

REFORMATION TODAY



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Rehoboth pictured in the background is a Namibian town, with a rich missionary history, south of Windhoek. The photos in this issue focus on Namibia (see page 3)

Front cover: The Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary (NETS), Windhoek. In the foreground is one of the students, Petrus Mumbuu and Tina his wife.

Contributors in this issue

Robert Godfrey is the president of the Westminster Theological Seminary, California.

Jim van Zyl is the author of the correspondence courses for The Bible Institute of South Africa, Kalk Bay, Cape (see page 32).

Alec Taylor is pastor of Chelmsley Wood Reformed Baptist Church, Birmingham.

Sharon James read history at Cambridge and theology at Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Carey Family Conference

Reports of the annual Carey Family Conference held in July at Quinta Hall, Shropshire have all been positive and encouraging. Speakers were Geoff Thomas, David Kingdon, Andrew King and Joachim Rieck of Namibia.

Next year's conference has been booked at Cloverley Hall, Whitchurch, Shropshire for 3-10 August, 1996. A few miles from the M6 in Staffordshire, the Hall has extensive grounds, heated swimming pool, games room, playing fields and tennis courts.

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Editorial

Reformation Today 25th anniversary

Reformation Today was born out of the first Carey Conference for ministers held in the first week of 1970.

A rediscovery in the 1960s of the priceless worth of the Reformation heritage confronted Baptists with the question, 'Do we become paedobaptist Presbyterians or do we remain Baptist? Alternatively is there a halfway position or compromise on the issue?'

Are we Reformed Baptists or Paedobaptist Presbyterians?

At that first Carey Conference, 1970, David Kingdon expounded the Abrahamic Covenant which prepared the way for the Mosaic Covenant but also looked forward to the New Covenant. The book *Children of Abraham*¹ confirmed that, far from being defective in covenant theology, Reformed Baptists alone do justice to the unity and discontinuity of the Covenant of Grace. The gist of the matter lies in the word NOT in Hebrews 8:9. In the most emphatic way the New Covenant is not like the Mosaic which embraced all Israel as a body. This inclusion is not now automatic. The writing of God's law on the heart and mind (new birth – see John 1:12,13) is imperative. The matter is personalised. It is no longer national (Matt 10:35,36).

A Baptist view means that we hold to the gathered view of the Church. This fundamental subject is summed up in the review of Leonard Verduin's book *The Anatomy of a Hybrid*.

Unity with the Reformers and the Puritans

Apart from the subject of baptism and the nature of the Church as consisting of those called out of society (1 Cor 1:1-2), our experience over the last 25 years has confirmed the priceless worth of our Reformed and Puritan heritage. This is reflected in Robert Godfrey's expositions on 'Luther's Journey to Righteousness' (RT142, 146, 147).

The rationale for our distinctive place in the evangelical spectrum is the combination of Reformational and Puritan theology combined with energetic enterprise to build upon the gathered church principles.

Hyper-Calvinism and evangelism

Hyper-Calvinism has severely hampered many in the Strict and Particular Baptist tradition. Misunderstanding of Calvinism has stunted growth and stifled missionary passion. A great change came about when William Carey went to India and Andrew Fuller laboured theologically and practically to promote and support the missionary endeavour. The Puritans can help us greatly in this subject. Those who read the Puritans are least likely to fall into the errors of hyper-Calvinism or Arminianism.

Some recent RT articles in the Reformed and Puritan tradition are, 'God's love to the non-elect' RT145; 'Is there a love of God for all mankind?' RT138, both by Bob Sheehan, and by the editor, 'John 3:16 and hyper-Calvinism' RT135 and 'The Redeemer's tears shed over lost souls' RT146. Jim van Zyl's material in this issue provides a further antidote to hyperism as he expounds on the vital theme of human responsibility as that relates to divine sovereignty.

Hyper-Calvinism in Britain is being promoted by a very tiny constituency but one which is active to exploit undiscerning editors to promote its cause.

The Charismatic movement

Division over the Charismatic movement has affected most churches and the indices of *RT* show that about a dozen articles have appeared since the mid 1980s. In this issue Alec Taylor supplies us with a sobering documentation of an area of abuse prevalent in some sections of the Charismatic movement. The review by Sharon James of John MacArthur Jr's book *Reckless Faith* highlights the recklessness of charismatic mysticism and prophecies.

Authoritarianism

Over the last 25 years we have sought to be relevant with an emphasis on the TODAY. Many issues have been addressed. Reformed Baptists around the world have been vexed over authoritarianism. Can anything be done which will improve the situation rather than inflaming it? Should this matter be addressed? Spiritual counsel is being sought and we aim to publish the outcome in the next issue.

The need for effective evangelism

Over the last 25 years Reformed Baptist churches have multiplied across the world. Will this continue? Will the increase accelerate? My prediction is that it will. To be effective evangelism must stem from spiritually healthy and united churches. The sovereignty of God misunderstood will kill evangelism but rightly construed, as Jim van Zyl shows in his article (p 15), the sovereignty of God is a powerful encouragement.

As from September 28

the editor is due to begin a busy itinerary in Australia:

Perth. Melbourne, Newcastle,
Sydney, Brisbane;

and from

October 27-November 11

in Jakarta and the Lampung area of South Sumatra, Indonesia.

What of the future?

The work of church planting and the quest for revival are issues developed in the concluding chapter of *Our Baptist Heritage* which was published in 1993 for IFRB by Chapel Library.² In Chapel Library (led by Pastor LeeRoy Shelton, Jr and Michael Snyder - see *RT133*) we have a tried and tested partnership in prayer and effort as we seek to promote our great Puritan and Reformed heritage in many languages. Our united vision is expressed in Psalm 2:8, 'Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession'.

What of the future? Even though the scene is dark at present the long term future is assured. The promise made to Habakkuk still stands; 'For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea' (Hab 2:14).

On account of being in Namibia for two months, the editor apologises for the lateness of this issue.

References

1. A synopsis by Bill James of *Children of Abraham* is obtainable from RT, for £1.00 incl. postage.
2. Chapel Library, 2603 W Wright St., Pensacola, FL 32505, USA.

Ministry in Namibia



From left to right: *Glendon Thompson who is an evangelist working alongside Martin Holdt of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Florida Park, SA; Beverley and Mark Nieuwoudt, Marcelle Rieck holding Kezia, and in front Joachim Rieck with Jonathan and Martin*

The editor

During the months of June and July we were engaged in ministry at Eastside Baptist Church, Windhoek, Namibia. At the same time Pastor Joachim Rieck from that church was engaged in ministry in the UK and Germany.

Namibia, a land area about the size of Germany and France together, is limited in its potential by a low rainfall and limited water supply.

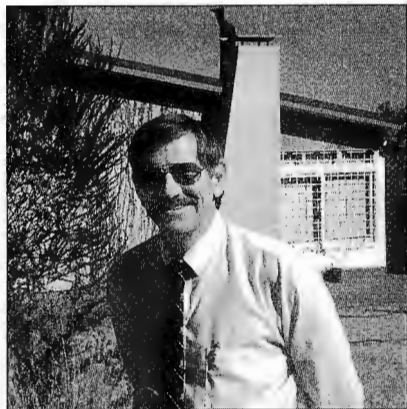
The capital, Windhoek, must be one of the most beautiful small cities in the world (population $\pm 150,000$). It is surrounded by mountains and many suburban homes make use of the aspect of rocky hillside. The poorer suburbs where I visited are better off economically than most parts of Africa. One

problem is that when the news of better conditions is made known people are drawn from rural areas in quest of employment. Many, perhaps most, experience disappointment since there simply are not enough jobs available for unskilled labourers. This urbanisation is a universal problem of which the most agonising example is Mexico City, rapidly becoming the poorest and largest conurbation on earth with a horrendous 32 million anticipated (Operation World – based on present growth rates) by the year 2000.

At Eastside Baptist Church my principal role was pastoring and preaching. For ministry I used as a basis for 17 expositions the outline of The Apostles' Creed which provides a wonderfully balanced overview of the Christian faith and is a statement which



Laban Mshalakele, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Katatura



Dr Gerhard Buys, principal of NETS

unites believers over the centuries. However as an instrument of ecumenical unity today it is inadequate. We face the imperative of clarity about the sufficiency of Scripture which can be nullified by tradition, and justification by faith alone. It is not enough to say, 'We believe in the forgiveness of sins', because that could be by confession to a priest. Imputed righteousness alone saves.

For the midweek meetings a variety of relevant controversial subjects were expounded followed by questions and discussion. While in Windhoek I was also privileged to minister in the Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary where I presented three biographies (Luther, Francis Schaeffer and D M Lloyd-Jones) and also addressed the subjects of 'How to maintain a devotional life' and 'How to prepare sermons'.

In a small country opportunities on mass media are much more likely and I was invited to produce 10 devotionals for radio and also invited to a panel of

discussion on baptism for TV. A previous engagement meant that I had reluctantly to decline the latter and the dynamic youth pastor at Eastside, Mark Nieuwoudt, took my place. In the event he filled in so well that he has been invited to take a series of prime time TV devotionals.

Comparing this experience in Windhoek with other pastorates I note well that there is a tremendous advantage in two of contrasting ages working closely together on a daily basis. We met early (6.00 am) for prayer four days a week and worked in the morning from the well administered church office where a paid secretary operates Monday to Friday 8.00 am-1.00 pm. With such a base it is almost impossible for pastoral neglect to occur.

A further privilege was to preach in Grace Baptist Church, Katatura (Pastor Laban Mshalakele) and for another recently formed lively church, led by Adolf Shasamba, seeking association with established churches.

Luther's Journey to Righteousness – Faith and Good Works



Martin Luther
(by artist Lucas Cranach the Elder 1526)



Dr Robert Godfrey

Part 3 – the earlier studies by Robert Godfrey (RT142, 146) traced Luther's journey from conservative monk under the authority of tradition and the unbroken misery of bondage to sin; to justification by faith under the authority of Scripture, and the freedom of the Christian and the use of the law (RT146). Luther's two-kingdom theology developed how one lives before God and how one serves in the world.

Faith

Now as a corollary to this distinction between law and gospel Luther discussed faith. Faith after all was what responded to the gospel. Luther was not denying that there must be a response to the gospel. He was saying that response must never be seen as a work or a human accomplishment or a human merit. Faith, then, was that response to the gospel through which we are reconciled to God. He wrote in his treatise on *The Freedom of the Christian*: 'Anyone who has had even a faint taste of it [faith] can never write, speak, meditate or hear enough concerning it. It is a living "spring of water welling up to eternal life..."'¹ Luther's great passion was to talk about faith, the glories of faith, the wonders of faith. He wrote,

It is indeed impossible for me to grasp and attain to this one and only Redeemer from sin, Jesus, except through faith. He is and remains beyond the grasp of works. Since faith alone, before any works follow it, can lay hold of this Redeemer, so it must be true that only faith before and without works grasps hold of his redemption, which means nothing else but becoming righteous. For to have been redeemed from sin or to have sin forgiven must be the same as being or becoming righteous.²

Good Works

Good works, however, follow such faith (or redemption or forgiveness of sin or righteousness) as the fruit of faith. Now we will come back to develop that point a little later, but it is important to hear Luther here. While he insisted that faith alone and only faith justified, Luther made perfectly clear in his writing that good works follow from and grow from faith:

For faith is a vigorous and powerful thing; it is not idle speculation, nor does it float on the heart like a goose on water. But just as water that has been heated, even though it remains water, is no longer cold but is hot and an altogether different water, so faith, the work of the Holy Spirit, fashions a different mind and different attitudes and makes us an altogether new human being.³

The Life-changing Nature of Faith

In another place he wrote, ‘Therefore faith is an active, difficult, and powerful thing.’⁴ This faith was no bare mental assent. That was how the medieval Catholics understood faith. But Luther’s faith was life-changing, life-controlling because it put one in touch with Christ.

Luther wanted to make this point about the law and the gospel and about faith so that we would clearly understand man to be a free lord of all, subject to none. As we stand before God we are not subject to the law, we are not subject to any earthly power. We are freed before God by the gospel of his promise. Nevertheless, we are also the dutiful servants of all, subject to all. That is also the reality in which we live as we live before the world, before men, *coram hominibus*.

Luther discussed human service by saying that the law is valuable but in a deep sense unnecessary. Now exactly what did he mean? He meant that when faith is real, there will bubble up out of the Christian heart a spontaneous response to God. We will love to do what God does. We will desire what God desires. We will be drawn not by threats but by love to live the Christian life. In that sense, then, the law is unnecessary for the Christian. The law is unnecessary because the law demands, the law threatens, but the Christian does not need demands, the Christian does not need threats. He lives for God by faith.

The Inner and the Outer Man

Now we Reformed are inclined to ask whether Luther was not being a little naive. Are Christians really that good? Have Christians really come that far? Is faith really that powerful? Now we must recognise that Luther was not naive. Naivety is one of the few charges that cannot be brought against Martin Luther. We must see that Luther based his thought on this matter on a very careful distinction that he made between the inner man and the outer man. The inner man lives by faith; he has been renewed; he has been changed so that he has a principle of living faith that does spontaneously respond to God and follow after God. But the inner man is not the whole story for the Christian. The Christian is also the outer man. He is still also burdened with an old nature. In the face of that old nature, Luther said we do still need the law to nudge us, to direct us, to force us on. He taught that we must show the fruit of the Spirit. We must make progress in Christian living and, if we are Christians, we will make progress in Christian living. This progress is primarily because of the spontaneous quality of faith, but is also because of direction from the law. Luther could sometimes be difficult to understand because he moved back and forth between the inner and outer man. He contrasted them in different ways. Yet when we stand back and look at the whole picture, we can say Luther really was quite right.

Now we as Reformed may still want to draw the inner man and outer man a little closer together and talk more positively of the law for the inner man than Luther is willing to do. Yet, I think we can have a profound sympathy for what Luther was saying. He was not fundamentally wrong here, it seems to me. He was right to say that faith makes a difference. We do have a new nature. We do have a new sympathy for God. There is a filial response to God so that we desire to please him. We can certainly agree that there is an old nature, a sinful nature that needs prodding, that tends to move in the wrong direction. Luther wanted to stress that the real Christian life is the Christian life that is moving toward holiness. Luther never compromised that point. In his discussion of faith over and over again he spoke of the way in which faith must live itself out. He said:

Therefore we conclude with Paul that we are justified solely by faith in Christ without the Law and works. But after a man is justified by faith, now possesses Christ by faith, and knows that Christ is his righteousness and life, he will certainly not be idle but, like a sound tree will bear good fruit. . . . Therefore we, too, say that faith without works is worthless and useless . . . faith without works – that is a fantastic idea and mere vanity and a dream of the heart – is a false faith and does not justify.⁵

No Hint of Antinomianism!

You see there is no hint of antinomianism there. If faith has no fruit in the life, it is not a real faith and therefore it does not justify. ‘We say that justification is effective without works, not that faith is without works. For that faith which lacks

fruit is not efficacious but a feigned faith.⁶ This conviction reverberated through his writings over and over again.

When we come to what we call the third use of the law,⁷ that is the law as a spiritual guide to the believer, we find that even there Luther said things that would soften even the hardest Reformed heart. He wrote, for example:

We need the Decalogue not only to apprise us of our lawful obligations, but we also need to discern how far the Holy Spirit has advanced us in His work of sanctification and by how much we still fall short of the goal, lest we become secure and imagine that we have now done all that is required. Thus we must constantly grow in sanctification and always become new creatures in Christ.⁸

That is a beautiful statement. That is not a statement to which we could take exception.

Some wonder whether Luther really was concerned about holiness since he once said, 'Sin boldly!' The statement was frequently quoted against him by Roman Catholic apologists in the sixteenth century. They thought this statement proved that Luther cared nothing for holiness and was indifferent to sin. They feared that he was encouraging sin. Like all other of Luther's statements, this one has to be understood in context. The context was this: On a certain occasion Philip Melancthon was in a state of indecision as to what to do. Now Philip was a bit of a hand-wringer, never quite sure, cautious, somewhat like Hamlet. Melancthon confided to Luther his fears that whatever action he took in a particular situation would involve him in sin. Of that agony of conscience, which led to utter inaction, Luther said to Melancthon, 'Sin boldly.' That was another way of saying, 'Do something.' Luther counselled that it was better to do something in the service of God even at the risk of doing something wrong, than to do nothing. In that context Luther was not at all indifferent to holiness. Rather he expressed his passion that one must live, one must take risks, one must act for the Lord. One must not be immobilised by a neurotic fear of sin.

Luther's concerns were well summarised in *The Formula of Concord*, the last of the great Lutheran confessional statements. In 1577 after years of theological wrangling, Lutherans prepared a doctrinal statement to make peace. One of the issues addressed in the Formula was the third use of the law. Very much in the spirit of Luther, the 'Formula' declared:

We believe, teach and confess that although people who genuinely believe and whom God has truly converted are freed through Christ from the curse and the coercion of the Law, they are not on that account without the Law; on the contrary, they have been redeemed by the Son of God precisely that they should exercise themselves day and night in the Law (Ps 119:1). In the same way our first parents even before the Fall did not live without the Law, for the

Law of God was written into their hearts when they were created in the image of God. We believe, teach, and confess that the preaching of the Law is to be diligently applied not only to unbelievers and the impenitent but also to people who are genuinely believing, truly converted, regenerated, and justified by faith. For although they are indeed reborn and have been renewed in the spirit of their mind, such regeneration and renewal is incomplete in this world. In fact, it has only begun, and in the spirit of their mind the believers are in a constant war against their flesh (that is, their corrupt nature in kind), which clings to them until death. On account of this old Adam, who inheres in people's intellect, will, and all their powers, it is necessary for the Law of God constantly to light their way lest in their merely human devotion they undertake self-decreed and self-chosen acts of serving God. This is further necessary lest the old Adam go his self-willed way. He must be coerced against his own will, not only by the admonitions and threats of the Law, but also by its punishments and plagues, to follow the Spirit and surrender himself captive. . . . Therefore both for penitent and impenitent, for regenerated and unregenerated people the Law is and remains one and the same Law, namely, the unchangeable will of God. The difference, as far as obedience is concerned, rests exclusively with man, for the unregenerated man – just like the regenerated according to the flesh – does what is demanded of him by the Law under coercion and unwillingly. But the believer without any coercion and with a willing spirit, in so far as he is reborn, does what no threat of the Law could ever have wrung from him.⁹

Now again this statement may not be exactly the way Reformed theologians would put it, but there is a real commonality of concern among Lutheran and Reformed that the law be a living reality among believers, that it direct the believer in his life and help him in his obedience.

Luther in his *Large Catechism* on the Ten Commandments says:

Here, then, we have the Ten Commandments, a summary of divine teaching on what we are to do to make our whole life pleasing to God. They are the true fountain from which all good works must spring, the true channel through which all good works must flow. Apart from these Ten Commandments no deed, no conduct can be good or pleasing to God, no matter how great or precious it may be in the eyes of the world.¹⁰

There is Luther's concern for holiness.

The Ongoing Struggle

Now we see that this principle of 'nevertheless' (*dennoch*) in Luther came out of his conviction that the Christian life is an ongoing struggle. The Christian never arrives in the sense of totally conquering sin. The Christian never arrives in the

sense of utterly eliminating temptation from his life, even the temptation to doubt that God in Christ is his Saviour. Luther said the Christian life was an ongoing struggle and in that struggle we always need the law and the gospel. Luther taught that the Christian was *simul justus et peccator* (at the same time righteous and a sinner). The Christian is at the same time perfectly righteous before God because of what Christ has done and yet still a sinner. Luther concluded that we live with this struggle correctly when in the face of every doubt, in the face of every temptation, we turn again and again and again to Christ and the gospel. He said: 'When the conscience assails you, He [Christ] says: "Believe."' ¹¹ This conviction led Luther to exalt the promises of God because he had known the agony of wondering if God could ever accept someone such as he was.

Today we often misunderstand Luther because in our day few, if any, seem to have that agony. The idea seems often to be: 'Well, of course, God would forgive me my sins.' One professor once summed it up this way: 'The gospel of the average man is this: "I like sinning and God likes forgiving, so the world is very well set up."' Today we rarely experience agony of conscience and therefore we tend not to understand Luther's passion about the promise. It is the doubting heart that needs to cling with white knuckles to the promises of God. That is what Luther understood. He said, 'I myself have now been preaching and cultivating [justification by faith alone] for almost twenty years and I still feel the old clinging dirt of wanting to deal so with God that I may contribute something and he will have to give me his grace in exchange for my holiness.'¹² Luther saw that the central temptation was to think we can bargain with God and imagine we can exchange something we have done for his grace. That idea must be stamped out by the law so that we will understand Christ.

Nevertheless, he felt in the balance of preaching, one must be careful to preach more of the gospel than of the law. He wrote,

If you preach faith, people become lax, want to do no good, serve and help no one. But if you do not preach faith, hearts become frightened and dejected and establish one idolatrous practice after another. Do as you please; nothing seems to help. Yet faith in Christ should and must be preached no matter what happens. I would much rather hear people say of me that I preach too sweetly and that my sermon hinders people in doing works (although it does not do so) than not preach faith in Christ at all; for then there would be no help for timid, frightened consciences. I see and experience this: Here is a man who is lax and lazy, who falsely boasts of faith and says he relies on the grace and mercy of God and that these will no doubt help him even though he clings to sins. But as soon as death comes to him, it appears that he has never really grasped and believed the grace and mercy of God. Therefore one will have enough to do to cheer and comfort him even though he has not practised any particular idolatry. But when the message of faith has been extinguished and the heart is completely swamped by sadness, there is neither counsel or help. Say

something about grace to such a heart, and it will answer: 'You preach much to me about grace and mercy; but if you felt what I feel, you would speak differently.' So a frightened and inconsolable heart goes on. I have heard people speak like this when I have tried to comfort them. Therefore I would like to have the message of faith in them not forgotten but generally known. It is so sweet a message, full of sheer joy, comfort, mercy and grace. I must confess that I myself have not as yet fully grasped it. We shall have to let it happen that some of our people turn the message into an occasion of security and presumption; but others, the works-righteous, slander us on this account and say that we make people lazy and thus keep them from reaching perfection. Christ, himself, had to hear that He was a friend of publicans and sinners, that He broke the Sabbath, etc. We shall not fare any better.¹³

For Luther the solution to presumptuousness was not just to use the law, but especially to get people to understand the gospel, to understand the grace of God, to understand what Christ has done.

Luther was a pioneer and a heroic Reformer. He was also a profound theologian who will help us today to understand the law and the gospel. If you want tremendous spiritual benefit and power, read Luther. He has spiritual insights that will be a great blessing to all Christians. He will help us draw near to Christ.

References

1. *Martin Luther: Selections from his Writings*, ed. John Dillenberger, New York (Anchor), 1961, p 52.
2. Cited in Robin Leaver, *Luther on Justification*, St Louis (Concordia), 1975, p 24.
3. Martin Luther, 'Commentary on the Alleged Imperial Edict', vol 34, Philadelphia (Fortress), 1960, p 91.
4. Martin Luther, 'Lectures on Genesis', 1535, *Luther's Works*, vol 2, Philadelphia (Fortress), 1960, pp 266f.
5. Martin Luther, 'Lectures on Galatians', 1535, *Luther's Works* vol 26, Philadelphia (Fortress), 1963, pp 154f.
6. Martin Luther, 'Disputation Concerning Justification', 1536, *Luther's Works*, vol 34, Philadelphia (Fortress), 1960, p 176.
7. The first two 'uses of the law' are described in article by *Robert Godfrey, part 2, RT146*.
8. Martin Luther, 'On Councils and the Church', *Luther's Works*, vol 41, Philadelphia (Fortress), 1966, p 166.
9. *The Book of Concord*, ed. T Tappert, Philadelphia (Fortress), 1959, p 480.
10. *Ibid*, p 407.
11. Heiko Oberman, *Luther, Man Between God and the Devil*, New Haven (Yale), 1989, p 129.
12. Martin Luther, 'Sermon on the Sum of the Christian Life', *Luther's Works*, vol 51, Philadelphia (Fortress), 1959, p 284.
13. *What Luther Says*, ed. Edwin M Plass, vol 3, St Louis (Concordia), 1959, pp 1128f.

Reckless Faith

a review by Sharon James

Reckless Faith: When the Church Loses its Will to Discern, John F MacArthur, 1994, Crossway Books, 256pp, US\$ 17.99, Available in UK from 'Grace to You', 25 High St, Ashford, Kent TN24 8TH for £9.99 incl. p&p.

During recent years we have been amazed at the capacity of the Church of England to adapt to the relativistic society around. First we see the ordination of women. Then the refusal to condemn homosexuality. Then the finding of a Church Commission that 'living in sin' is not really sin at all. The latest scandal concerns the 'Nine O'Clock Service' in Sheffield where a C of E priest for two years conducted 'New Age' rave services where pictures of naked women were flashed up on the walls and in the midst of it all immorality was taking place. The Bishop of Sheffield himself contributed money to the 'Nine O'Clock Service' because he found the liturgy helpful when he visited and was impressed by the number of young people the service was attracting.

What has gone wrong? How can such things be? Although John MacArthur writes from the other side of the Atlantic, his analysis is valid for evangelicals everywhere and his plea for discernment could not be more timely. He explains the difference between reckless faith and authentic faith. He argues that 'reckless faith' has overrun the evangelical community. The visible Church in our generation has become astonishingly tolerant of aberrant teaching and outlandish ideas - and frighteningly intolerant of sound teaching. When the Church loses its will to discern, when the obligation to love is separated from faithfulness to truth, then the course is set for spiritual catastrophe.

The factors behind the current widespread inability to discern truth from error are traced out. The biblical formula for discernment is explained. The central issue of how to separate fundamental (non-negotiable) truth from secondary issues is tackled. Appeals for unity are examined. For example Charles Colson calls all Christians who can assent to five basic truths to unite. (i.e. The infallibility of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the virgin birth and miracles of Christ, Christ's substitutionary death, Christ's physical resurrection and return.) MacArthur argues that as no reference is made to the way of salvation, justification by faith, or the sufficiency of Scripture, this is just not good enough. A Mormon could assent to Colson's points. Nor would *The Apostles' Creed* serve any better; this omits the deity of Christ and the Trinity: JW's could assent to it. MacArthur calls for a new movement to re-emphasise the foundational doctrines of the faith. 'If the current

hunger for ecumenical compromise gains a foothold within evangelicalism . . . it will spell the end of any clarion voice of truth' (p 117).

Reckless Unity with Roman Catholicism

The 1994 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together' document is analysed. This document was signed by notable leaders such as Charles Colson, J. I. Packer, Os Guinness, Timothy George and Bill Bright. The purpose of the document is explained and extracts quoted (pp 122-128). MacArthur is crystal clear in his critique of the document and concludes:

Having declared all active Catholics 'brothers and sisters in Christ', and having given *de facto* approval to baptismal regeneration and justification by faith plus works, the Accord has no choice but to pronounce Catholic Church members off-limits for evangelism (p 128).

MacArthur wrote to several of the leading evangelical signatories asking them to clarify why they assented to the Accord. He gives as complete a list as he can of the arguments in favour of the Accord in their own words. It would seem that the major factor in the minds of many was the urgency of uniting on social and ethical issues in a morally relativistic society. In other words the document, 'sets aside personal salvation in favor of national morality. It is nothing but the old ecumenism with moral conservatism rather than radical politics as its real agenda' (p 130). MacArthur clearly shows the flaws in their arguments and concludes: "'Evangelicals and Catholics Together'" utterly compromises both the formal and the material principles of the Reformation' (p 135). An appendix treats the question 'Is Roman Catholicism Changing?' The conclusion drawn is that Rome continues to oppose the doctrine of justification by faith alone. For as long as this is the case, while it is admitted there may be many true believers within the Catholic Church, 'it is the spiritual duty of all true Christians to *oppose* Roman Catholic doctrine with biblical truth and to call all Catholics to true salvation' (p 216).

Reckless Mysticism

MacArthur next turns to the failure of evangelicals to discern against mysticism. He argues that the 'Toronto Blessing' has 'nothing whatever to do with objective truth' (158). He analyses the work of William DeArteaga, *Quenching the Spirit*, and exposes the weakness of DeArteaga's argument, particularly his contention that 'theological correctness' quenched the Great Awakening. MacArthur's section on the Great Awakening is an excellent corrective to those claims that it was some kind of forerunner of the 'Toronto Blessing'.

Those who focus on the emotional phenomena of the Great Awakening are likely to miss the real import of that revival. It was a movement based on strong preaching and sound theology. . . . The emotional displays began in *response* to the clear preaching of God's Word (p 169).

Edwards continually tied the nobility of true religious affections to the working of the mind. . . . So it should be quite clear what Jonathan Edwards would think of twentieth century emotionalism. 'Holy laughter' epitomises the fanaticism he blamed for the demise of the Great Awakening (p 174).

A quotation is given from Edwards' exposition of 1 Peter 1:8, dealing with the believer being filled with inexpressible and glorious joy:

In rejoicing with this joy, their minds were filled, as it were, with a glorious brightness, and their natures exalted and perfected. It was a most worthy, noble rejoicing, that did not corrupt and debase the mind, as many carnal joys do; but did greatly beautify and dignify it . . . (quoted on p 174).

Reckless Prophecy

The final chapter, 'Looking for Truth in all the Wrong Places' is a powerful warning against the current fad for looking to prophecies and direct 'words from the Lord' for guidance and direction. Wayne Grudem has produced the most thorough defence of the ongoing nature of prophecy. MacArthur allows that Grudem warns against abuse of the prophetic gift, and that Grudem believes absolutely that the canon of Scripture is closed. Grudem warns that modern prophecy should not be thought of as the very word of God. But in his own denomination (the Vineyard Churches) his warnings are frequently ignored, and it is 'I heard the voice of the Lord . . .' that is so frequently heard.

Grudem's defense of prophetic revelation has opened the door to a host of bizarre and misleading 'prophecies' that have plagued evangelical Christianity over the past five or six years. Scores of churches world-wide have implemented Grudem's theology and are encouraging people to share mental impressions as if they were prophetic messages from God (p 183).

MacArthur deals clearly with the folly of trusting subjective impressions and the need to hold fast to a robust view of the sufficiency of Scripture.

The book is timely as it provides a strong biblical corrective to current trends in evangelicalism which threaten to dilute or even destroy the gospel message.

Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God

Jim van Zyl

The nature and duty of evangelism

The principle according to which the Christian operates is that his duty and responsibility are determined by the revealed will of God. We are to order and govern our duties by the light he has given in his Word, and not by guess-work or intuition.

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law (Deut 29:29).

I am not saying that in the course of evangelism in whatever form, some particular thought, idea, question or unexpected prompting of the Spirit may not be impressed upon our mind and heart. The Spirit is like the wind, he works as he wishes. But these unusual actions of the Spirit must not be the overriding factor in our evangelism, neither should we constantly be seeking them. We must be governed by the revealed Word, and if it seems that God is guiding us into some unusual action, then that must be tested by the Word.

‘The things that God is pleased to keep to himself (the number and identity of the elect, for instance, and when and how he purposes to convert whom) have no bearing on man’s duty. They are not relevant in any way (because) . . . the command to evangelise is part of God’s Law.’¹

The evangelist cannot direct his evangelism just to the elect because he does not know who they are! In fact as Dr Packer points out above, that is God’s business, not ours. Spurgeon, when confronted with this difficulty, replied that it was not for him to go around lifting up men’s coat-tails to see if God had written the word ‘elect’ across their backs!

The necessity of evangelism

Whatever we believe about election, the hard fact remains that evangelism is necessary, for the simple reason that no man can be saved without the preaching of the gospel. This lies at the heart of Paul’s argument in Romans 10:14-15. His argument goes like this: ‘No man can call upon the Lord for salvation unless he believes. But how can he believe if he does not hear? And how can he hear unless someone preaches? And how can a man preach unless he is sent by God?’ And that is precisely the point. Every Christian has been sent to evangelise. Being sent he preaches (perhaps not from a pulpit, but he still preaches). As he preaches to the

non-Christian, the Holy Spirit works in him through the word he hears, and so by hearing he believes.

Thus the Christian and his sharing of the gospel becomes a vital link in the unbeliever passing from death to life.

Are you a Christian? Then you must evangelise because only so will a non-Christian hear and believe in Christ as Saviour!

The urgency of evangelism

Whatever we may believe about election, the fact is that men and women are being lost (their relationship with God has been broken) and they are without Christ. They are, to put it bluntly, going to that place called hell. 'Unless you repent you will all . . . perish' (Luke 13:3,5).

If we see a man fast asleep in a building going up in flames, we don't stand and argue the pros and cons of his election, we rush to get him out! We should not be held back by the thought that a person might not be one of the elect and that our efforts may be in vain.

(i). It is always wrong in principle to abstain from doing good because of possible negative consequences. You 'do good', you preach the gospel primarily because it is the highest service you can render any man. If he rejects it, then it is his responsibility. A desperate man, bent on suicide, may aggressively try to prevent someone saving him, but surely every effort should be made to save him from his own folly. Should we do less for a sinner on his way to hell?

(ii). The non-elect are, as far as the evangelist is concerned, unknown. It is futile and presumptuous to try and guess who they are.

(iii). Our calling as God's children is to love all men (see the parable of the Samaritan) irrespective of God's eternal decrees. This is not to defy God. It is rather to obey him and his revealed will. Thus we find Paul warning and teaching 'every man' (Col 1:28). Every man was his neighbour. Every man needed Christ. Every man was eternally lost without Christ.

(iv). The greatness of our neighbour's need and danger is precisely the urgency of our task. The danger of a man asleep in a building about to go up in flames is the measure of the urgency to rescue him.

(v). It is our responsibility to tell. If he considers himself unworthy of eternal life, that is his solemn responsibility (Acts 13:46). God commands all men everywhere to repent and we are commissioned to convey that command urgently and persuasively to all.

The genuineness of the invitations of the gospel

Whatever we may believe about election, the fact remains that God in the gospel really does offer Christ to 'whosoever will'. *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved* (Rom 10:13).

When God says 'whosoever' he is not being hypocritical. His holiness, integrity and justice will not allow him to be hypocritical! Neither was our Lord in any way dishonest when he said, 'He that comes to me I will in no way cast out' (John 6:37).

Divine sovereignty and human responsibility

These two great truths must be held together. Dr J I Packer uses the word 'antinomy' which the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* defines as, 'A contradiction between conclusions which seem equally logical, reasonable or necessary'.

For our purpose, however, we change that slightly to read 'an *apparent* contradiction' for the whole point of an 'antinomy' from a theological view-point is precisely that it is not a real but an *apparent* contradiction. 'An antinomy exists when a pair of principles stand side by side, seemingly irreconcilable yet both undeniable. There are cogent reasons for believing each of them . . . but it is a mystery to you how they can be squared with each other. You see that each must be true on its own, but you do not see how they can both be true together.'²

The example commonly used to illustrate this dilemma is the movement of light in physics. There is clear proof that light consists of 'waves', but equally cogent proof that it consists of pulsating particles (that is, dots rather than short stripes if illustrated on a blackboard). It is not yet apparent, though some scientists seem to be moving towards a conclusion, how light can act as 'waves' and 'particles' at the same time. Yet the evidence is there. Hence neither can be ruled out or reduced to the terms of the other or explained in the terms of the other. The two seemingly incompatible positions must be held together, and what's more, both must be treated as true. Although this may offend our tidy minds, we must hold both if we are to be true to the evidence.

An antinomy is not a paradox, but a figure of speech to express an apparent contradiction. Paul, for example, speaks of having nothing, yet possessing all things (2 Cor 6:10). The 'apparent' contradiction is *verbal*, not *real*.

Likewise, God's sovereignty and man's responsibility are a verbal antinomy, not a real contradiction.

God's sovereignty is our only hope of success in evangelism

The scriptural logic that lies behind this statement is the condition of the unbeliever in his unregenerate state. Any evangelist facing the unbeliever with the gospel is

confronted with a formidable situation in the non-Christian's darkened mind and perverse will.

To the non-Christian, the things of God are foolishness (1 Cor 2:14). They are not even worth considering as an 'alternative'. A Dominican priest, Matthew Fox of Oakland, California says, '98% of Bible scholars agree with me . . . that we need to go back to 'original blessing' – not 'original sin'.¹³ Now if that is the view of a priest, what would be the view of the busy office manager today?

To him the Christian faith is weak, irrelevant to this century and its claims ridiculous in an age of space travel and hi-tech. But not only does he think that the Christian faith is 'foolish', he is also hostile towards it and refuses to subject himself to God's law (Rom 8:7ff). It is astonishing how angry many unbelievers become when you raise this subject! Why? Paul points out that the non-Christian is not sick or in hospital, but on a mortuary slab in the morgue, 'dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph 2:1).

It means that no human agency can raise a dead man, turn his hostility into love, help him to accept what he thought was foolish (2 Cor 4:14) by means of his own resources. 'Unless there is some other factor in the situation, over and above all our own endeavours, all evangelistic action is foredoomed to failure. This is the fact, the brute, rock-bottom fact, that we have to face.'¹⁴

What then is the 'other factor'? What is our hope?

(i). Our Lord specifically said that 'unless a man is born of . . . the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. The flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit' (John 3:5-6). As evangelists we have immense hope since the Holy Spirit can and does give 'life' to 'dead' men. This is the first encouragement. We never witness alone!

(ii). Our Lord said, 'No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him' (John 6:44). You may ask; 'But why does he not draw everyone?' My answer would be, 'I do not know; the secret things belong to the Lord.' But the encouragement to the evangelist is that he knows that God draws sinners to his Son! We saw earlier that human agency is hopeless. But, as an evangelist to crowds or to an individual, we have this great encouragement encapsulated in God's own promise: '. . . so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it' (Isa 55:11). What encouragement!

(iii). We read in Ephesians 2:8, 'For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.' Now whether you take the phrase 'gift of God' to apply to either 'grace' or 'faith', it is in the long run immaterial. The important thing is – the very passage in which Paul describes non-

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Christians as 'dead' (i.e. spiritually dead), goes on to state categorically that the state of grace into which they have come is a gift from God. The metaphor Paul uses is of course that of 'death'. Having thus defined the non-Christian as 'dead', he goes on to tell us that the spiritual life needed, to pass from wrath to adoption, is given to the non-Christian by God himself!

How does that encourage the evangelist?

Realising that no human can bring a spiritually dead man back to spiritual life, the evangelist is encouraged because he realises that there is a divine life-giving agency (God) who can do just that!

Finally, it makes the evangelist bold! He now realises that he is not going to evangelise with a sense of hopelessness because he is faced with a foolish, hostile and spiritually dead unbeliever on his own. God has promised to make his ministry fruitful. The Holy Spirit will bless the evangelising word – as he has done throughout the age of the Christian Church.

This study is extracted from the course on Evangelism for the alternative programme for Licentiate in Theology, Bible Institute of South Africa, prepared by Rev Jim van Zyl.

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Crazy Counselling

by Alec Taylor

We live in a fallen world where life is tough and often tragic and many people carry deep emotional scars of past traumatic experiences. Some experiences have been so dreadful that they may haunt us and torment us for the rest of our lives. The person who has been sexually abused as a child is often plagued with feelings of guilt and uncleanness. William Cowper, the great poet and hymn-writer, suffered all his life from the harmful effects of being bullied at school when he was very young.

Many very vulnerable people have suffered greatly at the hands of certain counsellors, inside and outside the church. Some secular therapists have come under fire in recent years for their counselling techniques based on Jungian principles. They have encouraged counselees to visualize their hurtful past as they seek to unravel the causes of present trauma and problems. Once the counselees are in a state of mind regression, they become susceptible to all kinds of suggestions and some over-zealous counsellors have suggested that they have been the victims of sexual abuse by their parents. Counselees have taken these suggestions on board with disastrous consequences. Marriages have been destroyed and careers have been ruined. Last year in the USA, Gary Ramona won £335,000 damages against a therapist who had induced his daughter to recover 'memories' of rape that he was supposed to have committed against her until she was 19.

Crazy counselling is not confined to secular counselling, however. The charismatic movement has thrown up some of the most appalling counselling techniques. Those most commonly known and causing great problems are found in what are known as 'Inner Healing' and 'Deliverance' ministries.

Inner Healing

Inner Healing (or Healing of the Memories) is a form of prayer counselling which seeks the healing of past hurts. These hurts are alleged to be responsible for present emotional, spiritual and psychological problems. Betty Tapscoff, a Southern Baptist writes, 'Inner Healing is the healing of the inner man: the mind, the emotions, the painful memories, the dreams. It is the process through prayer whereby we are set free from feelings of resentment, rejection, self-pity, depression, guilt, fear, sorrow, hatred, inferiority, condemnation, or worthlessness, etc.' She quotes Romans 12:2 to justify her practice but this verse of Scripture has nothing to do with the charismatic practice of Inner Healing.¹ This unbiblical practice is hailed as the panacea for all the ills of the Christian life.

Counsellors probe deeply into the past of those who are counselled, seeking to uncover all their hurts and repressed emotions. The counselling session is often very long. One friend remarked that after a ten hour counselling session, he felt that he had been emotionally raped and he compared it with ‘a marathon session of the confessional in the Roman Catholic Church’. It hardly needs saying that counselees become very vulnerable after such intimate counselling and the counsellor begins to wield quite an influence over their lives.

Following the counselling comes the healing prayer described by David Seamands as ‘one of the distinctives about healing of memories. So that the Holy Spirit may actually touch the barriers to health, a full use is made of conversational prayer with emphasis on visualization, imagination . . .’² The use of the imagination or visualizing is not picturing a scene described in a book, or imagining how a derelict house would look if it were renovated. It is an act of such intense concentration that reality is created out of imagination. The Lord Jesus is imagined into the hurting even until he becomes real and tangible (Roman Catholic charismatics generally visualize Mary). Rita Bennett quotes a testimony – ‘I stated to the counsellors that I hated my mother for not loving me. I spoke forgiveness to my mother and asked God to forgive me (NB. the mother was only there in her imagination). Then we asked Jesus to allow me to see how he meant my mother to be through Creative Prayer. First, Jesus held me really close and I could feel his love. Then he handed me to my mother, and she showered my face with kisses. I really liked this. Then she touched my hands, and I wrapped my fingers around her finger. Then she unwrapped my blanket and touched my legs and stroked me all over. . . . Then Jesus took me and held me and burped me . . .’³

Seamands confesses that this prayer time ‘can be somewhat frightening, and counsellors must simply “hang loose in the Spirit” and be ready for almost anything’. He goes on to write, ‘Don’t be surprised if, when counselees re-experience a situation, they revert back to that time. Their voices may become like those of little children, and they may say and do things appropriate to that stage of life.’⁴ One victim of such counselling told me that this had happened in her experience. She was regressed to childhood and found herself speaking with the voice of a two year old girl. She had no control over the voice and said that the experience was weird. Another friend found herself speaking with a man’s voice after being informed that her mother was a witch (this ‘word of knowledge’ was entirely false). After hours of counselling she was left a total wreck.

Inner Healing counselling is not biblical

We must not tolerate Inner Healing counselling because it is not biblical. Seamands writes, ‘It is of the utmost importance to understand that the healing of the memories has a solid foundation in the Scripture, which is our final authority in all matters of faith and practice.’⁵ This sounds very good and can throw us off our guard but these counsellors misuse Scripture beyond recognition. The way they interpret the Bible would do a Jehovah’s Witness proud! It requires a very perverse

imagination to equate the renewing of the mind (Rom 12:20) with the mind-bending practice of Inner Healing. Among their favourite scriptures are John 14:27; Luke 4:18-19 and 1 Corinthians 13:11. The Lord Jesus does heal the broken heart, he does give his peace, but we do not need to look into Bible commentaries to know that these verses haven't the remotest connection with the practice described above. How 1 Corinthians 13:11 can be used to justify regression for the healing of 'the hurt child within', I fail to understand.

It is not difficult to see why many Roman Catholic charismatics love the practice of Inner Healing. The teaching has nothing to say on the glorious doctrine of justification by the free grace of God, through faith: 'Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ' (Rom 5:1). We stand righteous in Christ, we have peace with God, our guilt has been cleared and there is no more condemnation (see Rom 8:1). We do not look to Inner Healing for our peace and in Christ we are a new creation. He has dealt with our past and he is with us in all our present difficulties and trials. Rita Bennett is on dangerous and blasphemous ground when she uses Romans 4:17 to support visualization.⁶ God 'calls those things which do not exist as though they did' because he is our God and Creator. We must not try to 'play God' by seeking creative power through visualization. The second commandment forbids us from making any carved images or material representations of God. To visualize Christ and to bring him into our presence (as we imagine him to be) is a form of image-making. If visualizing was the practice of the early Christians, it makes 1 Peter 1:8 very difficult to understand. Those first readers of Peter's letter had not seen the Saviour in the flesh or by visualization. The apostles were at pains to point out that they had seen and touched the Lord Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry (2 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:1,3). In this respect they differed from their readers who had not seen the Lord. 'We walk by faith, not by sight' (nor by visualizing) – 2 Corinthians 5:7. After the resurrection, the apostles did not attempt to use visualization to bring the risen Saviour into their midst. Thomas worshipped a real Christ, not a visualized Christ. Paul's letters to the churches reveal him to be a great pastor of souls. Those early Christians faced quite as many problems and trials as we face at the end of the twentieth century. In all his detailed teaching, we fail to find a single instance of Inner Healing being described. We find more problems when we discover the source of Inner Healing.

Inner Healing has occult origins

The famous Swiss psychoanalyst, Carl Gustav Jung, taught that there is within each one of us 'a collective unconsciousness'. Jung had a spirit guide whom he called 'Philemon' and he claimed to bring up images from the 'collective unconsciousness'. Agnes Sanford was much influenced by Jung's ideas (which came from evil spirits) and she 'Christianised' them. She introduced visualization and Inner Healing to an unsuspecting church. Her son, Jack, studied at the C G Jung Institute in Zurich with his charismatic episcopalian friend, Morton Kelsey. In their book *The Seduction of Christianity* and its sequel Hunt and McMahon give

detailed proof of the occult practices and bizarre teaching of people such as Agnes Sanford, Morton Kelsey, John and Paula Sandford, Richard Foster and other teachers of Inner Healing and visualization.⁷ We shall be seeing later that Inner Healing is a satanic deception which must be vigorously denounced.

Inner Healing wrecks lives

Inner Healing books give glowing accounts of people who found liberation through its methods. In his wife's book, Dennis Bennett claims, 'It really works. It's exciting. Don't pass it by!'⁸ We have no warrant to embrace a practice because 'it works'. The cults claim that their religion 'works' but we must reject all teaching that is not biblical. Where Scripture is called on to support these practices, we must ask, 'Is this what the verse and its context are really saying or implying?' Those who have spoken to me of their experiences of Inner Healing counselling tell a very different story to that which we find in the books. One young lady, who with the help of friends broke loose from a hostel where Inner Healing was practised wrote, 'In my opinion, these regular "counselling sessions" of young vulnerable women alone, by an older man, are neither healthy nor safe. I believe that such practices can lead to a misplaced dependence upon the counsellor rather than upon the Lord Jesus. I have yet to see any positive fruit of such methods either within the hostel or elsewhere.'⁹

Mary Pytches advocates the use of touching during counselling sessions.¹⁰ When the counselees are in a state of regression, taken over by visualization and not in control of themselves, the danger should be obvious. I know of two charismatic ministers who have fallen into adultery because of their involvement in this type of counselling. A friend was in a church that was completely destroyed through Inner Healing practices so that it no longer exists. Such counselling has led to the break up of many marriages. Inner Healing practitioners warn of occult practices while unwittingly (?) using such practices themselves.

The use of so-called 'words of knowledge' has led to many a disaster and the spread of lies and slander about those who are innocent. 'False memory syndrome' is not confined to the world of secular counselling and some horrific cases have recently been well-publicised. The *Telegraph Magazine*, Saturday 10 December 1994, gave the detailed story of Paul Ingram whose marriage has been destroyed and his family ruined through Inner Healing counselling and bizarre 'words of knowledge'.

Paul Ingram was a well-respected senior policeman and faithful member of his charismatic church in Olympia, in the north-west of the United States. He is now serving a twenty year jail sentence. Why is this? It all began when his twenty-two year old daughter attended a church-sponsored retreat for girls at which a woman 'healer' told the girls that she saw images of several of them being molested by relatives. This so-called revelation had a devastating effect on the girls and Ericka was later found weeping inconsolably. The healer informed her that she had been

sexually abused by her father when she was a child. On returning from the retreat, Ericka and her eighteen year old sister Julie left home. Three months later, Ericka told her mother that she had been abused by her father and molested by her brothers.

Father and brothers denied these charges but the pastor told Sandy, Paul's wife, that Ericka's accusations were probably true because children do not lie about such things. Paul was arrested and when questioned insisted that he had no memory of wrongdoing, but his daughters would not lie as they had been brought up to tell the truth. In his prison cell, Ingram was seen by his pastor who sought to exorcise Ingram, telling him to spit out the spirits of sexual immorality and gluttony into a wastepaper basket. The interrogation went on for five months and Ingram prayed and visualized in his cell turning out more and more lurid confessions.

In the meantime, Sandy began to have memories of being raped by Paul's friends and Ericka described the most vile acts of sexual perversion involving her father. She also spoke of orgies at which 25 babies were sacrificed and the Ingram property was dug over but no mass graves of sacrificial babies were found. Ericka's accusations grew more and more bizarre and she accused judges and doctors of Satanism. The number of babies sacrificed increased tenfold to 250. Ingram pleaded guilty to six charges of rape. When later he perceived the difference between real memories and those implanted, he sought to withdraw his guilty plea but this was rejected. The judge asked Ingram if he had anything to say. He replied, 'I stand before you. I stand before God. I have never sexually abused my daughters. I am not guilty of these crimes.' Reporter Robert Chesshyre writes, 'Today, as if awakened from a savage nightmare, he sits numbed and drained in a prison cell, serving a 20-year sentence, clear in his mind that he was innocent of the crimes to which he confessed. Others who have investigated his case concluded that Ingram was a victim of a modern form of witchcraft . . . I became convinced that Ingram was the victim of a giant collective madness, to which, of course, he himself contributed massively.'¹¹

What are we to make of all this? The man has lost his wife and his daughters. His life has been ruined by charismatic madness! How could such vile confessions be put into the minds of professing Christians? The Bible describes demons as 'unclean spirits' (eg. Mark 1:23,26,27). To be involved with Inner Healing counselling is to dabble with the occult and many lives are being ruined.

If you believe that this could only happen in America, think again. The BBC has highlighted the case of the Dallimore family who live in a Norfolk village (Radio *Sunday* programme and *Everyman*, BBC Television, 21 May 1995). Their daughter Rebecca became involved with her local charismatic Anglican church and began to attend Wednesday night healing meetings. So-called words of knowledge revealed that her parents had satanically abused her. They were arrested and the house was searched for evidence of satanic paraphernalia and other clues. Nothing was found and they were released but they have lost their daughter whom

they have not seen for two years. Rebecca is 'recovering' at a Christian healing centre in Dorset. Cult expert Graham Baldwin commented, 'This case amounts to false memory syndrome. Someone in the church put ideas into Rebecca's head, and her parents are suffering.'¹²

Deliverance counselling

The same BBC television programme referred to above also highlighted the dreadful effects of so-called Deliverance counselling. The leading exponents of this teaching are Peter Horrobin (one of the compilers of *Mission Praise*) and New Zealanders Bill Subritzky and Graham Powell. Horrobin is Director of Ellel Grange, near Lancaster, and two other 'healing centres'. Over 4,000 people pass through these centres every year for counselling courses which are also held in other countries of the world.¹³ A supporter and speaker at Ellel Grange is the Bishop of Willesden, Graham Dow.

These people make the most outrageous statements, with no support whatever from Scripture, that almost every problem and sin is caused by demons coming into our lives. Peter Horrobin spoke of confessing the sins of a man's ancestors and of taking control of the spirits that come down the ancestral lines.¹⁴ Graham Powell writes, 'Evil spirits are frequently transferred from parents to child even before the child is born . . . I would say that today by far the majority of children are born into the world already demonized.'¹⁵ Subritzky tells us that when there is friction between parents, 'young children can be filled with fear and demons of fear can enter them, followed by physical afflictions such as asthma. . . . On many occasions, demons enter during pregnancy or at birth. Demons can easily enter a foetus where there is shock, fear or trauma on the part of the mother, particularly where there is disagreement between parents.'¹⁶

These people are teaching Christians that their problems are caused by demon possession. There are demons for everything – rejection, anger, lust, gluttony, lies, laziness and so on. Having convinced their hearers that they are possessed, they then proceed with the most harrowing exorcisms (some were seen on the *Everyman* programme). One former staff member of Ellel Grange told the television reporter that he had been forcibly held down by four men after being told that he had demons of lust. Despite his struggling, they poured Ribena over his private parts (this is nothing less than ritual sexual abuse)! Evelyn Laws and her daughter, Jackie, were counselled at a Baptist church which had embraced 'deliverance' ministry. Through a 'word of knowledge', Evelyn was told that her father was a Satanist and that she and Jackie were consequently under the control of demons and that there had been witches in their family. After three years of the most appalling counselling mother and daughter were left as wrecks and have lost their faith. Evelyn said, 'I regret that I have lost my faith. I feel that I have been cheated out of that. I had faith as a child . . . and I regret not having that any more. It has left me feeling very angry. It's left me with feelings of being spiritually and psychologically abused. They wanted to know so much, they demanded in fact to

know so much about my life that I feel as if I have been raped . . .’ Jackie commented, ‘It wasn’t until I threw away my Bible that my life got better.’¹⁷

Conclusion

Inner Healing and Deliverance counsellors wield great power over those they have duped. Such teaching and practices bring bondage, fear and trauma rather than the release that they proclaim. These pernicious teachings fail to deal with real sin and real repentance, telling us that our sin is because of past hurts or through demons.¹⁸ If you are an objectionable person, it is your sin! Do not blame your sinful behaviour on demons or onto past hurts. Many fine Christians have been hurt. The way of forgiveness is not by regression into the past but by turning to God in repentance and faith here and now in the present. We live in a fallen world and the believer is not exempt from suffering. The most superficial reading of the New Testament shows that the Christian life involves conflict, struggle, trials and tribulation. – ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God’ (Acts 14:22) ‘Tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance character; and character hope’ (Rom 5:3-4). The early Christians thrived under rejection and triumphed in difficulties. We are not to give way to despair in suffering but to rejoice in it (see Acts 5:40-41; 16:22-25; Rom 8:17-18; 1 Cor 4:9-13; 2 Cor 4:7-10, 16-18; 1 Thess 1:6; 2:2; 3:2-4). We need a robust Christianity, thoroughly grounded in the Word of God to enable us with God’s help to cope with life’s bitter experiences.

Let us be quite clear that this crazy counselling by well-meaning amateurs is demon-inspired. The day will soon come when some charismatic counsellor will be taken to law for slander. The sooner these vile practices are exposed for what they are, the better! Let us be sensitive to those who come to us from charismatic churches where Inner Healing or Deliverance is practised. They may be emerging from a ‘hell on earth’ and they will need all the help that we can give them.

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11. *Telegraph Magazine*, Saturday 10 December 1994.
12. *Sunday Telegraph*, 10 July 1994.
13. *Everyman* (BBC Television 21 May 1995). I have video recording of this programme.
14. *Everyman*.
15. Graham Powell, *Christian, Set Yourself Free*, p 51.
16. Bill Subritzky, *Demons Defeated*, p 69.
17. *Everyman*.
18. Tapscott, pp 55-56.

The Anatomy of a Hybrid

The Anatomy of a Hybrid

The Anatomy of a Hybrid, Leonard Verduin, 274 pages, The Christian Hymnary Publishers and Associates, Box 7159, Pinecraft Br, Sarasota, FL 34278, USA phone 813-955-8521 Retail price \$8.95 plus shipping. Available in UK from Metropolitan Tabernacle Bookshop, Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6SD, £4.95. For review of Verduin's *The Reformers and their Stepchildren*, see RT143.

The theme of Verduin's book is the marriage of Church and State for which union he has aptly chosen the title *The Anatomy of a Hybrid*. He uses the King James translation of Genesis 6:4 as an analogy. The sons of God married the daughters of men. The godly united with the ungodly. In the Roman emperor Constantine we have represented the marriage of the Church and the State. Up until that time the godly Church was severely persecuted by the State. Then the Church and State became one. Believers who did not agree and did not conform to this alliance themselves became the subjects of severe persecution. The child born of this union was a hybrid, a rugged monster!

The first result was that there was no longer a gospel to proclaim since all were now already included. The second result was coercion. All were obliged to conform on pain of death. A third result was the demise of missionary endeavour.

Those who see no need of evangelism within society have no concept of what it is to evangelise beyond the border of their own monolithic society.

The Donatists were not without their errors but they did retain a biblical view of the nature of the Church as that body called out of society (1 Cor 1:1-2). The Donatists resisted this secularisation of the gospel but were regarded as seditious.

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) did nothing to save the Church from the calamity of sacralism (a monolithic society held together by sacrament). Augustine scored full marks for his stand on original sin and sovereign grace and for his refutation of the errors of Pelagius. Verduin describes Augustine's response to Constantinian sacralism in detail (pp 105ff). It is impossible to support sacralism from Scripture and so Augustine resorted to the idea of *ecclesiola in ecclesia* which means that the little spiritual Church is to be found in the large State Church.

Verduin shows that Calvin followed a similar idea in his teaching that there is the invisible Church of the elect but then the very large visible Church on earth, so large that the few grains of wheat are encompassed by a mass of tares (pp 199ff). Verduin quotes the Institutes in which Calvin says that the Scriptures speak of the Church as, 'those who by the gift of adoption are the sons of God and by sanctification of the Spirit are the

true members of Christ' and then goes on to affirm that, according to Scripture, 'often too by the name Church is designated the whole body of mankind who by baptism are initiated into the faith; by partaking of the Lord's Supper profess unity in true doctrine. . . . In this Church there is a large admixture of hypocrites who have nothing of Christ but the name and outward appearance. . . .' It is not surprising that Calvin endorsed the principle that the State should put heretics to death. The burning of Servetus was the logical outcome of Calvin's thinking (pp 202-208).

In 1527 the Anabaptists held a secret conference at Schleithem where they drew up a brief credal statement.¹ There were seven articles of faith. The first concerns baptism. Believers' baptism is outlined positively and infant baptism is described as, 'the highest and chief abomination of the Pope'! Calvin later undertook to refute the Schleithem Confession item by item. It is noteworthy that it is difficult to find any mainline denomination practising infant baptism today that does not accept the validity of Roman Catholic baptism. Verduin notes that Karl Barth came to the conclusion that the real reason for the Reformers retaining infant baptism was their unwillingness at any price to let go the idea of the State Church (pp 249-251).

Sacralism ordered the extermination of dissenters. In the Swiss Reformation Anabaptist leaders Felix Mantz and George Blaurock were put to death. Three months after being involved in the production of the Schleithem Confession Michael Sattler, a former Benedictine monk, was tortured and burned at the stake. New leaders such as

Menno Simons and Jacob Hutter were used to pull the battered Anabaptist cause together. Verduin takes up the story of Conrad Grebel and his battle with sacralism and the magisterial reform of Ulrich Zwingli (pp 155-212). Verduin concludes this section by refuting the idea that religious freedom was one of the products of the magisterial Reformation. 'No reputable historian of our times could endorse that notion' (p 211). Finally Verduin traces out the journey of sacralism across the Atlantic to Massachusetts Bay in the New World. He describes the experience of Roger Williams.

Having traced out the history of sacralism from pre-Christian times to the ultimate rejection of that idea in modern America, Verduin concludes his book with a warning. He quotes the book of Revelation which describes the scenario of a society of coerced conformity and a common sacramental symbol, a massive totalitarian sameness, without which it will be impossible to buy or sell (Rev 13:17). Christians must be separate from that.

As with his other book *The Reformers and their Stepchildren* the reader is given a tremendous overview of Church history leading to a balanced view of the Reformation. It was indeed a mighty reformation leading to the recovery of the gospel and the doctrines of salvation. However with regard to the doctrine of the Church the 16th century Reformation is unfinished.

References

1. The Schleithem Confession of 1527 is included in the book edited by Mark A. Noll, *Confessions and Catechisms of the Reformation*, Baker 1991.

News

Bulgaria

In 1989, 350,000 Turks fled from Bulgaria to Turkey which, for its size (61 million), is regarded as the least evangelised nation on earth. When Communism collapsed about half of those who had fled to Turkey returned. Since then there has been a major break through with hundreds of groups of believers forming in Bulgaria. We know of nothing like this in Turkey. There are about 400,000 Gypsies in Bulgaria, a people generally despised at the bottom of the social order. A spiritual awakening has taken place among the Gypsies.

This year pastor Dean Olive of Grace Baptist Church, Madison, Alabama, USA, accompanied a Presbyterian minister Harry Miller, who was invited to teach in the Baptist church in Petrich three years ago by pastor Ivan Dimitrov. Ivan is assisted by two young men. Church planting is taking place in several towns.

Pastors in Bulgaria have received very little training and Harry Miller's regular teaching has done much to make up for this need. It would be advantageous if men could be trained at the London Theological Seminary which is ideally suited to the needs of Europeans from backgrounds like that of Bulgaria.

Support for this Baptist work can be directed to Rev Harry Miller, 4007 Glendale Lane, Huntsville, AL 35810, USA (telephone 205 852 2604).

Dean Olive reports that he distributed copies of the 1689 Confession, books by C H Spurgeon and J P Boyce's *Abstract of Theology*. There is a small selection of books in Bulgarian available.

Dean was inspired by the way that the Bulgarian Baptists shine in evangelism. They reach out into towns and villages and distribute gospel literature wherever they go. They urgently need biblical teaching to give a better grasp of truth, for example their preaching on repentance could give the impression that the sinner has to prepare himself first before coming to Christ. Much needed is clear teaching on justification by faith, on Christian liberty, but especially on the doctrines of grace.

India

With a population of about 900 million, in 25 contrasting states, India is a world of its own. The state of Uttar Pradesh, the home of Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism, has given no opening to the gospel. It has the largest population (139 million; Protestant Christian 0.12

per cent!) Tamil Nadu (population 55 million; Christian 6 percent), the most southerly state, is visited annually by pastor Stephen Turner of New Zealand. This last May/June he was accompanied by Stephen Fry of Auckland. Pastor Turner preached in a number of Tamil Baptist churches. Besides renewing fellowship with pastors, the reason for the tour of these churches was to grapple with the question of developing spiritual leadership along sound theological lines. The main purpose in Tamil Nadu is to teach Divinity at Coonoor, this time to a group of sixteen students.

The method used is to select basic Reformed books and to study them in depth. The books chosen this year were:

Warnings to the Churches, J C Ryle, Banner of Truth;

Redemption Accomplished and Applied, part 2, J Murray, Banner of Truth;

The Final Word, O Palmer Robertson, Banner of Truth;

The Discipline of Grace, J Bridges, Navpress.

These books are studied paragraph by paragraph with questions and discussion of issues. This work has not been easy to develop. There is a deep seated antipathy in some quarters to the Reformed faith and efforts to disaffect young men who are interested in what the Coonoor Studies have to offer. Often where there is a lack of theological teaching legalism fills the vacuum as though being a Christian is

merely observing taboos. While we have no interest whatever in the booze or tobacco business we must insist that the life-style of Christians is the Sermon on the Mount and uphold the freedom expressed so well in the 1689 Confession chapter 21, otherwise donkeys who also abstain can be on the church roll!

Already Stephen is planning for the annual Bible school at Coonoor next year. It is refreshing to observe his passion for this work in India and his concern to find avenues wherever possible for advanced training for young men who are preparing for the ministry.

Reformation among the Southern Baptists

Southern Baptists represent the largest evangelical denomination and the largest missionary force in the world. About 15 million (it may be needful to halve or even quarter this statistic since Southern Baptists tend to keep on their church records those who long since have become invisible) support 8,000 missionaries and 10,000 seminary students with a cooperative budget of 150 million dollars. To a man the founding fathers of this great denomination maintained the doctrines of grace (see Tom Nettles, *Introduction to the Southern Baptists*, Carey Publications 32pp. distributed by EP, which describes the origin, growth, prosperity and present crisis of the Southern Baptists).

About the turn of this century theological decline set in. Arminianism began to prevail leading to Liberalism. Arminianism has led to superficiality and shallow decisionism. To build without robust Christian truth is to build with wood, hay and stubble. The technique is used to get people to consent to a few basic truths and then recite a prayer. It is then assumed that they are saved. The result is superficial church building and lifeless and largely nominal memberships which soon collapse in times of testing. A further consequence of superficiality is a shamelessly low level of morality in which there is no difference between the Church and the world.

Even more tragic are the consequences of Liberalism. Seminaries have been undermined and in this way large sectors of the ministry eroded and destroyed.

It has not been all downgrade among the Southern Baptists. During the last ten years there has been an upgrade seen primarily in the formation of the Founders' Movement which organises an annual conference. Fred Huebner, who supplies Reformed books to about ten to a dozen conferences across America, told me that the Southern Baptist Founders' Conference was the most vibrant of these.

This Movement produces *The Founders' Journal* which appears four times a year. It is edited jointly by Thomas R Ascol and Ernest Reisinger.

This year to celebrate the 150th anniversary a king size issue of 64 pages was published. 57,000 copies have been mailed to 39,000 pastors and missionaries. Over 500 subscriptions have been received and each new subscriber has been given a free copy of *The Forgotten Spurgeon* by Iain Murray.

'Mission 150' is the most far-reaching undertaking to restore the doctrines of grace to the Southern Baptist Convention. Writing in *Christianity Today* (May 15, 1995) Timothy George points to the growing awareness of Reformed theology among Southern Baptists today. 'There is a renewed commitment to the sovereignty of God in salvation, worship that centres on the glory of God rather than entertainment and a perspective on history and culture that sees Jesus Christ as Lord of time and eternity. All of this can only result in the greater building up of the body of Christ.'

However he warns that it is imperative to guard against views that endanger the doctrine of human responsibility or that deny the free offer of the gospel.

South Africa

Eclecticism in the DRC

In *RT138* we reported the struggle of Christo Heiberg who wrote a thesis documenting the inroads of Liberalism

into the University of Pretoria Theological Faculty. It is amazing that there has been so little resistance and a grief that eclecticism has disarmed many who might have been faithful defenders of the truth (Jude 3). Eclecticism, of course, is the idea that we know about all points of view, but sadly contend for nothing. Should not watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem defend those walls where the peril is greatest?

The March 1995 issue of *Lux Mundi* (Zwolle, Netherlands) gives an update on the situation in South Africa and comments on the fact that some within the Dutch Reformed Church (NG – *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk* which is by far the largest of four Afrikaans denominations) have resisted the downgrade and protested against contempt for the Word of God; deviation from ‘*Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide and Solus Christus*’; lack of faithfulness to confession standards; and compromise of the subject of sinfulness and sin.

Lux Mundi tells of a minister, Eugene Viljoen, who opposed the decision of the synod in 1990 that women could be elders in the Church. For his opposition, in which he was careful to be temperate, he was deposed from office. It is observed with great sadness that the recently murdered Prof Johan Heyns justified the deposition of Viljoen. While Presbyterianism has many advantages we must observe that when a hierarchy becomes liberal or corrupt

the whole edifice is subject to ruin. We note that with the best will in the world it was not possible for Christo to remain in the NG denomination. He has joined the *Free Reformed Churches of South Africa*. Eugene Viljoen has done the same and is presently serving a Free Reformed Church in Capetown.

Bible Institute, Kalk Bay

Jim van Zyl writes from Capetown, ‘For some time now I have devoted myself entirely to the task of preparing correspondence courses for the Bible Institute of SA in Kalk Bay. I have now completed 16 such courses including among others, Doctrine of God, Man and Sin; Doctrine of Christ’s Work of Redemption; The Early Church; Preaching; Cults and Heresies (with particular emphasis on the New Age Movement); A Commentary on I and II Kings; A Christian View of Philosophy (which includes lectures on revival). I am busy writing my 17th course, “A History of the Medieval Church”. BI have also requested courses on Reformation Church History, Worship, and The Theology of the Old Testament. The University of South Africa (UNISA) now recognise 80% of the BI Licentiate Courses in terms of credit towards a degree. When it was decided to make the Licentiate available to “living-out” students there was no correspondence material available so we have had to start from scratch.’

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