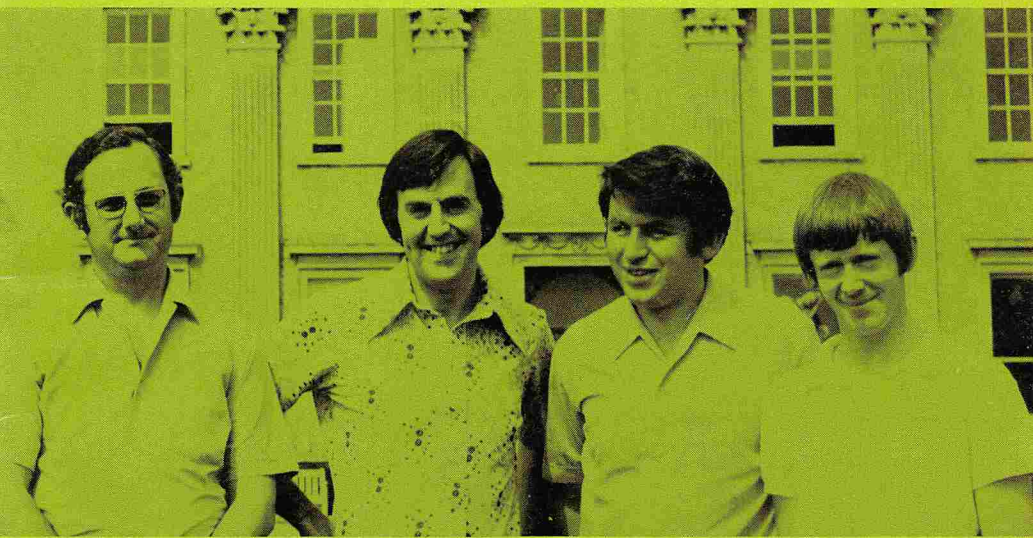


REFORM- ATION TODAY '77



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Editorial

The Legacy of the Nineteenth Century

MEN ENTERING THE MINISTRY TODAY SOON DISCOVER THAT THERE ARE traditions in the Church which come to us as a legacy of the nineteenth century—a legacy of dubious value. Traditions which can hinder progress, stick hard and are difficult to remove. Reformation is exceedingly difficult. Long patience and enduring perseverance are necessary. It is no small help to understand how these traditions originated. Robert Oliver's historical survey gives us some idea.

Whenever the Church departs from a powerful doctrinal, expository, systematic, teaching ministry she exposes herself to deadly errors and heresies. A lack of definitive doctrine made way during the last century for the overwhelming advance of Liberalism. The poor evangelical forces were ill-equipped to stand before the armed might and blitz-krieg of the higher critical movement. A lack of doctrinal strength in the Established Church meant that a fertile field was ready to receive the seeds of a resurgent Romanism in the Church of England.

In his first study Robert Oliver traced out the advance of Liberalism and described the advance of an expanding Romanism. This time we see the horrifying developments of unbalanced forms of evangelicalism breaking out on all sides, from the extreme of unbiblical hyper-Calvinism on the one hand to decisionist Arminianism on the other, from the highly eccentric, legalistic and sectarian stance of Darbyism on one wing, to the intoxicating excitements of an Irvingite brand of Pentecostalism on another. Unbalanced deviations became rampant. Why? The main reason—and it needs to be repeated over and over again—was the failure by ministers to obey the instructions of Scripture to establish their churches in the truth. Now the process of recovery is a slow and unsensational work. But we must not be despondent or allow ourselves to become melancholic about it.

What does NEAC mean for us?

A brisk correspondence has resulted from the dispatch of *Evangelical Times* and *Reformation Today* to leading evangelical Anglicans. A small fraction appears in this issue. Some subscribers have written in giving

Cover picture. *The cover picture was taken at the Carey Family Conference at Clarendon School last year. From left to right: David Kingdon, David Straub, John Rubens and Colin Richards of Bedford. David Straub has recently taken up the pastorate of the Reformed Baptist Church at Paradise, Pennsylvania.*

us the addresses of those they know in the Church of England who would be interested to read these reports. We welcome further addresses from you. The *Church of England newspaper* (17th June) devoted the front page and several other pages to the write-up which appeared in *Reformation Today*.

Jim Packer to the fore

Writing in the same newspaper Jim Packer declares that Anglican comprehensiveness rests on two principles. The first is that church communion should always be based on agreement regarding only what Scripture defines as essential. The second is that positions are not always being denied when doubtful ways of expressing them are offered on a provisional and exploratory basis.

We hope to review the 77 page Nottingham Statement in a future issue and call for clarity on a number of issues especially statements such as Mi (b), 'Seeing ourselves and Roman Catholics as fellow-Christians, we repent of attitudes that have seemed to deny it.' We, too, deplore obscene attitudes such as those displayed in Ulster toward RC's—yet who would deny that we all need to know what a Christian is. The vast majority of Anglicans and RC's we meet know absolutely nothing of the new birth.

The Covenant Baptist issue

Material is being held over on this subject, but we assure our loved and esteemed friends, such as Professor Douma of Holland, that we have not forgotten them and will conduct our exposition with affection for them. Our congregation has been strengthened and encouraged by an ever increasing number from Holland.

'Christian Hymns' prices

Hundreds of hours of work are represented in the compiling of the two new hymn books now available. Stop press information for our American friends as follows: the price of the words only edition for America is \$3.80 and for the deluxe edition (the comments in my review do not apply to the deluxe edition), \$4.85. The music edition is in deluxe style, price: \$12.85. Postage for words edition 50 cents for music edition \$1.40.

An alarming graph!

The graph on page 39 certainly is frightening. What can be done?



The second in a series of three articles by Robert Oliver.

The Legacy of the Nineteenth Century

THE PREVIOUS ARTICLE OUTLINED THE DISASTROUS RECESSION EXPERIENCED by Evangelicals during the nineteenth century. Losing the powerful lead they had maintained earlier, they lost control of the larger denominations by 1914. They no longer carried weight in society as they had done in the days of the Clapham Sect. Although Britain was superficially a religious nation, the teaching of the majority of pulpits was not the robust evangelicalism of an earlier generation. Even the remaining Evangelicals themselves issued an anaemic version of the Gospel of their fathers. Unhappily, most did not seem to grasp the nature of the problem. Many felt that activity—of which there was plenty—would meet the need. There seems to have been little suggestion that the churches needed to review their teaching in the light of Scripture. In England too few seemed to have realised that a mighty movement of God's Spirit in revival was essential. England had been affected to some extent by the 1859 Revival, but not as Northern Ireland and Wales had been. The 1904 Revival in Wales appears to have had very little impact upon England.

The fundamental weaknesses of the Church were to be exposed by the changes in society, resulting from the First World War. By 1914, however, the shifts among Evangelicals had, in great measure, weakened them as they grappled with the challenges of their age. It is to these internal developments that we must turn in this article.

Changing Evangelicalism

There had always been differences of opinion and belief amongst English Evangelicals. The broad classification included both Anglicans and Dissenters, in both of which groups there were Calvinists and Arminians. From the 1820s, however, new developments can be traced. These further divided the Evangelicals and weakened their testimony in the face of the new challenges. The remarkable career of Edward Irving illustrates the ease with which changes could be introduced and suggests a certain weakness among many who held to an orthodox view of the Scripture.

1. Irvingism

In 1822, Edward Irving, who had been assistant to Thomas Chalmers in Glasgow, was called to be the minister of the Church of Scotland congregation in Hatton Garden, London. A man of magnetic personality and remarkable oratorical gifts, Irving made an immediate impact upon the metropolis. All classes of society flocked to hear him preach and within two years a larger building was needed. At this time he was developing his ideas on unfulfilled prophecy.

It would probably be true to say that most Evangelicals of the early nineteenth century held a post-millennial view of our Lord's return and viewed the future with a fair degree of optimism. By 1825, however, Irving had concluded that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent and that it would precede his personal millennial reign on earth. In reaching these conclusions he had been profoundly influenced by the writings of a Spanish Jesuit, Manuel de Lacunza, whose book, *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, he translated into English and published in 1827. Already he had revealed his views to his own congregation, before launching them on to the general public at the great May meeting of the Continental Society in 1825. Edward Irving's frequent journeys in England and Scotland helped to gain him a considerable following. Further publicity for his prophetic teaching was provided by annual conferences at Albury Park in Surrey from 1826 until 1830.

Irving's thinking was moving rapidly. By the end of the decade he was convinced that the proximity of Christ's Advent justified the expectation of a reappearance of such apostolic gifts as prophecies, healings and tongues. Such phenomena were claimed by his congregation in 1831. At this time Irving was also teaching that our Lord had taken a sinful humanity. For this he was disciplined and expelled from the ministry of

the Church of Scotland. His followers established a new denomination, the Catholic Apostolic Church. It was alleged that its organization and liturgy had been revealed by divine inspiration. It became hierarchical and ritualistic, with the Eucharist as its central service. Although the doctrine of transubstantiation was rejected, vestments, lights and incense were used at this service. Irving himself played a fairly minor role in the new church and died in 1834, while on a visit to Scotland.

Although Irving was dead, his influence continued to be felt in several ways.

(i) The Catholic Apostolic Church continued throughout the nineteenth century. It was never a strong group when compared with other denominations, although it was able to put up a number of massive buildings. It has been suggested that its ritualism helped to create a demand for ceremonial, which was later met by the Anglo-Catholics.

(ii) Irving's prophetic beliefs lived on among many who had no sympathy with his interest in apostolic gifts or in the ritualism of the Catholic Apostolic Church. His view of the future was essentially pessimistic. Time was short and no great impact of the Church upon the world was to be expected before the end.

(iii) The Evangelicalism of the earlier years had been shattered. *The Christian Observer*, a magazine representing the views of the Clapham men, was deeply disturbed by the tone of the May meetings after the advent of Irving. These meetings of the various missionary and philanthropic societies had been the great annual rallies of the Evangelicals. Charles Simeon spoke for many, when he declared of the Irvingites, 'They are led aside . . . from a doctrine, which humbles, elevates, refines the soul . . . to a doctrine which fills only with vain conceits, intoxicates the imagination, alienates the brethren from each other and by being unduly urged upon the minds of humble Christians, is doing the devil's work by wholesale.'

2. Darbyism

While Irvingism was taking London by storm, another important development was taking place in Dublin. There a small group of able men commenced meetings for Bible study and Christian fellowship. Soon they began to celebrate the Lord's Supper together, although they insisted they were not a church and arranged to hold their meetings at times which did not clash with church services. These meetings soon came under the remarkable influence of John Nelson Darby, a former minister of the Church of England. Similar groups formed at Plymouth, Bristol and London before appearing in other cities and villages of the United Kingdom. Most of the leaders in this movement were well-educated and many had come from an Anglican background. They were staunchly evangelical and at this stage Calvinists, although their Calvinism was not expository and definitive like that of the Puritans. The result was that there was little

doctrinal foundation. On matters of church order, however, they showed a remarkable divergence of opinion. Some were Baptists, others Paedobaptists. Some believed that they were forming churches, others considered that local churches in the New Testament sense no longer existed and that no attempt should be made to re-establish them. Some held to a plurality of elders, others taught that there were no church officers now because there were no churches. All seem to have imbibed the doctrine that no great extension of the Kingdom of God was to be expected, because of the imminent return of Christ. Important in propagating this eschatological view had been the Powerscourt Conferences, held in Ireland in the early 1830s and similar in outlook to the Albury Park Conferences in England.

In the early years the Brethren, as these Christians came to be known, believed that their movement, with no fixed church polity, was the answer to a divided Christendom. In 1845, however, the Brethren movement itself divided as a result of a schism in the Plymouth Meeting. Factions formed under the rival leadership of Benjamin Wills Newton and John Nelson Darby. The movement divided into Open and Exclusive sections, with Darby as the leader of the Exclusives. The repercussions of that division continue to the present day. Certain of Darby's views were received beyond his immediate circle and demand closer attention.

(i) *The Church*. Darby believed that the Church had long ceased to exist. He declared, 'I believe from the Scriptures that the ruin is without remedy. That the professing church will be cut off. Christendom has become completely corrupted. The dispensation of the Gentiles has been found unfaithful. Can it be restored? No! Impossible!' Men who believed that the Church had not existed for centuries were not likely to be interested in church history, however much they might admire the achievements of individual Christians. Obviously if there is no church, it cannot be reformed. Another result was that loyalty to a leader tended to become more important than loyalty to a regularly constituted group of Christians. These views need to be seen against the background of nineteenth century individualism, when many Evangelical Christians were tending to neglect the doctrine of the Church.

(ii) *Dispensationalism*. Darby's prophetic teaching proved to be even more attractive than his church views. Premillennialism had been taught by many before him, but Darby developed it in a new way. He insisted upon the 'distinction between Israel as the earthly people of God and the Christian Church as his heavenly people. The present age will close in two stages, with the removal from earth of the genuine members of the Christian Church at the Second Coming of Christ and the judgement of apostate Christendom when he comes in glory with his saints. Then and only then will God's plan for the earth begin to be implemented through the agency of the Jews, who will have recognised their Messiah at his coming in glory. Two corollaries came to be drawn: the coming of Christ for his

Church may be expected at any time; those passages in the Gospels in which Christ spoke of his coming in open glory—such as Matthew 24—must have been addressed to the disciples as Jews and not as Christians.’¹

This distinction between God’s two purposes led Darby to assert: ‘The Church is in relationship with the Father, and the Jews with Jehovah. . . . The Jewish nation is never to enter the Church. . . . The Church is a kind of heavenly economy, during the rejection of the earthly people.’² This distinction lay at the root of the rapture theory, which first appeared among the Irvingites, although Darby claimed to have come to it as a result of his own studies. He held that the Church is a kind of parenthesis in God’s purposes and so he argued that it was not envisaged in the Old Testament prophecies, which are only concerned with the destinies of national Israel.

Darby was an extensive traveller, exercising a powerful influence wherever he went. He paid six visits to North America, where great congregations flocked to hear him, even if they were not prepared to heed his call to forsake apostate Christendom. His prophetic scheme took great hold especially in the increasingly popular Bible conferences, most notable of which was the Northfield Bible Conference, established by D. L. Moody. A spate of books and pamphlets carried dispensational teaching throughout the English-speaking world. Amongst those who accepted this view was the American Bible teacher, C. I. Scofield, who incorporated it in the notes of his famous Bible. The Scofield Bible became the basis of instruction in countless Bible Schools in the United States and its teaching thereby a part of the orthodoxy of American Fundamentalism.

3. Hyper-Calvinism

Most of the leading Evangelicals of the early years of the century were Calvinists. Their Calvinism tended to be implicit rather than explicit. As a result, some of the clearest statements of the doctrines of grace were made by men who did not accept the free offer of the Gospel. Those who preferred to speak of themselves as moderate Calvinists and those who were hyper-Calvinists were moving further apart. Samuel Wilberforce recorded in his diary some comments of his father, William: ‘Father reading some of Romaine in the evening exclaimed, “Oh how unlike this is to the Scripture! He writes as if he had sat at the Council Board with the Almighty!” He then mentioned Mr. Newton’s having told him that more of Romaine’s people had become Antinomians than any other he knew.’ Possibly this was a reference to the fact that many of Romaine’s people had been drawn to the ministry of William Huntington, after their old minister’s death. Romaine and Huntington seem to have had a profound respect for each other.

William Huntington, a self-taught minister, built up a large Independent congregation in London. He was opposed to the free offer of the Gospel

and also denied that the Law was the believer's rule of life. After his death in 1813 his congregation scattered, but his influence remained. His followers could be found among the Strict Baptists, the Independents and even in the Church of England. Among the Particular Baptists, such men as Andrew Fuller and Abraham Booth had been concerned to maintain the historic Reformed position on the preaching of the Gospel and the position of the Law. Many of their successors do not seem to have taken a clear-cut position and even began to move towards Arminianism in some cases. Against these, such men as William Gadsby, James Wells and Joseph Charles Philpot reacted strongly. It was from preachers of this school that C. H. Spurgeon was to receive such stern criticism at the outset of his London ministry.

William Gadsby and James Wells were both powerful preachers, whose energies helped to swell the ranks of the hyper-Calvinists throughout the kingdom. The continuance of such a group owed much to the literary abilities of J. C. Philpot. Philpot, an outstanding classical scholar, became a fellow of Worcester College, Oxford, and was ordained to the ministry of the Church of England at the same time as E. B. Pusey. A contemporary of the Tractarians at Oxford, Philpot underwent a deep conviction of sin and revolted against the inclusive nature of the Church of England, before he was convinced of the truth of believer's baptism. He seceded from the Church of England in 1835 to become a Strict Baptist and soon afterwards became editor of the *Gospel Standard* magazine. Under his editorship the circulation of this magazine increased until its readers were found throughout the English-speaking world. Other Strict Baptist magazines came into existence, but none could compete with the *Gospel Standard* as an exponent of experimental hyper-Calvinism. Such groups of Christians as these came to be regarded as the champions of Calvinism in England, largely because there were so few of the old fashioned Calvinists left. They were careful to maintain a separation from other Evangelicals, even from the few contenders of the old Calvinism of the Puritan tradition as exemplified by C. H. Spurgeon. Of Spurgeon, J. K. Popham, one of their leading ministers, could write in 1892: 'I could never follow people in their judgement about Spurgeon. The little that seemed right was so counteracted by the much that (as judged by the Scriptures) was undoubtedly wrong that I always felt that I must not praise him on spiritual grounds but leave him to the just judgement of God.'

4. *Arminianism*

Turning to the other extreme of Evangelicalism, it is clear that Arminianism was present but certainly not dominant in the early years of the century. The Wesleyans and the various Methodist breakaway groups were making considerable progress. The division of the Primitive Methodists from the main body after 1805 was in large measure the result of the introduction of American camp meeting techniques. It cannot be denied that God

greatly blessed the endeavours of the Primitives at Mow Cop and elsewhere, but as so often happens, success was used to justify a great deal for which no scriptural warrant could be pleaded. The novelty of the evangelistic appeal at the close of the sermon had been developed in the camp meetings at the end of the eighteenth century. It soon came to be regarded as an integral part of American evangelism, as viewed from this side of the Atlantic. Because of this, Asahel Nettleton had to defend the cause of orthodox evangelism when visiting England in 1831 and to point out that sound men in his own country disapproved of the new methods.

These new methods were of course popularised by C. G. Finney, whose *Lectures on Revival* was soon regarded as an authoritative work on the subject. Strangely, the first edition of this work to appear in Britain was published with an introduction by the moderate Calvinist, John Angell James of Birmingham. Later James was to have grave doubts about Finney, his message and his methods, but in spite of all, he allowed him to preach at Carr's Lane Chapel, Birmingham in 1851.

By the time the 1859 Revival reached England, Finney's approach had been accepted by many. It is true that men like C. H. Spurgeon and Brownlow North who stood in the older tradition did not approve of the new ways, but many who were active in preaching did. One prominent figure who did was William Booth. He was to found the Salvation Army in 1863. In 1859 Booth was a minister of the Methodist New Connexion in Gateshead, where he had considerable success as an evangelist. American evangelists such as Walter and Phoebe Palmer preached in English cities at this time, while Finney himself arrived to conduct a mission in Bolton, Lancashire in December 1859.

American methods were to receive a further boost in 1873 and 1874, when D. L. Moody spent two years campaigning in Britain, culminating in a twenty weeks campaign in London. His second British campaign lasted from 1881 to 1884. Again London received attention and Moody preached there for eight months. These campaigns were influential in the work of F. B. Meyer and G. Campbell Morgan, who were to be prominent Evangelical leaders by the beginning of the new century.

C. H. Spurgeon was not impressed by the new methods and cautioned against the use of the enquiry room. The services at the Metropolitan Tabernacle continued to be based upon the careful exposition of the Word of God, with earnest application to believer and unbeliever alike. It is amazing, therefore, to discover that within less than a year of Spurgeon's death, D. L. Moody was conducting an evangelistic campaign in the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

It is no accident that a new approach to sanctification coincided with the acceptance of Arminian evangelism. The new preaching did not insist that sanctification must be the inevitable result of regeneration. The

result was the rise of special conventions and holiness meetings from the 1870s onwards. The Keswick Convention dates its commencement in 1875. Prominent in the developments leading up to this Convention were Mr. and Mrs. R. Pearsall Smith, who arrived in England in 1873, the year when D. L. Moody began his first campaign. It is significant to note that both C. H. Spurgeon and J. C. Ryle did not become involved in the Keswick Movement. In his book, *The Christian Warfare*, Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones makes the important point that it was at this time that the Victorian spate of Puritan republications ceased.³ The new approach to evangelism and the sanctification formula had made the old theology obsolete as far as the majority of English Christians was concerned.

Conclusions

Evangelicalism had weakened and divided as it ceased to be under the direction of powerful expository preaching. There were plenty of great pulpiteers in the nineteenth century. Some of these could dominate congregations of thousands. There were skilful leaders who, by their preaching tours or writings, built up large followings. Unhappily many of these men lacked the biblical balance which had so often been seen in the writings of the Reformers and Puritans. They preached the truth in varying degrees, but neglected important aspects and even included serious error in their teaching. Only faithful proclamation and application of the truth in its biblical proportions can maintain true unity and health in the Church. As different men developed their peculiar emphases, they not only produced imbalance in their own congregations, but they also provoked over-reaction in other quarters. Because of Irving's excesses many stressed order and dignity to the point where they were afraid of the powerful interventions of God which are seen in times of revival. The powerful movement of the Spirit of God in the eighteenth century produced scenes far removed from the staid congregations of the nineteenth century. At the same time Hyper-Calvinists and Arminians drove each other apart. As time went on, the one group not only abandoned aggressive evangelism, but produced congregations suffering from inertia, and lacking assurance of salvation. The activities of the other group created problems everywhere as new techniques replaced the old ways of preaching the Gospel and vast numbers were coaxed into a profession of faith with very little teaching. These problems are still with us. Many men are wrestling with them in the situations they have inherited. These problems can also be recreated today if we allow ourselves to over-react against error and fail to be grounded in Scripture. It is vital, therefore, that we endeavour to understand the whole counsel of God and patiently teach our congregations. Only as a good foundation is laid can we hope to escape the aberrations of the past.

¹ H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 230.

² Quoted from a booklet on dispensationalism by Jon Zens.

³ D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *The Christian Warfare*, p. 149.

Paul's Teaching on Marriage

by Victor Budgen

'THE THIRTEENTH APOSTLE HAS A GREAT deal to answer for' was the title of an article in *The Times* newspaper, written by Olivia Manning at the end of International Women's Year. By the time we reached the second paragraph the familiar accusations were gushing out. 'Paul, from all internal evidence, was a case-book neurotic. He was an hysteric, a fanatic, probably an epileptic and almost certainly a suppressed homosexual with a hatred, fear and envy of women,' she confidently declared.¹

The charges were predictable and strong. After all, many people within the professing church have at times provided ammunition for those outside. As long ago as 1959 'St Paul wrong on Sex' could provide a not inaccurate title for a popular daily paper's coverage of a T.V. Brains Trust. Apparently one of the team members, Sir Ifor Evans, had trotted out the idea that Paul regarded sex as evil and sexual desires as dreadful. He asserted that this was not the idea of Christ at all. The paper went on, 'Agreeing that St. Paul had taken a wrong view of sex, Dr. Weatherhead said that this apostle should have had psychiatric treatment particularly in regard to his attitude to women.'²

Such accusations are widespread. As we look at Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 in particular this challenge needs to be faced. Was Paul a crusty old bachelor with a down on marriage and women? Did he merely tolerate marriage? Would he really deep in his heart have preferred the world to have been populated with aged sexless beings? At first sight there is a problem. He did praise very highly the gift of celibacy and say, 'I wish that all were as I myself am' (v. 7). He did appear to permit marriage largely as a safeguard against immorality and merely in situations where the couple were 'afire with passion' (vv. 2 and 9).

At several points he undoubtedly urged others to take the single path if they were able (vv. 25-35). Some may say that the issue is simple and clear. Does he not say, 'To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I am'? (v. 8). Yet we would maintain that the issue is by no means simple and clear. The matter demands further investigation.

There is great value in the old adage, 'a text without a context is a pretext'. It would be grossly unfair, for example, to build one's image of Christ's view of family life on his one phrase, 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple' (Luke 14:26). Such a radical, far-reaching and undoubtedly valid challenge can only be properly understood within three contexts. Firstly, we must ask what is the general view of Christ about family life. Here we find that Christ spoke highly of marriage and of honouring one's father and mother. Secondly we look at the context of the passage itself. Here we find that Christ is speaking of the need to count the cost of discipleship. Thirdly we look at the closer context and precise wording of the saying. At this point we find that a parallel passage like Matthew 10 vv. 37-39 helps to soften any possible vindictive undertones in the word 'hate' without in any way diminishing the radical challenge. Let us use the same method with Paul.

What is the wider context of Paul's general teaching on marriage? If we turn, for instance, to 1 Timothy we may find that we have to add schizophrenia to the list of Olivia Manning's charges! Apparently the apostle says one thing one day and unsays it the next. For, in this first letter to young Timothy, Paul says

that the bishop or elder should be a married man, asserts vigorously that those who forbid marriage teach 'doctrines of demons' and completes his vigorous somersaulting by urging the younger widows to remarry post-haste! (1 Tim. 3:2, 4; 4:1-5; 5:14). The simple fact is that both in 1 Corinthians and in 1 Timothy Paul is reacting to specific situations. Yet as far as our purpose is concerned, enough has been said about 1 Timothy to show that Paul was far from automatically condemning marriage.

It is Ephesians 5:21-31 that gives us Paul's clearest teaching about marriage. There he is not reacting to any particular situation or problem. It is straightforward teaching. In this chapter we see that he has the highest doctrine of marriage. The union of the man and woman is likened to the union of the Saviour and his believing people. One comment on the passage must suffice. Dr. Ironside tells of the man who came to his pastor troubled because he thought that he was loving his wife too much. 'Do you love her more than Christ loves the church?' was the challenge he received. 'No', was his instant reply. 'Then you don't love her too much,' said his wise counsellor. So much for Paul the sour misogynist (woman-hater).

In the second place we have the more immediate context of Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians chapter seven as a whole. Some words later in the chapter are pivotal. Paul writes, 'I think that in view of the impending distress it is well for a person to remain as he is. Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek marriage. But if you marry, you do not sin, and if a girl marries she does not sin. Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that' (vv. 26-28).

Generations of critics have interpreted these words as a reference to the imminence of Christ's second coming. But, we have no evidence for taking the reference in 1 Corinthians to the 'impending distress' as a reference to Christ's return. It is most likely that

Paul is envisaging a time of real persecution for the Corinthian Christians.

Not all Christians everywhere live under constant duress. There are seasons of relative peace. There are also periods of hardship and heartache. In such times the apostle knew that a man could be 'got at' through his family. Also the knowledge of his family's sufferings could heighten his own. John Bunyan endured lengthy spells in prison. He felt for his family and in particular for his blind daughter Mary. Here is an excerpt from what he wrote. 'O I saw in this condition that I was as a man who was pulling down his house upon the head of his wife and children; yet thought I, I must do it, I must do it.'³ Of course the issue is by no means a dated one as the family of Georgi Vins in Russia and many others experience today. Therefore, when Paul wrote 'I would spare you that' we know that he was writing with compassion.

Our third consideration leads us to affirm that any proper assessment of Paul's teaching must leave a place for the call to the single life. Sometimes circumstances may dictate this, as we have seen. However, even in relatively peaceful times, there may be from God the call to a single life. A major reason, one assumes, is that a man may be free to travel or free to live in certain conditions without the problem of being constantly aware of the privations endured by his wife and children. Paul in our passage speaks of a 'special gift' from God (v. 7). He also refers to freedom from preoccupation with family affairs as implying greater freedom of service in some situations (vv. 32-34).

It is at least arguable that John Wesley, constantly itinerating, scarcely ever remaining in one place for a few days together, should never have married. It is certainly beyond dispute that his marriage was a fiasco, a disaster.⁴ Speaking as one convinced of his own call to celibacy, John Stott has said, 'From some of the homes I've visited, it's very clear to me that it's far better to be single than to be married to the wrong person.'⁵ Obviously the single

life is not an unmitigated life of sorrow. The married state on the contrary may be just that—if it is entered into contrary to God's will.

In 1770 Berridge wrote to Lady Huntingdon telling her that he had warned one minister about the danger of 'petticoat snares'! He feared that the poor man had already burnt his wings. He continued, 'Matrimony has quite maimed poor Charles Wesley, and might have spoiled John Wesley and George Whitefield, if a wise Master had not graciously sent them a brace of ferrets. Dear George has now got his liberty again. . . .' Later on he referred to his own thoughts about taking a 'Jezebel'.⁶ One wonders what his female correspondent thought! I am not for one moment condoning the unfortunate tone or arguments of this particular letter. Yet at least he does make the point that certain Christian tasks are sometimes best done by single men.

One should not leave this subject without alluding to the sacrifice that might be involved. Words heard by God's prophet, Jeremiah, cannot have been received with total freedom from heart-ache. 'You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place,' was God's command (Jer. 16:2). Some have written of the difficulties involved in taking this path. The title of one such publication, by Shelagh Brown, is enheartening and positive. It is called *Single—fulfilment and the single Christian woman*.⁷ It is a reminder that the single woman is often single (partially or wholly) by choice. There may be non-Christian suitors she has in obedience to Christ rejected. And yet it may be a life of 'fulfilment'. If celibacy is a 'gift', then the grace will also be 'given'.

We should remember that in writing Scripture Paul had the mind of Christ himself. This particular subject is no exception. Christ constantly upheld the sanctity and goodness of marriage. He spoke highly of it as ordained by God and performed his first miracle at a wedding reception (Matt. 19:1-9; John 2:1-11). Yet there were times when, as he prophesied, it would go much harder

with those who were married and with families than with others (Luke 21:23; 23:29). And like Paul he stresses that for some time there is the call to the celibate life (Matt. 19:12).

If we were to leave it there, we would give an unbalanced picture, for 1 Corinthians seven stresses that as well as the gift of celibacy there is the gift of marriage. 'But each one has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and one of another,' he affirms (v. 7). Even here Paul has fallen foul of numerous critics. Most seize on the aspects of his teaching as summed up in the second of the three reasons for marriage given in the 1662 prayer book service, which says: 'Secondly, it was ordained for a remedy against sin and to avoid fornication, that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry, and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body.'

'You see,' say the critics, 'Paul thought of marriage merely as a safeguard against lust and fornication.' The answer is that Paul certainly did think of marriage as a safeguard against lust and fornication, but there is no question of 'merely'. He thought of marriage as involving much more than this. Above all he thought of it as a union between believers (2 Cor. 6:15). He maintained that God intended it for life (Rom. 7:1-6). He was sure it should involve tremendous mutual consideration and love (Eph. 5: 21, 25f). He realised that children are often involved (1 Tim. 5:14). But it cannot be denied that he also said it was a remedy against fornication. 'But because of the temptation to immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband' (1 Cor. 7:2). If we recall that in the previous chapter he had concluded on this note, 'Shun immorality' (6:18), we can see that the opening verses of chapter 7 are a continuation of this theme. Elsewhere Paul strikes the same note. Writing to the Thessalonians he says, 'For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from immorality; that each one of you know how to take a wife for himself in holiness and honour, not in the

passion of lust like heathen who do not know God' (1 Thess. 4:3-5).

It is instructive to look at a proposal of marriage that Whitefield once made. As was the custom of the time it is addressed to the bride's father. Writes our fervent suitor, 'You need not be afraid of sending me a refusal. For I bless God, if I know anything of my own heart, I am free from that foolish passion the world calls *Love*.'⁸ How we long for at least a tiny hint of 'passion'! (v. 9). What a blessing the wise girl turned him down!

The teaching of Paul is realistic. No man should marry a woman simply because he is 'afame with passion'. Yet it would seem likely that he should not marry if he is not. God expects the man to feel a strong physical longing for his bride-to-be as long as it is a longing joined to respect and faith and true Christian love.

Furthermore, once they are married, physical union is an essential part of marriage. This is the clear meaning of vv. 3-5 where Paul is speaking of intercourse. What a contrast this passage is with the teaching of a pamphlet of the Manchester branch of Women's Lib which was headed 'Women—your body is your own'. What a contrast this is with the view of the man who feels he has the 'right' to 'take sex' when and where he likes. There is no mention of our demanding our 'rights' but rather of giving them. And perfect equality in this sphere is the scriptural rule. 'For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does' (v. 4).

Throughout the Bible marriage is continually described as 'one flesh'. This is so in the marriage ordinance in Genesis, in the teaching of Jesus Christ and in the pronouncement of the apostle Paul (Gen. 2:24, Matt. 19:5 and Eph. 5:31). Therefore, if a marriage has never been consummated, it is not a question of divorce but of annulment since the marriage has never truly taken place.

Other parts of the scriptures support the propriety of physical love. In fact

'propriety' is far too cold a word. The wife of Ezekiel was 'the delight of his eyes' (Ezek. 24:16). The writer of Proverbs, as well as warning against adultery, tells husbands to rejoice in their wives 'a lovely hind, a graceful doe'. He continues, 'Let her affection fill you at all times with delight, be infatuated always with her love' (5:19).

However it is reserved for the Song of Solomon to express most clearly the joys of physical love. (Whatever deeper meaning the book may have we cannot ignore the plain surface meaning that it is a poem between two lovers.) The woman thinks of the man's head and wavy hair, his eyes, cheeks and lips, his arms, body and legs and concludes, 'His speech is most sweet, and he is altogether desirable' (Song 5:16). For his part the man is overwhelmed by her attractiveness. Her lips are 'like a scarlet thread'. He praises her hair, her teeth and her breasts, loves the scent of her garments and tells her 'you have ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes' (4:3,9).

Of course not all are as passionate and poetic as the couple in this poem! Nevertheless the absence of passion is by no means a virtue. Kierkegaard once looked at two cows and was reminded of many marriages he had observed. He wrote, 'the one jogging gaily along and swinging its tail with a fine dash, the other was more prosaic and depressed at having to take part in such emotions—are not most marriages like that?'⁹ The passage teaches that we are to seek to give rather than to demand rights. Very rarely are two people 'sexed' alike. Part of the discipline and growing joy of marriage is for a couple to seek to understand each other's desires and moods and to please each other.

The passage says nothing about the frequency of love-making. That is left to the individuals concerned. It does however warn that only in exceptional circumstances should physical union be put aside. The circumstances are carefully and clearly defined. In verse five we are told that it is not to be a unilateral act but something that is agreed. It is

(continued at foot of page 15)

A new minister and a new emphasis at Westminster Chapel

IN MANY WAYS LONDON IS THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE WORLD. THE RECENT Silver Jubilee celebrations for our sovereign majesty Queen Elizabeth II acted as a reminder that no other nation can boast of such stable institutions over so long a period of time. Between the Houses of Parliament situated on the Thames embankment at Westminster (which represent the oldest democratic parliament in existence) and the official residence of the Queen at Buckingham Palace (representing the oldest monarchy in the world) lies Westminster Chapel. Situated in Buckingham Gate about a hundred paces from Buckingham Palace, Westminster Chapel is the most famous non-Conformist preaching centre this century, made so by the combined ministries of Dr. Campbell Morgan and Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

The history of Westminster Chapel goes back to 1842. The present building, a typical Victorian preaching house with two circular galleries, was built in 1865. Just four years before that, Spurgeon began preaching at the newly erected Metropolitan Tabernacle, the internal shape and design being very similar to that of Westminster which has a seating capacity of 2,500. The original Spurgeon's Tabernacle seated 4,600 but in addition hundreds used to stand. There is no other structure left in



Continued from page 14

only to be temporary, 'for a season'. And there must be an underlying reason, such as greater freshness and more time for mutual prayer.

The verse underlines the temporary and abnormal nature of this by stressing that they should 'come together again'. Knowing human nature, Paul points out that Satan will seek opportunity to tempt the couple if they deny the obvious and strong impulses of their nature. In conversion God has not turned them into sexless angels. He has not expected them to be monks and nuns. If they seek to live like that within marriage

then perversion or adultery could easily result. The teaching of Paul is sane and eminently practical.

¹ *The Times* December 24th 1975.

² *Daily Herald* July 13th 1959.

³ *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners.* John Bunyan. S.C.M., 1955. p.142.

⁴ See *A Tale of Two Brothers John and Charles Wesley.* Mabel Richmond Brailsford. Rupert Hart-Davies. 1954.

⁵ Interview, *Crusade* magazine. June 1974. p.40.

⁶ *Five Christian Leaders.* J. C. Ryle. Banner of Truth. p.139.

⁷ *A Falcon Booklet.* 1971.

⁸ Quoted in *George Whitefield.* Arnold Dallimore. Banner of Truth. 1970. p.471.

⁹ *The Journals of Kierkegaard* edited and translated by Alexander Dru. Collins Fontana. 1960. p.67.

London quite like Westminster Chapel. This is probably the reason why the local authorities have placed a preservation order on it. With some tasteful redecoration and avoidance of heavy institutional colours the inside of the Chapel could be made to look extremely attractive.

Dr. Campbell Morgan ministered at Westminster from 1904 to 1917 and again from 1932 to 1939. I have spoken to one who can remember every seat being filled on Friday nights to hear Dr. Morgan in the prewar years. Dr. Lloyd-Jones, who was born at the beginning of the century, was invited by Campbell Morgan to become joint pastor in 1939. In 1943 Dr. Morgan retired due to ill health. A flying bomb blew off half the roof of the Chapel in 1944 but after fourteen weeks the congregation reassembled.

The war had a disastrous effect on London's congregations and at Westminster the numbers sunk to 200. Recovery came about by the means of systematic, expository preaching. During years when Calvinism and Puritanism were in total eclipse Westminster was the centre from which a new era began. In the fifties there were stirrings and during the sixties a new Reformed movement began to spread significantly across the country and into other nations as well.

The word 'movement' is used for want of a better expression for there is no central organization or secretary, and nobody has been more hostile to the idea of 'movements' than 'the Doctor'. What is meant is brought into focus by the simple question: Which church do you recommend people to attend? Once Christians have become accustomed to being fed with the Word of God and when they have come to appreciate a biblical, definitive, doctrinal, ministry such as prevailed at Westminster from 1938-1968, nothing less will satisfy them.

It is not then a question of being partisan or supporting a movement. It is a matter in which lives are affected for time and eternity by the kind of church and ministry they attend. The problem in recommending Westminster Chapel is that it has been more of a preaching centre than a church. You could go in and out, as many have done, and not be greeted by a soul. Many of those who had imbibed the Reformed truth desired to see its practical outworking in a local church, which explains why the decline at Westminster following 'the Doctor's' retirement in 1968 was such that the numbers eventually dropped from about 1,600 to 200.

A new minister

At the beginning of the year Dr. R. T. Kendall, a Southern Baptist pastor and theologian of Calvinist persuasion, was asked to fill the pulpit for six months following completion of doctoral studies at Oxford, and before returning to America (he is a native of Ashland, Kentucky). Such was the impact of his ministry during those six months, not only by way of



Dr. R. T. Kendall

edification and increased congregations, but by conversions, that an almost unanimous call was given him to become the minister. This he accepted, but made very plain his desire that Westminster Chapel should be both a preaching centre and a warm and friendly church with a strong emphasis on evangelism. He believes in tithing and is ambitious that the church be fully involved in the generous support of missionary endeavour.

Dr. Kendall, aged 41, is the first American to become the minister at Westminster in her 135 years. He is a controversial figure and has stirred the Carey Conference for ministers and the Westminster (Puritan) Conference held every December at Westminster.

He avows that the present Calvinist movement is a 'Synod of Dort brand' rather than genuine Calvinism. He says that Calvinists today do not hold Calvin's doctrine of the atonement, nor his doctrine of assurance. So far nobody has been able to refute his documentation. The standard of his research and knowledge can be seen by reading his papers on William Perkins and John Cotton, published in the Westminster Conference reports.

In preaching at Cuckfield recently on the text 'Jesus Wept' Dr. Kendall showed the overwhelming emphasis that he places on evangelism, an emphasis which he is putting into practice at Westminster Chapel. The

results have already become visible! This note has long been needed. The 'Reformed' camp needs to be stirred to practical evangelism. If the ministers show little interest in evangelism the people are not likely to be inspired and the masses will go untouched. Dr. Kendall feels passionately about this, and if he can convey this passion as effectively as Dr. Lloyd-Jones conveyed the message of the necessity for expository preaching, it will be only just in time.

Lack of concern for personal evangelism is reflected by disinterest in evangelistic literature. At a recent Conference this year I obtained permission to display some literature and observed that most ministers were not even interested enough to pick up or examine evangelistic booklets but I had no trouble whatever in disposing of everything for believers. Some might blame the author or presentation, but I maintain that has nothing to do with it. Either personal evangelism is a preoccupation or it is not. I am not the first to observe that there are evangelical ministers, irrespective of their particular doctrinal distinctives, who do not lead their people in evangelism. They are sadly out of touch with our generation and with our secular society. But happily there are very bright exceptions to this general observation.

With Dr. R. T. Kendall at Westminster we can feel a guarantee that the Gospel will be sounded in the clearest fashion at every service and that there could hardly be a better place to take our unconverted friends.

It came as a surprise, not to say a shock, to Dr. Kendall, his wife Louise and their two children, Robert Tillman II, aged ten, and Melissa Louise, aged six, to find that after eagerly anticipating their return home, they were now to remain in London. If the Lord continues to use Dr. Kendall at Westminster we will have an example set before us in the heart of the world's most interesting capital city of what soul-winning Calvinism is all about.

All that we have learned from the Puritans is of tremendous value. But if it is to mean something more than heavier and heavier bookshelves it needs to be set alight. We have the altar but where is the fire? May it continue to descend at Westminster Chapel to the inspiration and encouragement of us all.



Christian Fellowship

by Jeff Saunders, assistant minister to Peter Lewis of Nottingham

IN REFORMING OUR CHURCHES WE SHOULD SEEK TO EMULATE THE VITALITY, as well as the organisation, of the New Testament congregations. Therefore we cannot afford to neglect the subject of fellowship. This article deals firstly with the nature of fellowship and then with the expression of fellowship.



1. The nature of fellowship

Fellowship was a notable feature of the first Christian church. It was a feature as essential as it was prominent. We read of the disciples that 'they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers' (Acts 2:42). Just as it is impossible to imagine a lively church without biblical teaching, the observance of the Lord's Supper, and corporate prayer, so it is impossible to conceive of Christian communal life without the ingredient of fellowship. That in itself should convince us of the importance of our study.

We can add another reason. Fellowship is one of the most common words in our evangelical vocabulary, yet probably few of us really understand what it means. Like some verbal chameleon it changes its meaning to suit its context! It is applied to activities as diverse as gossip sessions and prayer meetings, and to sharing emotions which vary from the shallowest sentiment to the most sacrificial Christian compassion. We will see that this breadth of usage is not entirely wrong, for 'fellowship' aptly describes a wide range of Christian experiences and responsibilities. But 'fellowship' is no colourless term—it possesses a richness of meaning and connotation.

Fellowship is supernatural, not natural

The thought of sharing and being in partnership is basic to the definition of fellowship. But Christian fellowship is no secular partnership or humanistic association. It is fundamentally spiritual. The early Christians were in fellowship with each other because they had been reconciled

to God. To employ the language of Paul, it is 'the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord' (1 Cor. 1:9). Christ is the founder and sphere of Christian fellowship. He is the shared person and his salvation is the shared characteristic that undergirds the Church and unites believers in fellowship. We can attempt a definition: fellowship is the bond of partnership among Christians based on a common Lord, a common salvation and common graces. Like all Christian graces, fellowship is active and will work out in attitudes of comradeship and acts of sharing.

Now we can put the controversial communalism of Acts chapters two and four into perspective. It has been claimed as an example of primitive communism. But this was the natural out-working of Christian fellowship and was as supernatural as the conversion of the three thousand. It bears only the most superficial resemblance to freemasonry or Marxism; its genius was the 'fellowship of (given by) the Holy Spirit' (2 Cor. 13:14).

Indeed, only such a power could have soldered together the diverse and contradictory elements that made up the Jerusalem church—so varied in nationality, culture, temperament and social class. But this amazing unity was commonplace in the early church and finds remarkable expression in Philemon verse seventeen. That the wealthy Gentile convert and the impoverished Jewish missionary could have regarded each other as 'partners' (R.S.V.—from the Greek word for fellowship) was an extraordinary work of God's grace. That Paul could expect Philemon to treat his runaway slave as he would Paul (i.e. as a partner) was even more amazing.

As fellowship finds its foundation in Christ, so it discovers its greatest example in him. We read in Hebrews chapter two, verse fourteen 'Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil'. What is the writer saying? In order to identify himself completely with his people Christ took a share of (entered into fellowship with) our mortal human nature, and therefore entered into closest fellowship with his people. This example is the more impressive because it involved Jesus in a dreadful toll of suffering and death. His share was all loss that ours might be all profit. Only by such a fellowship could the Lord break our dreadful spiritual bondage.

Fellowship reaches up to God before it reaches out to others

A key passage in arriving at the biblical concept of fellowship is 1 John 1:3-7. Notice particularly verse three, 'that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ'. This may seem a prosaic enough statement to those of us born in the Christian dispensation and familiar with this passage from our first months as believers. It was not so to the apostle John. He was making a very daring statement. From a hundred examples we could demonstrate

that the believer of the Old Testament era had enjoyed fellowship with God, yet the Hebrew word for fellowship was never used of a saint's relationship with his God. To the devout Jew God was transcendent. Any words associated with the ideas of familiarity or partnership were cautiously applied to him. How then can John speak of fellowship with God?

That mystery finds its solution in a greater mystery—the person and work of Christ. John had known the Incarnate God, and he knew that fellowship with God was made a reality for believers by the death of Christ, without compromising the dignity of God or cheapening fellowship into an easy familiarity. The Cross demonstrates the love and the justice of God. It shows his awesome holiness and majesty and yet at the same time his readiness to receive repentant sinners and the free access available to those who come. This is the vertical dimension of Christian fellowship—fellowship with God.

However, fellowship has a horizontal dimension also. Flowing from our new relationship with God is our new relationship with other believers. If we have fellowship with God we will have fellowship with one another. The horizontal dimension is the evidence and outflow of the vertical. If we have no loving fellowship with each other then we cannot pretend to have fellowship with God (1 John 1:6). That is one of the great themes of John's first letter. This horizontal fellowship exists not only among individual believers, but also among congregations sharing a common faith. Interdependency should not mean isolation and no church should be an island!

Fellowship is exclusive as well as inclusive

Fellowship, though wide, has its limits. While we can thankfully say 'how good and pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in unity' we must never forget the warning, 'Come out of her my people, lest you take part (have fellowship) in her sin, lest you share (have fellowship) in her plagues' (Rev. 18:4). Christian fellowship is exclusive.

There are three vital passages on this theme. The first is 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. Paul condemns the sort of intimate partnership in which a Christian becomes entangled in the values and practices of godless men. It is a sound principle of exposition that applies this passage to marriages with unbelievers, but the principle laid down is wider than that. Some personal friendships and business partnerships would stand condemned by this text. For example, a Christian businessman may be a model of integrity yet his firm is dominated by the immoral business practices of his partner. Rather than take refuge in his own piety, the Christian would be wiser to end a relationship in which he is compromised by the other man's actions.

Then there is 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 in which there is a strong emphasis on false religions. The basic argument is simple. To eat the Lord's Supper is to claim a share in the benefits of Christ's death and to have fellowship with Christ. Similarly, idolatrous ceremonies are not acts of harmless superstition, but acts of *fellowship* with demons behind false religions. This being so, Christians cannot take part in such sacrifices. Such a statement rebukes modern religious mongrelism. I refer to the practice of professing Christians uniting in worship and ritual with Jews, Buddhists, Hindus and Moslems in inter-faith services. Christian fellowship excludes false religion.

But Christian fellowship is also intolerant of heresy. The third passage, 2 John 11, is germane here. To give support or encouragement to men who distort the gospel and deny the divinity of Christ is to have 'fellowship' with their poisonous work. Many people come to our homes or churches, claiming the name of Christ and asking money for their medical missions or evangelistic agencies. We must test their orthodoxy and practice before we help them.

If this sounds uncharitable, consider that even Paul experienced such examination (Gal. 2:9). It was only after they 'perceived the grace' in him and heard an account of his beliefs that the leaders of the Jerusalem church extended to him the right hand of fellowship. The church of Christ is no vast umbrella that shelters men of all creeds and character: she must keep herself pure.



2. The expression of fellowship

This is possibly more difficult to deal with since we are overwhelmed by the richness of materials. Not only are the Greek words for fellowship very common in the New Testament, but the concept is conveyed by other words and phrases. Thus, for example, phrases beginning 'with...' often convey ideas of fellowship. So the New Testament speaks of suffering with Christ (Rom. 8:17), of being crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:6), and of living with Christ (Rom. 6:8). 'Together' is another word with the same connotations, and in John's writings 'abide in' is often almost a synonym for fellowship. We therefore restrict ourselves to the more prominent and numerous uses of the actual words for fellowship.

Fellowship in suffering with Christ

The Christian life is one of present fellowship with Christ. It is also an experience of fellowship with phases of the life and death of our Lord

(Rom. 6:1-11; note the use of 'with'). In this sense the idea of fellowship is equivalent to identification with Christ and therefore to sharing the benefits of his death. Philippians 3:10 might seem to fall into this category, but actually goes beyond the idea of identification. Paul is claiming a desire to share in the burdens of Christ's sufferings, not the benefits. How can he do that? The answer lies in the mystical union between Christ and his people. There is such close union between Christ, the head, and the Church, his body, that the experiences of the one can truly be regarded as the experiences of the other. Though Christ no longer suffers personally, he is afflicted through his people. Bernard Gilpin vividly expresses this truth: 'Although Christ sitteth on the right hand of the Father, yet he lieth on earth; he suffereth all calamities here on earth, he is many times evil entreated here on earth.' Christ is here on earth in the Church, therefore the afflictions of the Church are the sufferings of Christ and in these sufferings Paul wishes to share.

That the sufferings of the Church are the afflictions of her Lord is not merely the opinion of the harassed disciple. Jesus himself expresses this thought in Acts 9:4. Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the Church, yet Christ says 'Why do you persecute *me*?' To the troubled Christian whose woes are not the result of his own folly or sin, this truth brings great comfort. Samuel Rutherford tells us of the sweetness of hearing our Redeemer 'say at every sigh and every blow and every loss of a believer, "Half mine!"'

Fellowship in affliction with other Christians

Christ and his people unite in one body and thus a believer's troubles may be regarded as the Lord's sufferings. But we can extend this principle. Because the Church is a body, the sufferings of one member are the afflictions of the whole body (1 Cor. 12:25-26). We have fellowship in the troubles of other Christians. This fellowship is one in which we take to heart the distress of other believers, weeping with those who weep (Rom. 12:15). The Corinthian Christians did not actually experience Paul's sufferings, but out of a loving concern they made his afflictions their own, and so shared his woes in spirit (2 Cor. 1:7).

However, sympathy is not enough. There must be unity with those who suffer. It is no good being heart-broken over the sufferings of our brethren when we are not prepared to identify ourselves with them. The writer to the Hebrews commends his readers because, when not persecuted themselves, they were companions of (in fellowship with) those who were persecuted, presumably by standing by them and helping them (Heb. 10:30). In similar circumstances Paul could thankfully remember Onesiphorus who 'was not ashamed of my chains' but went to great trouble to find the imprisoned apostle (2 Tim. 1:16). This brings us to the third feature of fellowship in affliction: the element of practical

support. When the Philippians had fellowship in Paul's sufferings they proved the reality of that partnership by the gifts they sent him. Fine words and strong emotions are no substitutes for loving deeds. Manton epitomises for us the character of one Puritan wife: 'She had not only learned the heathen's lesson to lay up, but the Christian's lesson too, to lay out according as the necessities of the poor members of Jesus Christ called for it.'

Running through many of the texts on this subject is a great spiritual law. If we have fellowship in the afflictions of others, we will have fellowship in the comfort they receive from God (2 Cor. 1:7-8). The Christians at Corinth so took to heart the distress of Paul that they really felt some of the discouragement that caused the apostle to 'despair of life itself' (verse 8). As a result they would be comforted, not merely by hearing of the way God's grace had sustained Paul, but by themselves being sustained in the same way. Thus the Philippians shared in Paul's grace, so that, as he was strengthened to defend his gospel, they might also have the courage to stand by him and his doctrines (Phil. 1:7). We do ourselves great spiritual good when we share in the troubles of others. If we took to heart the anguish of the church in Russia we might also capture some of her fervour and spirituality.

Fellowship related to other churches

'Contributing to the needs of the saints' is not only a virtue to be inculcated in our individual Christian relationships, it is also a fundamental principle of inter-church relations. We should note that the financial support rendered by the Gentile churches to the Christian community at Jerusalem was interpreted by Paul as an act of fellowship. It is remarkable that, in one of the great statements of this truth in Romans 15:25-27 the translators of the Authorised Version put 'contribution' for the word 'fellowship'. Scholars are agreed that fellowship in this context had acquired an almost technical meaning, being a synonym for financial help. Fellowship can be read in our bank balances!

The Gentile churches were under a strong obligation of love to the 'mother church' at Jerusalem. From her they had received the gospel. It is a great temptation for us to conclude that, as we have few ties of this nature, we have little occasion to express our fellowship in supporting other churches. But we are not free to reason in this manner. If we are part of God's family we cannot be indifferent to the welfare of any part of that family; we share in the prosperity or the poverty of other members. And as we pray for the spiritual well-being of many churches we have never encountered, so those churches pray for us. We receive enrichment from the prayers of many other churches and eternity may reveal how much our own spiritual welfare was the result of the prayers of churches that never knew of our existence but prayed for the Church worldwide.

There is another illustration of this truth of inter-church fellowship which is when we move to a strange town and find a spiritual home and warm friendship in a congregation that shares with our own a common faith and the same Redeemer.

Fellowship in the work of the ministry

The communal life of Christians as a partnership is nowhere more clearly demonstrated than in the relationship between ministers and their congregations. So we are not surprised to find the concept of fellowship applied to this relationship. The principle that governs the economy of the local church is clearly stated (Gal. 6:6). The word the Authorised Version renders 'communicate' would be better translated as 'have fellowship in'. Similarly Paul uses another word for fellowship when discussing the same theme (1 Cor. 9:11). We see from these passages that, as the congregation shares in the spiritual profit of a minister's labours, so the minister shares in the financial profit of his people's work. The minister or preacher is to look on his stipend or fee not as a gift, but as his right. In the same way the congregation has an equal right to good quality exposition and competent pastoral work. If strict equity were observed in this matter many a penny-pinching church would find itself without enough gospel to save a soul, and numbers of indolent pastors would be near starvation!

Fellowship in spiritual blessing

We have noted how the Gentile churches felt compelled to share their money with the church at Jerusalem, because Jerusalem had shared the gospel with them. That is one example of this very important expression of fellowship. If we return to Acts chapter two we shall see how the new sense of fellowship we find there expressed itself in spiritual activities (verses 42 and 46-47). This is the deepest level of Christian fellowship. We will wish to share grace, as well as goods, with our brothers in Christ. In the Christian community our faith, our spiritual experiences, our times of prayer will all be shared with others; and by such sharing we can strengthen the weaker brethren.

Spurgeon emphasises the importance of this: 'Brethren who will not communicate with one another upon spiritual subjects are as traders who shut up their shops and will not buy or sell. Too wise to be taught, and too idle to teach, they live isolated lives, like the man in the iron mask, without joy to themselves or benefit to others. We shall all be beggars together if we shut ourselves up like hermits and cry "every man for himself"'. . . . Time was when they that feared the Lord spake often to one another, and that was the best of times. Let us hold mutual discourse upon our experiences, make pleasant exchange of our knowledge, and aid each other by our gifts. Among idolators we read that "the carpenter

encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil", and surely such cooperation ought to be even more evident among the servants of the true God. We wish it could be said of all church work, they helped everyone his neighbour and everyone said to his brother "be of good courage". . . . We want no more "exclusive brethren", whoever they may be; but we need communicating brethren, whose fellowship is with the Father and with the Son and with all the saints.'



SUMMER FAMILY CONFERENCES

There are still places available at the following family conferences.

Pilgrim Hall, Sussex—8th-13th August

Speakers and subjects at Pilgrim Hall include Brian Freer, from Rainham, Kent, speaking on *The Christian and Work*; Douglas Jones, from Gloucester, speaking on *Difficult Home Situations*; and Drew Garner, from Houston, Texas, speaking on *How to Gain maximum Profit from Bible Study*. Drew Garner will be the main preacher at the evening sessions (at 8 p.m.), assisted by Brian Freer and Bernard Honeysett. There are several sessions devoted to discussion. For recreation there are tennis courts, a swimming pool, table tennis, putting and croquet. The beautiful grounds are a very pleasing feature. Cost for the week is £29.50 per adult, with reduced rates for children.

Clarendon School, Beds.—15th-20th August

Drew Garner, from Texas, is also the main speaker at the Clarendon Conference for the first week. Richard Chester, from Caterham, will speak at three of the sessions. Colin Richards, from Bedford, will give a historical paper on the Life of John Berridge, and other subjects to be tackled include *Improving our Evangelism*, and *The Christian Culture*. There are three discussion periods. Indoor swimming pool, tennis courts, a fully equipped gymnasium, and table tennis are some of the sporting facilities available. There are extensive woodlands and lawns.

Clarendon School, Beds.—22nd-27th August

For the second week of Clarendon, Richard Chester will preach at two of the main evening sessions. Daniel Webber, from Strood, Kent, will speak at two day sessions on *Savonarola and the Florentine Revival*, and *The Value of Christian Reading*. Erroll Hulse will be dealing with *The Importance of Missionary Work*, and *Work and Recreation*. Accommodation is in single, double, family and dormitory rooms. The number of smaller rooms is limited. Those attending will be expected to give assistance with domestic duties, including waiting on table, use of washing-up machine etc. Cost for each week at Clarendon is £19.50 for adults, with reduced rates for children.

Costs at all conferences include accommodation, all meals and refreshments. These holidays are designed for all age groups, for single people, married couples and families. Special attention is paid to sessions for younger children and a creche is also provided during the mornings. If you wish to book, or find out more, please phone the Conferences Secretary, John Rubens, as soon as possible. His address is 36 Longden Close, Northwood End, Haynes, Beds. Telephone Haynes (023 066) 440. Day visitors are welcome but must let John know in advance. All are welcome to evening preaching sessions at 8 p.m. without prior booking. Why not give yourself a treat and enjoy ministry, fellowship and recreation for one of these weeks?

NEAC and Rome

and other correspondence

From Rev. D. C. K. Watson, Evangelical Anglican minister of York and an acknowledged foremost charismatic leader of today. The main point taken up as follows.

The Rev. D. C. K. Watson,
86 East Parade,
York YO3 7YH

Dear Mr. Hulse,

I am grateful for your complimentary copy of *Reformation Today* (No. 37); and I appreciate your right and healthy concern for biblical truth—a concern that I fully share. I also appreciate your willingness to ‘correct’ brethren when you sense dangers and errors. No one is infallible; and I am personally not interested in defending *myself*. ‘We all make many mistakes,’ and I do not doubt that I have said and done things unwisely in the past.

However, since you report on my address at NEAC and refer to it as ‘the most irresponsible address that I have ever heard’, I hope you will forgive me if I ask one or two questions.

Is it responsible reporting on your part to quote one small section of my address which served to prove your point, whilst ignoring the balancing remarks that I made? For example, having stressed in one of my eleven main points that our numerous denominations are one of the greatest hindrances to evangelism in many parts of the world (which cannot be denied), I went on, *in that context* (please note), to say that ‘in many ways the Reformation was one of the greatest tragedies that ever happened to the Church’. What you did *not* report was my very next statement: ‘Martin Luther never wanted to split the Church; simply to reform it. We no doubt glory in the biblical truths that were rediscovered at the Reformation (as I certainly do—see the numerous Banner of Truth books on my shelves!—books which I often use); but from the Refor-

mation onwards, the body of Christ in the world was torn from limb to limb into hundreds of separate pieces.’

The editor’s reply to that point as follows:

My dear brother,

Thank you for writing in the way you have.

I did not miss the qualifying statements in your address to which I listened very intently, but those statements had no effect whatsoever to offset the overwhelming impact which it had on the large congregation. I spoke to as many as I could afterwards, young and old, ministers and laymen, men and women, and they clearly understood your address to be a powerful endorsement of the comprehensive approach with Roman Catholics, being advocated even more strongly than heretofore. That there could be no mistake about your meaning and that your balancing remarks did not offset the impact of what you said can be proved by examining the Church of England’s newspaper report next day. They understood you in exactly the same way that I did. Also Gerald Bray writing in *The Third Way* did likewise.

You said, ‘We no doubt glory in the biblical truths that were rediscovered at the Reformation’. Can you recall anyone at Nottingham glorying in that way? It is not a matter of *no doubt*—but rather *very great doubt*. Very few EAs are ardent about the Reformation.

You speak of the ‘body of Christ’ being torn limb from limb. The body of Christ surely was not the great corrupt multitudes within the all-embracing monolithic Church of Rome? Surely it was a case of *Ecclesiolo in Ecclesia*. The body (little flock) was within the whole, which principle pertains to the sacralistic bodies of Greek Orthodoxy, Lutheranism and Anglicanism today. Your statement about the body surely does not stand up to analysis.

Zeffirelli's film has been seen by millions. The events shown depicted one who possessed supernatural powers. Was he more than an extraordinary man? We can find out by careful examination of his words and claims.

Who Was HE?

Who Was HE?

Some drivers when they miss their way use his name as a curse. Some sportsmen when they miss a crucial shot express their frustration with his name. Some reserve either his first name or his second for occasions of intense annoyance or maybe to impress others in making a telling point in discussion. No other name under the sun receives such abuse as

his. Yet strangely no other name can equal his for love expressed and service rendered. Among all peoples, races and nations there are those who revere him and his name with the utmost devotion and adoration.

Profound ethical reasons are involved in our attitude toward and feelings about his name. The apostle Paul said 'If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema, maranatha.' 'What does that mean?' Anathema means accursed. The curse and disavour rests upon the one who blasphemes Christ. The word 'maranatha' simply means our Lord will come and points to the coming time of judgement when those who curse Christ will be turned over to destruction.

But there is no need to be active against him or neutral. Neutrality is the same as indifference and to be indifferent is not to love. The truth is that if we do not love him we are accursed before God. Is it possible to love him? We cannot love someone we do not know about, nor can we believe in someone of whom we are ignorant. By considering some of the titles of this man we can find out who he is and how he meets every need that is ours.

12p

Published by Reformation Today, this booklet was written by Erroll Hulse.

RT Reformation Today
Box 106
Haywards Heath
West Sussex RH16 1QL

A sixteen page booklet has just been published, suitable for giving to those not convinced by the Gospel. The page size is the same as this magazine and is printed in three colours. The front inside and back pages are shown above. A high standard of layout and production has been attained by the artist and printers. The language used and references are contemporary. An order has been placed for the booklet to be used in factories, offices and workshops.



Correspondence continued

From David G. Preston in Nigeria.

I was particularly pleased that you commend *Psalm Praise* which is in my opinion the best collection of 20th century hymns I have seen. My strong commendation should not be read as uncritical. Some renderings are most unsatisfactory (e.g. Psalm 89, a good

hymn but complete avoidance of the thrust of the Psalm). But studying the book gave me a greater appreciation of the note of praise in the Psalter (apparently the Hebrew title is *Book of Praises*), and lifted up my heart in praise to the Lord as no other hymn book has done.

From John Thornbury of the USA.

July of this year will mark the 150th

During 1972 Alan McKerrell of Australia described the early life of Arthur W. Pink (R.T. 11). The life story was continued this year (R.T. 36) by Ray Levick who is the agent for Reformation Today in Australia. A heading in the editorial read, 'How eccentric was Mr. Arthur W. Pink?' (Readers will spot further eccentricities in this article). Mr. Pink began as a preacher of prestigious potential. But he did not settle. He began to wander. At the same time he withdrew from church life and from preaching. In due course he became an author of prodigious output. The form of his writing was biblical exposition which appeared in a monthly magazine entitled Studies in the Scriptures. A deadline every month meant that he was compelled to produce the material which later formed the main source from which the many books bearing his name were edited and published.

Increasingly then, A. W. Pink secluded himself from fellowship being critical, if not hyper-critical, of the churches. From the articles by Robert Oliver now appearing in Reformation Today we can see that the legacy of the nineteenth century was a spiritual wilderness. Arthur Pink's response to this was withdrawal and a resort to the ministry of the pen. Inasmuch as he aimed at biblical exposition the exercise has proved profitable. However the work of reforming and building up churches is imperative. It is never safe to be divorced from the realities of the life of a local church. Valuable as literature is it can never become a substitute for local church experience. The revival of good expository literature in recent years has been wonderful but if misused it will do harm to the truth by producing eccentric, intellectual-type believers who really have no stamina in the uphill task before us.

The Life of A. W. Pink (Part 3)

AT THIS STAGE I FEEL THAT IT WILL BE PROFITABLE TO CONCENTRATE ON Mr. Pink's writing ministry as expressed in his magazine 'Studies in the Scriptures'. From now on this was to be the Pinks' 'work of faith and labour of love' to the Church for the rest of their lives. One reason for this is that various comments on the subject appeared in the studies and



anniversary of the historic New Lebanon Conference of New York state in which Asahel Nettleton confronted C. G. Finney about the disputed new measures, so characteristic of the new Arminian evangelism which has dominated America since Finney. This was the 'great divide' as far as evangelism in this country is concerned. I am wondering if you could have something in *Reformation Today* about the New Lebanon Conference spotlighting the older Cal-

vinistic concepts of revival of which Mr. Nettleton was such an outstanding example.

The only contribution that we are able to give at this time is to draw attention to the book being published by Evangelical Press which is a biography of Asahel Nettleton by John Thornbury. Needless to say we are in complete sympathy with Nettleton's approach to the Revival and we heartily commend the new biography.

correspondence around this period. The following extract explains what took place. It is from an article on the front page entitled '*Why this magazine is published*' which gives an interesting observation of the times.

We were in touch with numbers of God's children who longed to have His Word opened up to them, but who knew not where to turn for such a ministry. With very rare exceptions the preaching of the day completely fails to meet this need. Even where the faith once delivered to the saints is not denied, there is little real exposition of the Holy Scriptures. One may hear a couple of topical sermons every Sunday the year round, and know nothing more of the Bible at the end of twelve months than was known at the beginning. Mere generalizations, the reiterating of platitudes, striking anecdotes, the recounting of personal experiences, will not feed the soul, nor impart that instruction which is essential to vital godliness. 'Preach the Word' (2 Tim. 4:2) is God's command to His servants, yet apart from the text how much of 'the Word' does the average sermon contain?

It is the same with nearly all of the literature published today. Even the soundest of it is sadly lacking in a spiritual and helpful exposition of the Scriptures. There is much to interest the curious, much that appeals to the intellect, but little that searches the conscience or that feeds the soul. The best of the magazines though giving much of the religious news of the day, are for the most part, sadly lacking in that which promotes a closer walk with God. 'Signs of the Times' may make exciting reading, but they do not lead to more intimate communion with Christ. If the editors would insert some of the sermons of C. H. Spurgeon, or give extracts from the best of the Puritans, their pages would be more edifying. If they would take up a book of Scripture and give a verse by verse interpretation, with its present-day application to the needs of God's people, more would be truly helped.

It was because of the lack of expository ministry, both oral and written, that seven and a half years ago we were asked and consented to publish a magazine devoted solely to studies in the Scriptures. This trust we sought to fulfil. We have spared no pains to the discharge of this duty, having given the largest part of our time to the important work. But we learned that there are not so many who welcome a ministry of this type as we had thought. There are few prepared to 'buy the truth' (Prov. 23:23) and sacrifice time, personal recreation and subordinate temporal interests to the acquiring of that which is spiritual than is commonly assumed. The vast majority of those who read today do so to while away an hour of recreation rather than for edification and spiritual profit. Hence, a magazine which treats only with the Word of God does not appeal to them; it is 'dry' or 'too heavy'. People have not the requisite 'time' to take up a publication which has to be read slowly, carefully, and prayerfully, to be of real benefit. (Ref. S/S July 1929.)

Readers will note the use of the pronoun 'we' in the above extract. This is because the magazine was a joint venture of both husband and wife as a team. The annual letter was always from A. W. and V. E. Pink. To show what I mean consider the following letter of praise which must have *startled* the readers as it did this writer:

For another year the editor and his wife have been spared a single day's sickness. What mercy is this! Though the editor spends at least twelve hours every day in his study, engaged in heavy mental work, yet this close

confinement, year after year, has not impaired his health to the slightest degree. Though he has now read through the Bible over fifty times and upwards of one million pages of theological literature, he has no glasses and reads the finest print as comfortably as he did twenty-five years ago. Though the editor's wife does all her own housework (and we have no electricity) making of bread, and her own clothes, looks after a garden and has canned and preserved, jellied and pickled between two hundred and fifty and three hundred pints of fruits and vegetables; and though she does all the typing and addressing of envelopes for the magazine, yet, in spite of a frail body, God has graciously sustained and granted all needed strength. (Ref. S/S Dec. 1932.)

One million pages of theology! And he still had twenty years to live! In this connection the magazine served a unique purpose as the readers were receiving excellent material which reflected the benefit of wide study. Mr. Pink was not a blind follower of all he read and would depart from the commentators where he felt it was warranted.

Fuller light

In reviewing the first ten years of the magazine the Pinks were 'devoutly thankful to find that no fundamental changes have occurred in our views of God's Truth'. However the 'personal word' went on to say that 'fuller light has led to both modifications and amplifications and has often made us ashamed of our dullness and slowness to apprehend spiritual things'. (Ref. S/S Dec. 1931.)

An example of this occurred in an article on Abram's sin (Gen. 12: 10-13) where he mentions that most commentators have missed the significance of the word 'famine' (v. 10).

'Even such a helpful writer as C. H. M. goes astray here and in our work "Gleanings in Genesis" we were guilty of echoing his views without having first thoroughly "proved" (1 Thessalonians 5:21) them for ourselves'. (Ref. S/S July 1929.)

His point was that the famine coming upon Abraham in Egypt was a chastisement of Abraham being in the wrong place and not as a test of faith as most writers (and he previously) usually say. This point has not been corrected in the current Moody Press edition of 'Gleanings in Genesis'.

Writing problems

Like other Christians in full-time work Mr. Pink experienced difficulties. In one letter he gives us a rare insight into this:

After writing for thirteen years for many of the same readers, it requires more thought and time now to write on fresh and needed subjects, without repeating what has been said previously. The themes selected for this year—the covenants, union, communion and sanctification are very 'heavy, and intricate', the last especially severely taxes one who feels more deeply as the years pass, his woeful *lack of experimental godliness*. Therefore etc.

He tells of a particularly trying experience as follows:

There are times when it seems little more than a mockery that *I* should be writing on 'Sanctification.' But enough: I have never been one to say much about myself and that much slipped out before I was hardly aware of it. I passed through a *very* trying season in December [ie two months previously] which shook me to my foundations. The Lord seemed to give Satan the full length of his rope toward me. I have not yet quite recovered. I do hope there may yet be some fruit from it to God's praise.

I have not been able to find out what the 'trying time' was but as they lived a secluded life I can only presume it was some temptation in the mind. The fact that he was extremely reluctant to ever talk about his personal life and feelings gives weight to this. Note the phrase 'out of love with themselves' in the quotation later in this article.

Constant moving caused problems with his library. In the introduction to the studies on Hebrews (started 1928) he tells us that due to extensive and long distance travelling he was obliged to break up five libraries during the previous twenty years. Fortunately he had taken notes in his Bible and helpful extracts from the thirty to forty commentaries on Hebrews in his possession during this period.

Finance

The financing of the magazine was typical of the Pinks' individualistic approach. It was sent free to all who would read it. Folk such as widows and pensioners who were unable to contribute were gladly kept on the mailing list. There was no subscription rate. This was because they felt they were in the Lord's work and relied on him to supply their need.

On one occasion they even told the readers not to send in gifts unless clearly prompted to do so as they had a few hundred dollars in hand!

They made it a rule 'to return all gifts sent in by those whom we have reason to believe are unsaved as also from those who wish to *Pay* for it. Spiritual things cannot be purchased with the dross of earth. On the other hand those who desire to have fellowship with the work of the Lord and express their gratitude unto Him by a gift towards its continuation (but not otherwise) are free to do so.'

I can only trust the above comments were not included with the return of the money of those who *Paid* for a subscription!

This may seem extreme but the Pinks were very precise in spiritual matters. They 'would rather send those studies to one hundred of the poor of the flock who were unable to send a gift than to twenty people who would donate five dollars each and then rarely read the magazine.'

If nothing was heard from a person on the mailing list, after a reasonable

time, their name was dropped from the mailing list. At times up to three hundred and fifty names were deleted in the annual check-up.

To give an idea of their outlook and convictions it is interesting to find that in 1935 despite problems, the print of the magazine was done in a larger type because the elderly folk had found the small print trying on the eyes. This increased the size of the magazine from twenty-four to thirty-two pages. It had the effect of doubling the postage bill, all at a time when they found that so many of the readers were still feeling the effects of the depression and unable to contribute to financial fellowship (as the Pinks called it). Also several liberal contributors had been called home to be with the Lord. If the Pinks felt the Lord was leading them they would go ahead despite the difficulties. I might add that all bills were paid within twenty-four hours of receipt, a habit which the Lord always enabled them to carry on.

It is therefore no surprise to find readers receiving the following warning: 'No one engaged in the *Lord's* work ever has need to solicit any help from man. Wherever there is any *begging* (directly or indirectly) for money or gifts, it is a certain sign that the one is *not* in the will of God and is working in the energy of the flesh and we would earnestly exhort every Christian to have no fellowship with such work.'

Why was the magazine blessed?

There are three reasons why I feel the studies were singularly blessed by the Lord.

Early training and dedication. Firstly there was Mr. Pink's particular calling to the work. An early Christian upbringing was a great blessing to him as the following extract from an article 'Caring for the children' shows:

The writer's father was a busy merchant, and in England we had a delivery of mail every Sunday morning, which often contained important business letters. But none were opened on the Lord's day! No Sunday newspapers ever entered our home, not even when the Boer War was on. When we were little, all our toys were put away Saturday night, and pictorial editions of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Foxe's book of martyrs, etc., were brought out. And today, the writer is unfeignedly thankful to God, that he was brought up in a home where the holy Sabbath was so 'strictly'—scripturally—kept. The day began by our father reading to us God's Word. In the morning the family attended preaching service. In the afternoon father and mother read to us out of spiritual books. Quite a little of the time was spent in the singing of hymns. And our father was not a preacher!

The surprising thing is that despite the fine example of a godly home he tells us he was the only one of the three children that was saved. (Mr. Pink was in his early forties at the time.) He felt very strongly that the act of his mother dedicating him to the Lord's service before he was born was owned

HOW TO GROW A CHILD FOR GOD

by Wayne Mack



Requests have been made for Wayne Mack's article "How to Grow a Child for God".

Copies have been printed and are available at 10 for 50p post free.

by the Lord to his sovereign purpose. She even reminded him of this in her old age!

He went on in the article to advocate parents dedicating their children publicly in a solemn way (providing that the church was sound) and quoted Matthew 19:13 as an example. This was not to take the place of the parents' vow in private to bring up the children in a God-fearing manner.

Selection of Articles. The magazine was published during the great depression and the second world war. Despite these controversial times Mr. Pink stuck to his task of expounding the Scriptures only, which he felt was the main issue of the day. He says, 'It is our aim not to tickle the ear, but to search the conscience, not to pander unto the sensational-monger, but to feed Christ's hungry sheep, not to please empty professors but to make God's children more and more *out of love with themselves.*'

Personal Desires. What were his motives in expounding the Scriptures? Was it to make a name for himself—or to build up a following to start a new denomination? To see what his aims were listen to him in this extract from an annual letter:

As we grow older, we feel the great need of a deeper experimental acquaintance with God, and so of the Holy Spirit's applying His Word in power to our hearts. More and more we are learning that there is a vast difference between a theoretical knowledge of the truth and an inward experience of it. Our great need is for the Lord to write His Word upon our hearts, to thoroughly search our innermost being therewith, to make us feel the power of it in our conscience. Only thus are we personally fitted to be of any *spiritual* help to others. We must ourselves be taught how to overcome the flesh, the world and the devil, before we can communicate the secret of it to others. Pray, brethren and sisters, that the writer may be pruned and purged, and thus be a fitter vessel for the Master's use. We hope to throw increasing emphasis on that which is calculated to expose a worthless profession, and to promote a closer walk with God.

If this was his request to the readers is it any wonder his writings are being read today!

Two new hymn books reviewed

FOR MANY YEARS STRICT BAPTIST Churches in Britain have been using a hymn book called *Gospel Hymns* containing a selection of 1,212 hymns. American visitors have expressed amazement that a book of such reliable doctrinal substance should exist in an age of superficial hymn books. But despite its merits there is no question that the book is badly out of date. The opportunity came after the war to revise *Gospel Hymns*, update it and provide a tune book. The opportunity was lost with the result that countless Baptist Churches no longer sang hymns extolling the sovereign grace of God because they preferred available collections which had the great value of being contemporary in style. However, the modern compilations were Arminian in tone and lacked the robust free-grace hymns of former days. This illustrates that it is fatal to take a complacent attitude, or worse still a negative outlook, toward the need to be contemporary in expression, for the initiative soon passes to others. We are living in a generation which is seeing unprecedentedly swift and drastic transitions and changes. We need only to look at China, Africa and South America to see that.

We turn now, not to things *not* done, but to rejoice in that which has been accomplished—two brand new-hymn books, together with comprehensive tune books to match (although we are still waiting for the printer to complete *Christian Hymns* tune book). These volumes are designed to meet the needs of those who are Baptists and who love the doctrines of grace.

Some may wonder why two books should be produced instead of one. Could not these groups of men of like mind have worked together? That almost 400 hymns appear in *Christian Hymns* that are not included in *Grace Hymns* shows

that the difference is considerable. The freedom to publish as we please is one of our greatly prized liberties. In many countries believers enjoy no such freedom.

A four page leaflet describing *Christian Hymns* is included with this issue of *Reformation Today*. The picture on the front is life size, so if you cut it out you will have an idea of the size. *Christian Hymns* is a chunky little brick of a book, about an inch and a quarter thick. It is reminiscent of C. H. Spurgeon's *Our Own Hymn Book*.

There are 901 hymns. Those churches using *Gospel Hymns* have to face the fact that that book is not being reprinted. Gradually their copies will wear out. If they add *Christian Hymns* 284 will be duplicated giving 617 new hymns. I find my selection from *Gospel Hymns* confined to about 300 so that the addition of 617 further hymns recommended by believers of the same outlook would be of great value.

Now turn to *Grace Hymns* which contains 848 hymns. 291 of these are already in *Gospel Hymns* which for those who make the change to *Grace* will give them 557 new hymns—not bad when we think that an average congregation sings about 550 hymns a year.

Of the two books, *Grace* measuring seven inches by five-and-a-half inches is the more sturdy with a much better quality hard-wearing balacron binding in bright red. This quality is reflected in the fact that *Grace* is 25% heavier in weight. The stitching as it is related to a thinner more brittle type of paper in *Christian Hymns* is a weak point. The tune book matches and is not merely well produced, but magnificent! *Grace Hymns* is also cheaper to buy, selling at 95p. An attractive feature in *Grace* not

found in *Christian Hymns* is that there is a Scripture text at the head of each hymn well printed to match the typography of the hymns. The printing in a non-serif type in *Grace* is better and clearer than in *Christian Hymns*. Although there is no section of children's hymns, hymns suitable for such are to be found throughout the book and are indexed separately. The music edition of *Grace* contains full Scripture and subject indices.

There are not enough Psalms in either book to satisfy those whose idea in singing the Psalms is to have an adequate selection and to sing them as they are and not in truncated form. But it is not difficult for churches to have their own supplement of Psalms.

Mr. S. M. Houghton reviewed *Grace* hymns in *The Gospel Magazine* (Nov.-Dec. 1975). It might help to quote some of his observations. 'Named authors,' he says 'are approximately 350 in number. Many of them supply one hymn only. Thirty-two of them (each with five or more hymns in the compilation) supply between them 371 hymns, distributed as follows: Isaac Watts (51), Charles Wesley (47), John Newton (25), James Montgomery (21), Horatius Bonar (21), Thomas Kelly (17), Frances Ridley Havergal (15), Philip Doddridge (13), Fanny J. Crosby (12), William Cowper (10), Augustus Toplady (9), Joseph Hart (9), Samuel Medley (8), Anne Steele (8), Josiah Conder, Henry W. Baker, Timothy Dudley-Smith, John Ellerton, Charlotte Elliott, William Gadsby, Frank Houghton (7 each), Cecil F. Alexander (6), John S. Monsell (6), Benjamin Beddome, John Cennick, Paul Gerhardt, W. Vernon Higham, W. Walsham How, John Kent, Henry F. Lyte, Godfrey Thring, Christopher Wordsworth (5 each). The list shows how substantial is the contribution of writers of the 18th Century to hymnology. Of the 32 writers just mentioned, one author of the 17th Century (Paul Gerhardt) supplies five hymns, eleven of the 18th Century supply 189 hymns; seventeen of the 19th Century supply 158 hymns, and three of the 20th Century supply 19 hymns.

Hence the 18th Century writers continue to lead the field, Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley in particular. Of the 18th Century, we may conclude that "there were giants in the earth in those days". We seem to live in pygmy days; scientific achievements are massive, but hymnology seems to be in a backwater. It is remarkable that, in contrast with the 18th Century, many later writers contribute a mere one or two compositions to modern hymnals.' Mr. Houghton goes on to say that, 'Hymns of high merit are found by the score in *Grace Hymns*, and that he was particularly glad to see Joseph Swain's hymn, "On the wings of faith uprising, Jesus crucified I see", given a place. Inevitably—for tastes and opinions differ immensely—some hymns are omitted that seem worthy of inclusion, while some are admitted that cause surprise, as for example, two modern copyright hymns (published by Singspiration), one of which includes the line, "With God things don't just happen", while the other says little more than "Burdens are lifted at Calvary".'

Mr. Houghton criticizes *Grace Hymns* for not being meticulous in their editing and especially for not adding 'alt' in all cases to hymns that have been altered. Names of some authors have been misspelled. For hymn 102 a date is wrong. Disconcerting printing errors appear in numbers 67, 409, 292, 326, 409, 458 and 558, while re-arrangement is needed for the verses of 720. All these can be put right in a further edition. Mr. Houghton concluded his review by commending the excellent qualities of *Grace Hymns* and we conclude ours by commending both new books. That there are two to be scrutinized and evaluated as to comparative merit will probably have the effect of greatly exercising the judgment and discernment of the Sons of Asaph and raise the sensitivity of believers generally as to the value, quality and content of the hymns they sing.

To order *Grace Hymns* you must write to *Grace Publications Trust*, 139 Grosvenor Avenue, London N5 2NH.

John Owen and 2 Peter 3: 9

One of the readers of Reformation Today has pointed out that John Owen, a foremost and respected theologian, restricted the meaning of 2 Peter 3: 9 to 'the elect'. The text reads as follows, 'The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness: but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.'

In seeking to refute Arminianism Owen became intolerant of the Arminian interpretations and said, 'I shall not need add anything concerning the contradictions and inexplicable difficulties wherewith the opposite interpretation is accompanied.' He also said, 'That to believe that God has the same will and mind towards all and everyone in the world is to come not far short of extreme madness and folly' (Owen's works vol. 10, p. 348ff).

We do not believe that God has the same will and mind towards all in the world in as much as he has by sovereign election determined to save a people for himself. We are dealing now with the question of his revealed will, in which he will have all to be saved. This Owen himself, and all the Puritan divines, maintained. The question before us is whether 2 Peter 3: 9 should be included as one of the passages which either directly state or infer that God's revealed will is for all to be saved. Under pressure Owen sought to restrict it, but was it necessary to do so?

Since this issue arose from the article by Bob Letham, 'Theology well formed or deformed?', we have asked him to give us an exposition of 2 Peter 3: 9. He

has responded as follows:

The particularity of redemption is not endangered by adopting a more inclusive reference than Owen would allow. Indeed, Calvin himself understood Peter's language in precisely that way. However, we would all agree that our ideas should not rest on human authority or tradition, but on biblical exegesis.

There are, in fact, strong exegetical reasons in favour of viewing the clause in 2 Peter 3: 9 ('God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance') as having a universal reference.

A problem surrounds the pronoun in the preceding clause (ὁμᾶς). If we allow that εἰς ὁμᾶς is preferable to both the textual variants (εἰς ἡμᾶς) and (δὲ μῶς), the question remains: What is the extent of reference of those to whom God's longsuffering (μακροθυμεῖ) is displayed? Is it displayed to the readers of the letter, to believers, only? Or is it shown to the ungodly as well? The personal pronoun itself has a built-in ambiguity. Even if Peter intended it to refer particularly to the recipients of the letter there is no evidence that would demand its restriction *solely* to them. At least there is no *certainty* that the longsuffering of God is restricted to believers.

Even if we were to restrict the scope of God's longsuffering in 2 Peter 3: 9 to believers, that of itself would not require us similarly to restrict the reference of the following clause since

the latter might be intended to enunciate a general principle (God is not willing that any should perish) which would undergird the more pointedly specific statement that preceded (God is longsuffering toward you).

Elsewhere, Peter reflects on the long-suffering (μακροθυμία) of God. In 1 Peter 3: 20, against a backcloth of sporadic suffering and persecution in the churches of Asia Minor (1 Peter 2: 20; 3: 9,14-17; 4: 1,12-19) he draws attention to the forbearance God showed in the days of Noah, prior to the Flood. Five factors are present in the context of 1 Peter 3: 20 which are of importance for us:

1. the godly remnant (ὀλίγοι) who were eventually saved through water;
2. the ungodly to whom God exercised μακροθυμία;
3. God, who exercised μακροθυμία;
4. the preparation of the ark;
5. the eventual flood.

In the context of 2 Peter 3: 9 the same factors are evident if we allow for developments in the history of redemption:

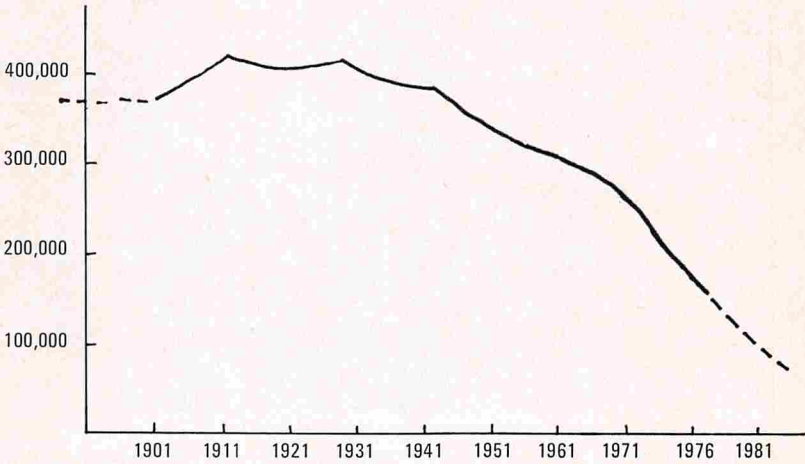
1. the churches to whom Peter was writing, who were facing mockery from their pagan neighbours (vv. 3-7);
2. the ungodly scoffers who were belittling the promise of Christ's return (vv. 3-7);
3. God, who is not slow in fulfilling his promise but exercises μακροθυμία (vv. 8-9);
4. the Lord's promise of a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (vv. 4,9,13);
5. the impending Judgment day in which the world will be destroyed by fire as at the Flood the world was destroyed by water (vv. 5-7, 10).

Peter evidently viewed the Flood as a significant precursor (almost a type) of the Last Judgment, and thus the circumstances which attended that great cataclysm are seen as analogous to those which exist in these last days, the final age ushered in by the death and resurrection of Christ. He was probably echoing the teaching of Jesus himself (Luke 17: 26).

In the days of Noah, God's longsuffering was specifically directed to the ungodly. Though they provoked him so intensely that he determined to destroy the world yet he allowed man a breathing space while the Ark was being constructed and also gave a promise of deliverance from the coming judgment through the Ark itself. Moreover, God's μακροθυμία was manifested in conjunction with Noah's own preaching or proclamation (2 Peter 2: 5)—whether this was by word or deed is of small account. Since there is this clear parallel between the days of Noah and the last days in which we are living it should not be difficult for us to see that God's continuing longsuffering is also associated with the distinctive proclamation of the last days, the promise of deliverance from the coming judgment-by-fire by Christ, and that it continues to be displayed towards the world of the ungodly. He could legitimately send all men to instant damnation yet he provides a time for repentance and extends a promise of mercy in Christ, which nevertheless is regarded with contempt (2 Peter 3: 3f.).

Thus there should be no reason why the extent of reference of God's μακροθυμία in 2 Peter 3: 9 should not embrace a wider constituency than the recipients of the letter, or the elect, alone. In this case, the subordinate clause that follows, 'God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance', means precisely what it says and is therefore a reference to God's will as expressed in the gospel promise and not to his hidden will in election.

An alarming graph!



The above graph depicts the appalling decline in membership of the Baptist Union. Spurgeon said, 'We are going downhill at breakneck speed.' Douglas McBain writing in *The Baptist Times* is attempting to analyse the reasons for the decline and suggest remedies. So far he has avoided the crucial underlying causes. Surely we cannot stand by and do nothing. Perhaps readers might have suggestions as to how Reformation can be encouraged within Baptist Union churches. At the present rate of decline extinction will take place in 1989.

Grace Baptist Church—Dublin



Time for refreshments—part of the assembly gathering at Dublin

Grace Baptist church came to the birth as a result of persistent and aggressive evangelism in Ireland's capital city. As a result a high proportion of the members has always been drawn from converts from Rome. The preaching of the church is firmly rooted in the reformed faith. But their's is a vigorously evangelistic Calvinism which by means of door to door work, open airs, hotel lectures and street contacts, has aimed to penetrate Dublin, the heart of Irish Catholicism, with the Gospel.

For some time they have met in a rented property whose dilapidated condition has been outweighed by its strategic location close to the University and the centre of the city. To purchase this site which is up for sale and to renovate the building would cost in the region of £30,000, a large sum at first sight, but by no means such for a site in the centre of a capital city. The alternative would be a removal from a strategic location to one perhaps out towards the outskirts.

Catholic Ireland still exercises a world wide influence through her missionaries and also through the great multitude of priests and prelates of Irish extraction—ask any American or any African missionary! Hence a vision for Dublin is a vision for a far wider field. Reformed Baptist churches will doubtless want to stand alongside Chris Robinson and his people as they face a demand which might seem impossible but for their—and our—conviction that the Sovereign God is able to supply the need.

Chris Robinson's address is: 105 Ramleh Park, Milltown, Dublin 6.

(Contributed by Herbert Carson.)

NUMBER 38

JULY-AUGUST 1977

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C\$5.00

SOUTH AFRICA

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N.Z.\$3.00

Single copies one-sixth the above in each case which includes postage.

Gifts are welcomed and those who wish to support the Magazine should make out their cheques to "Reformation Today".