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# The Baptist Ministers' Journal

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"The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily  
reflect those of the Editorial Board"

# Editorial

In theory “foreigners” no longer exist, at least in the context of Europe, for the Treaty of Maastricht has turned us all into Europeans. We are being invited to regard each other in a fresh light, as fellow citizens in a new European home. Far harder for us, as an island race, than for most of the other signatories, especially as we persist in regarding the E.C. primarily in terms of economic benefit. Across the Channel it’s rather different with a notion of statehood enriched by the multifarious cultures of the Twelve and a binding commitment designed to make another disastrous European war an impossibility. The sheer scale of such inclusiveness is hard to comprehend.

And whatever reservations there may be about a “rich man’s club”, vis-a-vis the Third World, there is a devilish irony in the rising again of the extreme Right on European soil. At the very moment when differences are being sunk in the drive towards greater European unity, Fascism and neo-Nazism are enjoying a renaissance majoring, as ever, on that exclusivity founded upon purity of race. Fuelled by the old potent mix of unemployment, insecurity, fear and prejudice, the scapegoats, as on *Kristallnacht* in 1938 and frequently since, are the “outsiders”. In the U.K. context, the recent election of a single BNP (British National Party) candidate to a local council, may be dismissed as an unrepresentative quirk, but it is sufficient to ring alarm bells. Social deprivation, injustice and poverty have always provided the fertile breeding ground for totalitarianism, of the Left or Right. We dare not be complacent: “it could never happen here”.

One of the reasons early Christianity was despised was that it cut across family ties. Such was its internationalism that the quality of love normally associated only with the close nuclear family was now generously lavished on all and sundry. And though rather compromised by its theological and denominational exclusiveness, Christianity at its most authentic has always loved the stranger, and no questions asked. This inclusiveness of spirit should serve as a mighty bulwark in the face of race hatred. Time will tell.

Such national concerns are close to the heart of a reinvigorated *Evangelical Alliance*. Clive Calver outlines something of its wide brief and his longing that Evangelicals might present a united front for the sake of the Kingdom. Following this, one of our colleagues shares his experience of securing a settlement outside the normal pattern. In an increasingly daunting scenario, he hopes it may be helpful to others. Our third contribution comes from the pen of David Cook. In an article which takes a broad sweep of the breathtaking developments in science and technology and their ethical ramifications, he pleads for greater awareness, that the Church may not simply react too late, but be in a position to offer constructive and helpful moral guidelines as issues develop.

The drivenness of the ministry often results in profound guilt if one takes time off. Roy Turvey, who sadly was not spared to enjoy the leisure of retirement, argues the case for taking it more seriously to the end that we may be more fully rounded people (and more interesting?) In *Logic and the Liturgy*, Donald Hudson approaches worship from a philosophical viewpoint, countering current ideas which see it essentially as subjective and functional, doing something for the worshipper, the “feel good” factor. To conclude, Clive Jarvis continues the debate on the rationale for Sunday School, highlighting the need to take children seriously, to enter into their world, and to minister accordingly. This debate, which we now draw to a close, has been stimulating and sometimes provoking; very necessary in view of our rather weak Baptist theology of the child.

# The Evangelical Alliance and the Life of the Nation

At 2.00pm the telephone rings in the Communications Department of the Evangelical Alliance. By 2.07pm I have been cajoled by staff into taking part in a 'live' interview on London Talkback Radio.

On another day it might be *The Times* pursuing evangelical views on evangelism among Jewish people; Radio 4 asking if the latest 'Big Bang' theory negates religion; or *The Sun* seeking faithful Christian couples to talk about their marriages for a feature on fidelity.

## A Broad Agenda

Each time EA responds in these ways, such as in a recent 1200-word article in *The Independent* on the Christian view of sexuality, it does so on behalf of a million people represented by the Alliance through its membership. The EA is not a para-church agency, but an umbrella body uniting and serving evangelicals across the denominations. Consequently, we are as likely as not to pass the media on to our members and other evangelical spokespeople for a response. Many is the time we have pointed the media in the direction of Baptist Union General Secretary David Coffey - on one occasion it was for a live interview on ITN at very short notice!

I highlight the media because many Christians will have seen the Evangelical Alliance quoted in the press or interviewed on radio. But being a 'voice' for evangelicals is only a small part of our function. Our most crucial role is behind the scenes helping members to carry out their work. Richard Wilkins of the Association of Christian Teachers, one of the 500 societies affiliated to the Alliance, describes the EA as 'not a piece of the jigsaw, but the table on which the jigsaw pieces come together'.

Helping members of the Evangelical Alliance to carry out their work includes the formation of as many as 14 'coalitions' of Christian experts on a range of subjects. They resource the Church in key areas like education, evangelism and religious liberty. Examples of EA coalitions in action include:

- The raising of the voice of Christian drug rehabilitation centres when a crisis in funding threatened to affect their very existence. The coalition met with Government officials to put their case.
- Advice to Christian parents who are increasingly concerned about just how far their children should go in celebrating other faith religious festivals in the classroom.
- Resourcing churches with practical initiatives on the neglected subjects of singleness in the church, debt among Christians, and low levels of tithing across the denominations.

Equipping churches to be spiritually healthy is the goal of much of our work. From a Church Life Team of six respected preachers and teachers who lead weekends in churches on church planting, evangelism, prayer and Bible study, to emergency prayers materials, complete with OHPS, which are rushed to member churches when crises like famine in Africa and war in Bosnia strike.

A telephone helpline for those addicted to tranquillisers has been established by the EA drugs coalition. Prayer triplets for adults and 'Warrior' prayer tapes for teenagers are helping to serve youth groups. And EA's Home Affairs Department is equipping Christians to meet social needs in their communities, whether in the form of a nursery for children, or outreach to homeless people.

Most of these initiatives are in fact directed by EA's members. For example, an expressed need from members for a publication outlining the dangers of seemingly harmless occult pastimes led to the production of *Doorways to Danger*, an eight-page guide. Or when Operation Mobilisation phoned with news that the mission ship Logos I has sunk! Could EA Help? We are not experts in salvage, but we can draw people together to share in each other's problems. We are here to give support and bring evangelicals together. Unity in the Body of Christ underpins all that we do.

### **The Desire for Unity**

Following the recent announcement by the Bishop of Durham that he was due to retire, the Evangelical Alliance paid tribute in the media to his concern for the disadvantaged and commented that David Jenkins was deserving of a gold medal for service to evangelical unity. His statements of uncertainty about key elements of the Christian faith had spurred evangelical Christians to set aside minor areas of disagreement in order to re-affirm their common commitment to historic Christian truths.

Many within the Alliance long for such unity among evangelicals all year round, not just in the face of theological controversy. A dramatic example of improving relations is the growth of Local Evangelical Fellowships (LEF). Groups of churches - from 10 congregations to 100 - working together in villages, towns and cities, supported and resourced by the national Alliance. The results are startling, with church planting, city-wide missions, paid workers and advice centres being the fruit of greater co-operation. As evangelicals drop barriers between each other they are discovering that more is achieved together than apart.

Encouraging signs of evangelical co-operation are emerging through Great Britain. Tears were shed by EA Wales staff as they witnessed fellowship between leaders whose church traditions were poles apart. They had come together at an EA Wales conference on the evangelisation of Wales. The desire for greater unity in Scotland was evident when churches nominated some 550 people for only 37 positions on the Council of the newly formed Scotland Evangelical Alliance. Similar stories can be told by the Northern Ireland Evangelical Alliance and the African Caribbean Alliance.

As evangelical unity grows and churches are increasingly seen to be working effectively in their communities, there is a small, but discernible, change in the attitudes from those outside the Church. Government ministers and civil servants are more prepared to listen and discuss than they used to be. Alliance staff are increasingly called upon to represent evangelical concerns to Parliament and the media. At one meeting with Kenneth Clarke, now Chancellor, Mr Clarke said:

"I don't understand you evangelicals. One minute you're talking about social issues, the next minute moral issues. What are you, left wing, or right wing?"

In replying "neither" I was able to underline the diversity of evangelicalism and the consequent strength when evangelicals whether left or right, charismatic or non-charismatic, stand and act together.

Encourage your young people  
to think about **HOME MISSION**

Get them



unching Holes in the

**Darkness**

the latest **HOME MISSION** video  
about the work of youth evangelist,  
Steve Flashman



**THE BAPTIST UNION**  
OF GREAT BRITAIN

Behind our effort is the dream - of the day when evangelicals in Britain have regained the credibility to challenge and change legislation by quiet, reasoned argument and prayer. First, relationships have to be established and respect earned. Such things are beginning to happen.

It appears that evangelicals - now approaching half of England's Protestants in Church on Sundays - are rediscovering the vision of social and spiritual transformation which motivated Methodism's founder John Wesley to support anti-slavery campaigns, William Booth of the Salvation Army to set up Britain's first employment exchanges and the likes of Spurgeon, Muller and Barnardo, who opened orphanages.

Such radicalism is being reborn in parishes across the UK. And attentions have turned to issues beyond the old favourites of abortion and family values. The improving fortunes of evangelical churches owe less to modern church services, replete with guitars and jiggling vicars, than fall-out from the 'Great Reversal'. This saw in the Sixties and Seventies churches of all denominations reclaiming from lost property their mislaid Christian social conscience, once such a driving force within Victorian society.

Lord Shaftesbury's Ragged Schools Union for orphans, Bramwell Booth's campaign against child exploitation, are today being championed as models of New Testament faith in action. At events like the Spring Harvest church weeks attended by 80,000 people annually, church-goers are being called out of alienation from social concern and a privatised pietism, into a recognition of the socio-political implications of Gospel. Abortion and family values are of great concern.

The sea change has come in the shape of thousands of small, often unheralded church initiatives, indicating that social ministry is being restored alongside, and as part, of evangelistic outreach. Help for prostitutes in Soho's Red Light District, London, from the Green Light Project; dozens of church social programmes assisting homeless people; and the growth of specialist care for people with physical and learning disabilities by groups such as the Shaftesbury Society, are typical of the quiet revolution of the past 30 years.

Major initiatives like the creation of a Community Initiatives Unit at the Evangelical Alliance, advising churches on the setting up of training, employment and other social projects, and Tear Fund, Britain's fifth largest relief and development agency (which began as a file at EA during the 1960's), are part of the unfolding story of what can happen when evangelicals co-operate together. Conferences on social issues, South Africa and local church leadership are an extension of that co-operation and partnership.

The *Church Times* has aptly summed up the EA's daunting task as 'representing the views of Charismatic and non-Charismatic, Calvinist and Arminian, Anglican and non-Anglican, pro-ecumenical and anti-ecumenical'. As we seek to encourage co-operations across these boundaries it is clear that evangelicals face critical decisions in the coming years. Do we as evangelicals continue to move forward together, or split as we have in the past in order to build our own empires? Will evangelicals continue to be marginalised as a lunatic fringe in society? Or will we unite in serious attempts to address the issues of our day?

History shows that demonstrable unity among evangelicals backed by action will require something of a miracle. But I do believe in miracles! At its founding conference in 1846 it was declared that the Evangelical Alliance would be a body which never duplicated, but only facilitated the activities of others.

## High Priorities

As we approach the final years of this century, I see four areas of major concern for evangelicals.

- **The Uniqueness of Christ:** We must proclaim again one who represents the only way to God. While exercising compassion and understanding to those of other faiths, we must still maintain that Jesus alone was God incarnate.
- **Cultural Relevance:** We need to continue to meet our world where it is. The challenge of spreading the Gospel as we approach the next century must be met together.
- **Pluralism:** A crucial issue. Increasingly people are going to wish us to minimise our faith and to lose hold of those doctrines which we believe. We must recover a commitment to doctrine and above all a commitment to the authority of scripture.
- **Unity:** We must recognise that charismatic evangelicals and non-charismatic evangelicals need each other. To that end we must ensure that within the worldwide community that evangelicals do not divide themselves.

Whether charismatic evangelicals or non-charismatic, evangelicals will have to double their numbers in order to have a significant impact in Great Britain. The Evangelical Alliance will continue to serve evangelicals, resolving disputes, encouraging co-operation, answering complaints, arbitrating, enabling people to trust and support brothers and sisters from other evangelical perspectives. These are vital steps towards greater evangelical effectiveness in Britain.

While the fortunes of evangelicals have improved, the fact remains that Church has little or no relevance to 90 per cent of the English population. There can be no room for complacency.

**Clive Calver**



# A Possible Pattern for Settlement

Faced with the 'mid-fifty' crisis in the re-settlement process, it was necessary to reconsider the pattern for future ministry. For over a year there had been little response to the monthly nominations by the Superintendents to Churches and the need for a move was becoming more emphatic. There was the possibility of 'pressing on' in an increasingly difficult situation (but this could not continue for another ten years) and there was, of course, the possibility of resignation, an 'out-of-pastorate' grant for a year, and then an uncertain future if no settlement materialised. Retirement was out of the question, bearing in mind the penalties for retiring early within the Baptist Union Pension Scheme and the lack of state provision at age 55 years. Having spent his whole working life in the Baptist Ministry there was no other 'work experience' available, and re-employment generally at this age is becoming increasingly difficult. The other possibility was to anticipate living within the earning capacity of his wife, but, without a profession, she too would no doubt find full employment difficult to secure. None of these options seemed, therefore, to be a satisfactory solution, so the consideration turned to 'part-time' ministry and the possibility of living within the constraints of a reduced stipend.

## Exploration

An assessment was made of what the net income would have been if both the Baptist Union Pension and the State Pension were available at this stage (i.e. a forecast of what income limit would pertain when retirement eventually took place). In due course it would be necessary to reduce one's standard of living to be within that income, and it was agreed that such an adjustment in life-style could be made now instead of ten years hence.

With the help of the Superintendents a Church was located which was unable to consider paying a full stipend but was looking for experienced leadership. The option of a Home Mission Grant would have placed additional strain on the Grants Budget; a 50 per cent grant would have to reduce annually over the coming years, the guarantee that the Church would be able to make such reductions could not be given, and a Senior Minister's Grant was neither possible at age 55 years nor desirable with respect to the additional call upon the Home Mission Grant budget. A meeting between the deacons of the Church and the prospective minister was arranged to enable a frank discussion about the resources of the Church and the needs of the minister to be undertaken.

The Church decided it could only offer half of the basic stipend, and would not expect, therefore, a full week's work for a part-time remuneration. It transpired that the Church would be looking for about 18 hours per week, and three Sundays per month (less the five holiday Sundays per year). The minister agreed that he would be willing to increase these hours, on average, as he felt unable to anticipate doing all he would wish to do within 18 hours. Assuming an 'average' working day included three sessions of three hours, it was agreed that he should normally be working for the Church on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, regarding the other weekdays as free from Church duties (approximating to some 27 hours per week - this being far nearer half a week than 18 hours!) It was also agreed that a measure of flexibility would be included to allow for emergencies and meetings on other days, but, generally speaking, an answer-phone would be used during 'off

days and this would be attended at meal-times when at home.

However, on the financial side, the 'half-stipend' would be insufficient to provide an adequate income. One possibility was to find a further 'part-time' job to supplement the income, but this could complicate availability in emergencies, etc. However, a solution was found which partially met the criteria. The Church could not offer more than the 'half-stipend' but was able to make a Pension Contribution based on the basic stipend rather than on only the 'half-stipend'. This would preserve the minister's pension in due course and such an arrangement is possible within the Pension Fund rules for ministers of the age of 55 years. The Church also agreed that, provided it did not put an additional strain on the Church's own financial resources, it would make each year a number of 'Taxable Benefits-in-kind' in addition to the stipend being offered. These would include the minister's share of the pension premium and National Insurance Contributions, the heating and lighting cost of the manse, the purchase of books required for his ministry, etc - the total amount of these Benefits would be around £2,000. In order to ensure that this burden should not fall on the Church, it has been possible to arrange for individual Christians (unconnected with the Church) to give, by covenant or Gift Aid, £1,500 per year which, with income tax to be reclaimed, achieves the required £2,000.

The 'half-stipend' (which is little more than the 'tax-free' allowance and therefore almost without a tax deduction) and the 'taxable Benefits-in-Kind' go a large way towards meeting the figure estimated in terms of the total required on the basis of the anticipated future pension (as outlined above). There remains a small difference between this income and the 'pension' figure of about £1,200 and this will have to be met, either by further cut-backs into a simpler life-style or by his wife's finding a small part-time job of some ten hours per week.

### **The Housing Issue**

There was one further requirement - housing! The minister had no share in his present manse, no other house (for retirement) and no finances to put into a new manse, and the Church in question had no manse available. However, it has proved possible for the Church to meet the costs of a new manse (with a 25 year mortgage, a small loan and the use of some small reserves). For such a pattern of settlement to be possible, housing is an essential provision. Where a Church has such housing provision and the income to allow consideration of part-time ministry (although insufficient to support 'full-time' ministry), there is the possibility of settlement.

As the Church grows and the work-demands increase, there will be an increase in income with the possibility of a larger stipend and a greater hour-allocation, and, eventually, the Church should be able to support a minister on a full-time basis.

In these days of difficulties with settling the older ministers (in spite of their experience and years of service) one possibility is for ministers to consider whether there is necessarily a need for a full stipend (with families having 'left home') and whether a reduced income (with possible benefits of a reduced work-load) is a viable option. As more ministers appear to be yearning for 'early retirement' (even if not at the age of 55 years) and situations with less stress and a reduced work-load, this may suggest for others a way forward in settlement.

**A colleague**

(name and address supplied)

# Moral Decision-Making: New Grey Areas

The model used in training men and women for ministry today is of a minister with a Bible in one hand and a newspaper in the other. The aim of such training is to help ministers apply God's Word to God's world and for them to teach and enable others to do the same. It is vital we help Christians face up to the moral dilemmas of the last few years of the twentieth century. That is, however, not enough, if we are to train people not just for the present but also for the future. A key concern must be to equip ministers, and indeed all Christians, to cope with the new moral problems and issues that we will face in twenty year's time. The difficulty is that we do not know what these problems will be. This makes the task hard, but means we must focus on teaching methods of making moral decisions. Such an approach will ensure that no matter what the problems will be in the future, Christians will have a way of coping with and responding to them.

While there can be no certainty about which issues will arise, there are some general trends, which make it likely that certain key themes will be the focus of concern for individuals and society. These central issues will provide the content of debate for us all and demand that Christians make some response to the problems that **will** face society in the future.

## A Crystal Ball?

The mark of a true prophet was that what he said did, in fact, come to pass. While not claiming to be a prophet, it is possible to see that certain issues will be of growing importance. In one sense, there is nothing specifically new about these areas. Like science, they arise out of our present state of knowledge and experience. Nevertheless, it seems that they will pose increasingly difficult moral questions for us all in the years to come.

## The Rise of Technology

My wife's grandmother lived to be one hundred years old. She had seen in her lifetime the arrival of the combustion engine, the aeroplane, radio and television. It is literally incredible to think of how radically her and our world has changed in the last hundred years. Most of the changes stem from technology and the application of science. These have created major social and personal changes in the life of the world.

There seems no reason to doubt that the degree and rapidity of change and innovation are likely to continue. The moral problems will remain. Just because we are **able** to do something, does that mean we ought to do it? Does **can** imply **ought**?

Philosophers and theologians have given all kinds of theoretical answers to the question, but these answers seem to have had little impact. Technology grinds out its changes and developments, and moralists hastily try to respond usually by trying to close the stable door after the horse has bolted. The general issue of coping with and controlling the development, use and abuse, of technology will continue to be a major concern in the world scene.

## **The Rise of Genetics**

The biological sciences seem poised to make a major breakthrough in our understanding of human beings and disease. The rise of medical responses to the problems of infertility has led to key developments in the area of genetics. The availability of human embryos and the relative freedom of research up to fourteen days in the life span of such embryos has enabled medical scientists to make steady advances in the science of genetics.

This has focused on the Human Genome Project, which is a world-wide exercise to map out the human genome structure. We will then have a complete map of the genetic structure of human beings and the genetic structure of disease. Already there are almost monthly announcements of new genetic understandings of disease. There are two different levels of understanding. The first is that we now realise that much illness has its basis in genetics. That means that the very genetic structure of human beings predisposes us to be vulnerable to certain diseases. This then poses moral questions.

Are we purely and totally determined by our genetic structure? Is disease totally explicable in terms of our genetic history? What implications follow if either of these questions is answered positively? Strictly these are not **moral** questions, but they rest on and raise a whole host of moral perspectives in terms of how we respond to the answers given.

The second level of understanding is that of specific genetic carriers of particular diseases. Muscular dystrophy, Huntingdon's Chorea, heart disease and even homosexuality have been identified with certain genetic abnormalities. More and more of such genetic links will become clear as the Genome Project reaches its final stages in the next five years.

We do not simply note such discoveries. Scientists are developing ways of responding to such "abnormalities". These raise a whole host of moral questions. We shall focus on four to illustrate how new developments raise moral issues.

### **Destroying Abnormality?**

If we were able to identify abnormal genes, then we could decide to dispose of such carriers of genetic abnormality. Simply put, that means we could abort all babies found to be carrying defective genes. We could go back a step and sterilise all those who carried such a defective gene and thus prevent them from passing the defect on to the next generation. How such control and limitation of individual freedom would be enforced is hard to see. How it would be viewed by our Western liberal society is obvious. In practice, the Abortion Law allows the abortion of a foetus whose quality of life will be poor. This is the widely used means of responding to amniocentesis testing. If an abnormality is suspected, then abortion is automatically offered and usually taken. The issue will be how far such disposal of genetic abnormality by abortion will be allowed to develop. If a child is a carrier of the so-called "homosexual gene" is that a ground for abortion? If a child is female, and the parents desperately wanted a boy, is being female a "genetic disorder or abnormality"? Is abnormality in the eye of the beholder? Will we move to a society where all are "normal"? What will this mean for the physically and mentally disabled and for people with handicaps?

### **Making Normal?**

Instead of destroying the foetus or person carrying a genetic abnormality, we

could manipulate that individual's genetic make-up. At the present state of medical science, this usually involves adding a "normal" gene rather than manipulating a "flawed" gene, but as the science develops, the capacity to alter an individual's genetic structure will undoubtedly grow. Should this be allowed and how, if at all, should it be controlled? Part of the difficulty is in deciding what counts as normal and abnormal, and part is the extent to which we agree to interfere with an individual's fundamental being. The fact of sex change operations shows that we do interfere with individual's human being at their request. They are able to give or withhold consent, but that is not so for a child in the womb. Nevertheless, many would argue that there is no difference in principle between treating a child and treating an embryo if it is clearly for the benefit of the child and aimed at removing pain and distress.

The degree to which we should change an individual depends on when we view that the individual is formed, the consent of that individual, what counts as being in his or her best interest and whether we should fundamentally alter who and what is a person.

### **Changing the Germ Line?**

Geneticists draw a distinction between somatic cell therapy, where you change an individual body, and germ line therapy, where you change a genetic line that affects many people. If and when we have identified a group of people who carry a genetic disorder, we might seek to remove that genetic disorder altogether. We might fundamentally alter the germ line of genetic structure, thus ridding humankind of that particular genetic structure. It sounds like an excellent idea, removing once and for all the threat to individuals and a burden to society. There is deep unease about changing the genetic pool in this kind of way. Part of this is that certain genetic defects have positive effects for others. Some scientists think that the focus on disease has meant that we have overlooked the benefits and advantages of some genetic "abnormalities". If we get rid of these, we may find catastrophic results in areas we do not suspect have any connection. The ultimate loss might be irreversible. For these kinds of reasons, germ line therapy is not practised in the UK.

### **Whose Information?**

Once we know the content of the human genetic code and are able to set out the individual's genetic structure, there would be advantages in having such information on a credit card. In a foreign hospital, this could be read off by a machine and suitable treatment provided. Unfortunately such information would have major implications for insurance and employment. Insurers, building societies and employers would benefit from knowing that someone **might** develop a handicapping or even fatal disease by the age of forty. They might also refuse to employ or fund such a person. A new level of discrimination might emerge and further problems over the control of such delicate information.

### **Virtual Reality**

If technological advance has created new grey areas in genetics, it is fast developing new moral problems in the development of virtual reality. The growth of television, computers and the world of computer games, has taken a new leap forward in moving from the purely visual to a whole body experience. A special suit and helmet can produce a reality that is created by oneself or someone else. It is

virtually the same as reality. It is just as real and total an experience, as what we count as normal experience, affecting the whole body and person. It doesn't take a genius to see the benefits and dangers of such developments. The training of doctors, surgeons, airline pilots and an host of technical operators would allow the enactment of situations and the development of appropriate responses and skills. Unfortunately, the same technological advance would also open the way for pornography and violence. Some might argue that at least it would only be through and with a machine and would not involve "real" people. Others will point to the dangers of fantasy and imagination, the impact of violence and pornography on individuals themselves as well as their attitudes and behaviour towards others, the risks of blurring the lines between reality and virtual reality. The dehumanising of individuals and the destruction of genuine social interaction seem fundamental risks in the further development of virtual reality. Yet it continues to be worked on and applied to more areas of knowledge and life.

### **Euthanasia**

It may seem odd to suggest that a new grey area will be further debate over euthanasia. Yet developments in the USA and Holland, potential pressures through the EC, the developing ability of medical science to keep people alive as in the Tony Bland case of Persistent Vegetative State, the self-absorption of society with the good life, dignity and selfishness as well as growing problems over resource allocations will make the debate fast and furious. It will focus initially on Living Wills and Advance Directives and the claims of autonomy. Christians must be clear not only about their attitude to death and dying, but to the use of technology in prolonging life and death, and the limits of autonomy. There will also be debate about the role of the Church in a secular society and how far Christians or anyone else, has the right to inflict their morality on an unwilling majority.

### **Social Changes**

There will be increasing pressure for the disestablishment of the Church of England and with that further debate over how minorities cope morally with the rest of society. In one sense the great Western liberal virtue of tolerance will be put even more severely to the test. Continuing social changes in families, marriage, sex and relationships as well as business practices will highlight the tensions between competing moral systems. Social analysts suggest that the middle classes of the West are united on two main views. They stand for individual freedom and liberty. They are also opposed to redistribution of wealth and resources. Both views are in a way based on selfishness. This will play an increasing role in creating grey areas in morality, as we have to decide how much we are willing to pay in taxes or in charitable giving and so what level of responsibility we have for each other, the sick and people with disability, the environment and the poor at home and abroad. As personal and societal finance falls in real terms and the world economy continues in general recession, there will be further pressure on the values we claim to uphold and on maintaining abalance between ourselves and our own needs and the needs of others.

The change in social living patterns in terms of cohabitation, marriage, divorce and remarriage, the growing number of older people and the shift in the focal point of social life towards the elderly, the increase of leisure and different employment patterns including working from home, the use of computers, phones and faxes and the removal of settings of social cohesion all mean that matters of morality will be

even more difficult to resolve at the local national and global levels.

### **The Church's Response to Grey Areas**

In dealing with the moral dilemmas of the modern age, the Church has tended to be reactive rather than proactive. Once an area has been identified as raising moral questions, Christians have tried to respond to the problem. This has meant that practices have already been established and the Church has had little impact or influence. It has also meant that the Church has been seen as largely negative, complaining about what is happening and trying to set limits. What we need is to be more aware of the issues which will develop before they become full-blown moral questions. With the expertise of all its members the Church is well placed to know how and when such issues will arise and to prepare society and Christians in how to deal with such issues. We must create an environment in which these kinds of discussions take place and the hard thinking is done.

The Church will face new grey areas, but it must remain faithful to her Lord, His Word, the history of God's dealings, through and with His people, and be sensitive to the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. Ethics is too serious to be left to the ivory tower or manse study. Ethics is to be explored in the whole community of God's people, bringing their experience of the world together with God's Word. The good news is that we need not be afraid of the new issues, their complexity or their difficulty. God has given us the gift and grace of His Holy Spirit, who leads and guides us into all truth. In that security, we may proclaim God's standards and live as salt and light, whatever the dilemmas we face.

**David Cook**

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# The Place and Choice of Leisure

My family thought it a great laugh when I was asked to write one of the sections of the original AIM material entitled *The Place and Choice of Leisure*! A sure sign I had not given it the place it ought to have in life. This section appears to have been dropped from the AIM material. If this is so it is a pity because I am convinced a rounded, balanced Christian life needs to have a place for leisure, as I hope to make out.

Thinking and writing about the subject, however, was an interesting, even salutary, exercise, particularly when we have often felt guilty if we have had “time off”, other than holidays. To have “had time to stand and stare”, too often produces an irrational feeling of guilt.

The *Dictionary of Sociology* defines leisure as the time subtracted from the time devoted to work, sleep and other necessities of life - surplus time.

In this article I shall look on leisure as that which a person chooses to do without any constraint from outside, simply because he or she likes to do it. The practice of our faith in worship, prayer and service would come under this heading for most sociologists, but for the Christian this is one of the necessities of life even though it may take up what the world would define as “leisure time”. We need to be aware, however, of the dangers of filling our times with “churchy” activities to the exclusion of all else.

## Perceptions of Leisure

In earlier societies there was little or no concept of leisure as a definable, separate activity from the daily business of living. The same may be true of some societies today.

Before the Industrial Revolution, when one in three days was a holiday of some kind or another, either to do with the cycle of nature, or the religious year, daily life and leisure were much more of a oneness than the life-style that developed as a result of that revolution. The rise of the Protestant “work-ethic”, coupled with the idea that popular leisure gave rise to “profane and licentious activities”, led some to the conclusion that leisure activities were “worldly indulgencies which tempted men (sic) away from a godly life”<sup>1</sup>

The history of humankind makes clear to us that the place of leisure, however we define or understand that, has an important part to play in the total development of a human being. “A cultureless human being (understanding culture as being that which human beings do unrelated to survival) would probably turn out to be not an intrinsic though unqualified ape, but a totally mindless and consequently unworkable monstrosity”.<sup>2</sup>

Leisure, then, for all members of the human race, and much more for the Christian who should see life as the coming to fulfilment of the total personality, is an essential part of life. The passage from birth to death (and beyond) is more than simply the ensuring of an adequate supply of the things that keep us alive.

## A Christian Approach?

For the Christian, then, the world and the achievements of humankind are there to be enjoyed. Not, let us add, because they are good for us, although they are of



inestimable value in helping us to unwind, keep a balanced life, develop an awareness of God's creation, and help us to become fuller, truer human beings. but simply because they are there to *be enjoyed*. Perhaps we have overdone the "miserable sinners" bit and played down the fact that man's chief end, in the words of the Scottish Catechism, "is to glorify God and *enjoy him* for ever". That means, among other things, enjoyment of His creation and all that is good, remembering that we share in the creative activity of God as those made in His image.

How we use our leisure is of the utmost importance. Men and women are made by what they do and by what their minds are set on. There can be few, if any, rules when it comes to the choice of leisure activities. There are, however, some guidelines for the Christian.

Our leisure should not be at the unwilling expense of another. Those of us who enjoy sports and games do so at time at the discomfort and, perhaps, physical danger of others. But this is not the object of the sport or game as it is, for example, in boxing, against which the Christian ought at least place a question mark. The same argument applies to so-called "blood sports". The subject is not debated here, but it is one that has to be faced. Can we derive pleasure from killing for fun any part of God's creation?

Our leisure should not become the focus of life to the exclusion of all else, any more than work. Many of us have an obsession that on the surface does sometimes appear to be the be all and end all of life for us. As long as it is not truly so there is no harm in it. Mine, incidentally, are music and cricket. I was greatly influenced in my teens by the writings of Neville Cardus, for which I thank God. Worlds were opened and experiences made possible through his writings. Such "obsessions" help to keep life balances and in perspective.

"The leisure that people need today", writes Gordon Dahl,<sup>3</sup> "is not free time but a free spirit; not more hobbies or amusements but a sense of grace and peace which lifts us beyond our busy schedules".

The only other guideline I would offer is that we should make sure our leisure activity, whatever it is, is life enhancing not life debasing. "And now, my friends, all that is true, all that is noble, all that is just and pure, all that is loveable and attractive, whatever is excellent and admirable - fill your minds with these things." (Philippians 4:8 REB)

**Roy Turvey**

<sup>1</sup> R.W. Malcolmson *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, Cambridge University Press, 1973

<sup>2</sup> Clifford Geertz, an American anthropologist, in *The Interpretation of Cultures* Hutchinson, 1975

<sup>3</sup> *Time, Work and Leisure*, Christian Century Foundation, 1971

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**To the Readers of the Baptist Ministers' Journal**

Writing this letter in November as the end of our business year approaches, I am moved to make a plea to our Churches regarding notification of claims. With minor variations in wording the policy conditions require that we should be told without undue delay when incidents occur which will result in claims. We are not unduly strict about this recognising Church officers are often busy people serving their Church and at the same time fully occupied with earning their living.

However, unless we are informed reasonably quickly we cannot give advice or institute enquiries as appropriate. Neither, and this is important at the year end, can we know what claims we have outstanding. Often submission of claims is delayed because estimates or accounts are awaited. This is understood, but we ask for claim forms to be submitted in the meantime so that claims can be registered.

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Yours sincerely

M. E. Purver

# Logic and the Liturgy

Many ministers take a utilitarian view of Christian worship. They talk as if the most important things to be said about it concern the beneficial psychological or moral effects which it has on those who participate and, through them, on society at large. This utilitarian assumption is so deep-seated in our thoughts about worship that some may be surprised to find that anyone should call it in question. But that is what I am intent upon doing.

I shall argue that the most important things to be said about Christian worship do not concern any effects which it may have as a matter of empirical fact, but rather the significance which it undoubtedly does have as a matter of logical necessity.

## Defining the Christian

By "Christian worship" I mean, of course, that combination of the reading and exposition of Scripture with the observance of the Lord's Supper which, from time immemorial, has been known within Christendom as "the liturgy". The two aspects of its significance, to which I want to call attention, may be stated summarily as follows: (i) What makes people Christians is their having a disposition to participate with understanding in the liturgy; and (ii) What makes it a disposition to participate with understanding is their conceiving of the liturgy as the representation of Christ. When I say that these aspects of its significance are "a matter of logical necessity", I mean that they can be demonstrated from what is meant respectively by the word "Christian" and the expression "with understanding". I will take them in turn.

First, then, the word "Christian". In order to know what any word means we need to know its defining characteristics. Here we may start with those that are necessary: i.e. those of which we can say that if anyone **does not** have them, that person **cannot** be a Christian. However, a great many of these necessary characteristics will be definitive, not only of Christians, but of theists of any kind. How are we to bring the list of them to a point where it nets **all** Christians, but **only** Christians? A point, that is, where we can say that if anyone **does** possess all of them, that person **must** be a Christian.

Some may say that we can do so by listing the moral qualities that all Christians, and only Christians, possess. But could any such list be compiled? I yield to no one in my gratitude for the admirable moral qualities of the Christians I have known and loved during my lifetime. However, knowing my own lack of some of those qualities, I hope it is not true that one **cannot** be a Christian if one **does not** possess them; and, thinking of some of the Non-Christians I have known who did possess them, I am sure that it is not true that, if one **does** possess them, one **must** be a Christian.

Others may say that we can complete the list of the defining characteristics of a Christian by stating the beliefs about Jesus which all Christians, and only Christians, hold. Yet, here again, can that be done? Even a belief as seemingly unequivocal as "Jesus is Lord" means different things to different Christians; and in a certain sense - viz. as signifying that Jesus was the supreme moral and spiritual genius of all time - it could be held by Non-Christians.

I am driven to the conclusion that, in the final analysis, the logically necessary condition, the fulfilment of which is sufficient to net all Christians, and only Christians, is their having a disposition to participate with understanding in the liturgy.

Having a disposition to do something is not the same as doing it. It is for there to be a certain degree of probability that, under such-and-such circumstances, one would do it. So I am not saying that, unless one attends the liturgy regularly, one cannot be a Christian. What I am saying comes to this. If anyone remarked of any given person **both** (i) that there was no degree of probability that this person would, under any conceivable circumstances, participate with understanding in the liturgy **and** (ii) that this person was a Christian, that remark would strike anyone, who was familiar with what is normally meant by the word "Christian" as self-contradictory.

Now for the expression "with understanding". What does this mean? Suppose, for example, we were told that a footballer had played "with understanding" and we asked the speaker what he meant by that. His replies would show that he meant that the footballer had kicked the ball about, knowing and consciously conforming to the reasons which those who play football would normally give for kicking it in certain ways rather than in others - i.e. ways which accord with the rules of the game, the tactics of the team, the requirements of victory, etc.

Well, similarly, having a disposition to participate in the liturgy "with understanding" must mean that it is a disposition to do so, knowing and consciously conforming to the reasons which would normally be given for so doing. So let us briefly review the things that are done in the liturgy and the reasons that would be given for doing them. I take them in the order in which they have traditionally been done.

Why is the Old Testament read? Because this is what Christ came to fulfil. Why the Epistles and the Gospel? Because this brings us as near as may be to what Christ said and did. Why the sermon? Because this applies what he said and did to our place and time. Why the credal affirmation in response to this liturgy of the Word? Because thus we bind unto ourselves what he said and did. Why next confession of sin? Because thereby we acknowledge our need of the redemption he brings. Why now the offertory of money, prayers of intercession, bread and wine? Because thus we present our humanity to be taken up into the humanity of Christ and offered anew to God. Why next the prayers of remembrance, thanksgiving and consecration? Because thereby we plead the one sacrifice of Christ. Why finally the distribution of consecrated bread and wine? Because this symbolizes the giving back to us of our humanity, redeemed and renewed in Christ.

Nothing could be more obvious than that the significance of the liturgy is Christological through and through. Its structure, no less than its contents, is essential to its significance. This is why we should not think of either as things with which we can play around.

The word, which has always seemed to me most apposite in this connexion, is "representation". The liturgy is the "re-present-ation" at a particular point in time and space of the eternal Person and Work of Christ. As to his Person, the Christ of theology is fully divine and fully human. As to his Word, he brings down, as God to man, the perfect revelation of divine grace; and offers up, as man to God, the perfect oblation of human penitence. Any disposition to do the things that are done in the liturgy "with understanding" is, as a matter of logical necessity, a disposition to do them whilst conceiving of them as the "r-present-ation" of Christ.

I am not, of course, saying that only theologians can participate in the liturgy with understanding. There are degrees of understanding. What I am saying comes to this. If anyone remarked of any given person **both** (i) that this person **did not**, even in the simplest terms, conceive of the liturgy as the "re-present-ation" of Christ **and** (ii) that this person had a disposition to participate in the liturgy "with understanding",

then that remark would strike anyone, who was familiar with what is normally meant by the expression "with understanding", as self-contradictory.

### **Worship as Intrinsic and Objective**

The two aspects of the significance of the liturgy, to which I have been calling attention, if taken together as premises, yield the conclusion that what makes anyone a Christian is having a disposition to do the things that are done in the liturgy, whilst conceiving of those things as the representation of Christ.

In this conception of them as the representation of Christ two further aspects of the significance of the liturgy are logically implicit. Namely, in a couple of words, that its significance is: 1) intrinsic and 2) objective.

In what sense **intrinsic**? Some things are ends in themselves. If, for example, anyone asked us why we should be good, or tell the truth, or cherish the beautiful, would it not be corrupt as a judgment of moral principle - no less than false as a statement of empirical fact - to reply that, by so doing, he would increase his own pleasure, prosperity, or well-being in some other such heteronomous regard? Goodness, truth and beauty are intrinsic, not instrumental, values. They do not stand in need of justification. They are themselves the ultimate criteria of justification.

Well now, must not something of the same kind be said about the "re-present-ation" of Christ? There is an evangelical version of the utilitarian view of worship, according to which the liturgy gets its significance from its effectiveness as a means of procuring conversions. But isn't there something misconceived even about such an instrumental conception of its significance as that? The liturgy does not get its significance from its utility as a means of bringing about any ends which we may think desirable; it is we, whose lives get whatever significance they may have from our participation in the liturgy. Or so, as a matter of logical necessity, it must seem from a Christian point of view. The liturgy is not a means to any end beyond itself which makes it worthwhile. What could conceivably be more worthwhile than the "re-present-ation" of Christ? That is what I mean when I say that its significance is intrinsic.

And in what sense **objective**? Subjectivism, no less than utilitarianism, can distort our conception of worship. We can conceive of it as a kind of mechanism which we have to kick-start into operation by stirring up the right thoughts or feelings in ourselves or others. But here again, isn't that misconceived?

For all the reservations, with which one is required to hedge about any reference to it, the doctrine of transubstantiation does bear uncompromising witness to the objectivity of the "re-present-ation" of Christ. And so its challenge to liturgical subjectivism cannot just be waved aside.

Jesus did say "This is my body", "This is my blood". And, whatever he may have meant, it can hardly have been simply: "If you eat a morsel of bread and take a sip of unfermented wine from a tiny glass once a month, that will be a useful aide-memoire in your efforts to recall what I have hitherto said to you and what I am now about to do for you". If any doctrine has scriptural warrant, I would have thought it was the doctrine that the liturgy is an **objective mystery**. A "mystery" in the New Testament sense of God's self-revelation in time and space; and "objective" in the sense that its significance lies in what God is doing thereby rather than in what we happen to think, feel or will, at the time.

How exactly to formulate, from within our tradition, belief in the intrinsic significance

and objective mystery of the liturgy may take some working out. That we have something to learn from other traditions only a bigot could doubt. At a dinner, given by the Free Churches in his honour at the time of his retirement, Archbishop Runcie said that the denominations, which participate in the ecumenical movement, have each a desire to preserve "a truth in the Gospel which it sees particularly clearly". This remark may be taken to have either of two implications: 1) that every denomination has something to teach to, and a lot to learn from, every other denomination, or 2) that each denomination should preserve its own belief and practices from contamination by those of the other denominations. In the fifties and sixties, when some of us as young ministers were greatly influenced by the Liturgical Movement, it would have been taken for granted that any such remark had the former of those two implications. But one sometimes gets the feeling that it is more fashionable nowadays to take any such remark to have the latter of those implications. If so, how sad. In those days we were encouraged to think of the liturgy as the focal point of ecumenism. We hoped that it was what we had to learn from, and to teach to, each other concerning its significance that would re-unite the denominations in the end. All I have been saying here is a plea not to let that hope fade. Nor to fall into the error of supposing that the universal bonhomie, now so evident amongst church leaders, is any sort of substitute for its fulfilment.

**Donald Hudson**

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# In Defence of Sunday School?

Faith can at times be so frustrating! Two thousand years on and we still have not fully resolved such seemingly crucial questions as the proper place of children in our church life. Notwithstanding, it is essential that we continue in our generation to tackle this question and I am grateful to both Stuart Jenkins (BMJ Jan '93) and Brian Wilson (July '93) for their contributions to this question in relation to Sunday School.

I find myself in general agreement with both of them in much of what they say, but I am not so sure that Sunday School should be consigned to the past.

## **An Irrelevant Superstition**

I have no difficulty with Brian Wilson's analysis of "paedobaptism". The question I always ask myself, and Anglican clergy when occasion arises, is why baptise infants? In essence the answer is because unbaptised means non-Christian means will not go to heaven. Whatever the Church teaches this is what the parents of most baptised children believe. It is a medieval superstition which should have no place in the Church of Jesus Christ. Paedobaptism is unnecessary and is a denial of the doctrine of Grace. Believing paedobaptists explain their practice through Covenant Theology, the belief that the faith of the parents "is sufficient" for the children, a theology created in recent times by evangelical paedobaptists. However, this is an irrelevance as the true motive for paedobaptism remains the same - the medieval superstitious fear that unbaptised children will be barred from entering heaven.

## **Why Sunday School?**

I also agree with Brian Wilson that we cannot assume all children are believers; and I accept his understanding that the Sunday School movement was founded on the paedobaptist understanding of the church. Here, however, I pause for thought. Whatever the initial reason for the Sunday School movement, I would want to ask why now do we have Sunday School? I doubt any member of my own church's teaching staff would reply because they are all good little Christians who need to be taught how to grow in the Christian life. Not even given that, in our case, only a very few children come from outside of the church.

On the positive side, they would talk about enjoying being with the children, in an atmosphere and environment that the children themselves enjoy. They would talk about introducing the children to the Christian Faith and positively encouraging them, at every age of their development, to know God. My own conversion was a crisis conversion at the age of 16, whereas my wife, brought up in a Christian home, will say that there was never a time when she did not know God.

On the negative side, they may say that in the eyes of much of the Church the purpose of Sunday School is to keep children out of the way so that the adults can have their teaching. This, I am sad to say, is what I believe to be the real reason for the existence of Sunday School.

## **Seen but not Heard!**

In my own church I hope we have on the whole a good attitude toward our children. We are at least asking the right questions, even if we have not yet found the answers. From the leadership there is a positive affirmation of the place and

importance of our children which is accepted by many, but we still feel the pressure of the few who simply want the children out of the way. We have regular family services when the children remain throughout the service. Gradually, as our thinking has progressed, this has evolved. Our children now learn and sing the same songs as the adults, so it is not all "silly" action songs. (They remain in the service every Sunday for the opening 30-40 minutes of worship anyway, and so get used to worshipping with the adults). During the address the younger children at times will go to one side in the hall and engage in an activity related to the theme - they made a lion mask when we recently did "Daniel in the Lions Den" - whilst the adults receive a shorter than usual address often illustrated in some manner. In terms of time we keep these services to just over the hour, whilst a normal service lasts just over 90 minutes. The result is an all-age worship which we are very happy with, but there remains a small group of people who do not come when it is a family service. They are simply not willing to put up with the presence of the children. The hook upon which their complaints get hung (no one will actually admit to being unable to bear the presence of the children) is 'without a proper sermon there is nothing in the service for me'. Such worship of the "God of self" is sadly prevalent in many areas of the Church today.

We must face up to the reality that the absence of children in so many of our churches today is because they are not wanted. For many faithful Sunday School Teachers the dilemma is not how do I convince my church to integrate the children more, but do I really want to expose my children to the Church as it really is? We are a charismatic church, our worship is lively, the children enjoy it, they are less restricted in our less formal environment, they like noise, and because our main social grouping is Young Families they, with a few exceptions, sit with their families and friends, and those that don't are usually adopted by the families there. Yet, there are still times when I wonder about over-exposing them to the congregation as a whole. What bad habits will they learn?

### **Preach at Them?**

Stuart Jenkins, in his article, makes what seems to me to be a strange argument in that whilst he dismisses the value of Sunday School teaching, he promotes the value of children being exposed to the preached word. Why deny them something presented in a medium they can comprehend by those (hopefully) equipped for the task by one that, in truth, many adults do not comprehend? If there is a lack of teaching emanating from the pulpit, if what does come forth is at an intellectual level too far above even most adults, the blame rests with the preacher and perhaps those who so poorly equipped them for their task, not with Sunday School!

As I read Stuart Jenkins' article again I find myself asking the question: when he speaks of "children" who does he have in mind? Pondering this question brings me back to the frustration with which I began: why haven't we worked this out by now? The answer that stands out most clearly for me is that we are all context bound. If, by children, he is predominantly thinking of 11-16, well, amen; let them be exposed to the occasional sermon (once a month at the Communion Service in our case). However, when, as in our own case, 20 per cent of the congregation can be aged 0-5, the situation changes. They can't be expected week in and week out to sit through 20 minutes of preaching/teaching without becoming restless, and so giving others genuine cause for being distracted, let alone the 30 minutes that many of us will be used to. I received an interesting insight into children's behaviour recently from some visiting missionaries. They told us that at their church in Africa their



children are the only ones that run around, the other children (all black) simply sit quietly. How, we asked, did their parents manage this wonderful display of discipline? Diet and stimulation, came the answer. The diet that the children eat is so poor that it does not provide them with the energy of their white counterparts, and poverty means there are no toys, books, TVs or Videos, to stimulate their thinking.

### **Dad Knows How to Do It**

When our children leave for their classes they go out into their age groupings. they find themselves in much smaller teaching units than the adults, with teaching material designed by professionals for their stage of psychological and spiritual development (though there remains a great deal to be desired in what is offered by all the major producers). There are teaching aids provided, crafts to do, the opportunity to learn by doing and to learn with friends. There is also the chance to ask questions and receive a healthy amount of personal attention from teachers who really care for you.

I have to wonder at the wisdom of losing all of that, for it seems to me that few churches would be truly willing to make the sacrifices required to permanently integrate children into worship. It also seems to me that we do not produce from our colleges pastors remotely equipped to plan and lead this kind of worship.

There are no trite answers, no simple solutions, the context in which we exist must be taken into account. Perhaps there are some important principles. I offer the following, as I offer this whole article, not to be definitive, or pretend to have "made it", but to contribute to what is a crucial debate in the hope that it may further stimulate our thinking.

1. Children are as much a part of the Church as any other group; they have important things to contribute and should be encouraged to do so.
2. Children are as capable of knowing God, and responding to God as any adult, though not necessarily in the same way as an adult.
3. Children are a blessing, a privilege, a responsibility and an opportunity; they are not problems.
4. A Church without children is a dying church, even comatose.

I am grateful to both Stuart Jenkins and Brian Wilson, for their articles provoked my thinking. I have taken issue with them only very slightly; in much else I am in full agreement. All contributions to this debate should be welcomed, for we ignore it at our peril, and to the detriment of the Kingdom.

**Clive Jarvis**

# Book Reviews

## ***Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology***

**by Tom Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright (SPCK, 1993, 142pp, £6.99)**

Three excellent authors, and a worthy theme that needs developing. So why was I disappointed? Not by the autobiographies - the best bit of the book. I identified with Smail's tensions between Barthian theology and charismatic experience, and values Wright's account of how Wimber's team changed him, and Walker's trek from Elim via humanism to Russian Orthodoxy. However, despite some good insights, the theological chapters lack depth, and seem nearer to **non**-charismatic theologising on renewal experience. Is this book *Three Renewal Theologians Express Reservations and Doubts?*

Walker's chapters on demonology and miracles were sketchy - pp90-91 discuss no fewer than 23 different leaders. Yes, Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal has thrown up some mavericks and paranoids - not uniquely! But I expected analysis of writings, like Bob Gordon's, not of T-shirts (p. 104). Smail suggests that charismatics tend to overplay the Spirit at the expense of the Cross (i.e. triumphalism) - in the language of Bertold Klappert and Gerry O'Collins, the Cross is collapsed into the Spirit. Similarly, he's right that repentance is usually seriously underplayed, when renewal is compared with most revivals. There's little new here, and even anti-charismatic evangelicals could support it.

Wright's critique of Wimber and the 'signs and wonders' movement was the strongest contribution. His later chapter on the Kansas City Prophets is just a footnote to it. He accuses Wimber / Springer of dualism and inconsistency. Instead, he offers his theory (from *The Fair Face of Evil*) that psychic phenomena should be seen as human possibilities (like artistic gifts), and not as spiritual gifts (whether of the Spirit or of Satan). As such they can be developed in obedience to God, or a means to our rebellion. I think this stretches some valid insights (some people are more prone to psychic phenomena before and after conversion) beyond the biblical, theological and experiential evidence.

**Anthony Thacker**

## ***Being Your Age: Pastoral Care for Older People,***

**by Michael Butler and Ann Orbach (SPCK, 1993, 208pp, £8.99)**

In the preface to this book, two objectives are stated: 1) "To bring together those most recent insights from the secular helping professions of social work, counselling, psychotherapy and community development which have particular contributions to make to pastors in their work...without detracting from the unique role of the pastor" and 2) "to address the needs of all of us: the old and those who have yet to face growing old; carers and those for whom they care..."

It is not surprising that with such a broad spectrum of aims, some chapters are very technical, resting heavily on the psychology of Jung. This is particularly true of chapters dealing with "Images of Ageing"; "Changing Experiences of Self"; and "Counselling and Psychotherapy". they are none-the-less easily readable. "Images of Ageing" introduces into the language and thinking of the professionals some very pertinent illustrations from the popular press and advertising industry in order to highlight some of the stereotyped images of old age.

Sheila Green's experiment sums this up. She disguises herself as an old woman

(with the help of a make-up artist), and then sets herself various tasks, including getting into a crowded "pay-as-you-enter" bus; going through a supermarket check-out; waiting in a hospital out-patients department, etc. She concluded, "I felt alone, isolated and at times threatened and frightened. Most of all I was angry that people did not notice other people's pain, anxiety and helplessness and realise that they need help and patience rather than abuse".

Other chapters have a more practical approach, which a busy pastor, seeking to establish a team of helpers, would find useful. This is particularly true of chapters on "Retirement"; "Whose Home?" (dealing with all the problems of suitable housing, living with the family, going into a home, etc); "Pastoral Visiting"; and particularly the chapter on "Caring for the Carers".

The difficult issues of sexuality and death, so often side-stepped in books on care for older people, are treated sensitively.

This book, part of the New Library of Pastoral Care, maintains the high standards of a very valuable series.

**Jean Payne**

### ***Worship and Youth Culture***

**by Pete Ward (Marshall Pickering, 1993, 168pp, £6.99)**

*Worship and Youth Culture* wrestles with the often thorny issue of young people and worship; an issue of concern for the whole church, but especially for young people, youth workers, and those whose responsibility it is to lead worship.

The content is presented in two main sections, "Thinking about Worship" and "Doing Worship". The language is modern and clear; easy, though not necessarily comfortable to read. The inherent challenge is to strike and maintain a balance between theory (theology) and practice, enabling young people to encounter, relate and respond to the Living God in ways both meaningful to them and honouring to God.

The author, writing from personal experience in the field of worship and young people, particularly advocates "alternative worship" services; services framed around basic key ingredients of worship, yet with scope for the expression and development of the imaginative, creative minds and skills which young people possess. Section II devotes a chapter to each of six key ingredients of worship, with useful practical suggestions and advice.

Alternative worship also gives consideration to young people unfamiliar with church culture and therefore adopts and affirms elements of young people's thinking, feeling and inter-relating, recognising these as potential points of contact between God and young people, and bases from which a fuller understanding of Christianity and Christian worship may grow.

Issues such as leadership, planning services etc, are dealt with usefully, and the relationship between alternative worship and traditional church culture does not go unheeded.

Those desperately seeking "something to do for the Young People this Sunday" are unlikely to be disappointed, but £6.99 is expensive for a quick fix. The value and rewards of this work lies in its challenge for us to re-evaluate what worship is and how much church services enable young people (indeed people of all ages and backgrounds) to do it.

**Gary Foreman**

### ***Using the Bible in Evangelism***

**by Derek Tidball (Bible Society, 1993, 106pp, £5.95)**

In all the discussions of different strategies for communicating the gospel, it is pertinent to be reminded that the Bible remains one of the 'greatest untapped resources in evangelical work'. This book is written in the 'firm conviction that it is possible to use the Bible in evangelism, even in our "post-Christian society", and that our failure to use it is the cause of our ineffectiveness!

The book begins by defining evangelism, as "Good News about Jesus, to be shared", which happens at many levels and takes many forms. The way the early Christians went about this task is outlined, together with examples of the way they used Scripture in this work. The author then briefly examines some of the basic themes of the gospel and shows how all Scripture has potential in evangelism.

The problem of using the Bible today is tackled. The author stresses the need to first understand and apply the Bible to our own lives. The final few chapters then give some practical advice on how the Bible may be effectively used on a one-to-one basis, within a church service and within the local community.

Overall this short book is very easy to read and is to be commended for its practical approach. As the author says, the purpose of this book is not to present an academic discussion, but to present some practical guidelines which will enable the Bible to be used in a wide variety of ways within the field of evangelism. The Bible is indeed the 'most effective evangelistic tool' and this book is well worth reading by everyone engaged in this work.

**Roger Green**

### ***A Silence and a Murmuring* by Peter Tongeman**

**(East Midlands Baptist Association, 1993, 48pp, £2)**

*A Silence and a Murmuring* collects together some of the poems by Peter Tongeman which have appeared in the *Baptist Times*.

They are divided into short sections: *Voices in the Silence*; *Light in the Darkness*; *Stirrings of Conscience*; *Slanting Rays*; and *Heart Yearnings*.

The book's title and sub-title, *Poems that Comfort and Disturb*, are exactly right for the contents. The comfort of the silence is explored and the disturbances are only murmuring. There is no shouting here, or cry of pain. Each poem is either a comfort or a murmuring; rarely both. For example there is *The Power of Silence* ("Be still, be quiet"), but also *When God Speaks* ("The wind, the storm, the rising floods"). There is *Glory* ("In the beauty of a flower, the migrant bird, the kindness of a friend"), but also *When Life's Frail Thread Is Broken* ("I thought I was secure").

The poems take a thought and illustrate it clearly. *Social Drinking*, *Standards and Money* take a familiar stance and gently chastise. The passion is muted; the sting of sarcasm is pulled.

Studdard Kennedy produced poems of conviction, that could roar and sing. Other recent popular voices produce sweet medicine. Peter Tongeman has his own voice. It can soothe and comfort and suddenly deepen. At all times the language is immediately clear and understandable. These are words that "carry" to the lone reader and when read aloud to others.

### ***Worship File: Autumn 1992, Winter 1993, Summer 1993* ed. by Stuart Jenkins (BUGB, £7 by subscription)**

The format of *Worship File* is loose leaf, building up into a resource pack for *Baptist Ministers' Journal* January 1994

worship leaders. Each issue is divided into four sections:

1. **Reflections:** including reviews, articles and preparation material.
2. **Materials:** for worship, prayers and hymns.
3. **Occasions:** special services.
4. **Seasons:** Remembrance; Advent; Christmas; Lent; Easter; Pentecost; Harvest.

**Reflections** include a series on *Preaching from the Song of Songs* by Rex Mason; reviews of the IBRA book on the Christian Year by Brian Haymes and *Praying With God's People* by David Pountain.

**Materials** include hymns by Stuart Jenkins and Christopher Ellis. Prayers by Jamie Wallace and other fresh voices.

**Occasions** include the opening and Closing of a Church, Infant Thanksgiving and Weddings.

**Seasons** include Maundy Thursday and One World Week.

There are wise words from Bernard Green, and a stimulating succession of Church Covenants from 1783, 1988 and 1991, as well as practical thoughts on Copyright, Buildings and Visuals in Worship.

The future of the File depends on the contribution of material and on suggestions as to what would be most helpful. The current issues are valuable in themselves and in their ability to spark creativity in all of us.

Past experience reveals that to find one phrase in a book, which will last on, makes the book worthwhile. We live in an age where language rarely goes beyond the immediate. There may be no obvious Wesleys or Cowpers or Cranmers, but here are ideas and expressions which will serve their time, and make opportunity for the poets and phrase makers to wing their words.

**Ron Ayres**

## Holidays 1994

### Mid-Wales Cottage

R.S. Thomas country. "Inglenook" village cottage, south of Dolgellau, near Snowdonia. By babbling brook, not far from sand and sea. TV. Sleeps 6/7. Tuesday to Tuesday bookings. £99 per week for those in ministry. Mrs D.F. Abraham-Williams, 13 Millbrook Road, Dinas Powys, South Glamorgan, CF64 4BZ. Tel 0222-515884.

### 'Seacot', 31 Preston Parade, Seasalter, Whitstable, Kent.

This fully-furnished and well-equipped detached bungalow facing the sea is available, as it has been for the past 12 years, for Ministers and Missionaries and their families, and accompanying friends where wished, on special advantageous terms - that is, under £50 a week inclusive of central heating, hot water and lighting. There are no extras.

It has a lounge, dining area, modern kitchen, bathroom, rear conservatory, large secluded rear garden, can sleep up to six. Plenty of parking. Five miles from Canterbury, and good centre for the whole of Kent.

Early application advised. Bookings are from Thursday to Thursday and the bungalow is available from 10 March. Applications or details: Sydney Clark, High Meadows, Fernfield Lane, Hawkinge, Folkestone, Kent. CT18 7AW. SAE please. Tel: Folkestone (0303) 892580.