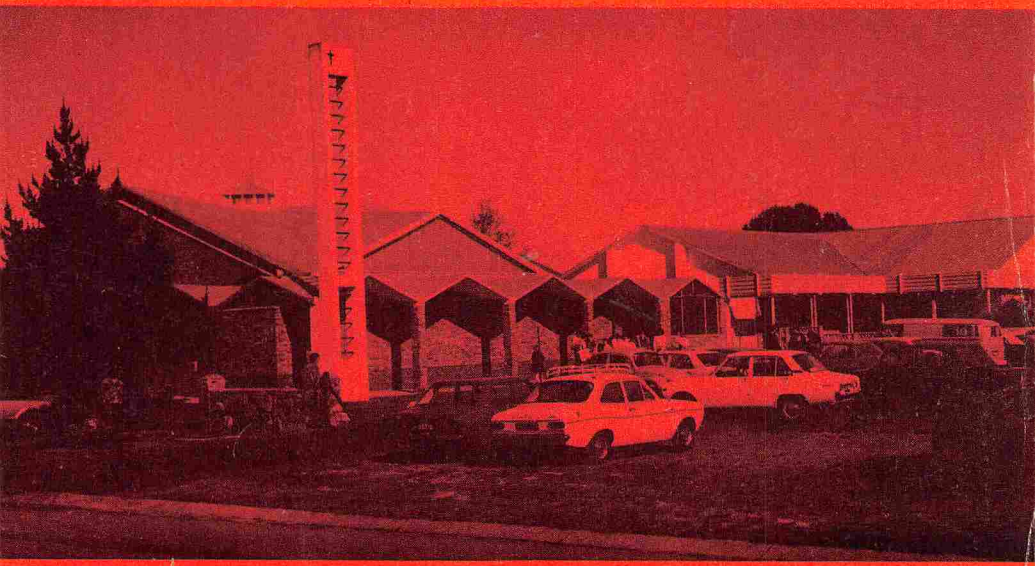


REFORM- ATION TODAY '79



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Editorial

How we received our Bible

SOME CHRISTIANS HAVE MADE A BIG FUSS IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO ANYTHING OTHER than the King James or Authorised Version. They have been led to believe that the KJV translation alone rests upon a solid foundation. Everything else should, according to them, be rejected. It is almost impossible to deal with dogmatism of this kind. The reason is that it is seldom possible to stop for an hour and explain just how the Scriptures came to us. If we are able to do that it is then needful to drive home a salient point, namely, that the merits of all the manuscripts must be considered, not just one family of manuscripts.

Peter Misselbrook has given us a useful description which is easy to follow and of reasonable length. This is an article we can give to those who think that we are unfaithful when we do not stick exclusively to the KJV. But apart from that particular use it is very helpful to know in a simple straightforward way what procedures lie behind the way in which the Bible has come. What happened after the original writers completed their manuscripts?

For the sake of some readers a qualification may be needed concerning the second last paragraph. The opening statement at that point might be misunderstood when the writer declares 'no translation of the New Testament will be perfect'. That statement and indeed the whole exposition might give the impression that we have received a very tattered, imperfect, 'riddled with mistakes' Bible! That is not so! The author rejects that idea in the fourth last paragraph. But repudiation of the notion that our Bible is full of imperfections needs to be more firmly underlined and pressed home. The original writings (autographs) were inerrant and perfect. Through transmission we may have difficulty with one text in a hundred, but these texts are on the circumference. Likewise the problems of translation from Greek and Hebrew to other languages are circumferential in that the meaning or Word of God comes right through exactly as the Lord requires it (Heb. 4:12). When it says that the Word of the Lord is perfect it means just that (Ps. 19:7, 8). Perfection has not been lost somewhere in the dust of time. The minor difficulties involved in copying or the transference of meaning from one language to another must not in any way be exaggerated so as to create a sense that we are deprived of power or authority in reading or preaching God's Word.

The sealing of the Spirit

Concerning this subject a correspondent in Texas writes: 'Revivals have been born in doctrinal controversy. I believe in what the doctor has been saying but he has built his case on flimsy exegesis.' Donald MacLeod's article has been

Cover Picture. *Westway Bethel Baptist Church, Kabega Park, Port Elizabeth, is typical of churches in South Africa in-as-much as full use is made of plentiful land space. During the week a considerable section of the premises are fully utilised for a day school for children. The architecture is attractive but by national standards not expensive. Finishes inside and out are economic. The roof over the main church is in rough concrete, in a square patchwork pattern (like Grammie's blanket) very free and attractive to those who appreciate a free contemporary style. Anton Hoffman is the minister at Kabega Park. He is supported by exemplary deacons, who truly fulfil their calling by giving him all the encouragement they can. During the editor's absence Anton Hoffman preached most acceptably at Cuckfield. Likewise he contributed at the first week of the Carey Family Conference at Clarendon School Bedford.*

well received as an invaluable contribution to the debate. Only by misrepresentation could his main contentions be refuted. His forthright rejection of the whole concept of *plus* was most refreshing because it assures us of our present full union with our glorious Lord. We have all the resources we need in our completeness in Christ, declared MacLeod (see R.T. 48), 'in our ordinariness we are complete in Christ'. But he was careful to reject any notion of a false complacency, 'Let believers realise that they can never be so filled as not to be filled again—and again and again.' Pastor Michael Eaton continues the discussion in this issue and shows that the controversy is not settled by reliance on the Greek tense in Ephesians 1:13. As is hinted by Pastor Eaton the subject can be developed profitably by a collation of the passages referring to anointing and to sealing aspects of the Spirit's work which are not to be confused with 'baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire'. I do not agree that the various terms are interchangeable as Mr. Eaton suggests, but we are thankful that he is steering us in the right direction of further study.

Deaconesses by the Rev. Carson

The anti-lib brigade might well be alarmed by the above notice! Fear not! There is comfort! In his conclusions Mr. Carson assures us that the truth about this matter may well be a Scriptural way of circumventing what is totally anti-New Testament, namely, women elders!

South Africa

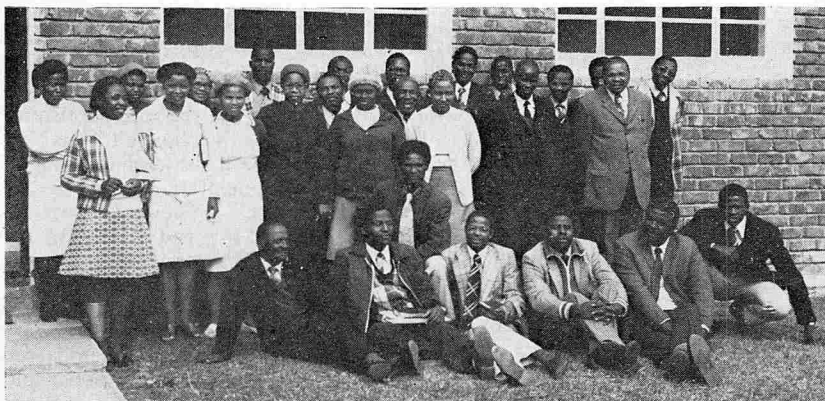
Having just returned after seven weeks in South Africa a number of encouragements can be reported. The proliferation of evangelical work in all denominations and among all racial groups is markedly greater than in the U.K. With the Dutch Reformed Church in prominence church attendance towers above anything we witness in this country.

The annual Reformed and Evangelical conference at Skoegheim however was not well attended. The main reason for this was a practical one. Petrol has doubled in price and severe speed limitations have been imposed which are strictly enforced by the law. However, many applauded the Skoegheim conference this year as one of the best if not the best so far. Concern to continue despite the expense of travel and the great distances involved was strongly asserted. There was generous giving to ensure a conference next year.

Sympathetic South Africans please note that this good cause is worthy of support. Considerably more financial help is needed, especially to encourage our non-white brethren to come. Clive Tyler at Kalk Bay is acting as treasurer. Reformed ministers who isolate themselves are sometimes guilty of acting unwisely or over-reacting to the inevitable pressures and trials that peculiarly beset them. Isolation increases those problems whereas sharing with others of similar position is of inestimable help. For our own sake and the sake of our people we need to get away to hear those who are gifted to expound on themes designed to enrich our ministries. Historical and biographical subjects are sometimes chosen to broaden our perspectives.

Clive Tyler's biographical presentation of the life of Andrew Murray (1828-1917) revealed a man who lived a very full, long and rich life packed with usefulness. Theologically he began on the foundations of the Reformed Faith laid in his youth when he studied in Scotland and Holland. Gradually he moved with the theological tide of that period toward holiness teaching. A good title for his life story would be, 'Andrew Murray—a man of his times'.

Jim van Zyl presented two tremendously practical and stimulating addresses on how to use television aright. The box must be our slave and not we the slaves of the box! The material is worthy of a wide circulation. The application for young people and children in particular was outstanding.



Students of the theological college at Debe Nek, near Kingwilliamstown, South Africa. Jim Harris, one of the tutors leads a Reformed Studies Group in Kingwilliamstown

Puritan Reformed

Dr. Douma, Baptism and the Covenant

While in Stellenbosch I was able to enjoy an exhibition of paintings by Solomon Caesar Malan (1812-1894), son of César Henri Malan (1787-1864), Reformed pastor of Geneva, whose ministry was transformed under the ministry of Robert Haldane in Geneva in 1816-17. A theological student was in charge of the exhibition. We began talking about books and he asked me about up-to-date information concerning the availability of Reformed books new and old.

The Puritan Reformed catalogue (for address see back cover) provides a comprehensive list of publishers and books, offers reasonable prices and an excellent postal service to its members. For these reasons I promised to send him a Puritan Reformed Catalogue. These are usually full of pithy comments and lively observations. For instance the June issue has this notice:

DOUMA

DOUMA, J: *Infant Baptism and Regeneration* (12.95) Dp150 \$1.15.

First brought to my attention by a recommendation in the BANNER OF TRUTH magazine, this brief study came about through quite an interesting means. Dr. Douma spent two summers with Erroll Hulse of Cuckfield Chapel Baptist Church, and enjoyed wonderful days of fellowship, except in the doctrines of church government and paedobaptism, of course. At the request of the elders of the Cuckfield church Douma has written his reasons for his views on infant baptism. This reviewer has not read a more brilliant, more biblically-based critique of David Kingdon's *Children of Abraham* than this. Douma acknowledges the great contribution that Kingdon has made to the literature on the subject and emphasizes the countless points of agreement, but states clearly why he cannot agree with the Reformed Baptists and still maintain the unity of the *promises* of the covenant, old and new. However, this brief work will not carry weight with those who fail to see the relationship between circumcision and baptism in the unity of the two covenants. Walt Hibbard.

In response to this booklet by my esteemed friend, Dr. Douma, I have endeavoured a reply. It begins with a survey of all that we have in common with Reformed Paedobaptists. We share with them almost everything pertaining to Christianity, including fervent belief in the unity of the covenant as unfolded

stage by stage. The only point of disagreement is a small one. It is the diversity in administration of the covenant as expressed in the Old Testament as against the New. That small matter however becomes a major one if you use it to establish the principle of infant baptism. Infant baptism based as it is upon the Old covenant administration effectively destroys the true baptism of believers. The failure lies in neglect of the emphasis on the change to the New Testament administration recorded in such passages as Hebrews chapter eight. We agree in the unity of the covenant in its development but recognise the diversity of administration insisted upon by the Bible itself. The reply is written for the benefit of laymen especially since we are affected in a radical way by the welcomed presence of our Dutch friends. Sometimes we are saddened that they put this issue before other issues which are of much greater moment. One matter which has been pointed out is that our children far from being deprived of anything are the recipients of every advantage that the covenant community has to offer. This includes the ordinance of baptism which must be administered scripturally in its proper time and manner when it is immeasurably richer and more meaningful than its unwarranted substitute.

Going back to where we began, S. C. Malan turned from his career as an artist and served as a pastor in Broadwindsor, England, for 40 years. But he did not neglect his natural talents and travelled often and widely.

The secession of Peter Williams

Minister of one of the most influential of the United Reformed churches in Britain, Peter Williams, has resigned from his denomination. There is nothing theologically reformed in the U.R.C. denomination, the name of which confuses those who do not know that it came about when the Presbyterian and Congregational denominations in Britain united. The denomination is thoroughly liberal and ecumenical. Part of Mr. Williams' testimony appears in the church magazine of the Lansdowne Baptist Church where Harry Kilbride is the pastor. Writes Mr. Williams:

I have had a growing uneasiness for some considerable time with regard to ecumenical involvement as I have watched the denomination exerting themselves in the cause of church union. Whenever I took part in an ecumenical service, I felt a deep inward sense of hypocrisy that I was sharing the same platform with ministers, including Roman Catholics, whose doctrinal standpoint was in flat contradiction to the clear teaching of the Word of God which I accepted without question.

For the fact is that in the modern ecumenical framework, the Gospel has been diluted, modified and adapted in order to make it perfectly acceptable to people and churches of every shade of theological opinion. I find this both intellectually dishonest and at the same time dishonouring to God, who has made his truth so clearly known in the Word of Holy Scripture. Far better to admit our differences than give the impression of unity by papering over the cracks.

In conclusion let me say that my decision to separate has never been divorced from a real love for the brethren. There are those evangelicals who have not seen any inconsistencies in maintaining their evangelical stand within the prevailing church structure. That must be their decision. I can only express thanks to Almighty God that after much prayer and heart-searching, he graciously brought me to the point where his holy will was so clear and well defined that obedience to it became a real joy rather than a burden.

The Carey Conference, Cardiff, January 1-4, 1980

Bookings (£5 Deposit) should be sent to Mr. John Rubens, 23 Brickhill Drive, BEDFORD MK41 7DA. The speakers are Donald MacLeod, Arnold Dallimore, Achille Blaize, David Kingdon, Stuart Olyott, Geoff Thomas and Bob Sheehan. John Rubens reports that about 250 attended over the two weeks of Carey family conference at Clarendon School this year. ▀

Peter M. Misselbrook has provided this fascinating account of the manuscripts that lie behind the translation of the Bible. A technical title would be 'Textual Criticism of the Bible'.

How we Received our Bible

IN ANY PRODUCTION OF A TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE THERE ARE TWO DISTINCT tasks to be performed. In the first place one must establish the text, both of the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament, which is to constitute the basis of the translation. Secondly, one must translate this text into English (or whatever other language is required) in such a way as to preserve the meaning of the original within the framework of a quite different language. Both of these tasks are exceedingly complex and demand the disciplines of textual criticism and of linguistics. Our purpose here is to introduce the reader to the first of these disciplines, that of textual criticism.

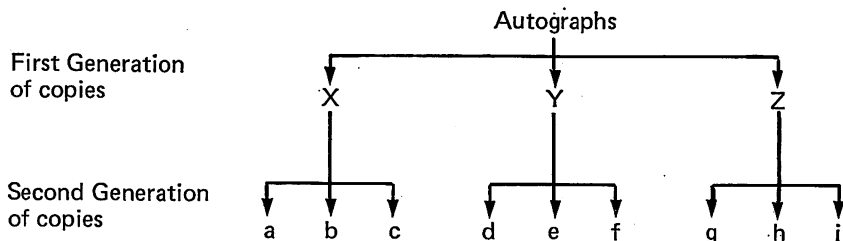
Why do we need textual criticism?

Perhaps the first question that springs to mind concerning this discipline is whether it is really necessary. After all, any of us can go into a Christian book shop and buy a copy of the Hebrew Old Testament and of the Greek New Testament. What need then is there of a discipline which devotes itself to establishing what these texts should be? This question can only be answered when we know something of the history of the text of the Bible.

We profess that the Scriptures were written under the inspiration of God. The original Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament as they came from the hands of Moses, David and their other authors, and the original Greek manuscripts of the New Testament as they came from the hands of the Evangelists and Apostles are the very words of God. But these original manuscripts, known as the autographs, are no longer available for our examination; we possess only copies. As soon as the word of God was given the need for copies would have arisen so that all might have access at least to the hearing of the word. In course of time the original and the first set of copies would wear out and further copies would have to be made. So a second generation of copies would spring up from the first. This process would continue again and again, giving us manuscripts which were now removed from the originals by many generations of copying.

Now those who made the copies of the Bible manuscripts, though they generally performed their task with great diligence because of their veneration of the word of God, nevertheless were fallible human beings like ourselves. In making their copies they made mistakes. In the many manuscripts which we now possess of both the Old Testament and the New there are numerous differences which bear witness to the mistakes made in the process of copying. With the production of each new manuscript from an older one the mistakes of the older (except those that were immediately obvious to the scribe) would be repeated in the new, but

now with the addition of new errors produced in the act of copying. Thus with each act of copying the number of errors would increase. The process can be represented diagrammatically, though in a simplified form, as follows.



In this diagram we show only two generations of copies in which at each stage three copies are made from each of the previous manuscripts. Each of the manuscripts a, b and c will reproduce the errors of peculiarities of the manuscript X, but at the same time each will have errors of its own.

We do not have access to the original manuscripts which came from the hands of the inspired Bible writers. We only have access to manuscripts which are removed from the autographs by several generations of copying. These manuscripts differ one from another. How then are we to know what the prophets and apostles actually wrote? How are we to judge between the various manuscript readings and discover which best represents the original? Textual Criticism is a discipline aimed at answering these questions. We should not be afraid of the name 'Textual Criticism' for it simply means the process of judging (hence criticism) between the various texts in our possession and their various readings with a view to ascertaining the best possible reading and thus the one most likely to be original. Such criticism does not destroy the word of God for it seeks not to undermine it but to establish it.

How does textual criticism function?

How does textual criticism go about establishing the best reading in the face of the various alternatives in the manuscripts? There may be three or four different readings at a certain point in the text, each of which may have the support of a cluster of manuscripts. Which of these readings is most likely to be correct?

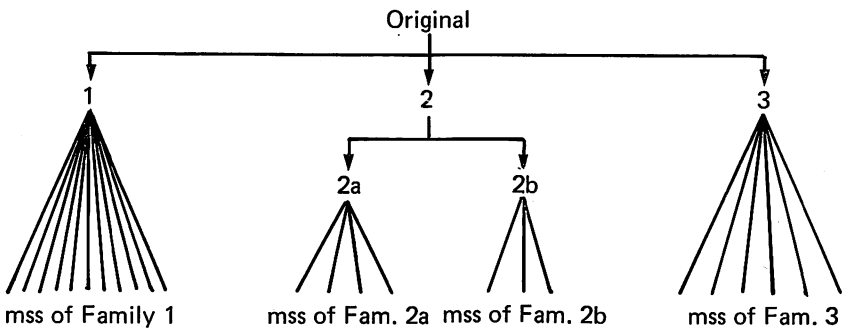
Textual criticism admits two kinds of evidence. On the one hand there is what is known as 'internal evidence' which is based upon a consideration of the various readings within the context of the passage of Scripture in which they are found. Which of the readings accords best with the style of the author? Which fits best into the argument of the author at this point? Is one of the readings so absurd that it is obviously wrong? These judgments, though often useful, are always subjective. We have no guarantee that the reading which seems to us so obviously out of style or even absurd is not precisely what was originally written. There is a danger with this type of evidence that we choose the reading which suits us best.

The second type of evidence is what is termed 'external evidence' and this is evidence based upon the distribution of each of the various readings throughout

the manuscripts. It might seem that when weighing the manuscript evidence we should choose the reading which was supported by the greatest number of manuscripts, but a moment's reflection should show us that this is not necessarily the best policy. One very faulty manuscript may have been copied many hundreds of times, every one of these copies perpetuating the former manuscript's errors, while a good manuscript may have been copied only a few times. In such a circumstance, if we were to choose the majority reading of the resulting manuscripts we should come up with the more faulty and not the better reading.

Family likeness

The textual critic must therefore examine the manuscripts carefully, comparing them one with another. He will find that his manuscripts fall into various groups defined by *family resemblance*. One group of manuscripts contains distinctive words and phrases which are not found in any of the others. The manuscripts within this group may differ from one another but they are also similar to one another in that they contain distinctive family marks. The textual critic will then reason that this group of manuscripts are all descended from a common ancestor which contained the distinctive readings which are peculiar to this group. An examination of the remaining manuscripts may reveal a few more similar families and even sub-families. From these the textual critic is able to plot a family tree which might look something like this.



The manuscripts of family 1 all contain a set of distinctive readings which are not to be found in any other manuscripts. These readings the textual critic supposes to have existed in the (now lost) manuscript 1. All the descendants of manuscript 1 reproduced the peculiar readings of that manuscript while each copy possesses further peculiarities of its own. The manuscripts of Family 2a have one set of distinctive readings which are not found in any other manuscripts but another set which they share in common with Family 2b. Thus our critic argues that Families 2a and 2b are both descended from a common ancestor the (now lost) manuscript 2 which in turn gave rise to two (also lost) manuscripts 2a and 2b. 2a and 2b each reproduced the peculiarities of manuscript 2 and therefore possess one set of peculiarities in common, but each added peculiarities of its own. So, by diligent comparison of manuscripts our critic is able to recognise *families* of texts and to construct a probable family tree which will account both for the similarities and differences between the texts.

Our critic may now find that the majority of manuscripts at his disposal belong to one of the families; for example, he may find that 75% of the manuscripts belong to family 1. But it would be quite incorrect to suppose that this of itself implied that family 1 preserved the best reading of the original. These many manuscripts are simply witnesses to their common ancestor 1 and therefore the witness of this large group is of *equal weight* with the witness of the manuscripts of family 3 even if this latter group amounts to only 1% of the total number of manuscripts.

Now this is a greatly simplified picture of the process by which various manuscript readings are to be weighed according to their text types or families. The purpose of this illustration is simply to demonstrate that the best text is not always the majority text, for the majority of texts may belong to one family and have one common ancestor. The value of these texts therefore depends not at all upon their number but on the quality of their ancestor, and this can only be judged by comparing *family* with *family*. In seeking to discover the original text the various manuscripts must therefore first be sorted into families and then each family must be treated as one body of evidence to be weighed against the others.

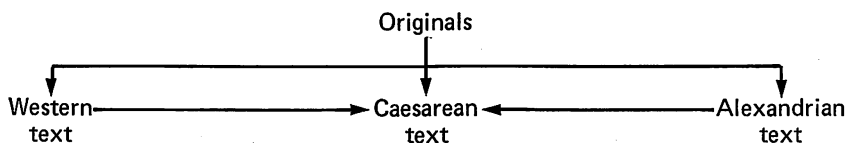
The difference between the Old and New Testaments

We wish now to apply these principles specifically to the textual criticism of the Biblical manuscripts. The space at our disposal here does not permit us to examine the textual criticism of the Old Testament. Old Testament textual criticism is a discipline which suffers from a lack of evidences; we do not have the vast range of manuscripts which we possess on the New Testament. This means that the discipline is rather more complicated and demanding than the textual criticism of the New Testament, but at the same time it has not stirred up the same excitement in the church at large, for few major translations have chosen to depart to any significant extent from the common received Massoretic text. The rest of this article will therefore be concerned with the textual criticism of the New Testament.

It is quite impossible to appreciate the methods of New Testament textual criticism without knowing something of the history of the transmission of the New Testament text. The New Testament was of course written in Greek, a language which permitted the word of God to be spread immediately throughout the Graeco-Roman Empire of the first century AD. As Christian churches became established throughout the Empire, each would want a copy of the New Testament for its own use. So the different gospels and epistles were collated and copied. Each newly established church would need its own copy of the New Testament and would therefore arrange for the New Testament manuscripts in one of the larger churches nearby to be copied and sent to them. Because of this practice of obtaining a copy from a nearby church, *families* of texts sprang up associated with certain geographical areas. That is to say that certain characteristic errors or peculiarities are found to be associated with different areas of the Roman Empire. But, as you can imagine, the different text families are not neat and completely distinct groups but there tends to be a good deal of intermingling between the families as copyists may have had access to manuscripts from different areas and have chosen to copy one manuscript at one point and a second manuscript of a different type at another.

Two dominant texts: the Alexandrian and the Western

Scholars believe that there are three basic ancient text families. One of these is the *Alexandrian text*. The chief witnesses to this form of text are *Codex Sinaiticus* and *Codex Vaticanus*, both dating from about the middle of the fourth century, though we have some papyrus fragments dating from the end of the second century which also have this kind of text. This is generally believed to be the single most reliable text family, though of course even this is not without faults. A second text family is the *Western text*. This was the most widespread and popular of the ancient text forms and is that found especially in the Latin speaking church of the first four centuries. Thirdly, there is the *Caesarean text*: this turns out to be a mixture of Western and Alexandrian readings. A very much simplified family tree of these manuscript families might look something like this.



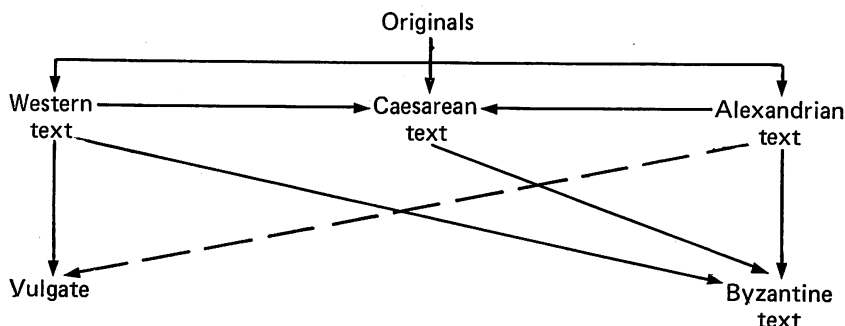
But the language of the western part of the Empire was not Greek but Latin. There was therefore a need that the Greek New Testament should be translated into Latin for use in the western churches. This had been done on a local basis at an early period of the Christian church; the *Western text* consists mostly of such old Latin texts and similar quotations in the Latin Fathers. But by the end of the fourth century this situation of a multiplicity of rather poor Latin translations was felt to be unsatisfactory. Pope Damasus therefore commissioned Jerome to produce an 'authorised' Latin translation. The resulting translation is what is now known as the *Vulgate*. Jerome relied mainly upon Latin texts available to him though he corrected these by reference to some Greek manuscripts which appear to have been of the Alexandrian family. Thus Jerome's *Vulgate* is based chiefly on the Western text but shows some influence from the Alexandrian. This Latin text became the standard or received text of the Western church.

In the Eastern church, which continued to speak Greek, a similar process of standardisation occurred. Towards the end of the third century Lucian of Antioch prepared a Greek text by comparing and collating a number of different texts which were at his disposal. This text, which is a mixture of the earlier text types became the accepted text of the church at Constantinople. Because Constantinople was the capital of the Eastern Empire the text of Lucian became the standard text of the entire Greek speaking church giving rise to what is known as the Byzantine family of texts.

So then, from about 500 AD we have a much less complex picture of the transmission of the New Testament. In the Western church the New Testament was known only in the Latin *Vulgate*. Manuscript copies of the *Vulgate* are therefore numbered in thousands. Similarly, in the eastern church the New Testament was known only in the Greek Byzantine text, copies of this family of manuscripts were therefore also greatly multiplied. The greatest proportion of

Greek manuscripts of the New Testament now in existence therefore belong to this one family of Byzantine texts.

A simplified family tree of the text families including the Vulgate and Byzantine texts would look something like this.



The first English translations

The first important translation of the Bible into English, the translation of Wycliffe in 1330, was made from the Latin Vulgate, for at that time the Greek text was entirely unknown in the West. With the Renaissance there was a renewed interest in ancient learning and particularly in Greek. Moreover, the invention of the printing press opened the way for the mass production of books. In 1516 Erasmus published the first printed copy of the entire New Testament in Greek. He did not possess any manuscripts of the entire Greek text and so used several manuscripts which he edited and collated to produce his work. All of the manuscripts were of the Byzantine family. When it came to the book of Revelation he had only one manuscript at his disposal and this lacked the last six verses. Erasmus translated these verses from the Latin Vulgate into Greek and thus produced a Greek text which is significantly different at this point from all known Greek manuscripts.

In the first edition of Erasmus's Greek text the Trinitarian statement of 1 John 5:7-8 was left out, for Erasmus could find it in no Greek text. But those who were used to the Latin Vulgate in which the text appears objected so strongly that Erasmus was obliged to include these verses in his second edition, though it seems that these too were translated from the Vulgate into the Greek for the purpose.

The Greek text of Erasmus was the basis for Tyndale's English translation of the New Testament.

The Received text or Textus Receptus

Erasmus's Greek text was later edited and published by Stephanus, and later still by Elzevir. Our Authorised Version New Testament largely follows Stephanus's 3rd edition of 1550. The second edition of Elzevir boasts in its introduction that this is the Greek text which is now received by all. The Erasmus/Stephanus/Elzevir text, which is the text which lies behind the New

Testament translation of the AV has therefore become known as the 'Received Text' or 'Textus Receptus'.

As we have indicated above, the Received Text was constructed almost entirely from the Byzantine family of Greek texts which is sometimes known as the 'majority text' since the majority of Greek manuscripts in existence belong to this family. But the Received Text is by no means identical with the majority text, for in several places (notably 1 John 5:7-8, the last six verses of Revelation, Acts 9:6 etc.) the Received Text follows the Latin Vulgate and *not* the majority text.

The great debate about the Received Text and The King James or Authorized Version

With this background knowledge of the history of the New Testament texts and translations we are now in a position to tackle the question more immediately before us. Since the 15th and 16th centuries the number of Greek manuscripts which have been discovered has been quite remarkable. There are now at our disposal some 5000 manuscripts of the Greek New Testament, though many of these include only part of the New Testament and some of them only a few verses. The question now is, in the light of all of this evidence, what is the best text of the New Testament? How are we to discover the text which is most likely to be original?

As with any other discipline which faces us with difficult questions, there is the temptation to seek an easy answer. One such easy answer is that of those who argue that the Received Text is the authentic Greek Testament and that any deviation from this amounts to tampering with the word of God. Those who defend such a view consequently defend the Authorised Version as the only Bible translation free from the errors of the critics. Such a position is rather attractive, for it presents an exceedingly simple answer to the complex questions raised by the multitude of manuscripts, but its attractiveness does not insure its propriety.

Before we consider the arguments of the Textus Receptus party we would like to recommend two articles by Donald MacLeod entitled, 'The Bible and Textual Criticism' which appeared in the *Banner of Truth*, 105 (June 1972) pp. 11-18 and 111 (December 1972) pp. 12-26. The first of these articles is a general introduction to the discipline of textual criticism in which the author shows that such criticism is not an ogre to be feared and hated but is a proper department of Biblical study. The second article is a detailed reply to an article by Terence Brown of the Trinitarian Bible Society who had objected to Donald MacLeod's initial article because of its suggestion that the Received Text is not above improvement. We warmly recommend these articles to our readers for they offer a far more able defence of the principles of Textual Criticism than we are able to give here.

Those who argue for the superiority of the Received Text generally do so on two grounds. Firstly, they claim that it is the majority text, that it has the support of the majority of the manuscripts. Secondly, they argue that other manuscripts, notably Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are corrupt. We shall deal briefly with each of these claims.

Firstly the claim that the Received Text has the support of the great majority of the manuscripts. To this there are two important objections. First of all it

should be remembered that the Received Text is *not identical* with the majority text, as we have shown above. If it is argued that we must always follow the majority text then, in particular 1 John 5:7-8 must be omitted from our New Testament. But those who defend the Received Text are vehement in their defence of the authenticity of this passage. 1 John 5:7-8 can only be retained within our New Testaments by acknowledging that the majority text is not always right and that it may quite properly be brought under criticism from other textual evidences. But once this has been admitted we have allowed that textual criticism is necessary to the establishment of the right text, and hence we have destroyed our own argument for the superiority and perfection of the Received Text.

Secondly, even admitting that the Received Text follows the majority text for the greater part of the New Testament, we cannot be persuaded that the majority is necessarily the best text. We have tried to demonstrate above that the majority may well be wrong. The majority text represents only one family of texts, namely the Byzantine text. This family, though it has numerous witnesses is not the most ancient or the most reliable of the textual families. The characteristic variations or abnormalities of the Byzantine text do not appear in the writings of any of the leaders of the Christian Church before the fourth century.

A second reason for the superiority of the Received Text according to its advocates, is that the other and variant manuscripts are corrupt. Advocates of this view argue that these other manuscripts, notably Sinaiticus and Vaticanus include deliberate corruptions made by Arians. Texts which affirmed the deity of Christ or the trinity of God have been tampered with in order to destroy the Biblical teaching on this matter. Donald MacLeod deals with this point in detail in the second of his articles mentioned above; here we can only deal with the point briefly. The view that other textual traditions have suffered from deliberate anti-trinitarian mutilation simply receives no support from the manuscript evidences. Most of the great Christological statements of the New Testament are precisely the same in the Alexandrian and Byzantine texts. Moreover, in John 1:18 Sinaiticus and Vaticanus read 'the only begotten God' which is a far stronger statement of the divinity of Christ than the Received Text's 'the only begotten son'. Are we to conclude that here the Received Text has been subject to Arian corruptions?

The manuscript evidence will not permit the view that the Received Text is beyond criticism.

A second, and very different simplistic solution to the complexities of Textual Criticism was that adopted by Westcott and Hort. These scholars argued that while the Byzantine text, and hence the Received Text, was corrupt yet the manuscript Vaticanus was practically a perfect copy of the original New Testament except for occasional mistakes which it was not difficult to spot and to correct. In other words, they argued that pride of place should be given not to Textus Receptus but to Vaticanus.

Today the majority of scholars recognise that no text or group of texts is without its faults. We cannot reconstruct the Greek New Testament simply by following one text with occasional reference to others. All of the witnesses must be brought together to speak whenever there is a word, phrase or verse in dispute.

There is no way of avoiding the hard slog of comparing text with text and family with family.

Let me add one final word of warning. Advocates of the Received Text sometimes present the argument as if it were a simple choice between following the Received Text or following the largely Alexandrian text advocated by Westcott and Hort. They produce good evidence for the imperfection of the work of Westcott and Hort, proving that the Alexandrian text is not as pure as these gentlemen supposed and that the Byzantine text is not so poor a witness as they believed. They back up this, quite proper argument with quotations from a great range of scholars and then conclude that we must return to the Received Text. The fallacy of this argument should now be quite clear. The choice is not such a simple either or. Criticism of Westcott and Hort does not mean that the superiority of the Received Text is vindicated. Beware then of this kind of argument.

From what has been said above it should be evident that Textual Criticism is a very demanding discipline which requires a great deal of time, devotion and careful painstaking study. We should not be quick to criticise the critics, but should be thankful for their labours on our behalf.

Applications

In closing let me sum up the main applications of what we have stated above.

Firstly, our commitment to the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures prompts us to be deeply concerned with the discipline of Textual Criticism. If we believe that the Evangelists and Apostles wrote the very words which God moved them to write then we should be concerned to establish exactly what these words are. Even though the variations between the manuscripts do not affect one doctrine of our faith, yet we wish, as far as is possible, that our New Testament shall contain every word that God spoke but not one word more. Conservative evangelicals should therefore be in the forefront of the work of Textual Criticism, establishing canons for critical study which are consistent with our own view of Scripture.

Secondly, it is precisely as we become involved in comparing the many manuscripts of the New Testament now discovered that we appreciate the wonderful way in which God has preserved his word through the ages. We are struck by the remarkable agreement of the manuscripts. Of the variations 95% are error so obvious that there is no controversy over which constitutes the proper reading. Of the remainder a further 95% do not affect the meaning of the verse in any important sense. Thus an openness to all of the evidence, far from suggesting that the original word of God is lost for ever, only confirms us in the confidence that a critically compiled Greek New Testament differs very little indeed from the original words which God caused to be written at the hands of the Evangelists and Apostles.

Thirdly, we have seen that Textual Criticism is a demanding discipline. Most of us will therefore have to trust ourselves to the work of others. We should not be afraid of doing this. Textual Critics are not wicked unbelievers out to destroy the word of God and the doctrines of the Gospel, they are honest men working hard on our behalf at a difficult and demanding sphere of study. If we are

unhappy about some of their presuppositions and conclusions then does this not call us to enter the fray and to produce men of the stature of Warfield who will devote themselves to this task from a conservative evangelical standpoint? Meanwhile we must trust ourselves to the work of others, not with reluctance and resignation but with thankfulness for their labours.

Fourthly, no text of the New Testament, and therefore no translation of the New Testament, will be perfect. Whatever text and translation we use we will not find that it is beyond criticism. Part of the task of the preacher will be, in accordance with his ability and knowledge, to state and explain in his preaching the points where he would wish to differ from the version which he is using. Whether he uses the AV the RSV or the NIV he should be aware of alternative readings and translations and should not be afraid to defend and expound an alternative rendering which he believes more accurate.

This leads us to our final point, and that concerns the question directly before us, how do we choose between different versions of the Bible? It should be evident from what we have said above that it is not a simple choice between which follows the 'right' text and which a 'corrupted' version. All versions are imperfect, both in their choice of text and in their translation, and all will have elements in them which we will find less than satisfactory. The question is therefore not which is right and which is wrong but which is the better and more useful version. At the risk of overstepping my brief let me offer a personal opinion that in the matter of choosing between versions the question of which text they follow—though by no means unimportant—is a secondary consideration. Whether they stick to the Received Text or whether they depart from it we shall find reasons to differ with their judgment from time to time. The primary question in choosing between versions therefore rests with the quality of the translation. Differences over the choice of readings in the Greek seriously affects the reading of only a handful of verses in the New Testament while the quality of the translation affects every verse. The primary question is therefore whether the translation before us is faithful to the original, and whether it brings home the meaning of the text with clarity to those—both believers and unbelievers—who will hear the word of God read and preached. ▀

Correspondence

From Pastor Michael Eaton, Nairobi Baptist Church, Kenya.

The Sealing of the Spirit: Some Unanswered Questions

I was interested to read Professor MacLeod's critique of Dr. Lloyd-Jones view of the 'Sealing of the Spirit'. There are, however, certain points which Professor MacLeod himself seems to have neglected and I write to ask that they be tackled:

(1) There are clear occasions in the New Testament where an aorist participle is followed by an indicative verb and a time-gap or time-sequence is in view. The following are New Testament examples:

'Having fasted . . . he afterwards was hungry' (Matthew 4:2).

'Having taken her hand he raised her up' (Mark 1:31).

'Having been healed he did not know who it was' (John 5:13).

'Having persuaded the multitude they stoned Paul' (Acts 14: 19).

'Having supposed that they had obtained their purpose they weighed anchor and sailed' (Acts 27:13).

'Having been justified by faith we have peace with God' (Romans 5:1).

'I thank God . . . for the grace . . . having been given' (I Corinthians 1:4).

'We give thanks . . . having heard of your faith' (Colossians 1:3, 4).

'Having taken Mark, bring him with you' (2 Timothy 4:11).

In all of these cases where an aorist participle is used there is sequence. The fasting led to the hunger; the hand was taken before the person

could be raised up; after a healing a man wanted to know the healer; after apostles fulfilled their purpose they left; peace follows but does not precede justification; grace is given and gratitude follows; Timothy had to get Mark before he could bring him.

To take Ephesians 1:13-14 as meaning '*Having* believed . . . you were sealed' is perfectly possible.

The major book on the 'Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek' (with that title, by E. De Witt Burton) claims that the aorist participle is 'most frequently used of an action antecedent in time to the action of the principal verb' (p. 63). Other major grammars agree with him,¹ including indeed A. T. Robertson who calls this usage 'the most common use of the aorist participle'.² So A. T. Robertson's grammar can be cited in favour of Dr. Lloyd-Jones as well as in opposition! Examples of the same usage can also be quoted from Hellenistic Greek outside of the New Testament.³ Actually the most useful comment of Robertson in this matter is one of an altogether different kind: 'The commentary must have other elements besides the grammatical. . . . There still remains the apprehension of the soul of the author to which historical grammar is only an introduction.'⁴ Precisely!

(2) Professor MacLeod wants us to face the question of whether the sealing of the Spirit is objective or subjective. But that is precisely the question that I would ask Professor MacLeod to face! The verse in question speaks of being 'sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the foretaste of our inheritance'. In other words the sealing of the Spirit is identified with a foretaste of glory. My question is: Is

it possible to have a foretaste of glory which is purely objective? Surely not! I would expect a foretaste of glory to be the present experience—yes *experience*—of the assurance, the communion, the rejoicing in song, the fellowship that will be characteristic of the glory-land we are approaching. Can a man have 'rivers of living water' flowing from him without his knowing about it? Must he merely 'take it by faith' that it is so?

(3) Professor MacLeod protests that the term 'sealing' is not used in a number of the passages quoted by Dr. Lloyd-Jones. This highlights one of the major neglected areas in the current discussion, the failure of so many to note the interchangeability of the various terms for the outpouring of the Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit is identified with the 'outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 1:5 compared with 2:17, 18, 33 and Acts 10:44-47 compared with 11:15-17. 'Receiving power' by the Spirit is identified with the same experience in Acts 1:8, and thus also with what happened to Christ (cf. Luke 3:22 compared with 4:14). 'Receiving power' is also identified with the baptism outpouring of the Spirit in Luke 24:49 compared with Acts 1:8. But Luke also uses the term 'anointing' for the same event (Acts 10:38). Then 2 Corinthians 1:21 and 22 identify 'seal' 'anointing', and 'foretaste', as Ephesians 1:13, 14 identifies 'seal' and 'foretaste'. Another phrase which flows through these references is 'promise of the Father', used in connection with the term 'seal' in Ephesians 1:13, and in connection with the term 'receiving' in Galatians 3:14 (surely justifying an equation between the 'receiving' and 'sealing' of the Spirit which Professor MacLeod queries).

Numerous other passages show that a whole string of terms are used interchangeably with reference to the

same experience, viewing it from different angles: outpouring, baptised, receiving power, anointing, Spirit of adoption, coming upon, receiving, earnest, seal, promise of the Father, firstfruits. A survey of the terminology shows these terms to be very largely interchangeable. Three questions need to be put to the *whole* range of these passages: (i) Is this blessing experiential or not? (ii) Is this blessing identical to, coincident with, or distinct from regeneration-conversion? (iii) Is the blessing described in a way that links it with holiness (as the Church of the Nazarene says)? Or gifts (as our Pentecostal friends say)? Or assurance (as Dr. Lloyd-Jones says, following a large segment of the Reformed tradition)? Or what? Studying the Scriptures the answers seem to be that this blessing is gloriously experiential; in New Testament times it generally accompanied conversion but is not absolutely inseparable from it; it largely connects with assurance, joy, worship, praise, prayer.

This does not seem very far from what Dr. Lloyd-Jones is saying. I, for one, see it as a very obvious major gap in the Reformed tradition as we currently find it. As Erroll Hulse so rightly says of one section of it: 'not exactly pulsating with life'. Is that a coincidence?

1 See for example N. Turner, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 3, (1963), p. 79.

2 *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (1919 edn.), p. 860.

3 See for example J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (1905), p. 130.

4 *op. cit.*, p. 29.

Dear Mr. Hulse,

re: '*Helping Struggling Causes*'

I sincerely endorse Derek Bigg's article on the extension of the Local

Church ministry to that of ENCOURAGERS. Prompting me to write, however, is the question as to what priority *Growth* should have in the strategy of ministry.

Many small Causes may be described as having no more than a 'survival mentality', with all resources geared to saving its impending death. It seems the more spiritual such survival enterprises are, the more unhealthily introspective they become, to the exclusion of heartfelt, active care for its Christless neighbourhood.

Zion, with its reputation for bearing good tidings, is exhorted in Isaiah 40:9 to get up into the high mountain, lift up its voice with strength and fearlessly point the surrounding cities to the Saviour. Many in Zion have intimate knowledge of that Saviour, have a voice, have the high mountain, yet (for fear?) don't like mountain climbing;

instead, they become attached to the rope somehow and let others pull them up. To 'get up' into that hard place of declaring the Gospel—and that these days is not always the pulpit—is more than the will can sometimes accept.

Bulldoze? No! Feed, share, encourage, love by all means possible. But surely a glimmer of 'growth mentality' applied intelligently to the most destitute of gifted congregations can break the apathy which is sapping at its roots, and we know what happens to people without a vision. The Lord will add to His Church such as should be saved, but it's up to us to go . . . make . . . and teach. . . .

Yours sincerely,

From a struggling, GROWING church,
Alan R. Fish.



By Herbert Carson. A second article in a series of three.

Deaconesses

THE TERM DEACONESS IS LIABLE TO PRODUCE A NEGATIVE RESPONSE AMONG many Baptists, who may view the title as either a concession to Anglican ideas, or the beginning of a capitulation to the thinking of Women's Lib! We are however to be governed neither by negative traditionalism, nor by male chauvinism but by the teaching of Scripture. Some Baptists might also like to ponder an interesting comment from the Oxford dictionary of the Christian church. Referring to the practical ministry of deaconesses in the early church in relation to preparing women for baptism, it links the decline in the practice of believers' baptism with the decline in the importance of the office of deaconess! The further comment is also significant—that the office disappeared in face of the emergence of the monastic movement with its cloistered nuns.

Women in the New Testament

We begin with the contemporary situation for the New Testament writers. Women would in many places have occupied a much more secluded



condition than today. It would have been very difficult for men to enter and minister within a household to the women. Furthermore the early churches operated in the context of bitter hostility in which all kinds of gross slanders against Christians were circulated. They were accused by the pagans of practising immorality in their meetings. The need for discretion was all the more insistent in view of the practice of the heretical teachers, castigated in 2 Tim. 3:6, 'who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women who are loaded down with sins'. One sees an awareness of the danger in the warning that the elder is to be 'above reproach' (1 Tim. 3:2) and in the firm reminder to Timothy that he is to 'treat younger women as sisters, with absolute purity' (1 Tim. 5:2). The ministry of women to women was thus a vital aspect of the evangelistic and edifying work of the churches.

Turning to a more explicit reference in the New Testament we meet Phoebe who is described in Romans 16:2 as a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae. The A.V. translates the word as 'servant', thus reflecting the view of those who would interpret the role as simply being that of any Christian who serves the congregation, even though in her case the service may have been outstanding. John Murray takes this line in his commentary, and claims that there is no warrant for seeing any church office in the ministry of Phoebe. The question is therefore whether she was simply a serving member of the church or a deaconess in the technical sense.

The word used is diakonos. While the form of the Greek word is masculine it can be used of either men or women. As we saw in the discussion of the role of the deacons in the New Testament, the word deacon can be used in the general sense of servant or minister. Yet we cannot avoid the fact that the term is also specifically applied to those appointed to the diaconate. For Paul to apply this word to Phoebe, and to commend her for special consideration by the believers at Rome, would imply surely that she was in fact much more than a gracious and helpful member of the church, but occupied a specific office.

Views of the Fathers and others

This certainly was John Calvin's view. He comments as follows: 'He commends her on account of her office, for she performed a most honourable and a most holy function in the Church'. Haldane agrees with this interpretation: 'As deacons were appointed to attend to the poor, so deaconesses were specially set apart in the churches in order to attend to the wants of their own sex'. Another notable commentator, Charles Hodge, echoes this as he writes: 'Phoebe was a servant, that is, deaconess'. Hodge adds by way of further comment: 'Many ecclesiastical writers suppose there were two classes of female officers; the one (corresponding, in some measure, in their duties to the elders) having the oversight of the conduct of the younger female Christians, and the other whose duty was to attend to the sick and the poor'.

John Chrysostom the great preacher of the fourth century took it that the reference is to Phoebe's office: 'Moreover he adds her rank by mentioning her being deaconess' (Homily xxx on Romans). Theodoret in the fifth century drew the conclusion that the church at Cenchreae must have been a large one to have a deaconess.

The testimony of Pliny

It may be objected that these patristic writers were viewing the New Testament from the perspective of their own situation in which an order of deaconesses was an established fact. But one can get evidence that the patristic writers were in agreement with those who lived close to the apostolic period. Some of the latter must have been contemporaries of the Apostle John. A most illuminating comment on their attitude comes from Pliny, a pagan writer, who had come to know Christian practice at first hand as it stood at the beginning of the second century.

Pliny was governor of Bithynia and wrote his famous letter about 112 AD in which he asked the Emperor Trajan's advice as to how he should deal with Christians who had emerged as a problem in his area. He told how he had used torture on two women to try and elicit the truth about the Christians. He refers to them in a way which has a direct bearing on the usage of the term 'deaconess'. So he speaks of submitting to torture 'two maid servants who were called (i.e. by the Christians) deaconesses'. The fact that he uses the ordinary latin word for maidservants (*ancillae*) and then gives them their distinctive Christian title (*ministrae*) points to the conclusion that they had an office in the church. *Ancilla* was the word for a female slave—hence our English word *ancillary*—and points to the social status of the two women. To add a further word to describe them as servants, would have been tautology. Hence to describe them as '*ministrae*' was to accord them the special title which they had in the Christian fellowship.

1 Timothy 3:11

This is a much more difficult verse to interpret, and the difficulty is reflected in the varying translations. The problem is that the Greek word may mean either 'women' or 'wives' depending on the context. So one group of translators follows the AV in its rendering: 'their wives', while another group follows the Revised Version with 'the women'. The New International Version translates it 'their wives' but gives as an alternative translation in the margin 'deaconesses'. Our decision therefore as to the true meaning will depend on our interpretation of the whole verse and indeed of the context.

We begin with the fact that the word means basically 'women' whether married or not. Thus in the immediately preceding passage (1 Tim. 2:9-15) it is this basic meaning which is primarily in view. One could hardly

imagine Paul teaching that only wives are to be modest in clothing, or that only wives are excluded from exercising authority over men! So it is in principle quite reasonable to translate the word in verse 11 as 'women' unless strong arguments can be adduced to the contrary. In fact the arguments point rather towards the correctness of this rendering and so to a reference to women deacons.

We have already seen that the word *diakonos* is masculine in form but may be applied to either men or women, and was thus applied to Phoebe. Had Paul therefore used this word in verse 11 in the context of his treatment of deacons, it would have been confusing, more especially as he is going to make further statements about deacons in verse 12. To distinguish the group described in verse 11 as 'women' is to avoid this confusion.

Fairbairn makes some important points in dealing with the verse and comes to the conclusion that Paul has women deacons rather than deacons' wives in view. Thus the verse is introduced in the same way as verse 8, 1 Timothy 2:9 and Titus 2:3-6, with the word 'likewise'. In each of the other cases cited he is turning to a new class. Then again there is neither article nor possessive pronoun in front of the word 'women'. The AV translates 'their wives' but by the italics it uses for '*their*' it indicates that this word is absent from the original, and has been added by the translators. This means that there is nothing to connect the word 'women' with those who have just been mentioned in verses 8-10, viz. the deacons.

Fairbairn makes the further observation that the qualifications refer more to ministry than to domestic duties. This is reinforced by a comparison of the qualifications with those required of deacons and of elders. So they are to be 'worthy of respect' (AV 'grave')—it is the same word as is applied to deacons in verse 8. They are not to be 'malicious talkers', a requirement which is close to the 'double-tongued' prohibition for deacons—a very necessary stipulation for anyone engaged in counselling others. Then again they are to be 'temperate' or 'sober'. This is the same requirement as is prescribed for the elders in verse 2, though the AV for some reason translates it by different English words—vigilant in verse 2 and sober in verse 11. It is however the same word in both cases, and suggests an avoidance of over indulgence necessary in anyone ministering within the congregation.

More arguments

Some further points may be made to reinforce the view that it is 'women' or 'deaconesses' who are in view rather than deacons' wives. In the first place it would seem a strange order to deal with the qualifications of wives before dealing with the issue of the deacon being the husband of one wife. The latter however follows naturally after the pastoral qualifications of 'the deacons' and 'women deacons' have been given.

It is also significant that no mention is made of elders' wives. It would be most surprising that deacons' wives should be presented as a more important class than elders' wives, so that the latter do not have any requirements or restrictions—unless one was so naive as to imagine that elders' wives need no teaching, such is their innate perfection! Calvin sees this difficulty and tries to meet it by saying that it refers both to the wives of elders and deacons. But it would surely be odd to include such a dual reference in the section specifically dealing with the diaconate.

If in fact deaconesses are in view in the reference to 'women', one can appreciate all the more Paul's firm insistence in 1 Timothy 2:12: 'I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man'. An ordinary Christian woman in the congregation might not be likely to push herself into a position of trying to teach men; but a woman with a specific ecclesiastical office might be much more tempted to usurp the authority of the elders. Incidentally this may reassure some who are troubled lest the trend of the argument of this article is towards 'lady elders'. In fact it points in the opposite direction!

The value of deaconesses

In the normal functioning of a local church one can see how valuable a role may be played by a deaconess. In the practical sphere there are often details which are overlooked by men, which are noticed at once by women—this is reflected in the way catering usually ends up in the care of a group of women members. But at a more important level, if the thesis of the article on deacons is true, namely that they share in the ministry of compassion and spiritual care under the oversight of the elders, then here is an area where the woman deaconess can excel. There are problems of teenage girls and of young married women where an experienced and spiritually sensitive woman can minister in a personal way when it would not be easy or even wise for a man to act. There is a sphere of compassionate ministry to women and children and also to the aged where the service of a sympathetic and godly woman will enrich the total caring ministry of the church. ■

A Reformed Critique of the Church Renewal Movement

The second article in a three part series by Rev. John Campbell, Riverton Baptist Church, Western Australia.

THE CHURCH RENEWAL MOVEMENT has had a significant influence on American Church life for about fifteen years. It arose out of a background of disappointment with conventional Church life, and strikes a responsive note with many leaders struggling in *status quo* situations where life and spontaneity are minimal. It is especially concerned with real fellowship, teaching, family life, discipleship, spiritual gifts and ministry.

I am much more sympathetic to this movement than to the bulk of Church Growth approaches. Most leaders in Church Renewal show admirable theological appreciation of issues affecting the doctrine of the Church. One example is *Larry Richards*. He uses the illustration of a missionary who wanted to stop headhunters killing each other with their stone axes.¹ He tried to break the link with their old way of life by providing them with new, shiny steel axes. Unfortunately, the natives found these axes much more efficient for cutting off heads! At last he replaced the new ones with machettes, tools with a completely different cutting edge. This did the trick. Richards applies this by saying that much of what we do in church life is simply an improved way of doing traditional things. He urges us to re-assess what it is we are trying to do. He is concerned about *a recovery of concept, not a reorganisation of functions*. So far, Reformed leaders may find much in common with him.

Other leaders of note in the Church Renewal movement are Keith Miller, Ray Ortlund, Ray Stedman, Findley Edge, Richard Halvorson, John McArthur, Elton Trueblood, Ralph Neighbour, Gordon Cosby, Juan Ortiz and Bob Girard. All of these men have written books on the subject, and it is valuable to read some of them.

The Church Renewal movement has *two focal points*. One is *the role of the Pastor*. The writings of men like David Haney (*The Idea of the Laity*) have freed many pastors from false expectations, both of their churches and of themselves. No longer is the Pastor expected to be the office boy, janitor, gardener and general 'dogsbody'. The Church Renewal exposition of Ephesians 4:1-13 has rediscovered the Pastor's evocative, supportive, equipping role. No longer is the Pastor treated as the chief performer and entertainer before a congregation of Sunday morning critics, but he is seen as the equipper, and the emphasis is put upon the Christian living of the congregation. Sam Shoemaker spoke of the Pastor not as a labourer but a working foreman. Haney depicts him not as a star footballer but as a playing coach; not as a torch-bearer but as a lamp-lighter.

The role of the Pastor, then, is (partly) to find and release the ministries of other people, rather than to do it all himself. He is not a one-man-band, but the conductor of the band or simply a lead musician.

He is not gifted to do all that many conventional Pastors try to do. Rather, every Christian becomes a *minister*, thus it is not biblical to equate *minister* with *pastor*. Providing this evocative function of the Pastor does not overshadow his other responsibilities, then this becomes a helpful contribution to our approach.

The other focal point is *the nature of the Church*. Men like Stedman and Richards ask 'What is the church supposed to be?' They explore (with great profit) the biblical images of family, body, temple, bride, etc. At times their writings and practices suggest many similarities with Anabaptist ideals of the 'gathered community'.

Our evaluation shall begin with *good points* of the movement:

(1) Church Renewal promotes a *flexible approach* to contemporary needs, and provides guidelines for an informed, unthreatened approach to change.

(2) It explains and exposes the dangers of *institutionalism*. Richards' explanation of Society v. Community is enlightening.

(3) Church Renewalists emphasises *the priesthood of all believers* and the use of gifts without necessarily losing the doctrine of pastoral leadership.

(4) *Team ministry* and eldership figure prominently in this movement. Many churches in Australia have adopted an eldership through Church Renewal teaching rather than Reformed influences. It stems in part from the doctrine of gifts.

(5) There is release for the Pastor burdened by *false expectations*, and a healthy stress put on under-shepherding and 'discipling'.

(6) There is the vital emphasis placed

upon *small group ministries*. Such groups provide sharing and caring circles of intimate fellowship. These groups are readily accepted in Australia, but I recently discovered that in Britain such groups are regarded with suspicion due to charismatic activities. Do we have to surrender such concepts to the charismatics? John Wesley and the Puritans used similar groups!

(7) As traditional approaches often fragment church life (e.g. Youth groups, Ladies' meetings, Boys Brigade, etc.), Church Renewal people place less emphasis on programmes and more on *the family* as a whole.

(8) There is a strong stress on *the unconditional nature of love*.

(9) Church Renewal stimulates us to think about what are *the characteristics of a healthy church*.

However, there are points of *danger* in this movement. Larry Richards, for example, outlines hope for vitality and community in an age of materialism, institutionalism, and dead orthodoxy. Yet there are weak links in his attractive approach.

(1) Renewal emphases on experience can tend to create *subjectivity* in fellowship and study. 'What does this passage mean to you?' often leads to navel-gazing! A balance needs to be struck between objective realities and subjective appropriation of those realities.

(2) *Preaching* may be undermined by some Church Renewal men. Richards says that preaching is one-way, or monological; teaching is two-way, or dialogical, and that Group involvement is the best, being interactional. Richards and others have developed their own theory of Christian education which relegates proclamation to a lower rank than is biblically per-

missible. This reflects a genuine concern to be contemporary that is not sufficiently locked in to biblical authority. Not all Renewalists share this view of preaching.

(3) Richards tends to undermine *the biblical doctrine of leadership*. His concept of servant leadership is a good reminder of the model of humility given to us by Paul (e.g. Phil. 2:1-11), but it does not entirely spring from the Bible. One major factor, in my assessment, is the current acceptance by the Church of anti-authoritarianism in the world. He could well have looked at John Cotton's concept of servants' authority in *The Keys of the Kingdom*, a book that converted John Owen to Congregationalism.

I could touch on other weaknesses, but they are largely related to the key points of criticism already given. My approach to men like Richards is to grasp what they are saying, recognise its importance, and assess it carefully. There is great profit in retaining traditional concepts of leadership and preaching but to use a supplementary diet of *Koinonia* groups and gift ministries.

Most of my discoveries in the ministry have come from Reformed studies on the Bible, but the Church Renewal movement has encouraged me to take my foot off the brake and put it on the accelerator!

CHART OF TWO MODERN MOVEMENTS

CHURCH RENEWAL

ORIGIN: Developed in U.S.A. through disillusionment with Evangelical *status quo*. Impact of Larry Richards typical.

NATURE: Broad, amorphous, not so easily attacked, defended or explained.

EMPHASIS: Concerned with the organic nature of the Church (as was Calvin) and church life. The rediscovery of Christian community.

ROLE OF SOCIOLOGY: Sociology is a contributive factor. e.g. awareness of statistical patterns.

This movement is directed against institutionalism and hindrances to the *organic maturity* of the Church.

CHURCH GROWTH

ORIGIN: Developed on mission fields and did not hit U.S.A. until 1950's-60's.

NATURE: Well-defined movement with specific presuppositions, principles, and implications.

EMPHASIS: Concerned with the evangelistic mission of the Church and church outreach. The re-discovery of the great commission.

ROLE OF SOCIOLOGY: Sociology is a determinative factor. e.g. adherence to statistical patterns.

This movement is directed against complacency, maintenance-oriented church life, and hindrances to the *numerical growth* of the Church.

P.S. I prefer to use the term *Church Health* because the word *Renewal* has unfortunately acquired charismatic overtones. We must note, too, that some of the Church Renewal people hold to charismatic views.

To be concluded.

1 *A New Face for the Church*, Grand Rapids, 1971. p. 16.

Michael Boland is a member of a Baptist church in Barnet, England. This article is gleaned from The Encyclopaedia of Christianity and reproduced here by kind permission of Mr. Jay Green.

Oliver Cromwell

OLIVER CROMWELL (1599-1658) WAS born in Huntingdon into a Protestant family. His formal education by Dr. Thomas Beard at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, was in a Puritan atmosphere. Leaving Cambridge prematurely on the death of his father in June, 1617, he assumed responsibility for the family estates, and in 1620 he married Elizabeth Bourchier, daughter of a prosperous city merchant, by whom he had eight children.

He was elected as member for Huntingdon to the Parliament of 1628-29, where he protested against the spread of ritualism in the Church of England. Charles I was angered by the attacks made on his ministers and policies in this parliament, and 11 years passed before he called another one. The king had to terminate this experiment in 1640 to seek support for his war to impose episcopacy on the Scots, but the opposition of the Puritan gentry in the Commons was more determined and better organised than before. Cromwell sat for Cambridge in the Short and Long Parliaments and seems to have been primarily, though not exclusively, concerned with church matters, such as advocating the destruction of the Anglican hierarchy 'root and branch'.

Cromwell's remarkable rise from nothing to be head of state was not deliberately sought by him. It was largely a result of the ability he showed in the Civil Wars as a cavalry officer and of his strength of purpose in prosecuting the war, as evidenced in the battles of Marston Moor (1644) and Naseby (1645). When they had defeated the Royalists, Parliament and

its army fell out, and Cromwell, as political leader of the latter, was chiefly responsible for the execution of Charles I in January, 1649, and the dissolution of the Rump, as the remnant of Parliament was called, in April, 1653. In both cases he believed he was acting justly and in the interests of the nation, though contrary to tradition. Cromwell was now in a position to make himself dictator, had this been his ambition, since his popularity had been greatly enhanced by military successes in Ireland and Scotland. In fact, in December, 1653, he became Lord Protector on the initiative of Major-General Lambert and the army, after the nominated Parliament of 'Saints' had re-signed its powers back to him.

Henceforth Cromwell regarded himself as called by God through a remarkable series of providences to govern. Thus, fundamentally, he would not permit his parliaments to change the constitution under which they had been summoned. Yet he was never, nor did he desire to be, a dictator. In 1657 he was offered the crown, but refused in deference to opinion in the army. But, although the Protectorate retained a military character to the end and as such was distasteful to the nation, Cromwell's rule was distinguished. Abroad he pursued religious and national ends rather than dynastic interests, as the Stuarts tended to. His two main objects were to crush the power of Spain, the political mainspring of the RC interest in Europe, and to organise a Protestant League. This latter dream was never realised, though Cromwell

was able to exert his influence to protect the Protestant minority in Savoy. Though of a reforming disposition, Cromwell's achievements in domestic affairs were mainly negative: the destruction of arbitrariness in church and state, and the maintenance of peace and order. After his death in 1658, neither his son Richard, who succeeded him as Protector, nor anyone else was able to save the Commonwealth and prevent the restoration of the Stuarts, which took place in May, 1660.

Throughout his career, Cromwell was motivated, not by personal ambition, nor by political idealism, but by his religious convictions. His letters show a familiarity with the Scriptures, to which he was careful to submit his life and thought. Despite his upbringing, his conversion does not seem to have taken place until about 1627-28. As a husband and father, he showed himself chaste and loving. His spiritual home was the army, which he sought to fill with godly men. In it, a multitude of sects flourished, some of which abandoned the Biblical doctrine characteristic of true Puritanism for their own private fancies and utopian schemes. Though not personally in sympathy with their teachings, Cromwell was indulgent to such men because he admired their sincerity and emphasis on the internal character of true religion. Regarded as the 'Great Independent', he did not oppose presbyterianism as such, but the policy of uniformity and religious persecution with which it had become associated. In seeking guidance at crucial times, such as before the trial of Charles I, Cromwell seems to have paid too much attention to his feelings while at prayer, and not enough to the objective Word

of God. A similar failing was his tendency to interpret success as necessarily a sign of Divine approval. Yet though Cromwell's judgment was faulty in these respects, it is just as true that subsequent generations of Christians have tended to lack that true sense of providence which sustained, energised, and humbled him.

Against Cromwell's mystical tendencies must be set his choice of such sober and orthodox chaplains as Caryl, Howe, Thomas Goodwin, and Owen. The Cromwellian religious settlement, of which Owen was the architect, provided for an established church including all orthodox Protestants, with each congregation free to choose its own order and government. Commissions tried ministers for their fitness and ejected them where necessary. On the testimony of Baxter, they did a considerable amount of good. Although the prevailing religious temper was against toleration, Cromwell did not wish to persecute the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and heterodox sects, providing they were peaceful and law abiding. He realised that saving faith could not be compelled by the sword, and the cause of the Gospel would not be furthered by the savage repression of its opponents. His life's ambition was to promote the unrestricted preaching of the Gospel and the practice of godliness.

Oliver Cromwell's religious integrity and practical wisdom saved the Puritan Revolution from sterility and self-destruction. He struck lasting blows against tyranny and clericalism in England, and his rule made English Puritanism famed and respected in his own day and to succeeding generations.



Reviews

Karl Marx: A Christian appreciation of his life and thought. *Dr. David Lyon.* Lion Publishing/IVP. £1.50. 192 pp.

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT BOOK. THE author, within a biographical framework illustrates the main themes of Marx' thought and then compares them with Christian belief. To introduce ideas to a lay-public and then criticise them within the same work is a difficult task, the danger always being present of either the introduction or the critique being over-emphasised. Dr. Lyon avoids this problem skilfully as Marx' thought is prepared clearly and accurately and the Christian critique appears well reasoned and biblically substantiated.

The book is in six chapters with an introduction which sets out the aims and method of the study. Chapter one introduces us to the young Marx and his Hegelian roots. The most important chapters in my view are Chapters two to four as here we are introduced to the main themes of Marx' thought. Chapter two deals with alienation, alienation for Marx, being that of the worker from the proceeds of his work and alienation for the Christian being that of man from God. Pages 55-59 contain a very useful discussion of the Christian view of work. The similarity of the Marxist and the Christian in the area of 'praxis' is then discussed. 'Praxis' according to Marx is the need for theory to have practical implications. The Christian agrees with the need for this but of course the Christian's theory is built upon a totally different base to that of Marx (p. 64). In addition the Christian shares the belief of Marx in a really fundamental social critique, not being merely concerned

with superficialities. However, such a critique by itself cannot lead to the discovery of truth since only the Christian has the standard of truth. I feel that Dr. Lyon goes astray here as he sees this standard of truth as being the life of Christ whereas surely it must be biblical revelation! (see p. 67).

Chapter 3 considers the differing views of Marx and Christianity in the areas of prophecy, property and people. Marx was in error as regards prophecy because he failed to foresee, among other things, the growth of imperialism and nationalism and the decline in class-consciousness. The Christian view of property is truly a third-way between the capitalistic absolute right to private property and the Marxist contempt of private property and Dr. Lyon discusses this third-way in pages 82-85. Marx was also in error in his philosophy of man. He saw man as being totally pre-occupied with the 'horizontal', that is with his relations with other men. He failed to realise the 'vertical', that is God-centred, aspects of men. Towards the end of this chapter Dr. Lyon touches on such problems on those of philosophy of history (to which I feel he gives a weak response p. 93-94) and the role of the State. He also discusses the need for consistency between the ideals of a person and that person's behaviour and compares Christ's total consistency with the inconsistency of Marx.

Chapter 4 deals with Marx' economics. Dr. Lyon gives a readable introduction to such concepts as 'surplus value', 'commodity form' and 'commodity fetishism'. He then considers the Biblical view of economics based on the Mosaic law and the New Testament Church (very much in the style of

Donald Sider in 'Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger', 1977, Hodder, a book also to be read).

Chapter 5 discusses Marx' involvement with Trade Unions and the place of the Christian in such bodies and Chapter 6 looks at the practical attempts at Marxism in the Soviet Union, China and Cuba and shows how the failure of such states to attain the Marxist ideal can be traced back to the fundamental error of Marx concerning human nature. The book ends by stating that Marx was not radical enough; he did not get to the root of man's problem, that is his relationship with God.

This book should be widely read because it not only introduces the views of Marx but also considers many problems for the Christian today. The book by no means deals in depth with most of these issues but is an important starting point. The Christian-Marxist debate certainly cannot lead to synthesis but when two world views collide crucial matters are bound to arise. Richard Ward.

REARGUARD ACTION OR SIGNAL TO ADVANCE?

The Evangelical Succession in the Church of England. *Edited by D. N. Samuel.* James Clark. 123 pp. £2.75.

NOT ALL ANGLICAN EVANGELICALS have capitulated to the mentality of the Keele and Nottingham conferences. Not all accept the principle of liturgical ambiguity in which a common wording is accepted which can mean diametrically opposite doctrines. Not all are prepared to accept a comprehensiveness which means the denial of basic doctrine. There are in fact still those who stand in the tradition of Ryle and Toplady and the English reformers. They are a tiny minority in the C. of E. as a whole, and even within Anglican

evangelicalism they would be a minority group. Whether they are heralds of a new day or desperate defenders of a forlorn hope time will tell.

The book comprises a series of papers delivered at a conference of the Protestant Reformation Society, and had the distinction of a scathing review by the BBC religious correspondent which told a lot more about the bias of Gerald Priestland than about this book! Their standpoint is that of a sturdy Calvinism. They do not see Anglo-catholicism as an optional expression of Anglicanism but as an unwarranted intrusion. Hence the strong element of polemic.

In the first of what is really a series of historical studies, D. A. Scales expounds the theology of the Reformers stressing their assertion of the supreme authority and perspicuity of Scripture and the primacy of preaching. He deals with the proposal of Colin Buchanan to introduce infant communion and rejects it rightly on the ground that spiritual discernment is needed. His arguments are however not only a repudiation of Buchanan's position but of his own practice of infant baptism. Colin Buchanan is right in claiming that those baptised should be admitted to the Lord's table, and is more consistent than his opponent. Where he is wrong is in accepting the baptism of infants, but here Scales is inconsistent for the discernment which he rightly demands for the Lord's supper is not required for infants.

B. H. Felce expounds Toplady on the Calvinism of the C. of E. and there is an interesting survey of the trend which led through the 39 Articles to the more radically Calvinistic Lambeth Articles, and to the participation of Anglicans at the synod of Dort where they gladly accepted particular redemption. Toplady's lament has however

a strangely contemporary ring as he deploras 'the dreadful declension of the majority of the members of the Church of England from the Scripture'. Philip Buss gives a fine historical sketch of the century from 1611 to 1711, highlighting the return to unreformed practices under Laud and the Caroline divines. There is an interesting glimpse of the problem of the multiplicity of Bible versions, which is not just a twentieth century phenomenon. For those who fondly imagine that the A.V. held undisputed sway it will be an eye-opener to find that the Puritans kept as their household Bible the Geneva version which went through at least 140 editions of the Bible or New Testament from 1560 to 1644, some thirty three years after the appearance of the King James version.

The paper on the nineteenth century gives cause for sober reflection on the way evangelicals reached the episcopal bench. Aristocratic friends were a great help, but at very great cost in terms of principle and consequences. Evangelical pragmatism is seen here at its worst. Thus one of the Sumners who became bishop of Winchester was a second cousin of Wilberforce, and also married into the family to which the Prince Regent's mistress belonged! He subsequently helped his brother further up the ladder to Canterbury. With a rake like George IV as a friend—and after all he was 'Supreme Governor of the Church'—it is not

surprising that they did not 'speak too loud against the vices of the wealthy' p. 69. Perhaps we may detect here one of the reasons why the working classes were alienated. No wonder too that such a system did not produce evangelical leaders and as a result the Tractarians carried the day.

D. N. Samuel reflects sadly on the present situation: 'external unity has been dearly bought at the cost of shipwreck of Faith and confusion of doctrine'. Roger Beckwith pinpoints the cardinal evangelical error—and this incidentally is not one confined to Anglicans—namely 'to think of their theology as a permitted option'. One cannot but raise an eyebrow at one conclusion drawn, which seems to be a masterpiece of understatement. It is the claim that the C. of E. 'is a reformed biblical Church (but suffering like other churches from lack of discipline)'.

D. N. Samuel contributes the final sermon. Here we find the spirit which animates these men and to which our hearts respond. They are biblical and reformed and deeply distressed at the state not only of their church but also of evangelical Anglicanism. The answer with which we would surely agree is that the need of the hour is a work of God who 'creates soul thirst and graciously discloses himself to men'.

H. M. Carson.



This is a brief extract from Roy Joslin's book *Urban Harvest* which is under preparation.

Reaching the Working classes today

Testing our Evangelism

Part one: defining the message and meeting the people

EVANGELISM' is not a Bible word. Does that surprise us? It does not appear in our English versions. Nor is there its equivalent in the original language. So why do we use it? It has to do with spreading the gospel—the 'evangel'. But why is it a word in common usage among Evangelical churches today, even though the word does not appear in Scripture? It is possible to detect a marked contrast between the New Testament Christians and those of today in relation to the spreading of the gospel. Put simply, it is this, they did it! We talk about it! Evangelism for the early Christians was not something they isolated from other aspects of Christian living in order to specialise, analyse, theorise and organise. They just did it! Of course, the New Testament contains teaching on the subject of the 'evangel'—what it is; and how to 'evangelise'—how we are to spread the good news. But there was never any intention to prepare an 'elite' of keen believers who were 'specially trained' for this Christian activity. In one sense, none of the New Testament believers were 'specialists' in evangelism; in another sense they all were! It was a part of every-day life for every believer. What is striking about the spreading of the gospel in the New Testament era is the 'naturalness' of the way this took place. When the Samaritan woman had received the living water which Jesus offered to her she couldn't get back to her townsfolk fast enough to tell what had happened to her.¹ Jesus did not have to urge her to pluck up courage, to be brave and bold, in order to tell others about the Lord. Without any prompting or persuasion from Jesus, she hurried back to the town and immediately engaged in gospel witness. The Lord did not suggest that she should attend a series of seminars on personal evangelism before she embarked on this task of telling others about her new-found Saviour. She just

did it. It came naturally. When persecution broke out against the early Christians in Jerusalem they were scattered to other areas. Then what happened? 'Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.'² They did not sit down and lick their wounds and lament that persecution had disrupted their plans and spoiled their future. How could they be expected to spread the gospel now? After all, they were in new and unfamiliar situations. Their spiritual leaders, the apostles, had remained in Jerusalem. Who was going to take the lead? Rather than rush in with the good news would it not be wiser to set up a 'working party' to investigate, in depth, this matter of spreading the gospel? Nothing of the sort! They just went everywhere announcing the gospel—no special training, no special techniques, no committees, no conferences, no international congress. They just did it. For those early Christians, spreading the gospel was (in the words of an old song) 'doing what comes naturally'! Amazing, but true. And so it should be for any and every Bible-taught and Spirit-directed Christian.

Why is the situation so different among Evangelical Christians today? I would not want to disparage the conferences we plan, the commissions we set up or even the articles and books we write! If it is 'unnatural' for believers to gossip the gospel nowadays then there must be reasons for it. Much as I wish there were some short-cuts whereby we could discover and regain the naturalness of the Samaritan woman and those 'scattered believers' in their bold and instinctive witness, I believe we must do some hard and patient thinking. There is no way round it. Transformed lives stem from renewed minds.

It is interesting to note that certain functions of our physical bodies happen 'naturally' when we are in good health. Normally, I breathe naturally without thinking about it. But should a virus or infection attack my lungs, I then become aware of difficulties in my breathing. I am forced to think about it. It may require conscious effort. Diagnosis of the trouble is required. A remedy is needed in order to restore the lungs to their normal functioning again. When I am breathing normally again the sign of recovery will be that I do not need to think about it. It will happen naturally.

For many believers, their 'evangelistic lungs' are in a poor state of health. Witnessing to our faith in Jesus Christ is such an effort. Just like laboured breathing! We cannot go on like this. We must carry out some biblical tests on our patient to diagnose the problems and propose the remedies. ■

John Calvin hated and loved

THE EXTRAORDINARY REFORMER OF GENEVA WAS A MAN LOVED BY HIS FRIENDS SOME of whom died as martyrs for the Gospel which they had embraced through his ministry. Calvin was hated and maligned by his enemies. Jerome Bolsec, a Catholic turned Protestant, quarrelled with Calvin, and then turned to Romanism again. He possessed a malevolent spirit and vilified Calvin writing about him as a 'terrible and pernicious monster, a man, ambitious, presumptuous, arrogant, cruel, malicious, vindictive, and above all, ignorant.'

Beza had a different view. Filled with grief at Calvin's death he wrote of him as follows:

He lived 54 years, 10 months, 17 days, the half of which he spent in the ministry. He was of moderate stature, of a pale and dark complexion, with eyes that sparkled to the moment of his death, and bespoke of his great intellect. In dress he was neither overcareful nor mean, but such as became his singular modesty. In diet he was temperate, being equally averse to sordidness and luxury. He was most sparing in the quantities of his food, and for many years took only one meal a day, on account of the weakness of his stomach. He took little sleep, and had such an astonishing memory that any person whom he had once seen he instantly recognised at the distance of years, and when, in the course of dictating, he happened to be interrupted for several hours, as often happened, as soon as he returned he commenced at once to dictate where he had left off. Whatever he required to know for the performance of his duty, though involved in a multiplicity of other affairs, he never forgot. On whatever subject he was consulted his judgement was so clear and correct that he often seemed almost to prophesy; nor do I recollect of any person having been led into error in consequence of following his advice. He despised mere eloquence, and was sparing in the use of words; but he was by no means a careless writer. No theologian of this period (I do not speak invidiously) wrote more purely, weightily and judiciously, though he wrote more than any individual either in our recollection or that of our fathers. For, by the hard studies of his youth, and a certain acuteness of judgement, confirmed by practice in dictating, he was never at a loss for an appropriate and weighty expression, and wrote very much as he spoke. In the doctrine which he delivered at the first, he persisted steadily to the last, scarcely making any change. Of few theologians within our recollection can the same thing be affirmed. With regard to his manners, although nature had formed him for gravity, yet, in the common intercourse of life, there was no man who was more pleasant. In bearing with infirmities he was remarkably prudent; never either putting weak brethren to the blush, or terrifying them by unseasonable rebuke, yet never conniving at or flattering their faults. Of adulation, dissimulation, and dishonesty, especially where religion was concerned, he was as determined and severe an enemy as he was a lover of truth, simplicity and candour. He was naturally of a keen temper, and this had been increased by the very laborious life which he had led. But the Spirit of the Lord had so taught him to command his anger, that no word was heard to proceed from him unbecoming a good man.

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