

# REFORMATION TODAY



(see inside front cover)

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111

# The Carey Conference for Ministers

2nd-4th January, 1990

*College of Ripon and York St John, Yorkshire — Theme Revival*

Speakers: Dr Henry Krabbendam of America, John J. Murray of Oban, Scotland, Paul Cook of Hull, and Geoff Thomas of Aberystwyth.

There are many preconceived ideas about revival. Some think of a revival as a movement which will remove all our problems. However, it is salutary to remember that the kind of people that are likely to be added to the churches will add to the work-load, not lessen it. We have fallen behind in our thinking on this subject. Just what is a revival? Where do we draw the line? Would we regard any substantial increase in the number of believers in any given country or area to be a revival? Is the increase of believers seen in many African and South American nations revival? Underlying the whole subject is theology. What is the theology of revival?

Hendrik Krabbendam, whose background and work in Uganda is described in this issue is well equipped to tackle these questions. Paul Cook has specialised *The Forgotten Revival*, a large scale awakening which took place in England during the period 1790 and 1830. The title of his address is, *The Forgotten Revival and its Lessons*. This revival was referred to by Michael Haykin in his article describing the Concert of Prayer (see RT 104).

In a one hour programme presented by BBC TV the revival which came to the Western Islands of Scotland in 1827 was described together with the sequel as it has affected the subsequent life of the Free Church of Scotland. In a unique way revivals have continued in the Western Islands, especially Stornoway, since 1827, and right up until our own generation. John. J. Murray who has worked as a co-editor of the *Banner of Truth* magazine before entering the ministry of the Free

Church, has taken a special interest in the subject of revivals in Scotland. His presentation of this subject should be very valuable.

On July 9th 1974 I listened to Dr Allen of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa give a well researched paper on the history of revival in South Africa. The impact and power of that has never left me. I mention this as a reminder that in an exceptional way the Holy Spirit can bless this theme. After all it is his special work of power. It is important to document revivals. Happily this has been done with regard to the 1859-1860 awakening and also for the revival in Wales 1904. T. Omri Jenkins book 'Five Minutes to Midnight', which describes a five year period of revival in Eastern Europe from 1934 to 1939, has just been published by EP (£4.50, 122 pp.).

The last revival in England took place in Lowestoft in 1921. Mr Micklewright who was 21 when he was called to assist in that revival used to be a deacon at Westminster Chapel. He worked during his retirement for the Evangelical Library in London and often used to speak of that revival in which the principal preacher was Douglas Brown, son of Archibald G. Brown who pastored a church of 3,000 and who preached at C.H. Spurgeon's funeral.

We await details from Hendrik Krabbendam as to which aspects of revival he will present. This year at Ripon we were inspired by the life of Francis Schaeffer as presented by Geoff Thomas. For January next he is working on a biography of A.W. Tozer.

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*Front cover: Larry and Bonnie Secrest.*

# Editorial

Revival is a recurring theme in this issue of the magazine. Will we live to see a revival? There is little hope for the future of Christianity in Britain if we do not! We have been living off past capital. Nor do we hold that we can do nothing but wait and hope for the best. Such an attitude is tantamount to fatalism. Rather we believe that our forefathers were right. They believed in prayer and fasting. When they observed a lack of spiritual power in their preaching and a decline in their churches they called on God. They humbled themselves. They repented of their sins. They did not resort merely to new organised efforts. They cried out for renewal. They refused to live on husks. They called on God for the outpouring of the Spirit. They pleaded for the bread of life.

The absence of revival does not absolve us from the mandate to evangelise and teach all nations. Observe the example of Dr Hendrik Krabbendam and his tremendous enterprise in taking the gospel to Uganda. Note also in these pages the description of the work of CFL (Caring for Life) based largely on Isaiah 58 where revival is promised to those who show compassion and share their bread with the hungry. To be sure we do not make a formula out of that as though we could compel God to do anything. Salvation is by grace alone. We are always obliged to be faithful in our duties, revival or no revival. Our duty includes the work of reformation. The churches always require ongoing reformation to the requirements of Scripture. But reformation in itself does not guarantee a revival. In fact there is a distinct danger of imbalance in that approach because it is so easy to become proud of our orthodoxy and complacent in it. The Pharisees who gloried in the fact that they alone had the truth, were so proud that they did not realise that they had made the Word of God to none effect by their traditions.

## *Alan Gibson and the BEC (British Evangelical Council)*

In my last editorial I referred to the dilemma of those Baptists in the Baptist Union who do not wish to follow the majority of leaders and churches in the BU in their decision to join the Ecumenical Movement. We need to work at a viable unity which is practical. Hence the constant stress on association in these pages (note further comments in NEWS). In addition to that we need to look to see if there is a united voice which can speak for all Evangelicals who see the fallacy and danger of modern ecumenism. Alan Gibson, secretary of the British Evangelical Council, rightly points to the role of BEC in providing a source of unity. But what then of the Evangelical Alliance which is the larger body? Where does the EA stand with regard to the new nationwide ecumenical initiative of a close working cooperation of churches of all kinds including Liberals, Roman Catholics and Unitarians? The subject is too large for an editorial, which explains the omissions of the last editorial. However, an article has been prepared and sent to Alan Gibson for his comments. The mounting pressures of ecumenism are a reminder to us all that we should maximise evangelical unity at every level.

# Introducing Dr. Krabbendam

by Geoff Thomas

I just overlapped my studies at Westminster Seminary for one year with Henry Krabbendam. He was working on his Th.M degree there during 1961 and 1962, and I would occasionally see this lanky Dutchman, who quite dwarfed me, with that marvellous smile, walking around the campus. He went on to complete his doctorate twenty years ago and then became the pastor of a church in Sunnyvale in California. His aged parents still live in Holland; they were amongst the Free Reformed people who left the Reformed Church under the leadership of Dr. Schilder during the 1940's, wanting a more experimental and orthodox form of Calvinism. Henry did his initial theological studies there, and then emigrated to study and serve the Reformed churches in North America, but there developed a growing disillusionment with those churches in the Netherlands and America and he left them to join the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

For many years he has been Professor of Biblical Studies at Covenant College in Lookout Mountain in Tennessee, where he has influenced generations of students. He is the most beloved member of the faculty. We first shared a conference in Pensacola, Florida, ten years ago. I basked in his preaching, and since then I have longed for other people in Britain to hear him. He has always showed a deep and fresh interest in the subject of revival, and we have talked on that theme. He is the closest friend of Dr. John Miller of Philadelphia, who has had some influence over him, and it is in connection with him that Henry has preached in Dublin. In the past years he has spent a month or two each year preaching and

leading conferences in Uganda where he has an adopted daughter. In fact he passed through Britain in August on his way to giving her away and preaching at her wedding.

Of course, he has a wide ministry in church and ministers' conferences throughout the USA. Dr. Krabbendam's 'Hermeneutics and Preaching' in the book recently published by EP in Britain and Pres. and Ref. in America called *Preaching* indicates his understanding of and commitment to biblical theological preaching. Two years ago a group of conservative Presbyterians in the USA felt that their existing seminaries were getting too academic and dry, they believed a new seminary was needed and they have established one in Greenville, South Carolina under the leadership of Dr. Morton Smith. Its whole concept is very similar to that of London Theological Seminary's. It was natural for this group of men, when seeking for a professor of preaching and practical theology, to turn to Henry Krabbendam. So every two weeks he flies from Lookout Mountain to Greenville and lectures the students in homiletics for two days.

All this breadth of experience, from Holland and North America and Africa, of the pastorate and the theological college, allied to his commitment to a deeply devotional ministry, preaching faith and repentance with boldness, and his longing to see the church of Jesus Christ revived, makes him very well equipped to be our visiting speaker at the Carey Conference on his first preaching visit to the United Kingdom this coming January.

# Dr Krabbendam and Uganda

Uganda with a population of about 15 million is a land that has been tortured by civil war, anarchy, moral corruption and the inevitable economic collapse that ensues. The nation has been in turmoil since 1961 when Idi Amin seized power. Under dictator Amin the population was decimated, churches were destroyed and many leaders martyred or exiled. Recovery takes a long time. There are about 800,000 refugees outside Uganda and about the same number of orphans inside.

The present government has succeeded in bringing a measure of stability and security, although troubles continue in northern areas. There is religious freedom and the government is concentrating on the promotion of education and the reconstruction of roads.

Hendrik Krabbendam has led twelve preaching missions to Uganda. From May 10th to June 10th this year a team of eight from America joined by two pastors from Kenya worked for four weeks engaged in conferences lasting a week plus a number of other seminars of two to four days, these taking place in various parts of the country. The team divided into parties of two, three or four depending on the amount of preaching and teaching to be done. Women in the party rendered valuable service in teaching women's groups. To arrive at a remote place one party had to be accompanied by soldiers carrying bazookas to get them through a danger zone. During the mission over 1,000 leaders were trained in the subjects of preaching, evangelism, family life, and other relevant practical subjects.

An important part of the mission was a pioneer work in the islands of Victoria Lake which is the second largest fresh water lake in the world. Travel on the lake was hazardous. Hundreds of men and women made profession of faith and now there is a need to form churches and provide pastors. A permanent itinerant preacher is needed to continue the work of evangelism. A suitable boat is being purchased in order to facilitate regular visitation.

Typical of many parts of Africa there is an intense hunger for the Word of God, or as one Ugandan expressed it, 'an unquenchable thirst'.

In spite of all the upheavals in Uganda Dr Krabbendam has been like Jeremiah who demonstrated his faith in the future by buying a field (Jer 32). With his friend Clarence Dendulk Dr Krabbendam has established a Trust which has just legally purchased a property of 129 acres on Lake Victoria for the purpose of building a school. The architectural drawings for the school are now complete. There is only one university in Uganda and it is envisaged that the school will supply a sizeable contingent of students for the university. However the campus is designed to provide facilities for all kinds of conferences and seminars.

Planning is already under way for the next mission in which it is hoped there will not only be more preachers to meet the need but also doctors and nurses. So far eight pastors are committed to the mission to Uganda next year.

Dr Krabbendam's address is 1301 Aladdin Road, LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, GA 30750, USA.

# Progress with the 1689

Over the years the Westminster Confession of Faith has been translated into several major languages: Spanish, Portuguese, French, Chinese (Mandarin), Korean and Russian. According to the 1980 edition of the World Christian Encyclopedia, these languages, plus English, represent over one billion, four hundred million native speakers.

This is important for the Reformed Baptists since so much of the Westminster Confession runs word for word, and paragraph by paragraph, with the 1689 Confession of Faith. Obviously any translator will want to consult the Westminster closely and thereby seek to improve on it for accuracy and clarity. The Carey Publications 'A Faith To Confess' is a transposition of the 1689 into modern English. For that reason it is very popular.

Why have the Presbyterians surpassed us in making their Confession available in more languages? Was it a lack of vision or a low view of Confessions? Did we lack the funds or was it out of the poverty of our disorganization? At any rate, we must consider the possession of this outstanding asset and press forward with encouraging its translation, printing and distribution.

The 1689 Confession is at present being translated into Spanish, Portuguese and French, three major language groups, as well as Tagalog for the Philippines and Malagasy for Madagascar. RMI (Reformed Ministries International) has published the 1689 in Russian and is now ready to proceed to press with a Polish edition.

Through RBMS and the cooperation of Martin Holdt in South Africa the 1689 has been published in Zulu, the Zulu people being the largest tribal group in South Africa. In that country work progresses slowly but surely on the Southern Sotho translation which, with the Zulu, will make the Confession available to eight million native speakers.

Other major language groups not so far mentioned are Hindi (168 million), Arabic (144 million), Bengali (138 million), Japanese (117 million) and German (90 million). Apart from the latter, they all represent peoples and religions which have never been penetrated by the gospel to any significant degree.

With China the most populous country in the world with a Church apparently larger and stronger than previously imagined, it is very important that we do what we can to equip them in this area. But in the next 30 years, India will surpass China in population. The entire country is a maze of people and language groups with only a few having a significant Christian minority at best. Carey's India must remain on our hearts and in our vision.

For the sake of avoiding duplication it is urged that any work on the 1689 Confession be reported to David Straub, the Coordinator of the Reformed Baptist Mission Services, P O Box 289, CARLISLE, PA 17013, USA, or to the editor of Reformation Today.

Scan ch 3 to follow intro

# Have you been born of water and the Spirit?

Nicodemus visited Jesus when it was dark. When he knocked on the door that night he did not know he was making history. In John chapter three we have the most famous presentation on the necessity of the new birth.

The point of foremost importance was immediately broached by our Lord. The first sentence from the lips of the Master directed Nicodemus and all his company to their paramount need.

To put the scene in a modern context, imagine Pope John Paul II coming to Jesus by night to discuss his miracles, to be told within sixty seconds, 'You must be born again!' The comparison is worth pondering because the Pope represents a system of religion diametrically opposite to Jesus' instruction in John 3. Likewise Nicodemus represented a school which sought to establish human righteousness in the place of the righteousness provided by God (Rom 10:1-4).

A double emphasis, 'Truly, truly, I say to you,' is used three times, twice in asserting the necessity of regeneration (verse 3 and verse 5), and then in stressing the fact that the ruling class to which Nicodemus belonged did not receive the apostolic testimony that Jesus is the Son of God. The 'you' of verses 7 and 12 is plural pointing to the Sanhedrin. Note that Jesus talks about *our* testimony which suggests the presence of disciples. 'Our testimony' reminds us of the words of John in the opening verses of his first letter, 'The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.' The 'you' and 'us' in John 3 contrast those who receive Christ and those who do not. 'His own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God' (Jn 1:11b-13 RSV). The reason behind believing and receiving is the new birth.

Three main features stand out in John 3:1-19.

First there is the necessity of the new birth, immediately asserted, like bolts of lightning. Nicodemus was astounded. Hence Jesus said to him, 'Don't marvel that I say to you, you must be born again!' (verses 1-11).

Second, the incarnation is presented in vivid fashion. No one has ever ascended to heaven to be equal with God and so be able to tell the world what to do. Lucifer attempted that but was cast down (Is 14:13ff). The only one ever to come from the dominion of God to men is the Son of Man. He descended from heaven only to be raised up, not to heaven, but as the sacrifice for sin, a stark silhouette against the sky, the God-man nailed to a cross! (verses 13 and 14).

Third, the way of salvation is by faith. Nothing can be done to contribute to new birth. But there is a work to do. Faith is that work. Believing is the way set before Nicodemus. With regard to merit faith is not a work for it is only the instrument by which we receive Christ and his righteousness. With regard to activity faith is a work because it involves hearing, thinking, digesting, meditating, reflecting, discussing, reading and possibly agonising.

Verse five says the most about regeneration, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.' What is it to be born again? Why of the Spirit? And why of water?

### **1 What is it to be born again?**

First it is needful to appreciate the concept of birth referred to. Nicodemus was baffled by the idea. Jesus however was saying that just as natural birth brings a soul into the world for the first time so one born spiritually enters the world of the Kingdom for the first time. Natural birth never ceases to amaze those who witness it. When a babe enters this world for the first time he sees and hears and feels and cries. Before him is the whole process of growing into the world with its different spheres of experience and responsibility: language, education, work, culture, homelife, friends, music, politics, joys, dangers and pains. Into this complex world a new person is born and will now have to make his or her way.

The parallel is the same for the Kingdom of God. The soul that is born again of the Spirit is given a whole new life. He now sees what he was blind to before. The spiritual realm to which he was formerly indifferent now surrounds him. New affections fill his soul, new ambitions take hold of his mind. There is a complete readjustment of values and a total change in his appraisal of people. In short he has been born into a new world. He is now a citizen of the Kingdom which is destined to overcome all other kingdoms and endure forever. His mind now comprehends spiritual realities in a personal way which relates to himself (see verse 12). Especially does he appreciate the miracle of the incarnation (see verse 13), and the atonement (see verse 14).

The new birth consists of the spiritual renewal of the whole person, affections, mind and will. Especially is there illumination, the opening of the eyes. How do you explain the colours of a rainbow to one who is blind? How do you explain the difference between purple and red and yellow? The issue is one for sight, not words. Essentially the new birth is brought about by union with Christ. The first experience of that union is illumination by which we know the one with whom we are united. We know him as human and divine, yet one person (1 Jn 5:1). To illustrate the matter I refer to two very close friends. One is Chinese and has come from the heartland of China. The other is a black man from Africa. Each has unique character qualities which I seldom see in Europeans. Each is absolutely unique in personality. Now if I desired with all my heart to be Chinese and thereby possess qualities I do not have what could be done about becoming Chinese? I could change my dress and learn the language but I could

never get those distinctive qualities of character and nor would I ever look like anything else but a European. Only being born all over again would suffice. Or say I received a calling to work among the black people of Africa and wished with all my heart to become one of them. What could be done? Even given the longevity of Methuselah I could never change my skin or my voice, or eyes, or my facial features, or my character. There is no other way. I would need to be born again.

The parallel holds with spiritual new birth. It is a work of exceeding great wisdom and might which is compared to the raising of Christ from the dead (Eph 1:20). When Jesus was raised from the dead additional properties were added and interwoven with his humanity. He is the firstborn from the dead (Rom 8:29). The promise is that we will all be made like him (1 Cor 15:49). In declaring new birth to be from God James says we are the firstfruits (Jas 1:18). We should note that we are firstfruits of a coming cosmic regeneration which will be instantaneous and universal, not by a natural process but by a supernatural act of creation (cf. Rom 8:23; Mt 19:28; 2 Pet 3:10-13 with Col 3:10; Eph 2:10; 2 Cor 5:17).

## **2 Why born of the Spirit?**

The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit. There can be no doubt that the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit is mainly in view here together with the mysterious way in which he works, mysterious because we can clearly observe the effects but we cannot see that energy causing the effects. That energy is invisible. We see the trees moving but we cannot see the power that moves them. However there is more in this reference to the wind than the sovereign will of the Holy Spirit and the mystery of his might to work where he wills, when he wills, and with what power he wills.

The terms used take us back to Ezekiel 37, the description of the valley of dry bones and the spiritual rebirth of the captive people of Israel. In Hebrew the word for spirit is *ruah* and is the same as wind or breath. 'I will make breath (*ruah*) enter into you, and you will come to life' (Ez 37:5). The words 'Spirit', 'breath', and 'wind' are synonymous. The wind can be prayed to because he is God the Spirit (Ez 37:9-10). He it is that quickens the dead bones and brings them together. He raises them up to be a living mighty army. Consider the stupendous wisdom and power involved in not only reconstructing the dead bones correctly but the creative power in making organs, sinews and muscles, eyes and ears, whole perfect bodies, yet inanimate for they must be made to breathe and live. The purpose of the vision was to illustrate the tremendous power of the Holy Spirit in raising the Babylonian captives to spiritual life and then taking them back to the promised land. However it is impossible not to be reminded by the passage of the literal resurrection of our bodies in the great day when the trumpet will sound. The Holy Spirit who commences his good work in us will complete it in that great day (Phil 1:6).

Jesus asserts the sovereign omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit, who is like the wind which moves in a way totally beyond the control of human beings. Like the wind he is sometimes like a gentle breeze, but at other times he is a mighty wind of revival. At Pentecost he came audibly. 'Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting' (Acts 2:2). When he is about to regenerate a multitude he comes first to prepare the way with teaching. The same Spirit who raises dead souls to life first creates the praying and preaching conditions conducive to his work. This is characteristic of all the revivals in the history of the Church.

### **3 Why born of water?**

What did this reference to water mean to Nicodemus? He was an expert in Jewish rites and ceremonies. He would be familiar with the washing of bodies to represent the need for cleansing since the Jews regularly practised bodily ablutions or immersions as Murray Adamthwaite showed in his article in RT 109. Nicodemus would know about John the Baptist and his baptismal practice to symbolise repentance and the washing away of sins. But all the water in the world and all the washing in the world cannot regenerate. Scathingly had Jeremiah reminded the Jews of his day that even if they added soda and used an abundance of soap, the stain of their guilt would remain (Jer 1:22).

Baptists of many denominations practise immersion for baptism but they use the water exclusively as a portrayal for burial and for the washing away of sin (Acts 22:16). They employ water only after a credible testimony of faith has been given. The idea that the water itself regenerates is repugnant to them. The Holy Spirit alone is the regenerator. The whole idea of referring to the wind is designed to show that there is no way that the Spirit is tied to human means. Such a notion is entirely hostile to the teaching of our Lord. Water can only be used as a teaching symbol and we should not even begin to think that the Holy Spirit is tied or restricted to human actions.

So what is this water that regenerates? What did it convey to Nicodemus? There was a water quite apart and quite different from the waters used for washings such as the water used to fill the great laver or bath of the Temple for the priests to wash in (2 Ch 4:1-6). The water not used for washing or bathing purposes was the ceremonial water. This water was mixed with the ashes of the red heifer sacrificed annually and kept specially for sprinkling to symbolise cleansing from uncleanness. It was called 'the water of cleansing for purification from sin' (Num 19:9).

The details of this ceremonial water are provided in Numbers 19:1-10. A red heifer was to be sacrificed and made a whole burnt offering. The ashes were then to be taken and mixed with water to be used for sprinkling. It is never easy to interpret details with regard to the different sacrifices and it is unwise to be dogmatic. However I would suggest that while at least five different sacrifices are described in the opening chapters of Leviticus, we have in the whole burnt offering of the red heifer a kind of summary of all the sacrifices. This was not a

male but a female carefully chosen, quite different from all the other animals of sacrifice. There was an emphasis on the fact that the whole sacrifice was consumed in the fire. Even the cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet wool were thrown on the burning heifer. We see a type of Christ our sacrifice offered once and for all for our sins. The once and for all satisfaction rendered by Christ is stressed in Hebrews 9:11-14, 9:26-28 and 10:11-18. The ashes of the heifer sprinkled on those who are unclean is referred to in the first of those passages namely Heb 9:13.

In Hebrews 10:14 the doctrines of the new birth and the atonement are brought together. We are told that 'it is by one sacrifice that he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy', which declaration is followed by a description of the new birth which lies at the heart of the new covenant (Heb 10:11-18).

The conclusion to which I come is that the water of regeneration referred to is the water of sprinkling which is applied by God alone and no other. In the Old Testament parallel describing regeneration and the wind, namely Ezekiel 36 and 37, we read;

*'I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you'* (Ez 36:25,26).

It is vital that we note this sprinkling is the act of God not man. 'I will sprinkle!' Not you! *'I will sprinkle clean water on you, I will cleanse you, I will give you a new heart'* (Ez 36:25ff).

Especially should we note that the cleansing is simultaneous with regeneration for at the same time he says, 'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you' (Ez 36:26).

On what basis does the Holy Spirit regenerate the polluted guilty sinner? The answer is that he proceeds to work on the grounds of the only acceptable sacrifice made once and for all by the Lamb of God. The ashes of the heifer mixed with water symbolise the meritorious cause of the new birth. The ashes of the once and for all sacrifice represent all the merits of Christ applied to us. This reasoning is in line with the central teaching of the New Testament that our salvation is by virtue of union with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection (Rom 6:1-10). It is through union with Christ that we are born again. Through the powerful work of the Spirit that union is effected.

Viewing John 3:5 then I would suggest that to be born of the Spirit is a reference to *the effective cause* of regeneration while the reference to the water is a reference to *the meritorious cause* of regeneration.<sup>2</sup> The new birth does not take place arbitrarily. The reason behind it is the sacrifice which is applied by God himself. In the sprinkling upon the guilty sinner of the ashes of the perfect sacrifice mixed with water, his guilt is removed. The foundation is established for his justification which is declared by God the Father (Rom 8:33).

It is important to be clear about the water because confusion has reigned when water has been taken as the literal means of regeneration. In another way confusion has prevailed when regeneration has been regarded as having its source in the human will. When the truth is overthrown in a violent way we call it heresy. Let us look now at two major prevalent heresies.

### **The heresy of baptismal regeneration**

Failure to appreciate that the sprinkling of the ashes mixed with the water is administered in the spiritual sense only by God according to his own sovereign purpose and timing, has resulted in the most appalling muddle. From the time of Augustine the water of John 3:5 has been taken to refer to baptism which has led to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. J.C. Ryle in his commentary on John 3 rejects the idea that the water referred to in verse 5 is a reference to baptism and lists many writers who do the same. I will now make a brief survey of the confusion that has developed. It is important. I will be as brief as possible.

The Roman Catholic Church has developed a complicated ceremony in which salt and oil are used and when eventually the baby is baptised the claim is made that regeneration has taken place in the moment of the action, *ex opere operato*.

In the words of B.B. Warfield this means that 'the Church has completely taken the place of the Spirit of God.'<sup>3</sup> This dogma denies in every way the sovereignty of the Spirit taught by Jesus in John 3. Not only so it also leads to the absurdity of confining regeneration to all those who have received the Roman rite and at the same time having to deny by implication regeneration to all the rest who have not received the Roman rite! That includes a vast multitude of believers who have evidenced the fruit of regeneration in their lives.

C.H. Spurgeon in exposing the similar doctrine of baptismal regeneration espoused by Anglo-Catholics points to the drunkard reeling down the street, the pest of the neighborhood, worse than a brute, on his way home to beat his wife. Regenerate indeed!<sup>4</sup> And in our day well might we think of the vile murderers preparing their bombs to blow unsuspecting fellow mortals to smithereens! Regenerate indeed!

By the sixth century the Greek Orthodox Church reached a form for their baptismal service which has continued to the present. Included in the service is the consecration of the water three times, the priest breathing upon the water and making the sign of the cross three times over it as he prays that it will become the water of the washing of rebirth. The candidates are then immersed after which they are robed in white clothing. The priest then gives thanks in prayer to God 'who even at this moment has been pleased to give new birth to these thy servants'.<sup>5</sup>

According to the Anglican Book of Common Prayer which appeared in 1552 the baptism of infants was to be by immersion, after which the priest was to thank

God for having been pleased ‘to regenerate this infant with your Holy Spirit, to receive him for your own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into your holy congregation’.<sup>6</sup>

Luther’s second baptismal liturgy came to be widely used in Germany. The form of service which included a prayer of exorcism to drive out the unclean spirit from the infant concluded with the godparents holding the babe up in the font, the minister putting a white robe on the child and saying, ‘The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has regenerated you by water and the Holy Spirit, strengthen you’ etc.<sup>7</sup>

John Calvin in his commentary denies that Jesus is referring to baptism in John 3:5. The Presbyterian constituency has avoided the heresy of baptismal regeneration and viewed the water of baptism as a sign. Presbyterians have thought in terms of the promise of regeneration to come later. They base this upon the covenant of grace and the fact that God deals with families. Reformed Baptists accord with covenant teaching but confine the sign and seal of baptism only to those who show evidence of having been brought into the new covenant by regeneration.

### **The heresy of decisional regeneration**

The idea that a man is regenerated when he makes a decision for Christ has invaded the Southern Baptist Convention of America, the largest evangelical denomination in the world. This idea now predominates. In most SBC churches the altar call is regarded as essential because it epitomises the notion that coming to the front to make a decision is the way of the new birth. In my book ‘The Great Invitation,’ I describe the history and development of the invitation system. In some churches this system has become what I have the new evangelical sacrament. Those who practise this do so with the idea that regeneration can be produced simply by using the right methods.

Tom Nettles, who grew up in the SBC and who as a child walked the aisle almost every Lord’s Day shows that the Founding Fathers of the SBC were robust reformed theologians in the tradition of the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith.<sup>8</sup>

The heresy of decisional regeneration is now prevalent. According to those who practise this method the Holy Spirit is the servant of the will of man. Only when man decides can the Holy Spirit give the new birth. This contradicts the teaching of Paul in Ephesians 2:1-10 that man is dead in sin. The heresy is that the will of man is sovereign and that the Holy Spirit strives with the sinner but cannot regenerate until that sinner decides for God. This turns our Lord’s teaching upside down so that man is the author of his own new birth. This has deceived millions who have never been humbled for their sins, have never repented, have never turned from their sins, but have presumed themselves to be born again on account of a mere one time decision.

As with most heresies truth is mixed with error. It is true that the Holy Spirit

strives with sinners. He does convince the world of sin and righteousness and judgment (Jn 16:8-11). The work of the Holy Spirit does not stop short with preparation. He accomplishes his work of regeneration when he is ready. In that, as our Lord makes plain, he is as sovereign as the wind.

In decisional regeneration original sin is denied. In the fall man became utterly indisposed and disabled with regard to spiritual issues. The sinner is corrupt in his affections. His affections govern his will. He will not obey because he has no heart to obey. It will be helpful now to define the new birth and relate it to other aspects of salvation and in this way make the teaching more clear.

### **The new birth defined and related to other aspects of salvation**

Regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in which there is wrought an instantaneous change of disposition in the sinner. This spiritual birth is of the whole person bringing illumination or spiritual sight to the mind to embrace Jesus as the Son of God. It consists especially in a change of heart whereby the affections are transformed to love God and his people.

'The law of God and a divine nature are put into and framed in the heart, enabling it to act holily and pleasingly to God'.<sup>9</sup>

The new birth takes place as the Holy Spirit applies the truths of Scripture to the conscience. Hence Peter and James speak of being born according to the Word of truth (1 Pet 1:22,23 and Jas 1:18). Sinners never come of themselves but must be drawn. There is a preparation by the Spirit prior to regeneration in which knowledge is imparted by the means of grace.<sup>10</sup>

The actual change is by an act of power within the soul. Hence most are not able to pinpoint the precise time although they may discern the hour, or day or week. Some have no idea at all of the time but nevertheless evidence in their lives the fruit of the new birth. The Holy Spirit can regenerate infants or anyone else without the use of means as we see from John the Baptist who was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. Yet we must be careful to avoid the idea that the Holy Spirit will work without the gospel. The Savoy Declaration of the Congregationalists of 1658, based on the Westminster Confession, added a whole chapter with the purpose of thwarting the assumption that God will save people apart from the gospel and preaching. That same chapter became chapter 20 of the Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689.

In the 1689 Confession chapter 10 the new birth is referred to under effectual calling in which 'God takes away their heart of stone and gives them a heart of flesh'.<sup>11</sup> It is through the new birth that faith is created which unites the soul to Christ. The same new birth results in repentance whereby the sinner turns from his ungodly and unrighteous ways.

Upon the basis of that union with Christ by faith justification and adoption follow. The same Holy Spirit who gives new birth indwells the regenerate to enable them to be children of God (Jn 1:12,13; Rom 8:15,16; Gal 4:6). While regeneration refers exclusively to the Spirit's work the term conversion is used

to describe what we experience when we are turned around to repent and believe the gospel.

By union with Christ believers are set apart in an initial act of definitive sanctification. Upon that foundation there follows the work of progressive sanctification whereby through the renewing of their minds sinners are more and more conformed to the image of Christ (Rom 12:1ff; 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18 and 7:1). The mighty work of regeneration which marks the initiation of progressive sanctification in believers is ultimately consummated in the glorification of their bodies in the great day of resurrection (Phil 1:6).

All those born again are equally regenerate although some make more rapid progress in holiness of life than others. It is important to realise that every redeemed person, from Abel to Abraham to David to Malachi, all the redeemed in the Old Testament, up to the time of Pentecost were regenerated. Not one will be in the new world we call heaven without having the nature of heaven. The difference between the Old Testament (the book of promise) and the New Testament (the book of fulfilment) is that which was obscure has now become clear and more powerful.

### **Have you been born of water and the Spirit?**

Have you been born again? Your response may be that you have not. You may like Nicodemus, ask how you can be born again. It is beyond our scope to say how the Holy Spirit in a moment creates spiritual life in the soul of a sinner, but we can know the way in which Jesus guided Nicodemus. That was a crucial time for Nicodemus for we observe that he did come to believe. This is evident from his courageous action reported in John 19:39.

We see that the instruction of Jesus was designed to make a twofold impact on Nicodemus. First there was the destruction of his self-righteousness, and second, there was the priority of faith, believing in God's provision of atonement.

First, if as Jesus said, the new birth belongs entirely to the realm of the Spirit, does that not leave all unregenerate people in a state of utter helplessness? In our fallen state we are hopeless. We have no power at all to regenerate ourselves. Yet it is intolerable to live with the prospect of eternal ruin and misery.

A great favour was done to Nicodemus in showing him that so long as his religion bolstered his self-righteousness it was useless. His false hopes were killed stone dead so that now he might look to the true and only source of salvation.

Hence it is not surprising that the way of salvation is set before him in the clearest way. Nicodemus was urged to come to the light of truth. Like the Israelites in the wilderness he was to look away from himself and look up to

God's provision of healing. He was to concentrate on believing. 'Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life' (Jn 3:16).

Is it not impressive that the truths of God's sovereignty and human responsibility are placed side by side. First Nicodemus is assured that the new birth can come only by the will of God. But then he is pointed to his own responsibility and urged to look only to the sacrifice and to believe. Further on in John's gospel we read, 'All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away' (Jn 6:37). Here again is sovereignty alongside human responsibility. I am responsible to go to him. If I go to him he will not drive me away. Similarly when we read Romans 9 we are humbled by the absolute sovereignty of God in salvation, yet immediately lest we despair we find in chapter 10 exhortations to believe. We are called to put the promise to the test: 'The Lord richly blesses all who call on him, for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved' (10:12,13).

Have you been born of the Spirit? Have you been cleansed once and for all by the atoning work of Christ? Your response may be that you hope so but you are not sure. You may say that you believe. You do look to the Cross alone for salvation. Yet you are not at all sure that you are born again. You may ask how you can be sure.

The apostle John helps answer your question for in his first letter he describes the signs of the new birth; three signs or tests, doctrinal, moral and social. The regenerate person believes that Jesus is the Son of God (1 Jn 5:1). At the same time he lives a holy life (1 Jn 2:28-3:3; 3:7-10; and 5:18). Also he loves sincerely the spiritual family (1 Jn 3:10; 3:14-17; 4:11-21; and 5:1).

### **The New Birth and Revival**

As I have shown, there is a close relationship between John 3:1-8 and Ezekiel 37:1-14. The two stages of Ezekiel's vision point clearly to two activities: preaching and praying. The sovereign Lord commands both activities. The *four winds* represent the universal over-arching dominion of the Holy Spirit. He is able to accomplish a work of gigantic proportions. In the new birth we marvel at the transformation wrought in one soul. In the vision of the valley we have a figure of a whole people coming to new life. Today we long that multitudes in all nations be given new birth. We are urged to pray to that end (Ps 72; Ps 2:8).

A concert of prayer for revival led to a tremendous spiritual awakening in England from about 1790 to 1830. What about a concert of prayer all over the world for the fulfilment of the promises that the Messiah will be universally glorified here on earth?

<sup>1</sup> This material formed the substance of a sermon preached at Cuckfield Baptist Chapel, Lord's Day morning, August 20th, 1989. <sup>2</sup> George Smeaton, *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Banner of Truth, p. 170. <sup>3</sup> B.B.Warfield, *The Plan of Salvation*, p 64. <sup>4</sup> C.H.Spurgeon, *New Park Street Pulpit*, vol.3, sermon 130. <sup>5</sup> Peter Toon, *Born Again*, Baker, 1987, p.74. <sup>6</sup> *ibid*, p.95. <sup>7</sup> *ibid*, p.91. <sup>8</sup> Tom Nettles, *An Introduction to the Southern Baptists*, Carey Publ. <sup>9</sup> Stephen Charnock, *Works*, Parsons edn. vol.4, p.278. <sup>10</sup> John Owen, *Works*, vol.3, p.228ff. <sup>11</sup> *A Faith To Confess*, The 1689 Confession in Modern English, Carey Publications.

*During May this year Peter Parkinson presented a paper on social concern at the Grace Baptist Assembly in London. There were three parts. Firstly he laid down the biblical basis for social concern showing that evangelicals had retreated from their former biblical position and practice. Secondly he called for a recognition of the present social calamity. Thirdly he described his own experience in attempting to meet the present crisis. It is action that is so unusual. Many do not even think about the problem. Others may be willing to talk about it. How many take positive action?*

## We love because he first loved us

Some years ago, I came to realise that sitting in my congregation were people who were caring for those who had been abused, and who in that caring role were in great need of my, and the church's, encouragement and counsel. There were others who had been abused themselves, and still others who were unable to provide for themselves because of scars sustained in the past, or simply the inadequacy of their own personalities, and who, for many years to come, would need to live in a sheltered caring environment.

With a sense of hopelessness and frustration, I saw, in my own church, boys and girls in children's homes with which I had been associated who, reaching the age of sixteen or seventeen, were placed either in local authority hostels or in flats, where they were simply unable to cope. Watching them take an inevitable downward spiral into petty crime, and, in some cases, much more serious crime, was something which I found myself becoming increasingly acquainted with and disturbed by. I began to see and know personally an increasing number of 'casualties' — people who simply couldn't survive in our sophisticated society. Some of them were girls who had been drawn into prostitution; others, boys being used as male prostitutes. As I saw these situations and tragedies unfolding before me and around me, I became increasingly challenged by the Scriptures which I have shared with you today. I began to ask myself a very simple question:

What can I, a very ordinary pastor, in a very ordinary church, with very limited gifts, and very modest abilities and very restricted resources — what can I do about some of the enormous social and spiritual problems that I see in the lives of these young people whom I had got to know, and whom, moreover, I had grown to love, who were living in our city, and who, in some cases were sitting in my church?

I realised that such was the extent of the problem that the funding and pastoral staffing of any project to care for these people was far beyond the resources of

any one local church. It would be possible for some of the young people to have been placed in Christian homes, but many were so severely damaged that to try to integrate them into a normal Christian home would have not only been irresponsible, but damaging both to the young people and to those with whom they would have been living. It was obvious that specialised Christian care needed to be provided in residential homes but also day-time supervision needed to be provided to minimise the likelihood of those in our care getting into even more serious trouble than they were already. So was born in 1987 the Christian Trust called Caring For Life.

### **The Beginning of CFL**

In the providence of God we were provided with our first property at Christmas 1987 and selected the first four boys to go into a home that we were to call 'Carey House'. I shall never forget the shame I felt at my insensitivity in arranging the hire of a box van to pick up the belongings of our first four Caring For Life residents. The belongings of three of the boys could have been perfectly adequately accommodated in one plastic carrier bag with room to spare. One did come with a roomful of furniture, all of which had been provided by a professional man who had been using the lad as a male prostitute, and from whom the lad was desperately trying to escape.

Being told that we were sending a van round to pick up the boys, they assumed they would have to bring something with them. One brought a carrier bag into which he had placed two or three house bricks, a few rolled up newspapers that he had found in a dustbin and a couple of empty cans just to make it seem that he had something to bring with him. That particular boy we had chosen because for the preceding five years – in fact, since his 14th year – he had been living in a coal house, a small room, five feet by three feet six inches. For a wash basin he had had to use the bowl of an outside toilet on a council estate. For drinking water, he had to drink the water from the toilet cistern. The food he had scavenged or begged, from neighbours or his sister. His plight had come about because when fourteen years of age he returned home from school one day to find his mother, a lady who had been suffering from cancer, dead in bed, his father, a very inadequate person had committed suicide by hanging himself at the foot of the bed on which his wife lay. The boy, two weeks later, was evicted from the council property in which his deceased parents had lived, and took up residence in the coal house of his sister's house, who refused to have him in her own home. This place became his residence for the next five years.

He is one of many, many hundreds of young people who have slipped through the net of our welfare state, one in fact of an increasing number of people who slip through the net. He had had no new clothes since being fourteen years of age. So as you will imagine, although he was suffering from malnutrition, his clothes were woefully inadequate. The clothes he was wearing were put into a washing machine – his underwear which he had never removed for the past five years simply never emerged it just dissolved in the washing machine. But

the most important thing was that for the first time in his life he was introduced to the love of Jesus, and to experience it first hand. He had a new home, a home which by the grace of God will be his for as long as needs it so to be. He still lives in Carey House. He works at the farm, which is the hub of our Caring For Life ministry. He now has clothes that fit, and shoes too, and as many pairs of underclothes as he needs! God's people have seen to that; and every week that passes brings him, I am firmly convinced, one step nearer to salvation and faith in Christ Jesus. His heart is warmed more every week. Until very recently he never spoke a word about his mother or father and the tragic circumstances which led him to go to the coal house which became his home. Very recently he has begun to talk a little about these painful events.

It would be true to say that every boy who has come to us (and girl too) could tell their own particular tragic story. Almost everyone has either been appallingly neglected or severely sexually and/or physically abused. All have found the world to be a place in which there are few trustworthy people, a place of pain and hurtfulness, a place where you are treated as sub-human and given no dignity or rights. But all who have come to Caring For Life have found that there are Christians who show love, compassion, care and acceptance and who treat them with dignity as people created in God's image who are deserving of our love and our care.

There are many people who need our love, people who need your love and my love and Christ's love. The social challenge of the gospel has to be taken up, and is being taken up. For us to do this demands

### **A Radical Re-Think**

Practically all social work theory has been based on humanistic and atheistic pre-suppositions. We, in Caring For Life, have literally had to start again, right from the beginning, from basic biblical foundations. Why does the abuser abuse? What is our attitude to the homosexual? How do we approach the abused and the abuser? How do we deal with the young offender, the hooligan, the bully, the soccer hooligan, the thief? Whom do we blame for the things that have gone wrong? Do we call homosexuality sin or sickness? Do we call abuse a sin or a sickness?

It became very clear to us that whilst there may be reasons why some people are more prone to certain problems than others, be it homosexuality, theft, drug abuse or whatever, the problems that we were dealing with in the young people who came to us were essentially spiritual problems. The root problem that everyone has to grapple with is the problem of sin in the heart of man, and sin in the world in which we live. Therefore the ultimate answer to the problems that we deal with has to be the gospel of grace, forgiveness, reconciliation and peace found only in and through Christ Jesus. It is very clear to us that we cannot deal with these issues simplistically or superficially. We have to recognise that there are some people who have been deeply scarred and hurt and who have to be approached and dealt with with the greatest empathy, sensitivity, gentleness and understanding.

Underlying all our theory concerning care is a vital biblical principle which may be self-evident to us, but is one which our world has never taken seriously nor could possibly understand, and that is that we must take the example of Jesus very seriously in the way that he inter-reacted with humans around him. We must consider God's word seriously and the doctrine of man described and revealed in God's word seriously. Every man, the Bible tells us, is created in the image of God, and every man must therefore be treated with the dignity of a human being made in God's image — in that sense every human being must be treated as one of God's children. Before God there is a oneness and an equality of all human beings. I am in no way superior to any of the young people whom God has granted, in his grace, wisdom, mercy to put into my care.

I cannot even look with a sense of superiority upon the homosexual or the child abuser, the alcoholic or the drug abuser. I am, when all is said and done, at best a sinner saved by grace. That must be my perception of myself — and yet at the same time I am someone created in God's image. When I look at others who find themselves in dire circumstances I must in every sense say that there, but by the grace of God, go I, but even more than that I must perceive that I am looking at not just a wretched piece of humanity, but someone created in the image of God, deserving all the dignity, all the honour, all the respect of humanity which Christ himself shared. Therefore it must be with no sense of pride, arrogance or superiority that I must ever approach any other human being. Even those who as the old hymn describes are the 'vildest offenders'.

It is our experience that these sort of people with whom we deal day by day have rarely, if ever, been treated with any dignity, from childhood onwards. They have always been looked down upon, are despised by other members of society, regarded as 'cases' and inferior human beings, treated, at best with condescension, at worst with downright contempt by probation officers, social workers, police and many others who have to deal with them. They are certainly generally ignored, despised and regarded as an embarrassment by the average middle-class Christian whom they may have met at some time in the past. Indeed many of them have come to identify the typical Christian as somebody who is somewhat supercilious, having too high an opinion of himself and having an innate, and for that matter, inane self-righteousness.

Therefore when God's people treat them with great dignity and respect, be they an alcoholic or a drug addict, an abused child or a child abuser — whatever they may be — this for them is a totally new experience and one which immediately furnishes them with a sense of self-respect and dignity. And one, moreover, which opens up before them a whole new potential for forming relationships with a person who holds them in high esteem and treats them with such dignity. Appealing to that dignity which man ought to have within himself because he is someone created in God's image, enables one to make progress which otherwise might never have been dreamed of.

Such radical re-thinking is reflected in every part of our Trust's life and ministry. Those people who live in residence are given a room with a key, and no person,

whoever they may be, is permitted to enter into that room without the permission of the resident, or at their invitation. When a person is brought into CFL and given a home it is a home for life, not for a year or a month, or six weeks, but as long as they want that home. They'll never be asked to leave, no matter what crime they commit, no matter what they do, no matter how they abuse our friendship, they will have a home for life — an extreme undertaking — but nothing less than that can give the security that these insecure people need, and the basis on which to build a framework into which to bring the love of Jesus.

But the second area of radical re-thinking is the spiritual area. We were not just confronted in CFL with re-thinking sociological issues but spiritual issues. How do you introduce people into the life of a typically traditional Reformed Church? Especially when some of those people may use exceedingly colourful language; they may have some very anti-social habits and deliberately try to embarrass people around them; they may come in high on drugs, or the worse for wear from alcohol; they may be noisy and attention seeking, or, on the other hand, some of them may be girls who wear the most provocative clothing — possibly who, just two or three days previously were working as prostitutes just a few streets away from the church. Some may even be people who have stolen items from the homes of members of the church. They may have even broken into the cars in our own car park! How do you introduce people who have never sung a hymn or even been inside a church, to a church service with an hour's sermon, four hymns, prayers and readings? — Is it possible? — Well, unless we can encourage and educate members of our church to accept them *as they are*, it is not possible — and this is what we have been trying to do wherever anyone is considering a Caring For Life ministry.

One of the first things that has to 'go by the board' is our *preconception as to what Christianity is and what Christian morality is*. We have our ideas about what Christian standards should be. Is it right, for instance, for us to demand that young people stop smoking before they come to church, or stop drinking before they come to church, or that they wear a collar and tie and a decent suit before they enter the house of God? If we make these demands of the sort of people that we deal with in CFL they simply would never come to church. Even those who are soundly converted wouldn't darken the door of a church which laid such rules and conditions upon their attendance, but the real question is, why should we have any desire to lay such rules upon them? We tried to re-think as a church our own position and try, by the grace of God, to be liberated from a conservative legalistic fundamentalism, and we came to realise that biblical Christianity is not legalistic fundamentalism. Jesus didn't preach a 'no-smoking, no-drinking, wearing-the-best-suit-on-Sunday' gospel — he really didn't. He preached the Gospel of love and liberty. The apostle Paul did not command from his Corinthian Christians standards which the Pharisees would have kept — that surely was one of the reasons why the Jews were so offended by him, throughout his entire life. He preached liberty in Christ, and practised liberty in Christ.

This spiritual re-thinking was something which proved for me to be difficult and painful, and is an on-going process. It demands that we re-examine what is the gospel that we preach; maybe we sometimes have to realise that we fall into the trap of being far too constrained by the culture in which we live rather than being liberated into true biblical Christianity.

One of my prime objectives as a Gospel minister, is to see, by the grace of God, souls brought to faith in Christ. In this sense one of the things that I long for as a preacher, and as a Christian, is to see a mighty working of revival in our day and in our generation. I have often prayed for revival but often wondered whether I would really want revival if it came. What do we hope for when we pray for revival? One of the things I have come to realise is that when I in the past have prayed for revival what I am really hoping for is a massive increase in the membership of my church and others, but an increase bringing in the same sort of people who are already there. For instance, four more Mr. Smiths, four more Dr. So-and-so's, four more Professor So-and-so's, four more accountants, four more school teachers, four more builders, four more whatever-they-may-be. So we look at our congregation and say – 'How wonderful to have four more families like that and four more families like this.' It may not be like that at all. It seems to me that the empty pews in our churches may well be filled by the alcoholic and drug addict, the prostitute and the thief – it may be the unsavoury people who come into our church, with their rudeness, their unpleasant smells, their unsociable habits and their mis-behaviour. I must confess that there have been times in the life of our own church when I have seen not one or two, but a dozen or two of such disturbed, difficult young people integrating with our own Fellowship, and I've really wondered whether this is the revival that we really want – whether we might not say, 'Lord, take it back again, we are not ready for it yet.' We may pray, 'Lord, send us more people – but not this sort of people!'

The ultimate objective of Caring For Life is to bring souls who would be unlikely to darken the door of a church, to faith in Jesus. By grace to bring them to the house of God and thus to become a part of God's people. We love because he first loved us. In showing love in a practical way it has been our great joy to see the love of Christ breaking through into the lives of some of these young people. (For CFL address see front inside cover.)

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*As a disabled person Debby Horner of 39 Privilege Street, Armley, Leeds LS12 4LN, asks for contacts with disabled believers in other churches. Please feel free to describe your situation and especially your spiritual interests. Debby is a member of the Leeds Reformed Baptist Church. Several other disabled members in the church are interested in forming links by correspondence with those in similar situations in other churches.*

*Bill Haynes is pastor of the Indian Creek Baptist Church, Georgia, U.S.A. This material has been gleaned from an article originally written for a Southern Baptist context. Pastor Haynes address is Indian Creek Baptist Church, 3901 Rockbridge Road, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083.*

## Liberty no License for Heresy

Historically, Baptists have stood for and insisted on religious freedom for all persons. Baptists have refused to coerce, either by civil or ecclesiastical force, their beliefs on anyone. If one wanted to be a Catholic, Jew, Moslem, Unitarian, Mormon, atheist, or anything else, then Baptists have upheld their freedom to whatever they choose. This is a principle that Baptists have died to preserve and we would do well to do the same!

This important principle has been abused by false teachers within the churches. Yet it is imperative to point out that at no time in Baptist history, except perhaps the present, have Baptists ever extended religious freedom to mean that you can become a Baptist and then believe and teach anything you desire. Baptists have always stood for clear Biblical doctrine.

Freedom in religion and the priesthood of the believer should not be interpreted to mean that there is an absence of certain definite doctrines that Baptists believe, cherish, and with which they have been and are now closely identified.

J. B. Gambrell, president of Mercer University from 1893-1896 once said:

There have appeared men in these later days who feel persecuted if they are not allowed to enter pulpits established to uphold a given set of principles, and there to overthrow the very doctrines the church is set to defend. Men who do not preach the accepted doctrines of the Baptists,

have no right in Baptist pulpits, and it is no abridgement of their rights nor any persecution to keep them out. We are under no sort of obligations to furnish heretics with means to subvert the truth.<sup>1</sup>

It sounds as if Dr Gambrell were writing for 1980's Southern Baptists. While we must hold forth the principle of religious freedom, we must also hold our teachers, preachers, and leaders accountable to the doctrines of the Word of God that Baptists have historically believed.

I realise that with that statement many will cry out that to do this we would have to establish a creed. They will further claim that Baptists are not a creedal people, that we emphatically do not believe in creeds. The word creed simply comes from a word that means 'I believe'. Baptists have always been a people who believe certain and definite things. And for the most part there has been remarkable agreement on what we believe. Dr B. H. Carroll, founder and first president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary had this to say about Baptists and creeds:

A church with a little creed is a church with a little life. The more divine doctrines a church can agree on, the greater its power, and the wider its usefulness. The modern cry: 'Less creed and more liberty,' is a degeneration from the vertebrate to the jellyfish, and means less unity and less morality, and it means more heresy.

Very solemnly I would warn against any teaching that decries doctrines, or which would reduce the creed of the church into two or three articles. We are entitled to no liberty in these matters. *It is a positive and very hurtful sin to magnify liberty at the expense of doctrine.* A creed is what we believe. A confession of faith is a declaration of what we believe. The church must both believe and declare. The longest creed of history is more valuable and less hurtful than the shortest.<sup>3</sup>

The truth of the matter is that while Baptists have upheld the principle of religious freedom they have almost never done it to the point of disregarding sound doctrine. When they have, the results have always been disastrous.

In England, a hundred years ago this year, there was a controversy that is very similar to the controversy occurring in the Georgia Baptist and Southern Baptist Conventions today. It was called the 'Down Grade Controversy'. It was led by the great Baptist pastor, Charles H. Spurgeon, who said that the Baptist Union of England was on a 'down grade to destruction'. This was because error in doctrinal matters had been accepted into the union under the guise of liberty. One contemporary S.B.C. writer has said,

Spurgeon and his church withdrew from the British Union in 1887 charging that the Union tolerated heresy. He called for Baptists to adopt a written creed to protest the denomination from becoming an ally of evil. Rejecting Spurgeon's request for a binding doctrinal statement, British Baptists accepted his resignation and expressed disapproval of his issuing general charges without spelling out the supposed heretics.

Spurgeon wanted orthodoxy, even if freedom of thought had to be restricted; Clifford wanted true liberty

even if it meant the presence of what some believed to be modernist teachings.<sup>3</sup>

There seems to be in the S.B.C. today an attitude that doctrine really doesn't matter. What matters is that we 'cooperate' in giving and missions. What matters is that we show tolerance to those who see things differently from us. This is no different than what the secular thought has been for half a century. In fact it is probably not out of line to say that the church learned and absorbed this from the world. Allan Bloom, in his best selling book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, says,

Openness is the only virtue which all primary education for more than fifty years has dedicated itself to inculcating. . . . The true believer is the real danger. . . . From the earliest beginnings of liberal thought there was a tendency in the direction of indiscriminate freedom. In order to make this arrangement work there was a conscious, if covert, effort to weaken religious beliefs, partly by assigning religion to the realm of opinion as opposed to knowledge. . . . There are no absolutes; freedom is absolute.<sup>4</sup>

The Church has largely adopted this worldly system.

We look around and wonder why the ethics and morals of our day are so far from the standard that God presents in his Word. We want people to live right but at the same time we say that doctrine is not important. B. H. Carroll comments on this idea,

We Baptists, in stressing individual liberty, are continually sacrificing the power of united forces. . . . From doctrines come morals. All the modern hue and cry against dogma is really against morals. The more we reduce the number of the creed articles, the more we undermine practical religion.

*Continued on page 23*

# Book Reviews

## **Unleashing the Church – Getting People out of the Fortress and into Ministry**

Frank Tillapaugh, 1982 Regal Books, Ventura, California, \$10.35.

## **Unleashing Your Potential – Discovering your God-Given opportunities for Ministry**

Frank R. Tillapaugh, 1988, Regal Books, Ventura, \$10.35.

The theme of both books is the urgent need for all church members to get actively involved in ministering to others. Too often 'ministry' is left to a very few, and a church has little impact on the community around. Christians need to be transformed from 'consumers' to 'ministers' and both books challenge us all to leave the security of merely attending a 'fortress' and launch out in faith to play our part in the fulfilment of the Great Commission. A 'Fortress' type church is concerned with bringing people in to services, but the

overall emphasis is introverted, providing for the membership and regulars. Occasional forays are made out into enemy territory or an occasional missile lobbed over the fortress wall. An unleashed church is one where a significant number of members are getting out to minister to where there is sin and need.

There are many practical suggestions as to specific ways of reaching out to different types of people. Tillapaugh is a great advocate of identifying 'target groups' of those with specific needs (eg. overseas students, mothers with pre-school children) and then planning outreach efforts geared especially for them. He gives many illustrations of how this concept has been worked out in his own congregation.

The author laments the way that para-church organisations have taken over specialised ministries, and the way that so often workers in these organisations put the average church member to shame in terms of personal work. (As one of his associate pastors said in a

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## **Liberty no License for Heresy** (continued from page 22)

Just so the present trend toward cutting off every article of faith to which some individual crank may object, will, if tamely unresisted, leave the church without a creed and without a moral life.<sup>5</sup>

I would conclude by urging the exhortation of Jude, 'I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints'. We must stand for the truth of the Word of God, 'the faith' as Jude calls it. If the truth of the Word divides then there was no real unity to begin with, because it was based on a false foundation.

We must not allow the principle of religious liberty to be used as a cloak for

false teachers to undermine and destroy the foundations of biblical truth in our churches. Rather we should promote confessional standards and adhere to them.

### **Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup> J. B. Gambrell, 'Questions in Baptist Rights' p. 129, in *Ten Years in Texas*.

<sup>2</sup> B. H. Carroll, *An Interpretation of the English Bible*, vol. 6, pp. 140-147, Baker Book House, 1948.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Shurden. Quoted by Cecil Ray and Susan Ray in *Cooperation: The Baptist Way to a Lost World*, pp. 124f. The Stewardship Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

<sup>4</sup> Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, pp. 26-28, Simon & Schuster, 1987.

<sup>5</sup> B. H. Carroll, *An Interpretation of the English Bible*, vol. 6, pp. 140 and 148, Baker Book House, 1948.

seminar recently the para-church organisations are the fishers of men, while the churches are the keepers of the aquarium!) Often the para-church groups have grown up because of the failure of the predominantly white, middle class churches to reach those outside their own cultural boundaries (such as immigrants, street people, etc.). But while these organisations do an excellent work (and their methods are to be emulated wherever appropriate), there is no substitute for church-based evangelism. Those converted through para-church groups can too easily 'drop out' when they outgrow the organisation — for example when students graduate and leave the Christian Union. The local church is the place where the diversity of believers are integrated into one body. It is the glory of the local congregation to be a united fellowship of believers converted from diverse backgrounds, working together to reach diverse groups of unbelievers for Christ.

Many of the specific examples given are written with an American readership in mind (and would cause some amusement to British readers!) but the broad principles are applicable to any evangelical church. There is considerable overlap between the two books, the second working out in some more detail the principles laid out in the first, with a more pointed challenge to individual church members.

### **Islam Revealed: A Christian's View of Islam**

Anis A. Shorosh, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1988.

This is a timely book; the author is a Palestinian-born Arab who has researched thoroughly the Islam religion and its view of Christ. The history of Islam and explanation of its

main beliefs is accessible and clear. There is a most useful survey of the world wide situation as far as adherence to Islam is concerned. There are detailed comparisons of the Koran and the Bible and a comprehensive study of mis-quotations of Scripture in the Koran.

For those who come into contact with Moslems, perhaps the most enlightening section of the book is in the second section: the transcript of a debate held in the Albert Hall in 1985 between the author and a leading Moslem scholar and publicist. The Moslem position is put clearly by Ahmed Deedat: the major issue being the divinity of Christ. It is surely better to know in advance how a Moslem will respond to testimony of Christ's deity, and reading this will forewarn of the main areas of disagreement and misunderstanding. Deedat argued that nowhere did Christ explicitly say that he was God; that the concept of 'Trinity' is not explicitly taught in Scripture and makes no logical (or grammatical) sense; that no human being can become God (Moslems commonly represent Christians as believing that God the Father physically conceived Christ) and so on. As with any belief it is far better to read about it first hand from someone who is convinced of it. The rebuttal by Shorosh is not very comprehensive (perhaps due to lack of time in the debate?) but it would be a most useful exercise to work through the Moslem position and attempt a clear answer from Scripture to each point made!

Despite some weaknesses, overall this is an excellent introduction to the Moslem faith, which is the greatest single challenge to Christian mission today.

# News



*View of airstrip, now unusable*

## **Irian Jaya**

Irian Jaya, which is part of Indonesia, forms the Western half of the second largest island in the world, Papua New Guinea being the Eastern half.

There are 240 languages in Irian which has a population of only 1.3 million. The country has vast rugged mountains. Without aircraft it is daunting to penetrate the wild terrain. Michael Webb and his wife have been working with the Hupla people for eight years while their daughters Jennifer and Alison have been at a boarding school at Sentani on the north coast of the island. The Hupla people numbering about 3,000 occupy three parallel valleys in the centre of the land mass. Michael has been teaching the pastors and acting as advisor to the Woso Church District which has 13 churches scattered throughout the area. The Hupla have about half of the New Testament. There is a programme to teach the people how to read which is well advanced.

On August 1st at 9.15am a severe earthquake devastated the central valley of the three valleys where the Hupla people live. 67 people were killed. Two pastors lost their wives and one his only son. Villages were destroyed and mission



*Vijay and Narsmma, Andrew 8,  
and Philip 6*

houses, clinic and churches have been left in a state of disrepair. The staple diet is sweet potatoes grown on terraces. These have slid away thus destroying the livelihood of the people so that the people have moved across into the next valley. Two MAF helicopters have played a vital role in the crisis bringing medical supplies and helping the injured.

The future is very uncertain. The most needed items are very basic; machetes, steel axes, cooking pots, and shovels.

Until December Michael Webb's address is, 309 Old Walsall Road, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 1HY. Telephone 021 357 4941. Gifts can be specified and sent to his address and from January 1990 to RBMU, 186 Kennington Park Road, LONDON, SE11 4BT.

## **Fiji**

From Vijay Chandra comes news of the continued effort to plant a church at Vunidawa in the interior. Every Thursday Vijay leaves Nadera at 5.30 am to travel 100K to encourage eight believers and engage in evangelistic visitation. The work recently begun has faced fierce resistance from the Hindus. The way forward as always is by prayer, the exercise of faith and dogged perseverance. The extension work has been supported by the young Nadera Reformed Baptist Church which has 37 members. 30 attend the Wednesday prayer meetings.

Advance took place at Vunidawa when a family of five was converted. The means of outreach is by visiting the homes which



*Grace Baptist Fellowship of Oklahoma. Front, left to right, Frank Boydston, Keith Heck, Dennis Gundersen, Jack Good, Richard Weirick. Back, left to right, Berry Boydston, Bill Doerfel, Oren Lee, Royce Smith and John Ashwood*

is time consuming as the homes are far apart. Because of the changed lives of the believers there is a better reception now in Vunidawa.

The Nadera RB Church represents the only Reformed work in the island of Fiji. Vijay's nearest fellowship is by telephone with Stephen Turner and other pastors of the RB Association in New Zealand which now represents five churches.

### **China**

Two separate descriptions of the horrific events in China were received from personal friends who were in Peking at time of the massacre in Tiananmen Square.

Subsequently the world has seen that the movement toward freedom has been ruthlessly suppressed. Executions and harsh jail sentences have followed. Only two wanted leading students are known to have escaped abroad. Nobody is sure how many on the wanted list have managed to hide themselves in China. There is great uncertainty about the future. Over many years there has been intercession that freedom might come to China. Hopes soared when the students made their appeal for democracy.

Having complete control of the media, the regime has distorted the recent saga to advance its own ends. Kate Adie, the well known British reporter, who reported daily from Peking during the crisis for British TV, says that the media failed to convey the real terror and horror of the massacre (*Times* Aug 29).

As we reflect now on the past and future who can conjecture what repressions and persecutions may be in store for China's Christians if they become the focus of attention? Surely we do well to pray earnestly for them (1 Tim 2:1-4). We know from the letters received that Christians have proclaimed the good news boldly. Especially was this the case when the public address system was used to preach the gospel to vast crowds in Tiananmen Square.

The following paragraphs are quoted from one of our correspondents:

'But Christians now have unprecedented opportunities to share their faith. An evangelist in Inner Mongolia reports more conversions through his ministry in the month since the crack-down in Peking than over the last three years. Christians in South China warmly received students



*Left to right, Bill Calhoun, Gordon Taylor, Paul Rendall and Kim Dopler*

fleeing from the carnage in Peking; moved to the depths by their love, sixty received Christ. A house church leader I interviewed in late June said that God allowed the student movement to fail to bring the students to an end of themselves. "Many", he said, "are being led to the gates of the church. They now see that the Party is not the 'Great Saviour'. They see that man cannot save himself by his own efforts. They don't know much about Christianity. But Christians care for them and teach them the truth".

'Over the last decade and more God has moved in power in China's countryside and the rural Church has grown by leaps and bounds. Now we must pray that the Holy Spirit will work amongst China's intellectuals and students in the cities as their hearts are broken and all human avenues seem to lead only to despair. There are thousands of mainland Chinese Christians virtually exiled now in Britain, the U.S.A., Australia and other countries. Will Western Christians reach out to them in genuine love with the message of the gospel which is the only answer to the deep questions which they are wrestling with in the aftermath of the Peking massacre?'

#### **Oklahoma, USA**

From pastor Dennis Gundersen of Tanglewood Baptist Church, Sand

Springs, Oklahoma comes a description of a RB fellowship of 14 pastors meeting monthly and seeking to cooperate in practical ways. This fellowship began in 1981. The monthly meeting begins at 10.00 am and concludes at 4.00 pm. There are two expositions followed by discussion. Often the group is joined by a Presbyterian and others who are not Baptist.

Readers who are burdened to see a concert of prayer for revival will be encouraged to know that this group set aside four days a year for prayer only, the emphasis being on the urgent need for revival throughout the world.

Recently pastor Gundersen laid before the group a call to help a church in Jamaica needing \$5,000. This was soon raised. One church which does not have its own building contributed \$1,000. Most of the churches represented are small, having congregations of less than 60, and only one with an attendance above 100.

The meetings have been marked by a great degree of unity and love among the brethren even when differing positions have been expressed. We greet our brothers in Oklahoma and thank them for their example, especially in maintaining their unity and giving a foremost place to prayer. Surely many will pray that your

churches will be blessed with a marvellous outpouring of the Holy Spirit!

### **East Moline, Illinois, USA**

Gordon Taylor over the years has led the Sycamore Baptist Church into the rich inheritance of the 1689 Confession of Faith. When preaching there in June I was impressed by the fact that the church is isolated and so far away from churches of similar conviction.



*Mark Johnston (left) and Tom Lyon at Camp Gilead*

A letter has come subsequently reporting the development of an extension work at a place called Rockford, a two hour journey away. Pastor Taylor and a fellow elder, Kim Dopler, are visiting Rockford once a month until a church can be formed which will have a 1689 Confessional basis. A call has come from another church, this time a three hour journey away. The elderly pastor has to care for his ill wife and is finding it difficult to cope. What can be done to help? Wisdom is needed. Perhaps East Moline may become the first church to possess a RB helicopter! That in the long run might be more economical and save many hours lost in the tedium of travel.

The assembly is assisting in the preparation for the fourth annual Reformed Family Bible Conference held in Eastern Iowa which is attended by about 150.

In his recent letter Gordon Taylor stresses the important place of prayer:

'I too am encouraged by the desire of many for earnest prayer. The Lord does hear prayer. From time to time we have a day of prayer and fasting in our church. A little over a year ago we sought the Lord for the salvation of our children. In the past year



*Don Lindblad (left) and Bruce Ray*

we have seen one young man return to the Lord and now living a consistent testimony and three others profess faith and be baptized. Then just a few weeks ago a young man of 17 years of age was converted. He had been a grief to his mother, even leaving home for some time, but now seeks baptism and gives definite encouraging signs of a work of grace. We plan to have another day of prayer and fasting. We will include in our prayers the plea for God to bring many to himself all over the world.'

### **Unity and Advance in Washington State, USA**

Fifteen churches were represented at the third Northwest RB Family Conference held at Camp Gilead. The Juanita Community Church led by pastors Bruce Ray and Don Lindblad was prominent in leading the way supported by Providence RB Church, Tacoma. Tom Nettles spoke five times on historical and biographical themes. Conference times are much enriched by such materials. Dr Nettles will be in London, England, to speak at the Tercentenary of the 1689 Confession on 9th September, and after that will be preaching at Cuckfield in Sussex, and then St. Mellons, Cardiff.

# Carey '89



*Bill and Mary Barclay of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in conversation with Tom Smith of Charleston, West Virginia in centre of picture*

'Stay awhile amid its ancient charms' is the exhortation that greets visitors as they approach the city of Ripon in North Yorkshire. The first week in August, however, saw over 300 people gathering together to consider the ancient charms of the gospel at the 18th Annual Carey Family Week. A new venue for the conference, the College of Ripon and York St. John, provided beautiful surroundings for the largest and most forward-looking Carey week to date. High standards were met, both in the ministry of God's Word and in the variety of other activities, both spiritual and physical, available to all age groups.

## **Devotional Meetings**

The hot and sunny weather didn't prevent a full attendance at the two ministry meetings held daily in the campus Chapel. The sessions were all ably introduced by Pastor Peter Parkinson (Leeds) who led the worship with a multitude of songs of praise accompanied by a fine orchestra to inspire those singing. There were time-honoured hymns with their great

doctrinal statements alongside newer devotional choruses as well as a children's musical catechism.

Pastor Geoff Thomas (Aberystwyth) brought a series of messages to the morning meetings from the first part of Hebrews 12. Practical and clear application of the pleas of the writer to 'throw off everything that hinders' and 'to run with perseverance the race marked out for us' were followed by further encouragements to 'keep Jesus in our sights'. How easy to become transfixed by the misery and depth of our sin when we should be enchanted by the glory and the loveliness of him; we should 'take ten looks at Jesus each time we consider our sin once!' The last of the four sermons brought real hope to those living under the shadow of suffering, or the pressure imposed by stressful situations at home or at work, with a concise presentation of the way in which God deals with his children.

Pastor Tom Smith (Charleston, West Virginia) was responsible for the even-



*Geoff Thomas*

ing ministry and he preached a series of sermons on the opening verses of Romans 8. A correct perspective of our position before God, that we are no longer condemned but justified, was the opening statement to the series, leading through to great themes of Christian liberty in service. Simple questions about 'The Christian life', 'What is a true Christian?', and 'True Christian holiness' were addressed comprehensively and Pastor Smith left a lasting picture of the persevering saint as a mature river. Using the Mississippi as his model he suggested that in terms of holiness we often change our direction, meandering from side to side, sometimes even going in the wrong direction – but our overall trend and flow is heavenward.

### **Workshop Sessions**

One of the real successes of Carey '89 was found in the various workshops taking place each day after the morning worship services. Covering a variety of subjects and addressing different audiences, the sessions were all well attended and, in most cases, the participants were reluctant to bring them to a close even for lunch.

The workshops early in the week brought together elders and deacons in separate sessions, pastors and full-time workers and missionary workshops also being provided. Each group discussed some of the problems and difficulties experienced in these roles, and the willingness to share experiences and possible solutions to problems was profitable.

A group discussing the elderly in our churches revealed the common problem of a lack of purpose for them within the life of the church. Under-utilisation of the elderly can rob the pastor of a valuable resource, particularly in cases where early retirement leaves an active person with time to spare. Other pastoral issues tackled in separate workshops included parents of young families and parents of teenagers, and their attendant pressures.



*Paul, of the CFL (see article by Peter Parkinson). The young men fulfilled their work guarding the campus very well. Intruders intent on mischief were driven off!*

Some of the workshops were available more than once. The preaching seminar, for instance, was provided each day and, with leadership contributions from brothers Thomas, Kingdon and Hulse, the occasional or would-be preacher was given invaluable insights into numerous preaching issues. The selection of a scripture text and how to focus on the key issues ('always use the big texts!'), keeping the attention of the congregation, suggested resource books, applying the text and contextualisation of the sermon were all subjects introduced. The daily evangelism seminars were again in great demand with discussions and examples followed by case-studies and models. Thorny problems of all sorts were discussed at another daily session varying from 'the Christian response to euthanasia' to 'why the mid-week meetings are often poorly attended'.

The large contingent of young people at Carey '89 was an outstanding encouragement. The firm and imaginative leadership of Pastor Bill Bygroves (Garston Bridge) was used to harness great resources of life and energy. Times of open prayer were full of participation and eager worship. The qualities required by Young People's leaders were considered by another group along with the problems peculiar to early and late teenagers – a useful exchange of ideas and resources.

### **Missionary Focus**

The call to be outward-looking is ever before us in the Scriptures and the conference was enriched by the presence of three missions. Stands displaying the work and literature of the missions were open all week along with summaries of the mission activities at the evening meetings.

Peter White presented the work of Grace Baptist Mission, an autonomous organisation that helps churches to

provide care and support for missionaries they send out. Peter Back introduced the Red Sea Team International and their aim to proclaim the gospel of Christ to Muslims – 'in our every weakness we are able to affirm his strength'. Alan Stead represented the local work of Caring for Life which provides long-term care and provision for disadvantaged and often abused young people. First-hand examples of God's blessing on this work were to be seen patrolling the campus in pairs, the CFL lads having been given the responsibility for the campus security.

### **Children's Ministry**

With large numbers attending a family conference it was important to provide quality activities for the children of parents wishing to attend all the morning spiritual activities. Pastor Bygroves and his wife, Dot, provided an excellent solution. Bill enchanted the children with tales of Lord Victor Greatgrace and Horatio the Horn for a short time during the service before taking them off to provide their own worship time. Dot supported and proved a firm favourite with the children as they explored 'creative cookery' during the workshop sessions. By the end of the week, even the four-year-old children were answering Catechism questions in song! The tiny-tots were looked after by a team of volunteers whose sacrifice of time meant more participation for parents in the seminars.

### **Leisure & Pleasure**

The afternoon football and athletics coaching sessions for young people were enthusiastically attended and the races and games were a real challenge to the older participants. Tennis, rounders, table-tennis, volleyball and cricket provided a busy sporting programme along with visits to the local swimming pool, with a new running event, 'the Carey 2000 metres', being initiated.



*Alan Davey making melody*



*Mirillee and Jeremy Back listening to the children's address*

North Yorkshire provides ample choice for excursions and there was great fellowship enjoyed in two organised outings to York and Whitby along with surprise meetings with conference delegates at impromptu trips to Fountains Abbey and Brimham Rocks.

In the evenings, the college lounges furnished opportunities simply to relax and develop friendships or to watch a video presentation of a Christian or ethical film production. The bookshop was always popular.

### **Conclusion**

Christian fellowship is essential to

balanced spiritual growth, and the unity enjoyed at a spiritual event like Carey '89 is invaluable. To see Geoff Thomas wearing a knotted handkerchief atop a large boulder in Nidderdale, Bill Bygroves leading the late night keep-fit classes and Erroll Hulse coaching children in athletics reminds us of our common humanity.

Cassettes were available to take home, including a recording of the singing which was characterised by joyful praise typified by the following verse from Psalm 148 from the *Book of Praises* but to the tune Camberwell:

- 3 Praise the LORD of glory, praise his matchless worth,  
Praise his name exalted over heaven and earth;  
Praise him, all his people, by his power restored,  
Drawn to know and love him: praise him, praise the LORD!

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## **THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST FOUNDERS CONFERENCE, USA**

A report of the Seventh Founders' Conference held at Memphis, Tennessee, has been received which we hold over until next time. Over 200 came from 36 states. One of the highlights was an exposition by Samuel Storms with the title, 'Pilgrimage from Dispensationalism and its Dangers'. A biography of John A. Broadus was presented by Bill Ascol, (RT agent, see back inside cover). For information about the Founders' Conference write to Ernest C. Reisinger, 521 Wildwood Parkway, Cape Coral, FL 33904.

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