts 20*), but caution was needed. Those exercising this kind of leadership could easily overstep their authority by being legalistic, authoritarian, or even divisive. But in this and similar problem areas the scriptures, real dialogue and a plural leadership were the only adequate safeguards. He saw 'authority' as the most controversial issue in the modern shepherding movement. It was self-evident that Christ's rule over the Church had to be expressed through people acting on His delegated authority. The implication of this was that disobedience to the shepherd was tantamount to disobedience to Christ. The shepherd could only avoid this extreme by remembering that he was under the same authority. He thought that the critics of 'covering' had misrepresented this to mean a rigid structure of authoritarian control. However, the biblical principles, seen in the close covenant relationship and the ideas of mutual help and support, were no more than an extension of the command 'Love one another'.

'The Listening Shepherd'

Myra Chave Jones, who has recently retired as Director of Care and Counsel, reminded us of the Eastern shepherds. They listened to their sheep with their eyes as well as their ears. Those who wanted to shepherd the church had first to learn how to listen with eyes and ears; many tell-tale signs could be read from a person's face during a welcoming handshake. They also had to face their own fears and deal with their own reactions to what was being said to them before they could be effective listeners. The emotions played an important part too. Although we had been taught not to trust our emotions, they often helped us to feel what the other person was experienc-

ing. Finally, she reminded us that we must not seek to impose upon others our own 'agenda' even though this might mean our losing control of the encounter. While it was essential to have our objective clearly in view, the side issues, which loomed large to the person being helped, also have to be dealt with.

Case Studies

No CBRF seminar would be complete without group work. On this occasion, there were five groups. A number of important principles emerged. Pastoral care was felt to be an activity of the whole church not simply of the elders. And in this context their leadership was assessed by the way they took note of the views of other members and were prepared to delegate some aspect of caring. Moreover, caring could not be restricted to what some would regard as 'spiritual'. Practical help and understanding (e.g. help with job applications for the unemployed) was also vital. This was particularly important for those with rather unstable and volatile personalities. They might find the only genuine source of support in the church. The increasing pressure on marriage underlined the value of the husband-and-wife team. In this area, prevention, in the form of regular teaching on marriage, especially for the young people, was better than cure.

'Pastoring a Congregation'

Claude Shepherd, who is the Pastor at the Spanish Church in London, told a fascinating story to illustrate how painstaking and patient the pastor must be. Those who would shepherd the flock must first truly love the people in their care in the Lord if they were to cope with the many disappointments on the way. They must also show a true interest and identity with the people. At the same time they had to protect themselves from becoming too involved. The case he spoke of concerned a man and a woman who both, over a period of some months and about 50 pastoral visits, became Christians and were able to establish a sanctified relationship.

CHRIST'S UNEARTHLY ROBES (Mark 9:3)

Further meditations in Mark (5) David Brady

When Mark wrote his account of the transfiguration of Jesus, he was probably depending on the eye-witness report of the apostle Peter (cf. *2 Pet. 1:16-18*). As we know from the accounts given in the Gospels, this was an event which left Peter utterly speechless (cf. *Mark 9:6*: 'he did not know what to say, for they were exceedingly afraid'). Reflecting on this event in later years, Peter still seems to find it impossible to bring adequate words to describe the vision of the transfigured Christ. Indeed, Mark's account omits any reference to the actual face of the Lord, but he does make one brave effort to describe the brilliance of the Lord's garments: 'his garments became glistening, intensely white, as no fuller on earth could bleach them.' These last words, which make comparison with the work of the earthly fuller, are unique to Mark's Gospel and they remind us of Paul's similar attempt to describe the blinding vision of the Lord which was granted to him on his vengeful way to Damascus. For him it was 'a light from heaven, brighter than the sun.' Indeed, that which seems to have impressed both Peter and Paul was the superterrestrial nature of this glory; it was something excelling anything on earth, or indeed in the universe.

Heavenly Brightness

The work of the fuller (the extracting of natural impurities from raw wool) was indeed an earthly business, so much so that the late E. F. F. Bishop, who lived for many years in Palestine, felt that Mark was alluding to the eastern custom of spreading clothes on the ground for bleaching in the bright glare of the sun (*Jesus of Palestine* [London, 1955] p.156). We are reminded of the Old Testament references to the Fuller's Field (e.g. *Isa. 7:3*) where of course the fuller would probably lay out these clothes (which he had previously soaked, using primitive chemicals, and trampled out repeatedly) to make use of the natural bleaching properties of bright sunlight. However, it is more likely that the words 'on earth' in Mark's phrase 'no fuller on earth

could bleach them'—attach not to the words 'could bleach them', but to 'no fuller'; i.e. Mark is referring to 'no fuller in the world', just as he elsewhere refers to the mustard seed being 'smaller than all seeds on the earth' (*4:31*), i.e. 'smaller than any seed in the world'.

What Mark is therefore emphasizing is the heavenly nature of the whiteness, as betokening the divine nature of Christ. 'The light, then, it would seem, shone not upon Him from without, but out of Him from within' (Jamieson, Fausset & Brown). Or, as

There were those who by grace were enabled to perceive the finger of God in the works of Jesus.

Alfred Edersheim put it, "The 'form of God' shone through the 'form of a servant.'" But let Scripture speak: "The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven" (*1 Cor. 15:47*); "He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth belongs to the earth, and of the earth he speaks; he who comes from heaven is above all". (*John 3:31*; cf. *Eph. 4:9f.*). Truly, Christ veiled his glory when he came to earth and was laid in the feeding-trough at Bethlehem. That glory once shone out to his disciples on the mount of transfiguration, but to men at large it was hidden.

Contrasted Attitudes

And yet there were those who by grace were enabled to perceive the finger of God in the works of Jesus. The garments that shone with unearthly light on the mount were the same garments that had been touched by the woman with the unclean haemorrhage (*Mark 5:27*). No doubt, she had recognized by faith that beyond the veil of the Lord's flesh lay the merciful and healing hand of God. Her vision of the fountain opened for uncleanness found its source in 'no fuller on earth'. Of old the priests had

pronounced that holy flesh carried in the skirt of a garment was rendered unclean by contact with death (*Hag. 2:11-13*). But Christ Jesus reversed the outflow of contagion (cf. *Ezek. 47:1-9*), so that his touch of a leper did not render himself unclean (as the law pronounced), but cleansed the leper instead (*Mark 1:41*). This same cleansing power was felt by the woman with the haemorrhage, so that instead of defiling the Saviour by her touch of his garment, she received God's own cleansing; for this was no earthly device; it was the 'fuller' of heaven.

Of the man of heaven, whose garments shone brighter than any fuller on earth could bleach them, it is recorded that he stooped so low that he quite literally fell to the earth (*Mark 14:35*). The same garments which had shone with heavenly glory were those which his executioners divided among themselves and over which they cast lots (*Mark 15:24*). How different was their view of Christ to that of the woman cured of the haemorrhage. It was represented in their completely different attitude to his clothing. And yet their action was no mere victory of wicked men over the Son of God. No, for the Son of God chose to lay down his life, just as he chose to lay aside his garments in order to wash his disciples' feet (*John 13:4, 12*).

And for us?

So it is for us to recognize that which the world does not see: the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. His garments shone whiter than any earthly fuller could make them. The natural work of fulling would involve the shrinking of cloth in the course of washing it. Thus, in *Mark 2:21* the word for 'unshrunk' is closely related to the word translated 'fuller'. The piece of unshrunk cloth which no sane-minded person sews on an old garment is precisely a piece of cloth which has not been treated by the fuller, just as Christ's transformed garments shone with a light which was not the product of any fuller's work. In the piece of unshrunk cloth we may therefore see that the minis-

try of Christ is of no earthly character. We cannot fit the glory of Christ onto the ritual of earthly religion. 'Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better . . . If he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all . . . [but] we have . . . a high priest . . . who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven' (*Heb. 8:6, 4, 1*).

Those who are Christ's are therefore to set their minds on things above, not on what is on the earth (*Col. 3:2*), for he has said that being lifted up from the earth, he will draw all men to himself (*John 12:32*). Secondly, we are called to put to death what is earthly in us (*Col. 3:5*). Christ is 'like fuller's soap' (*Mal. 3:2*) and we are therefore called to be holy as he is holy, since by his blood we are ransomed from the earth (*Rev. 14:3*). So we are to live henceforth as strangers and pilgrims on earth, seeking our heavenly inheritance (*Heb. 11:13; Phil. 3:20*).

*O God, we come with singing,
Because the great High Priest
Our names to thee is bringing,
Nor e'er forgets the least;
For us he wears the mitre,
Where holiness shines bright,
For us his robes are whiter
Than heaven's unsullied light.*

KNOW GOD

A basic introduction to the Christian faith

Written by evangelist **Derek Cleave** in fellowship with other members of Christian Ministries, this little book is brief and simple. It avoids trivialising the Gospel and emphasises the link between conversion and Christian discipleship within the local church.

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continued from page 13

'Tomorrows Shepherds'

The final paper of the day was given by Jonathan Lamb, the Editor of HARVESTER. He began by considering what was practical in the setting of the church today. Jesus' pattern was as the servant-shepherd-Lord. He is the Chief Shepherd and in laying down His life for the church He gave us the greatest description of the pastoral role. We failed so often because His kind of self-sacrificial love for people was missing. We had to face the fact that without proper pastoral care the church would not grow; it was all too easy to allow our attitudes to be influenced by the excesses of other believers and become cynical. More positively, the New Testament provided considerable flexibility for working out new structures and patterns for caring and pastoral oversight. Elders were more than merely administrators or committee men. When selected simply for their skills in these areas pastoral care degenerated into crisis counselling instead of being for church growth. The link between the pastoral and the teaching role was very strong in the NT. He advocated that those with the prime responsibil-

ity for pastoral care should also carry out the bulk of the teaching. As elders assumed a greater concern for pastoral ministry they would inevitably become very busy. This raised the question of full-time pastors; an aspect not faced in the Brethren generally. In addition, new structures were needed so that hitherto untapped resources in the church could be made available. For example, pastoral teams which drew in members of the church who were not elders. Such teams could include both men and women and provided a forum for regular training. House groups could also be used to co-ordinate pastoral care in a geographical area. He did not think that enough was done to support the helpers, not only within the church but also by establishing links with elders in other churches. Training elders for shepherding had not received much attention, sometimes because formal training was thought 'unspiritual'! But how was the Holy Spirit to equip us? The church might consider giving financial support so that someone could undergo fulltime training at Bible college. He wondered if the elders should concentrate less on shepherding as such and

develop informal training schemes for those who seem to have the appropriate spiritual qualities to be potential elders. Finally he spoke of caring as a job for all; a point which had emerged earlier during the group work. Simple caring structures would help to release the full potential of the church to exercise these vital gifts.

Concluding Remarks

John Baigent drew the day to a close by reminding us of the picture of the shepherd in *Psalms 23*. God was the *model* of our shepherding, providing us with all that we need. He was also the *focus* of our shepherding, because the flock belonged to Him and not us. Finally, He is the *sustainer* of the shepherds, because they also are in need of shepherding.

(Two tapes of the seminar papers at £2.50 each post paid can be obtained from Mr. Tim Buckley (CBRF Tapes), London Bible College, Green Lane, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 2UW. Copies of the papers and further information on the work of the CBRF can be obtained from Dr. John Boyes, Executive Director, 13 The Meads, Northchurch, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 3QX; tel: 04427 2654)

Youthtrack

Two pages of information, advice and ideas for youth leaders and young people.

What happens when teenagers become Christians

It has always surprised me that nobody (in this country anyway) has bothered to do a serious study of teenage conversion. What happens when kids become Christians? It would seem a naturally, self-evidently important question to ask; after all, so many people *do* make

SURVEY

More Bible study material this month. The Bible Society have produced a range of Bible study booklets entitled 'Beginnings', which are designed to help young people take a step forward in some area of Christian experience. For instance, there's one (*Stepping Out*) which is intended to help prepare people for baptism (and, since Bible Society have to be undenominational, one called *On the Road* to prepare for confirmation!) *Big Questions* strikes me as an excellent collection of evangelistic Bible studies to use with interested but sceptical non-Christians, and *Conversation Starters* is for fairly new Christians who want to get to grips with the problem of living out their faith in the world. Two more titles, designed to help young people get into personal Bible study, will appear next year. The design is graphic, exciting, eye-catching; the activities suggested are imaginative and well balanced; the text of the passages to be studied is included in the booklet, so new Christians and non-Christians needn't be apprehensive about having to look things up; and leaders' notes for each session appear in small print at the back of the book. Each title gives between six and ten sessions of activity. Highly recommended.

their decision for Christ in their teenage years, and so much of our money and creative thinking in evangelism tends to get invested in this area. Nobody becomes a Christian more easily than a teenager. Sadly, nobody drops out faster, either. Why is it that we haven't examined carefully the processes involved in a teenage acceptance of Christ?

I have a lurking suspicion that the answer could be that many of us don't want to face up to the fact that teenagers are not adults. They look like adults, many of them; they can be reached by the kind of Gospel appeal (making points about the purposelessness of life without God, the question of life after death, and so on) which we would address to adults; they are capable of showing surprising maturity. So we ignore the fact that teenagers have a different psychological make-up to adults, and preach the Gospel to them as we would to an older age group

But teenagers are not adults. They do not, generally, have a firmly fixed idea of their own identity; they are still in the process of self-formation, looking for models to shape their lives around. And most of these models will be of very transitory value to them; the girl who was mad about Boy George last year has already moved on to Wham. When she falls in love for the first time, another kind of model will come into her life. And if we're not careful, when we offer Jesus to kids he can be perceived as simply another 'image', the latest kind of model to try out; and there will be a brief flurry of interest in Jesus, for a couple of weeks or so, until he is replaced by Michael Jackson or somebody more immediate.

Young people are fascinated by the idea of permanence, but in their volatile, fluctuating emotional state, they can't make it work; 'Tracey and Jason 2 gether 4 ever' carved on the side of a school desk is a brave statement of wishful thinking, rather than a sober calculation of the probabilities. When we ask them to give their lives to Jesus, the idea may appeal, but they will find it very difficult to imagine anything as long-term as a whole-life commitment. They need to be able to envisage what they're taking on; which is why the most effective teenage evangelism is not done in emotional appeals at late-night camp

epilogues, or after stunning rock concerts, but in the continuing context of a regular group meeting, where the young person has the chance to see Christian commitment at close quarters over a long period, in the person of his group leader.

How do we prevent Jesus becoming just another five-minute thrill, another fleeting role-model? Psychologists have often noted that the collection of pictures plastering the bedroom walls of teenagers becomes redundant and is soon taken down once the teenager becomes engaged in *genuine* relationships. In other words, the relationship with the football stars and the pop heroes is only a try-out for the real relationships with real people which the teenager is preparing to enter into.

What has this to say to evangelism? Just that we can offer a Jesus who is yet another fantasy figure, an idealised, unreal hero, or start quietly to build a real relationship, slowly and patiently, between the teenager and the Lord Jesus who is really there. This will not be done by a swift five minutes in the counselling room, a pat on the back and a copy of *Journey into Life*. It will be done only by a costly, time-consuming process of one-to-one discipleship, the sharing of prayer times, the sharing of lives.

Becoming a Christian involves a commitment of mind, emotions and will. This is a relatively straightforward process for a stable adult, and on a simpler level quite a natural commitment for a child. But for a teenager things aren't so simple. All of these three parts of his personality are in bewildering flux. His mind has just become used to abstract thinking; mentally he's not a child any longer, but he is still learning how to use his mind, and all sorts of irrational arguments about God being an astronaut and the like can seem just as plausible as more orthodox ideas. His emotions are on a permanent see-saw between 'elated' and 'moody', between 'gregarious' and 'introspective': Plato defined adolescence as 'drunkenness of the spirit'. And his will is bedevilled by new impulses and drives; he is surprised by what he finds in himself; he doesn't seem to know himself any longer.

This suggests at least two things. First, that a *crisis* experience of conversion will not always be appropriate, and should never be manufactured. There are times when young people need to be presented with a stark choice — accept Christ or reject him — and I preach for a verdict at the end of every school mission. But we need to be constantly alive to the real danger of forcing a crisis which God has not planned. We can do it more easily with teenagers than with any other group.

And, being teenagers, they'll let us

do it to them. Last week I had a group of sixty kids in the counselling room at the end of a concert; it was the second-last night of the mission. They had all come through to learn how to become Christians, and I was sorely tempted to lead them in a prayer of commitment and make them decide there and then. Instead I went through my prepared talk, then announced on impulse, 'I don't want you to decide about this here and now. Go away, think about it, and come back tomorrow night.' Immediately there was a spontaneous relieved laugh, and I realized that if I had forced the pace, many of them would have gone along with it; but even they would have recognized, as

they made their commitment, that they weren't ready to do it. They were really grateful to be given time to consider.

The second point I wanted to make was that, because of the fluctuations of teenage moods, any decision will be followed by re-evaluation, and this shouldn't worry us. Few teenagers make decisions about *anything*—buying records, choosing boyfriends, fixing on holiday plans—without immediately wondering whether the alternative possibilities wouldn't have been better. And so after any decision for Christ will come the crisis of uncertainty—'Have I done the right thing? Was it real? Have I been conned?' All too often, the

counsellor who led the young person to Christ is over the hills and far away by this point. If we want our converts to survive this stage, we need to have built a trusting enough relationship with them for us to be around and available, and approachable, when the horrendous doubts begin.

What happens when teenagers become Christians? We haven't begun to explore the subject. When is somebody going to do some serious thinking about it? And in the meantime, what can you and I do to ensure our methods of evangelism and appeal are suitable, God-honouring and person-respecting? It's worth thinking through.

The truth about glue sniffing

Since about 1974, it's undeniable, there has been a rise in glue and solvent sniffing amongst young people. It has been accompanied by wave after wave of 'shock horror' stories in the popular tabloids. But how widespread is the phenomenon? And how dangerous is it? How should we react to the problem of glue sniffers?

In the early sixties there was a similar fashion in America. The mass media were filled with reports of deaths due to the problem. A group of researchers tracked down the sources and found that there were in fact only nine cases of death allegedly due to glue sniffing; it was just that each had been reported many times! Of the nine, six were cases of death due to asphyxiation by covering the head with a plastic bag—not the result of the glue at all, another was probably the same thing; an eighth was due to sniffing petrol, not glue; and in the last case there was no evidence at all that the person involved had sniffed glue! There is in fact little evidence to suggest that glue sniffing produces major health hazards. With other solvents (see chart) it's a different story; but young people involved in sniffing glue are more likely to endanger themselves by the *circumstances in which they sniff*, than by the substance they're sniffing. (For example, doing it in a place where one could fall and injure oneself; putting a plastic bag over the head; or doing it to the point of semi-consciousness, which means that if one became sick one might not be able to prevent inhaling the vomit and so suffocating.) Our advice to them should reflect these facts.

What do kids get out of glue sniffing? Adults who have tried it have often ended up with no more than sickness

or a headache, and total mystification. But it's a learned habit; those who persevere find in the end an intoxicating pleasure a bit like alcohol intoxication, but much less lasting. Theoretically it would be possible to sniff spirits instead of drinking them, but it would be much less pleasurable.) It's another myth that glue sniffing makes kids aggressive; it all depends on their expectations, and the group to whom they belong. It can be used to stimulate aggression, just as adults use alcohol to gain 'Dutch courage'; but it needn't.

Glue tends to be used mainly by working-class youngsters, and particularly by 12-16 year olds. It is not addictive; most users play about with it for a short time only, then give it up in favour of alcohol as soon as they are old enough to go into pubs. Use can be fairly localised; in certain urban areas its use may be common, while just a few streets away no-one is interested in it. Boys tend to use it more than girls—perhaps twice as much, though it may just be that girls are better at concealing the facial rash

Solvent Sniffing

PRODUCT	WHAT'S INHALED	MAIN HAZARDS
<i>Less commonly used</i>		
Petrol	Same as impact adhesives, and tetraethyl lead	Possible lead poisoning Risk of burns if ignited
Aerosols	Fluorocarbon propellants, and particles from the product in the spray can	Dangers to many body organs If sprayed into mouth, serious risk of metal poisoning and obstruction of oxygen absorption
<i>More commonly used</i>		
Impact adhesives and other glues	toluene and other hydrocarbons, various additives	main hazards come from the circumstances of use (though a few kinds of additive can be directly damaging)

UPDATE

which it induces by applying make-up. Glue sniffing isn't a solitary pursuit; people do it in groups.

Glue sniffing is a problem, there's no denying it. But we have to be careful not to accept the terror reports in the popular press at face value; they can be helping to create the fascination they purport to describe. And most importantly, when confronted with young people with this kind of problem, we mustn't over-react. They aren't hopeless, desperate junkies on the brink of an early grave, but silly kids trying to be outrageous. Making them feel important and glamorously bad because of their habit is the best way to persuade them to continue.

*Helpful articles on glue sniffing are available from The Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence, Kingsbury House, 3 Blackburn Rd., London NW6 1XA; and National Youth Bureau, 17-23 Albion St., Leicester LE1 6GD.

Next month:

Teenagers and television

THE LETTER OF JUDE (1)

A 'catholic' letter

This short letter, which presents some of the features of an urgently penned tract, is not addressed to any specific group of readers but 'to those who are called, who have been loved in God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ'—terms wide enough to embrace all Christians. The author may have had in mind Christians in one particular area who needed the encouragement which is given in this letter, but what he writes is applicable to Christians in general. His letter therefore belongs to the 'catholic' or 'general' letters in the New Testament.

Five of the New Testament letters have traditionally been given this designation—James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 John and Jude. At one time the 'catholic' letters were reckoned to be seven in all, with the inclusion of 2 and 3 John; but the inclusion of these two (one addressed to a local church and one to an individual Christian) was manifestly inept. Eusebius remarks that the letter of James was 'the first of the letters called catholic. But (he goes on) it should be observed that some regard it as spurious, since not many of the ancients have made mention of it; the same is true of the letter called Jude's, which is also one of the seven called catholic. Nevertheless we know that these letters have been used publicly along with the rest in most churches' (*Hist. Eccl.* 2.23.25). Athanasius, Jerome and some later writers also speak of 'the seven catholic letters', but for them the term 'catholic' probably meant 'canonical' (i.e. recognized and used in the Catholic Church)—'canonical' not in contrast to the Pauline letters but in addition to them.

Authorship

The writer identifies himself as 'Jude (Judas), servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James'. In the early church there was only one James who could be referred to in this way without further specification (at any rate after the execution of James the son of Zebedee in A.D. 43/44); that was 'James the Lord's brother' (as Paul calls him in *Gal. 1:19*). On the three occasions where this James appears in Acts, he appears simply as 'James', without any qualification (*Acts 12:17*;

F. F. Bruce

For his latest studies, Prof. Bruce turns his attention from Paul to Jude, an author often ignored by Bible students.

15:13; 21:18). This brother of James, then, bearing the name Judas (reduced in English to Jude), is to be identified most probably with that Judas who is listed among the brothers of Jesus in *Mark 6:3* and *Matt. 13:55*.

A rightful place among the New Testament writings must certainly be granted to this letter which is full of mighty words of heavenly grace.

As none of Jesus' brothers appears to have believed in him before his resurrection (cf. *John 7:5*), his brother Judas can scarcely be identified with 'Judas not Iscariot' who was present at the Last Supper in the upper room (*John 14:22*); 'Judas not Iscariot' is rather to be identified with 'Judas (son of) James' who is listed as the eleventh apostle in *Luke 6:16* and *Acts 1:13*.

Apart from his authorship of this letter, Jude the brother of James plays such an insignificant part in the records of the early church that it is unlikely that his name would have been chosen to lend authority or credibility to a document actually composed by someone else.

The second-century Palestinian writer Hegesippus told a story about two grandsons of Jude, which is reproduced by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* 3.20.1-7). Some ill-disposed persons, it is said, reported to the Roman Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96) that these two men belonged to the royal house of David, and were therefore potential claimants to sovereignty in Judaea. Domitian had the men brought before him, but when he

found them to be poor peasants with no political pretensions, who looked for a messianic kingdom which was not of this world, he dismissed them as being unworthy of his attention; they lived on into the second century. It is impossible to be sure if there is any historical substance to this tale; in any case, it has no bearing on the exposition of this letter.

Date

The date of writing cannot be determined with precision. If we are right in accepting the traditional identification of the author with one of the Lord's brothers, the letter will belong to the first century A.D. If the false teachers denounced in *verses 4-19* were Gnostics, one might attempt to decide what stage in gnostic development they represented, and fix an appropriate date. But there is nothing in the contents to show that they were Gnostics. The relationship of the letter to 2 Peter might have a bearing on the date of both documents, but this relationship is a critical question to be determined separately. The apostolic age seems to lie largely in the past (*verse 17*). The contents of Jude do not seem to reflect any identifiable political situation. A date shortly after A.D. 70 might satisfy all considerations.

Canonicity

Jude is included in the Muratorian list of New Testament books drawn up at Rome about the end of the second century. Tertullian of Carthage about the same time speaks of the letter of 'the apostle Jude' (it is uncertain whether he identified the writer with Judas the member of the twelve or used the term 'apostle' in a wider sense, as Paul does when he appears to use it of James in *Gal. 1:19*). His contemporary Clement of Alexandria commented on the letter and refers to it in two or three places. There are possible allusions to it by earlier writers (about the end of the first century), but these are too uncertain to be used as evidence. Even in the third and fourth centuries (and later, in the east) there was some dispute about its canonicity. Yet a rightful place among the New Testament writings must certainly be granted to this letter which, as Origen said, 'con-

sists of but few lines, and yet is full of mighty words of heavenly grace' (*Commentary on Matthew*, 10.17).

Occasion

The letter of Jude was evidently not the treatise with which he intended his name to be associated. He tells his readers that, when he was minded to write to them on the subject of 'our common salvation', he found himself impelled to take up a more controversial line, in vigorous defence of the faith. A perversion of the gospel was gaining currency against which the churches needed to be put on their guard. The promoters of this false teaching were apparently the kind of people who, in Paul's language, used their freedom 'as an occasion for the flesh' (*Gal. 5:13*) or argued that one should 'continue in sin that grace might abound' (*Rom. 6:1*). Their characteristics, as Jude describes them, will be considered more fully in the following exposition. But there is no particular reason to think that a form of gnosticism was involved.

According to gnosticism, true knowledge (imparted by a redeemer-revealer) was the way to salvation. The widely differing gnostic schools shared the basic principle that the material world is evil, while the world of spirit is good. But there is no hint of such beliefs in Jude's account of the false teachers. Some gnostic schools (a minority) were libertine in theory and practice, but there were many libertines who were not gnostic. At any rate, the arguments and example of the false teachers were sufficiently specious for Jude to attach the most urgent importance to warning his fellow-believers against them and encouraging them to stand firm in the truth they had received.

The positive encouragement of *verses 20 and 21* embodies the purpose for which Jude wrote. This encouragement is preceded by his exposure of the false teachers, which occupies the major part of the letter. But the exposure is developed in a way which throws light on the use and application of the Old Testament in the early church. It was of the essence of the early Christian understanding of the Old Testament that it bore witness to Christ. A corollary of this was that Old Testament denunciations of the enemies of righteousness and truth were applied to the adversaries and opponents of Christ—whether those who took hostile action against him on earth, like Judas Iscariot, Herod the tetrarch and Pontius Pilate (cf. *Acts 1:20; 4: 25-28*), or those whose life and teaching threatened the purity of the gospel at a later date. Jude describes the false teachers against whom he polemicizes as men prescribed for condemnation long before (i.e. by Moses and the prophets); the central section of his

letter has been called 'a midrash on the theme of judgment' (E. E. Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity*, p.226). By 'midrash' we understand a Jewish method of biblical interpretation in which the sacred text is related to situations of contemporary interest to the interpreter and his public. The elaboration of the midrashic method in Jude's letter adds substantially to its interest.

Analysis

- I. Opening salutation (*verses 1, 2*)
- II. Jude's purpose in writing (*verses 3, 4*)
- III. False teachers exposed and their judgment foretold (*verses 5-16*)
 - (a) Precedents from early days (*verses 5-7*)
 - (b) Revolt against authority (*verses 8-10*)
 - (c) Destructive influences (*verses 11-13*)
 - (d) The prophecy of Enoch (*verses 14-16*)
- IV. Exhortation to Christian readers (*verses 17-23*)
 - (a) Apostolic predictions (*verses 17, 18*)
 - (b) Encouragement to build, pray, keep and wait (*verses 20, 21*)
 - (c) Rescuing those who are led astray (*verses 22, 23*)
- V. Concluding doxology (*verses 24, 25*)

Galatians

Prof. R. Y. K. Fung

Inevitably, the introduction of our new features necessitates the dropping of some items. One casualty is the series of studies in Galatians by Prof. R. Y. K. Fung. We regret having to do so and apologise to the author and to readers inconvenienced by this decision.

Replies to Professor Bruce

The November Question

I recently read a book entitled The Original Bible Restored, in which the author treated numerical patterns as powerful evidence for certain conclusions. For example, he reckoned the books of the Old Testament to be 22 in number (following Josephus); then he pointed out that the New Testament contains 5 narrative books plus 22 others, and found significance in the resulting total: 22+5+22=49 (the square of 7). Again (repeating an argument which has been put forward by others), Hebrews must be by Paul because, without it, his canonical letters amount to 13 only, whereas with it they are 14 in all (twice 7). This kind of argument leaves me cold; how do others react to it?

Mr. J. W. Forrest replies:

If numerics had the overwhelming significance described, I should expect to see in the O.T. that there were fourteen tribes instead of twelve (but thirteen in practice due to Joseph becoming two: Ephraim and Manasseh); and in the N.T. that there were fourteen apostles instead of twelve (but in practice eleven due to the general defection of Judas). And the fruit of the Spirit comprising seven characteristics instead of nine, etc. I am reminded of Panin's version of the N.T. who believed that every word had an 'arithmetical value' (in the Greek) and settled accuracy of text. Perhaps he would have been impressed by the book mentioned, but we must examine everything on its merits.

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Q&A

WITH . . . PETER COUSINS

Question 292

SLEEPING SOULS?

Would you consider that Scriptures such as Luke 16:19-31; 23-43; Philippians 1:21-23, 2 Corinthians 5:6-8 are decisive against the theory that the soul is unconscious and 'asleep' between death and resurrection?

I agree that the natural inference from the New Testament references to this question is that immediately at death the believer enters into the joy of heaven. Indeed, I would understand the 'Today' of *Luke 23:43* as implying that the penitent thief would not have to wait (as he and his fellow-Jews would have expected) for the glorious appearing of the Messiah before being able to enjoy the blessings of the New Age — these were available to him even at the moment of death. In this connection, it would be natural to understand *2 Corinthians 5:1-9* as suggesting that believers receive the resurrection body at death, although I hesitate to dogmatise about one of the most difficult passages in the whole of the New Testament. Obviously, such an interpretation would appear to conflict with what is said elsewhere (e.g. *1 Corinthians 15:20-23*) about the resurrection of the body coinciding with the Parousia. This apparent discrepancy does not concern me greatly because it seems to resemble the way in which the Old Testament prophets look across intervening events to speak of the coming of Christ or of the end times as if they were immanent. This condensed perspective seems to go with acute awareness of spiritual reality. The fact of the matter is that the New Testament writers do not seem to be at all interested in questions about a so-called 'intermediate state' — for them, the death of the believer is followed immediately by his reception into glory.

It has often been pointed out that, viewed from God's point of view, there is no time-interval, that the resurrection at the Parousia will be immediately after the believer's death, and indeed that the time interval will not be noticed by the believer either. But these are questions that Scripture neither poses nor answers. The important thing is the expectation of deliverance out of our present hardships and frustrations.

Question 293

SPIRIT-FILLED FROM BIRTH?

John the Baptist is said to have been filled with the Holy Spirit from birth (Luke 1:15). Did not he too need to exercise repentance and faith and experience the new birth?

The phrase 'filled with the holy spirit' is peculiar to Luke. It occurs once in the Old Testament (*Exodus 35:31*) where the activity of the Holy Spirit in human life is seen as something occasional, an endowment upon particular occasions and for particular purposes. Indeed, these opening chapters of Luke contain examples of this usage (*1:41, 67*). The reference in *1:15* implies two things. First, that John would be a true Nazirite — like Samson he would refrain from wine, experiencing the stimulation of the Holy Spirit alone (*Numbers 6:1-4, Judges 14:7, Ephesians 5:18* — a significant parallel). Second, from the day of his birth he would be equipped for his task as the second Elijah: by implication this filling from birth puts him into a different category from the men and women of the Old Covenant and Luke may see here a sign of the change that characterizes the New Age.

But John was a sinner and therefore presumably needed to repent, not once, but on numerous occasions throughout his life. We may, for example, think of the way in which when he was in prison he found himself doubting whether Jesus was truly the Messiah (*Matthew 11:2-6*). But his spiritual development would have been of a 'straight line' variety: his faith in God developed naturally with increasing understanding and maturity; sin did not lead him to turn his back on God but rather to come to him for repentance and forgiveness. There is no need to believe that everybody has to pass through a conversion crisis experience.

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

THE NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD (3)

THE GOD OF ABRAHAM ISAAC AND JACOB

Michael Burr

When God is called the God of a certain person or group, far more is implied than the fact that he was the God whom those people worshipped. The title primarily tells us something about God, not something about the persons concerned. It is usually clear that God is drawing attention to something that he revealed of himself in his dealings with those persons. And it is implied that what he then revealed of himself is available to those with whom he is now dealing. There are in fact very few people in the Bible whose names are linked with God in this striking way. He is never called the God of Moses, for example, and only very rarely the God of David. But several times he is called the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And this title implies firstly that God revealed something of himself in his dealings with these patriarchs; and secondly that this became the basis of his subsequent dealings with his people.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

This point is clearly made when God made his covenant with Abraham and promised that he would become the father of a multitude of nations: 'I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. . . . I will be their God' (*Gen. 17:7, 8*). He confirmed this to Isaac: 'I am the God of Abraham your father; fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your descendants for my servant Abraham's sake' (*Gen. 26:24*). And again he told Jacob 'I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; . . . behold, I am with you' (*Gen. 28:13, 15*). God had revealed himself, sovereignly and unasked, as the one who chose Abraham with the intention of blessing him and making of him a great nation. And now he was

**The God of Abraham—
the God who takes up
individuals with plans to
make something of them
—can make something of
Jacob, and of us, too.**

assuring Isaac and Jacob that his promises to Abraham applied equally to them.

This should be an encouragement to us, especially those of us who are rather like Jacob. For Jacob was as unpromising material as God ever took up. Having cheated his brother and deceived his father he had to leave his home, to which he was particularly attached, and must have felt that he had made a complete mess of his life. Yet the God of Abraham—the God who takes up individuals with plans to make something of them—can make something of Jacob, and of us too.

Israel in Egypt

We next meet this title—the first time it appears in full—when God speaks to Moses from the burning bush. In the ensuing conversation God calls himself the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob four times (*Exod. 3:6, 15, 16; 4:5*). The background here is of course the severe oppression which befell Israel in Egypt. Centuries had passed since God revealed himself to the patriarchs, circumstances had changed beyond recognition, and it might have seemed that God's promises would never be fulfilled. But God tells Moses that he is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and has not changed at all. He will prove this by keeping his word in what seem to be impossible conditions. The Lord Jesus comments that this passage implies the resurrection, since it shows that God has not finished with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. 'He is not God of the

dead, but of the living' (*Mark 12:27*), and it would have been quite inappropriate for God to call himself the God of decaying corpses. We can be sure that his handiwork in the patriarchs will ultimately be fully worthy of himself if he describes himself by reference to them. We can also be sure that his purposes for us will not be thwarted by hostile forces (including death), since he is our God too. Furthermore, some of God's dealings with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were particularly applicable to the situation of Israel in Egypt. All three patriarchs had been divinely protected from nations who were actually or potentially hostile (*Gen. 12:10-20; 26:19-31; 35:5*). Isaac was twice a symbol of life out of death (*Heb. 11:12, 19*), which was obviously relevant both to Moses' own infancy and to the situation of Israel as a nation. And Jacob had found that 'the LORD is in this place—the place where he was apparently alone and defenceless. God was impressing on Moses the fact that he would be to Israel all that he had been to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Israel' subsequent history

Perhaps the severest test of God's intention to keep his promises lay not in Israel's outward circumstances but in her repeated backsliding. At the end of David's life, when he was contemplating the future, he recognized that only God could keep Israel in a right relationship with himself. 'O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, our fathers, keep for ever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of thy people, and direct their hearts towards thy commandments' (*1 Chr. 29:18*). Again, when Israel fell completely into idolatry, Elijah called on the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel to make it known that he was God in Israel and that he had turned the people's hearts back again (*1 Kgs.*

18:36, 37). God had made long-term promises to the patriarchs which committed him to maintaining Israel's relationship with himself. We too, knowing the fickleness of our hearts, may sometimes wonder whether we shall persevere in the faith, or whether God's plans for us will be finally frustrated by our own folly. Our security lies in the One who took us up for his own purposes, for he can be trusted to see those purposes through to completion, despite our weaknesses, which he knew all about from the start.

The New Testament

Everything that God has ever revealed about himself is fully expressed in Christ, and this divine title is no exception. As Peter told the citizens of Jerusalem, 'The God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus' in raising him from death to his own right hand (*Acts* 3:13). For Jesus is the promised Seed

of Abraham, through whom all nations on earth will be blessed. In him all God's promises are guaranteed and all his purposes will be fulfilled. It is only because of Jesus and his work that God has been able to make such far-reaching promises to his people. Only because of the birth, death, resurrection and intercession of Christ can God's eternal purposes of blessing be fulfilled despite their innate weaknesses and external enemies.

And these purposes of blessing extend to all who have faith in Christ, for they are the true sons of Abraham (*Rom.* 4:16; *Gal.* 3:7). In Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham comes upon Gentiles who have faith (*Gal.* 3:14). The God in whom Abraham believed is the God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence things that do not exist, as was seen in the birth of Isaac (*Rom.* 4:17)—and this is supremely true as we see how he acts in Christ. We believe in him who raised Jesus from the dead (*Rom.* 4:24) and who has raised us from death to

newness of life. And he calls into existence a whole new race of Abraham's descendants, all justified by faith as Abraham was, and heirs of God's promises to him. So we too can claim the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as our God.

Finally, with reference to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the *Epistle to the Hebrews* (11:16) declares that 'God is not ashamed to be called their God'. The writer may mean that God has in fact provided all that the patriarchs looked for—a heavenly city in which his promises are fulfilled and their faith entirely vindicated. Alternatively, he may mean that God is not ashamed of *them* (cf. *Heb.* 2:11). He chose to honour them by calling himself their God, and might reasonably expect that they would respond to his promises and co-operate in their fulfilment, which indeed they did. May we similarly respond by faith to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who has been so fully revealed in Christ!

Letters to the Editor

Letters (brief and to the point please!) should be sent to the Editor, Jonathan Lamb, 39 East Avenue, Heavitree, Exeter, EX1 2DX. Publication of letters does not imply that views expressed are endorsed by the Editor or the Trustees.

PROF BRUCE REPLIES

From Professor F. F. Bruce

Dear Mr. Lamb,

May I comment on two contributions in your November issue?

Dr. Neil Summerton's article includes some words on 'the vexed question of withdrawal from eldership'. My own experience may suggest a happy arrangement. When I reached an age at which I thought it proper to resign from the eldership of my local church, my fellow-elders accepted my resignation but asked me to remain available in a consultative capacity. This means that I give my advice when they see fit to ask for it. Mr. Clive Govier's letter asks in a parenthesis if remarks of mine in your August issue imply that in *A New Testament Commentary* (1969) 'inspiration was not seen to extend necessarily to the very words of scripture'. The answer is 'No'; all the contributors were agreed that inspiration does so extend. The uneasy reaction to which I referred was due not to any difference on the

nature of scripture but (as I said) to 'an underlying difference on the nature and practice of the exposition of scripture'.

Yours sincerely,

F. F. Bruce

The Crossways, 2 Temple Road,
Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 9BA

CHURCH ORDER & THE N.T.

From D. H. T. Conway

Dear Mr. Lamb,

In his letter published in the November issue of *HARVESTER* Mr. Seymour Alexander writes 'unquestionably there is an apparent contradiction of *1 Cor.* 11:5 and *ch.* 14:34'. He then goes on to state that what we have to accept is the fact that women did pray and prophesy in the early church with the men. A careful study of the epistle indicates that neither of these assumptions is warranted by it. In the first 16 verses of *chapter* 11, in which Paul speaks of women praying or prophesying, there is nothing to indicate that he is referring to a meeting of the church. I have found no directions as to the order of gatherings of the churches in any of the first ten chapters of this epistle. Only when at *verse* 17 Paul begins to deal with the observance of the Lord's supper does he come to church meetings.

In contrast, in *chapter* 14 he makes it abundantly clear that it is to meetings of the church that he refers when he says that women are not to take part audibly:

verse 19 'In the church.'

verse 23 'When the whole church be come together.'

verse 26 'when ye come together'

verse 28 'in the church'

verse 34 'in the churches'.

The wording of *verse* 34, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches' (plural) disposes of Mr. Alexander's theory that this injunction be understood only in the light of suppositional circumstances at Corinth. The use of the plural clearly shows that the command is of universal, and not merely local, application. Earlier in this epistle, in the same chapter, Paul has commented on the need of speaking in such a way as to be easily understood. Can we dare to assume that in *verses* 34 to 37 he has not made his meaning plain?

Yours sincerely,

D. H. T. Conway
'Hauteville', 24 Glendinning
Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset
DT4 7QF

From Mr. Edgar Hall

Dear Mr. Lamb,

It would seem appropriate for me to reply to Mr Seymour Alexander's letter published under your caption 'Women in the Church.'

The 'sweeping statement' made by

me to which he refers is based upon the scriptures, and does not represent a personal viewpoint. The references made to Luke and the Acts of the Apostles are not in an 'assembly' setting. It is in this fundamental respect that so many wrong inferences have been drawn in regard to this matter of women speaking in the assembly. There is a pronounced tendency current at the present time to refuse to listen to Paul's ministry on this subject, and it may be well, therefore, to quote Paul's words in *1 Cor. 14:37* where he says, 'If anyone thinketh himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the *commandments of the Lord*.'

Paul was specially commissioned by the Holy Spirit to establish the principles of assembly order, and it does not help to quote the views of biblical scholars or other current writers, neither does it help the consideration of this matter to attempt to define the conditions which we may believe to have been current in the church in Paul's day. To do so is to out-date the Word of God. The Bereans had no recourse to any other authority but His Word. May I once again make a simple appeal for the observance of the literality of scripture. By so doing, we shall never rob the assembly of any spiritual gain or liberty, but rather promote the conditions that will be conducive to this end.

Yours sincerely,

Edgar H. Hall

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West Moors, Wimborne, Dorset
BH22 0PN

GOD'S RULE

From Mr. Colin Porteous

Dear Mr. Lamb,

I was at a loss to understand the nature of Mr. Thomas' difficulty over *Isaiah 45:7* before consulting the AV. We are credibly informed that while the Hebrew word concerned can and sometimes does signify moral evil, it does not necessarily do so, and in the present verse the term is clearly opposed to shalom, peace and/or prosperity. This requires the meaning 'trouble' or 'calamity'.

The whole paragraph 1-7 is in the form of a prophetic address to Cyrus (who lived a couple of centuries later than Isaiah), expressing very forcibly the sovereignty of God and His unique existence. Josephus informs us that Cyrus was in fact deeply influenced by this prophecy. To return to *v.7*, it is obvious that just as 'one man's meat is another

man's poison', so the same event (the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, prophesied in *vv.1-2*) spelt peace for God's people, but calamity to His enemies. This is a common biblical emphasis, not unrelated to *Rom. 8:28*.

Of course the more readily we accept the absolute sovereignty of God, the more we are likely to be helped by passages such as this.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

Colin Porteous

90 rue Fl. Laurent, 76620 Le Havre,
France

AMALGAMATE?

From Mr. James C. Burns

Dear Mr. Lamb,

In the article of H. Rowdon (September), one wonders how settled the writer's thoughts are. Admittedly assemblies in these Islands are not enjoying expansion at this point in time, and it is right and proper to expect an efficient and effective witness from a movement of God that, in the past, was marked by spiritual expansion that was dynamic. I rejoice that there are many Baptist churches and independent groups in the U.K. pulsating with life and worship, but I doubt if the Brethren knocked so hard by Mr. Rowdon would be an asset to them.

To be more direct, Mr. Rowdon advocates amalgamation (in some cases a wise step) on the ground that a crowd gathers a crowd, and so insures the future. Writing from my own circumstances with a building with seating for 2,500, it is a testimony that crowds do not just stay and continue. The reason for decline is not necessarily lack of spirituality or gift or leadership or vision. It can be social and economic or the fact of history that local churches are not necessarily permanent. Your writer suggests 'The stronger helping the weaker'. I am sure your readership is aware that every week-end literally thousands of brethren travel locally and far away to help the weak and encourage the faint hearted. Certainly in a district of two or three dwindling assemblies, wiser they are to use one premises for worship, ministry and prayer. As is often the case in such Assemblies, they have a useful Sunday School work which could well continue in their existing premises together with any conceivable type of gospel outreach. If such a merger necessitates some brethren ceasing to be 'leaders', may God give them grace to do so. Not having a seat on the 'executive' does not prevent any

brother from exercising his gift in ministry or Gospel, for it is a fact of church life that consensus is the way of unity both for brethren and sisters. For folk to be happy in fellowship they must be one in doctrine, in love, in a vision of future development, of involvement and training of the young for leadership, and this must come from within, not imported help which could disappear if 'The Lord calls' to a more attractive post.

The writer mentions the psychology of the Roman Catholic church.

Nowadays they are deliberately building units for a more intimate church life and as a result of Vatican II and her official commentaries on it, she speaks of the Church as 'The Assembly', and the WORD OF GOD read in the Assembly as a public act, so the old style of Roman Catholicism of huge crowds is now, according to their own sources, experiencing revival of smaller public units with each member of the Assembly actively sharing. Finally, to make an appeal for amalgamation and rejection of Brethren tradition despite the evidence of Holy Scripture *1 Tim. 2:12*. 'I do not permit a woman to be a teacher' and *1 Tim. 2:8*. 'It is my desire therefore that everywhere prayers be said by the men of the congregation'. N.E.B.) would seem to many anxious and concerned believers an unfortunate obstacle to achieving a wide agreement on problems that are all too prevalent in these Islands.

Yours sincerely,

James C. Burns

71 Hazel Avenue, Kilmacud,
Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland

SPEAKING IN TONGUES?

From G. K. D. Vere

Dear Mr. Lamb,

Re. Prof. Bruce's question on gifts.

Sept:

May I somewhat belatedly offer a contribution? I remember Charles Marsh telling us that when he was at school he could never learn a foreign language, e.g. French. Yet as soon as he became a missionary he became fluent in French and (I think) three Arabic languages. Does not this suggest that the gift of speaking in foreign tongues was the Spirit's gift to him? I leave your readers to think that one out!

Yours sincerely,

G. K. D. Vere

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Green, Essex IG8 0AR

Looking at Books

OTHER TRADITIONS

The Church of England observed
Rupert E. Davies (SCM Press). 128pp.
£4.95

Rupert Davies, a prominent Methodist, writes, he claims, 'out of love for the Church of England.' However, his repeated complaints of that body's 'conscious superiority' and ultra-conservatism make one wonder what more an enemy could say! The analysis of ecumenical politics and the legal and religious status of Anglicans is of no direct concern to a sect not even mentioned among the Free Churches. Even so, let us beware of congratulating ourselves that we are not as other churches are. Are we also too traditional and too little inclined (for all our founding fathers' objectives) to open our hearts to other Christians? If this rather depressing and confused little book were to cause us to reflect on our need of a genuine openness to the Spirit and Word of God, it would do some good.

Review by G. J. Polkinghorne

The Authority of Divine Love
Richard Harries (Blackwell 1983)
122pp. £3.50 paperback

To mark the 150th anniversary of the Oxford Movement the 'Faith and the Future' series considers 'the contribution of the Anglo-Catholic tradition so far'. Authority is clearly an obvious candidate in such a series and Dean Harries has the learning, grace and wit, to review it instructively. His first chapter sticks boldly, in the face of current sloganizing, to the concept of authority as 'dangerous but essential'.

continued from page 23

PAISLEY

From Mr. Alex Robertson

Dear Mr. Lamb,
The Christians who, for the past 56 years, have worshipped in Shuttle Street Hall, Paisley, have moved to a new Hall in the East end of the Town, and in future will be known as KILNSIDE EVANGELICAL CHURCH.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

Mr. Alex Robertson,
57 Greenlaw Avenue,
PAISLEY PA1 3RG
Tel: 041-887 1524
Yours in the Lord's Service,
Alex Robertson

He then devotes chapters to revelation, the authority of the Bible, conscience, tradition, the Roman heritage (infallibility and indefectibility) and the Anglican heritage. All with careful analysis, livened by occasional bon mots. The 'bible' chapter grated a little — 'every line of the gospels is written up in the light of the Easter faith'; true, but 'written up' in modern journalism may mean 're-written' and the typically form-critical decoding of *Mark 4:35* (p.42) is too Bultmann-like to let me be easily reassured by p.46. 'The Bible remains trustworthy, authoritative. For it brings us into touch with the earliest fellowship of Christian believers and their faith'. In the next chapter (p.53) the excesses of eschatological interpretation lead him to inveigh against the Bible being 'treated as a secret code-book'.

Dean Harries is well placed to warn us of our conditioning by the prevailing *zeitgeist* and urges us to take steps 'to breathe the air of a different atmosphere . . . to widen and deepen our own point of view by the inherited wisdom of the Church . . . a deliberate counter-conditioning, a conscious self-indoctrination in opposition to what has shaped us without our knowing it.' (58)

Provided this can be applied to methods of NT interpretation as well as all the other vagaries of the present century, it is to be welcomed. As, too, we can welcome the analysis of Church authority — the damage done by schism and the painfully slow attempts to build bridges, the ancient sport of scoring points of ecclesiastical 'rivals'. The Tractarians bemoaned the loss of church authority. They should be living now! A church divided at every level and in every part has even less authority in the world than a divided miners' union has in TUC counsels.

Not much about 'love' (it doesn't even make the index, and I was looking forward to the Dean's wisdom directed to the topic) but a lot about Authority, maturely considered, clearly expressed, and conducive to much sober thought.

Review by Charles Martin

USING OUR HOMES

The Church in the Home David Prior (Marshall's). 192pp. £3.95

Resulting from his experience in South Africa and world-wide observations, David Prior faces the Church in Britain with the need for radical

restructuring. The basic unit for this ecclesial renewal is the home group, offering the possibility of meeting modern man in his felt need for identity, fellowship and purpose. Using material drawn from the 'grassroots communities' of Latin America, he delineates ways in which churches may effectively relate to their local community, whether inner-city, suburban or rural. Within existing denominations small home-based fellowships must be developed, with genuine spiritual leaders encouraging the emergence of enabling ministries and every-member participation. Each group should be characterized by close fellowship, relevant worship, and life-related use of scripture. In relation to the community it will have a burden for mission, a desire to serve and an unreserved commitment to social justice. This is 'The Church in the Home'. The author gives a solid biblical basis for his ideas and quotes widely from writers grappling with these issues. He is right to insist on the need for the Holy Spirit to create awareness and desire before such ideas can be implemented, for they challenge both our conservatism and our comfort.

Review by Jim Harris

BASIC INTRODUCTIONS

Christianity made Simple — Belief
David Hewetson and David Miller (Albatross Books/Lion Publishing). 159pp. £1.95

If you are looking for material to help present basic Christian beliefs in new and imaginative ways, this book will prove an ample resource.

In their introduction, David Hewetson and David Miller explain their aims: 'We decided to use the title "Christianity Made Simple" though we realized it could be misunderstood. Some people might think we mean "Christianity Made Easy" — and that is impossible. Jesus clearly told us that His disciples must take up the cross, deny themselves and practice 'radical surgery' on anything that stands in the way of entering the kingdom. Christianity can never be made easy.'

However, the Christian faith can be simply explained . . . We have selected a number of theological topics which go to the very heart of Christianity.'

And their way of presenting these topics is quite arresting. The combination of David Hewetson's clear and

perceptive text is complimented by the humour and imagination of David Miller's illustrations, whose versatile artistry gives strong character to the book.

Belief is a book with a different style of presentation. Although a little 'wordy' in places it is lively, imaginative and vivid enough for teenagers, yet still deep enough to be intellectually satisfying to older readers.

Review by Fran Beckett

Introducing the Holy Land
J. Maxwell Miller (SCM Press). 190pp. £6.50 paperback

This 'Guidebook for first-time visitors' to the Holy Land, as the subtitle calls it, is somewhat different from the majority of books on this subject. For one thing, it is very detailed and quite technical, which makes it extremely interesting for pilgrims in the higher intellectual bracket, but, in the reviewer's judgement, a trifle advanced for the general run of Holy Land visitors. In the second place, the 'devotional' note is never struck, as it is in most such books. And in the third place, the land of Jordan is covered (with Petra, Amman, Jerash etc., all of them fascinating places), as well as the land of Israel.

It is an American publication, with American spelling. Its author is the Associate Professor of Old Testament at Emory University, Atlanta, and a distinguished archaeologist. Each year he conducts a small party of about fifteen theological students supplemented by a few prominent laymen on a tour of Israel and Jordan, and this book has derived from the travel notes with which they were provided. Much information is here contained concerning the history of Palestine down through the ages, and its geography, and its main archaeological sites, added to which are some useful diagrams, maps and photographs.

Review by Stephen S. Short

Introducing the Christian Faith
A. M. Hunter (SCM Press, 1984). 87pp. £2.95 paperback

Professor Hunter's many books are marked by scholarship, piety and clarity. This one briefly interprets 'basic Christianity' for the serious, uninstructed enquirer. The reality of the world of the spirit as contrasted with that of our natural senses is emphasized. The historic revelation of Christ to meet our predicament, the importance of worship, prayer, Bible-study and church membership are explained. There are positive treatments of the afterlife and of the Christian life-style here and now. For me the best chapter is the exposition of the Lord's Prayer. The book con-

cludes with a call to commitment.

HARVESTER readers will find little with which to disagree. There are moving comments on the Lord's Supper and a charitable acceptance of believer's baptism. The defence of infant baptism, which I find unconvincing, makes no mention of covenant theology; but Baptists should note Hunter's comment on vicarious faith in *Mark 2:1-12*.

Some of the many quotations, however apt, would sound better in sermons than in print. The author adds notes and suggestions (e.g. on miracles or Christology) for further reading by the more theologically inclined.

Review by John S. Andrews

COURAGEOUS LIVES

Candles In The Dark — Six modern martyrs Mary Craig (Hodder & Stoughton). 271pp. £4.95 paperback

We meet six Christians who over the last forty years have all witnessed in death to the Christian ideals which governed their lives. They have suffered in Europe, in Africa and in America.

In some ways this is a depressing book. It reveals so unsparingly the lengths to which hatred, fear and prejudice can take men. But it is also a book of hope. In a bitterly divided and confrontational world here are six men and women, Catholics and Protestants, divided by race and colour and culture who have one thing in common. All of them believed that the teaching of the Christ in whom they believed was something worth dying for.

It is a book which leaves us with an inescapable challenge. Would our witness take us as far as this?

Review by Anthea Cousins

On Fire For God Victor Budgen (Evangelical Press, 1983). 301pp. £5.95 paperback

John Hus (1373-1415), the subject of this biography, was a remarkable man: scholar and professional theologian, preacher, reformer (like Wycliffe, an enormously influential forerunner of the Reformation), and martyr, whose death at the stake on 6th July 1415 came about after the most horrifying casuistry by the Roman Catholic Church.

All of these aspects are given due and serious emphasis by Victor Budgen (a Rochdale minister) in this extremely workmanlike volume: clearly *On Fire For God* is a labour of love.

There are uneasy moments, however, and the author is perilously close to 'special pleading' when assessing

Hus's 'evangelical' views in relation to his traditional Catholic beliefs. After all, he maintained to the end the palpably unscriptural doctrines of Mary's perpetual virginity, and purgatory, while he also considered that next to Christ Mary is our 'foremost helper'. Also, the sources used are all secondary (*De ecclesia* in translation), and there's not much evidence of any use of German or Czech material books, etc. Scholars will still turn for the most authoritative interpretation of Hus's significance to the publications of the Czech historian, Matthew Spinka, or to Malcolm Lambert's *Medieval History: Popular Movements from Bogomil to Hus*. But Budgen's work is a most welcome contribution to the thin resources available in English on a courageous and dignified figure, about whom Luther said: 'Oh, that my name were worthy to be associated with such a man'.

Review by John Peters

The Woodland Gospels: according to Captain Beaky and his Band Jeremy Lloyd. Illustrated by Graham Percy (Faber & Faber, 1984). 63pp. £4.95

During the 'silly season' last summer it was reported in at least one national newspaper that a lady by the name of Nancy Praiswater, from California (of course), had founded 'The Christian Dog Fanciers' Fellowship' in obedience to our Lord's command to preach the Gospel 'to every creature'. Ms. Praiswater and her friends would have it as their aim 'to serve Him in the context of breeding and exhibiting pure-bred dogs'. It would seem that others have caught the vision, for in this charmingly illustrated production Captain Beaky and his band — that is, Artful Owl, Reckless Rat, Timid Toad and Batty Bat — decide to take the Gospel to their unchurched woodland friends. Captain Beaky, has, in a manner of speaking, joined the 'Sally Annie'! The preachers' main preparation consists of finding the right gear: nightshirts are favoured as promoting a suitably ecclesiastical gravitas. Alas! the open-air missioning is brought to an unscheduled finish by a change in the weather. The friends take shelter under an upturned boat where Artful Owl regales them with the Gospel story which, to judge from their interruptions, is as unfamiliar to them as to the intended objects of their ministrations.

'What's the difference,' asked Owl, 'between one bad thing and a lot of bad things?'

'Twenty-three,' said Bat, 'I'm only guessing, of course.'

This faulty conception of sin is tidied up, but the means of salvation is left

very fuzzy throughout the story — ‘do what you can and God will forgive the rest’ seems to be the sum of it. No wonder that Beaky and Owl are snoring loudly by the end! Sadly they miss Toad’s touching little prayer post-script in which he requests a measure of leniency towards Hissing Sid (that old serpent!), despite his petty larceny.

Review by Robert P. Gordon

Reprints received

The following reprints have been received. Dates of original publication are indicated, also whether a book has been revised.

Simon Peter (Hugh Martin: Banner of Truth, 1869/1967, £2.45)

The Christian View of Man (J. Gresham Machen: Banner of Truth, 1937/1965, £2.95)

Mary Batchelor’s Everyday Book (Mary Batchelor: Lion, 1982, £2.95)

The Books and Parchments (F. F. Bruce: Pickering & Inglis, 1950, revised and enlarged, n.p.)

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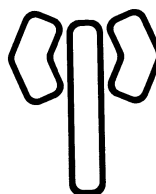


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NEWS PAGES

The Bible

The Bible Society is best known for publishing Bibles. But in recent years it has developed a number of books designed to help people use their Bibles. In order to further this objective, they have arranged a one-day practical workshop in central London which is intended for all those concerned to use the Bible in relevant ways with youth and adult groups in the churches. It will take place on Saturday February 23, 1985 at Bible House, Queen Victoria Street in London. The day runs from 10.30 to 4.30 and costs £2.50. Intending participants need not book in advance; details from Cynthia Dowdeswell, Bible Society, Stonehill Green, Westlea, Swindon, SN5 7DG. Tel: 0793-486381.

The National Young Life Campaign have produced a filmstrip: 'The Bible—Hoax or History'. In 70 frames it compares the Bible with other ancient books, underlines the antiquity and variety of the witnesses to its text, demonstrates its historical accuracy, shows how prophecies were fulfilled in Christ, presents the Gospel, and describes the history of the Bible. It ends by challenging people to read it for themselves. Copies are available, price £10, from National Young Life Campaign, 196 Kirkstall Lane, Leeds, LS5 2AB.

Brazil is experiencing one of the most ambitious Scripture placement projects ever attempted anywhere. At its completion within five years, 25 million public school students will each have received a contemporary translation of the New Testament.

The project is being undertaken by the World Home Bible League which will receive the Portuguese New Testaments from Living Bibles International. Since Brazil's population is 135 million, placement of 25 million New Testaments would put a copy of Scripture in the hands of nearly one-fifth of the people. The national committee overseeing the endeavour includes leaders from every mainline and evangelical Protestant denomination of Brazil.

Church members—fewer but tougher?

A new edition of the invaluable U.K. Christian Handbook (£9.95) has been published by Marc Europe of 146 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4BX. It lists nearly 3,000 addresses in its 500 pages and includes the details of Christian book shops and publishers,

media services, missionary societies and charitable organisations—as well as details of membership, ministers and churches for every denomination in the U.K. Besides being full of fascinating information (which may or may not be useless according to the individual user) it is of priceless value to anybody who needs to contact Christian organisations.

The Handbook shows that the U.K. will have 200,000 fewer church members in 1985 than five years previously. From 7,500,000 adult members in 1980 the church rolls will shrink to 7,300,000 in 1985 if current trends continue. Yet some denominations are growing strongly—the African and West Indian churches will have increased from 66,000 to an estimated 79,000 in the five-year period. The 'house' churches have grown even more dramatically—from 60,000 in 1980 to an estimated 180,000 in 1985; and the various independent churches will be up from 209,000 to 327,000. The reason suggested for this overall drop in the number of church members is that the nominal element is declining. 'People are either going to church because they want to, or they are staying away altogether . . . the church might be getting smaller but it is toughening up . . . In attendance terms—as opposed to membership—the numbers are holding up very well.'

In England, 39% of church members are Anglicans and a comparable proportion—34%—are Roman Catholics. In Wales by contrast only 18% are Roman Catholics. The figure for Scotland is 43%.

Development

The Rural Development Consultancy for Christian Churches in Africa contacted everybody on its mailing list during November about an important issue affecting world hunger. The Overseas Development Administration is part of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It has in the past had an excellent joint funding scheme in which voluntary agencies could receive up to 50% of the cost of approved projects in developing countries. The importance of this is that the projects have a long-term effect rather than providing a temporary 'first aid' response. In addition, many people recognize that non-government organizations appear to make much more responsible use of money. However, the co-funding scheme has become so popular that there is now real competition between the agencies to

get the money that is needed. Large organizations, such as Oxfam and Christian Aid, regularly obtain a big slice of the available funds. The suggestion was that MPs should be contacted, urging them to see that more money was made available through the ODA for joint funding of development projects by British non-government organizations.

Egypt

Egypt has the largest Protestant community in the Middle East—somewhere between 6 and 10 million. Yet every year several thousand Christians emigrate to other countries, and a similar number convert to Islam. Most Protestants in Egypt may be broadly classified as being conservative evangelical. Leaders began to explore the possibility of forming their own evangelical grouping in 1980. The inaugural meeting of the Evangelical Fellowship of Egypt was held on September 17.

The Egyptian church faces special restrictions. It is against the law to seek to make converts from the majority religious community. All Protestants are held accountable to the government through the Council of Protestant Churches in Egypt, to which all must belong. Church services are routinely monitored by the secret police.

There are signs of renewal in the Protestant churches. An increasing number of professional men and women and those with good government positions are opting for the insecurity of full-time Christian service. There is also evidence of spiritual renewal in several of the Coptic Orthodox churches which are in general dissatisfied with the political stance of the World Council of Churches.

Ethiopia

As 6,000 a day were reported dying in Ethiopia, Christian agencies reported an overwhelming response. Tear Fund described it as 'magnificent'. World Vision said it was receiving daily at least five times the amount of gifts ever seen before. Meanwhile, impatience grew with government and EEC agencies which seemed unwilling to act quickly to relate the stacks of surplus grain in Europe and the U.S.A. with the stacks of corpses in Africa. There was mounting criticism of the Ethiopian government, not only because of the large sums of money spent on independence celebrations, but also because of evidence that supplies sent by foreign governments

were being resold at inflated prices and withheld from certain areas. It was felt to be ironical also that the Kale Heywet denomination in Ethiopia, Tear Fund's Ethiopian partners, were administering aid in the face of closure of 1,800 of their 2,719 churches by the authorities. However, the help given by Christians was seen, not only by members of the relief teams, but also by non-Christian media representatives, as a powerful witness to Jesus Christ.

Evangelism

Personal evangelism is the subject of a course compiled for the Bible Training Institute of Glasgow by the Fishers Fellowship. The Fellowship is itself running the course also. The cost of £8 includes a copy of the textbook, lessons and several helps in personal evangelism. Each student is given individual tuition through the course. Details can be obtained from the Fellowship at 96 Plaistow Lane, Bromley, Kent BR1 3AS.

'*Tell Asia Today*' is the theme of a conference of national evangelists arranged by Dr. G. D. James of Singapore. It will meet in Singapore from May 3-12 and is intended to equip, encourage and energise lesser-known Asian evangelists so that they may be used by the Holy Spirit in the evangelization of Asia in this generation.

Good News Bible

The latest edition of the Good News Bible is based on the standard edition, and has a full colour dust jacket over blue balacron covered boards. Its special feature is 16 colour photographs designed to enhance and reflect the message of Scripture in the nearby text. Published by the Bible Society/Collins/Fontana, it costs £7.50.

Gospel Literature Outreach

New Year's Eve will see Clive and Jane Govier of Folkestone flying out, with their family, to Perth in Australia. After a few days of acclimatisation, Clive will take up his duties in Smithton as Principal of the GLO Training Centre there. The course, which runs from February to October, caters for up to 24 students and is intended to equip them to serve in overseas- and home-based resident teams involved in evangelism and church planting. The agreed term of service is three years, initially. Readers who wish to send a gift can do so via GLO Motherwell. The Goviers' new address will be PO Box 179, Smithton, Tasmania 7330, Australia.

Homosexuality

The gap between good intentions and mediocre practice is illustrated by

recent reports from the Christian Reformed Church in the U.S.A. It is over ten years since the Christian Reformed Church made a distinction between homosexuality as orientation and homosexuality as explicit acts. The report made at that time stressed the church's obligation to deal pastorally with homosexual members, both male and female. It specifically condemned explicit homosexual practice as incompatible with obedience to the will of God as revealed in Scripture, but emphasized that the homosexual, if a Christian, is to be wholeheartedly and fully received by the church as a person for whom Christ died and the church ought to offer every possible help in leading a life of chastity. Ten years later, the CRC's 'The Banner' contained articles bemoaning the fact that the Christian community continues to needlessly taunt and ridicule homosexuals and uses demeaning and insulting language in describing them. One correspondent lamented that the report of 1973 had had no noticeable impact on what goes on within local churches. A pastor regretted that the church was still failing to support its homosexual members in their struggle with temptation and sin.

India

Recent legislation in India requires all people from the Commonwealth who travel to or work in India to obtain a visa. This means that many who are now categorised as 'non missionary', because they have a 'secular' job while engaging in voluntary work, now need a resident's visa to stay in the country. This applies, for example, to headmasters, secretaries, unpaid workers amongst students, and every category of relief, development and medical personnel. The new regulations were introduced at the time of the Sikh troubles in the Punjab and were directly related to them. It has since been discovered, however, that the intent is also anti-Christian. Here is another matter for prayer, both that visa applications may be facilitated and also that the law may be changed.

Keswick

Dates have been announced for Keswick 1985. The Convention will be held from July 13-20 and the Bible Reading will be given by Eric Alexander and Michael Baughen. Among the other speakers will be Stephen Olford, Ken Prior, Gordon Bridger and Alan Nute, of Bristol, who is well known to our readers.

Operation Mobilisation

During January and February 1985, the 'Doulos' will be in Great Britain. The 'Logos' will be in the West Indies and expects to dry dock at the end of January, probably in Curacao,

Colombia. More recruits are needed — engineers, deck officers, and other people without any special qualifications other than a willingness to serve the Lord.

The Paternoster Press

During 1985 The Paternoster Press will be celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. A series of articles will be appearing in HARVESTER and the well-known logo has been redesigned. The underlying motif represents a pair of hands supporting a book.

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Post Green

One of the outstanding U.K. centres of the charismatic movement has been the Post Green community at Lytchett Minster in Dorset. Before 1975 there had been a renewal ministry in existence there. But during 1975/76 a new development took place when the Community of Celebration, best known through the Fisherfolk worship, life and travelling teams, were invited to live at Post Green. Now the communities have agreed that the time has come for them to 'give each other more room in which to grow'.

The Community of Celebration believes it is called first and foremost to be a body of people to worship the Lord and will continue to express its ministry of reconciliation renewal through the Fisherfolk ministry and the magazine 'Grassroots'. Its public ministry will continue.

The Post Green Community believes it is called to a renewal ministry in the lives of individuals, thus leading to the healing of the society in which the individual lives and works. A Pastoral

Centre has been established to offer counselling and training of counsellors, spiritual direction, therapy and rehabilitation. A brochure is available giving full details and showing the fees charged for the services provided by the Pastoral Centre. A bursary fund has also been set up so that no-one need be turned away for lack of funds. Readers may be interested to know that individual retreat facilities are available for one day or for a weekend. Full details can be obtained from the Post Green Pastoral Centre, 57 Dorchester Road, Lytchett Minster, Poole, Dorset BH16 6JE.

Shaftesbury Project

Christian involvement in society is explored within the opening volumes of two new series designed to set the pattern for many of the Project's future publications. The Discussion Papers series features analysis of problems such as unemployment, church projects, inner city economics and ageing within contemporary society. The Theological Reflections series includes an explicitly theological basis. Papers are available from the Project (8 Oxford Street, Nottingham NG1 5BH) at an introductory price of £1.50 each, including postage and packing.

South Korea

Harvie Conn is Professor of Mission at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. A missionary in South Korea from 1960 to 1972, he returned for a five-week teaching stint during the summer of 1984. He found that where he had left tent churches there were now buildings with two services. South Korea had been 4 to 6 per cent Christian in 1960 but is now 25-26% Christian.

'Church growth is not tapering off,' he said. 'There is great stability in the churches. People are very open to the Gospel.' Visiting the world's largest church, the Full Gospel Central Church in Seoul, with 360,000 members, was comparable to going to a big-league baseball game in the U.S.A., because of the enthusiasm of the people. These booming churches are producing Korean missionaries. Conn taught 60 candidates at a missionary training institute and more than 50 Koreans will be studying at Westminster during 1984/85. Conn was impressed by the fact that the candidates he met had gained financial support to go to the field. Most Christian missionaries go to other Asian countries but some go to Africa as well. The African Inland Mission actively recruits Koreans.

Mr. & Mrs. George Tryon

Mrs. Marjorie Tryon suffered a cardiac arrest during surgery in November. In consequence it has been necessary to

cancel most meetings—and all to the end of 1984. Everybody affected will have been informed by now, but details for the next few weeks are not at present available.

Unemployment

News has come of another local church scheme to help jobless people in the community. The congregation of Buckhaven Parish Church in Fife has transformed a disused warehouse into a centre where local people wishing to start their own manufacturing businesses can do so rent free for a year. Other functions of St Michael's House include providing a workshop for a project to refurbish secondhand furniture and an administrative base for a scheme to create an arts, theatre and hobby complex in a nearby church building. All the work required has been carried out by adults on the MSC community programme.

VAT on Books

The Christian Booksellers Convention has joined in the general campaign to ask the Chancellor not to impose VAT on books and Bibles. The Convention has sent a letter to every Christian bookshop in Great Britain enclosing petition forms, asking booksellers to obtain signatures from their customers so that the petition can be forwarded in the new year to the Chancellor. The Convention feels that imposing VAT would have an adverse effect on the sales of books and Bibles at a time when those who are involved in Christian literature are seeking to provide good moral judgement and teaching.

Youth

International Youth Year will not appeal to some Christians who may see little that is distinctively Christian in its themes of Peace, Participation and Development. But Janice Smith, a Christian who has become chairperson of the IYY committee, believes that 'we Christians are to be salt and to make our own response to IYY.' The Greenbelt Festival is going to hold seminars on the IYY themes of peace, participation and development. Michael Hughes of Scripture Union urges that 'a distinctive contribution

to IYY must be made by those who follow Jesus as Lord . . . Jesus who is Prince of Peace, calls his disciples his friends and is the Saviour and the Champion of the lost, the lonely, the deprived and the oppressed'.

Menadue Farm at Tintagel in Cornwall was available for four weeks of Plymouth camps during July and August, with two other camps following. Plans have recently been submitted for the installation of boys' and girls' toilets and shower blocks and it is hoped that these will be installed during 1985. Help with construction and finance are still needed.

Women's Bible Study Conference

'Celebrating 25 years, The Women's Bible Study Conference meeting in November was warmly welcomed by the Director, Manager and Staff of Highbury, Weston-super-Mare, who all helped to make it a memorable occasion by presenting each lady with a posy of flowers and baking a surprise cake which we were all thrilled to have cut for us by Dr. Norah Sims of Exeter. It was a time of looking back and of remembering God's goodness as Mrs. Ethel Capper gave an account of the first Conference held in 1959. The cost for that weekend was the grand amount of £2.5s.6d! The theme for this year's conference was the "Secrets of the Kingdom". Miss Olive Rogers took us through the open door into a heart-searching yet glorious study in the parables. We all benefited from a spiritual health and beauty consultation with Mrs. Barbara Morris, ex-missionary teacher, Zaire. A practical challenge, "To Give in Love", was presented to us, by Mrs. Marjorie Elphick, Chairlady of the Police Court Mission, a work unknown to many of us but we were all made aware of a great need being met today by a small group of dedicated people. The whole time spent together was most profitable and we praise God for all that is past and trust Him for all that's to come.' Brochures for next year's conference will be available in due course from Mrs. Phyl Nute, Doron, Hazel Avenue, Redland, Bristol BS6 6UD.

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Homecalls

Cecil R. B. Ingleby, suddenly at Paignton, on October 12, aged 86 years. Born in the North of England, he went with his family to Portugal, where his father represented the British and Foreign Bible Society. As a young man, he set up business in Portugal and spent some years there before establishing a business in the West of England. He travelled many miles in the Master's service in Somerset, Devon, Avon and further afield, being in great demand as a conference speaker and ministering to small and large companies of believers. He will be sadly missed; prayer will be valued for his wife.

Victor Joseph, aged 65, at Bournemouth. Saved as a boy of 16 years under the ministry of Mr. Luther Rees, he was associated in his early years with Welcome Hall, Shelbourne Road, Bournemouth, subsequently with Victoria Hall, Winton; Alton Road Gospel Hall, Wallisdown and most recently in Charminster Chapel, Bournemouth.

The Lord gave him, in early life, a real love for the Word of God, and a desire to share it with others. He became a very competent and gifted speaker, and he used this gift extensively in the local area. His ministry extended further afield, and he became very well known among the Assemblies in Devon. He was one of the founders, and driving forces behind the Mens' Bible Weekend, held at Ilfracombe each year. He gave of his time and talent in so many aspects of Christian work that it would be difficult to list them all, but mention should be made of his commitment over 16 years as Secretary of Bournemouth and District Christian Convention. The fact that more than 200 people attended the funeral witnessed to the love and esteem in which he was held by many. Prayer is requested for his widow and son.

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Home Workers Fund:

Latchett Hall, Latchett Road, South Woodford, London, E18 1DL. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during November amounted to £3,373.00.

Missionaries' Children's Aid Fund:

29 Queen Street, London EC4R 1BH. Gifts received by the Fund for general purposes during November amounted to £619.39.

Retired Missionary Aid Fund:

12 Clevelands Crescent, North Shields, NE29 0NP. Gifts and legacies received during November amounted to £10,879.58.

PRAYER LIST

Baigent, J.:

Rise Park Chapel, Romford 1; Endlesham Church, Balham, SW12 6, 13, 20, 27; 'Pray for London', Royal Albert Hall 12; Care & Counsel course 14, 21, 28.

Clifford, D. L.:

West Moors; St. Andrews, Malton, Yorks.

Gillham, S.:

West Moors 2, 8, 31; Three Cross 6, 8; Christchurch 7, 21; Wimborne 11, 18; Wallisdown 12; Wyke Regis 13; Heatherlands, Parkstone 14; Charminster, Bournemouth 15; Stoke on Trent 16; Chickerell 20; Dorchester 22; Westbury 23-25; Merriott 27; Dorset Regional Fellowship 28; Swanage 29.

D. J. Iliffe:

Angmering 1-5; Littlehampton 3; Selsey 6; Blackburn 7-12; Chichester 13, 20; Leicester 16-18; London 22; Wokingham 26-27.

Pierce, D. H.:

Melksham 6; Eire 11-25; Walthamstowe 26-27; C.E.W. Westbury rest of month.

Short, S. S.:

Altrincham 6, 9; Bramhall 6; Stockton Heath 8; Quenington 13; Corsham 18; Shrewsbury 19-24; Caerleon 27; Worle 29; Weston-super-Mare 31.

Tatford, F. A.:

Horsham 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Plaistow, Sussex 6, 13, 20, 27; Bexhill 23.

Thurston, A.:

Kingsbridge 6; Dartmoor Prison 1, 4, 8, 11, 22, 25, 29; Teignmouth 13; Dawlish 14; St. Thomas More School 16, 23, 30; Tavistock 27.

Tryon, G.:

See page 29.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Boscombe:

Drummond Hall, Drummond Road (by kind permission). February 2nd at 7.00pm. Conversational Bible Reading—Revelation Chapter 2. Mr. B. Osborne (Dinas Powis).

Brierfield, Lancs:

Hebron Hall, Walter Street. Saturday Evening Rally, January 19th at 7.00pm. Mr. S. Brown (Lesmahgow).

Colyton, Devon:

Gospel Hall, The Butts. January 26th at 7.00pm. Romans 13:1-14:13. Mr. H. Bell (Kingsteignton). Light refreshments provided.

Kirkintilloch:

Gospel Hall, 68 Townhead. Annual Conference on Saturday 26th January at 3.15pm. Speakers expected: David Clarkson (Dumfries), Gordon Jackson (Edinburgh) and Keith Stapley (Glasgow).

Kirkintilloch:

Gospel Hall, 68 Townhead. Mr. G. Bull (Milngavie) will minister the word of God on Thursdays 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st January at 7.30pm.

London E17:

Folkestone Road Hall. CEW weekend, 26-27 January. Saturday 6.00pm and Sunday 4.30pm. Speakers: Mr. D. Pearce and Mr. I. Powell.

Students: a warm welcome to any who are free to help in activities amongst boys and girls at Folkestone Road Hall, London E17.

Maidenhead:

Parkside Hall, St. Luke's Road. February 2nd. 'The Edifying of the Body', Ephesians 4. Mr. D. C. Hinton (Uxbridge). Address 6.30-7.30pm, Discussion 8.15-9.00pm, Refreshments in interval. A bookstall will be open.

Northshields, Tyneside:

Gospel Hall, Coach Lane, Sunday School Workers Conference on Saturday 19th January at 3.30 and 6.30pm. Speaker: Mr. P. Hedley (Italy).

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BLACK FOREST 1st June - 8th June
SWITZERLAND 5th July - 14th July

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PERSONAL

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1500 Bible Studies by Barry Blake-Lobb. Send stamp for sample cassette and list of titles. NEW LIFE RECORDINGS, Tixall, Stafford. (2)

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Social events. Fellowship Groups. Friendship. Nationwide. Weekend Houseparties. Holidays, home and abroad—Switzerland, Holy Land, Holland, Scotland, Devon. Christian Friendship Fellowship, Dept. A22, Edenthorpe, Doncaster.

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Midlands

Christian Brethren Eventide Home, Kings Heath, Birmingham, has vacancies from time to time. Apply to Mrs. R. Sly (Secretary), 43 Gilbertstone Avenue, Birmingham, B26 1JT. (12)

ACCOMMODATION

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SECRETARIES

From time to time the Fellowship has vacancies for full-time secretarial staff. Shorthand is not normally essential. If you would like to be considered for such a post please apply in writing, with brief details of qualifications and/or experience to the Personnel Secretary at the address shown below. Applicants should be in agreement with the evangelical Christian basis of UCCF.

Write to: Val Tattersall, Personnel Secretary, UCCF, 38 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GP

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