

REFORMATION TODAY '79



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Editorial

READERS HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION OF THE HEART-WARMING biographies which have been a feature of this magazine. This time we begin with the story of Jonathan Edwards and his son. We found it inspiring and instructive and believe that you will too.

We are grateful to Herbert Carson for two practical articles.

How we received our Bible

Peter Misselbrook writes to suggest that several able men should come together to discuss:

1. What are the *facts* regarding the textual witnesses? 2. What are the possible alternative interpretations of these facts? What are the weaknesses and strengths of each interpretation? 3. What are the results of the different theories for a critically compiled Greek Testament (how different would that produced by Pickering's theory be from that produced by any other). It is vital that we understand, in practical terms, what we are all arguing about. 4. Specific discussion of several problem passages: the ending of Mark, 1 John 5:7-8, Woman taken in adultery etc. Again, what are the evidences, what is at stake? 5. What should be the attitude of the churches to theories of Textual Criticism? Mutual acceptance or mutual recrimination?

In his letter he confesses that he is depressed that some have failed to see that Pickering quotes other writers out of context and that such a poorly argued thesis should gain support.

As far as the magazine is concerned we must state clearly that our basis of faith is the 1689 Confession, including chapter 21. Even that Confession is not detailed enough in some places. For instance chapter one on Holy Scripture needs enlargement to deal with the challenge of today. It should be spelled out that the original autographs are without error and that the transmission from those originals in no way affects any truth of the Bible, for all that we need has been preserved. In this subject of how we received our Bible the only issue at stake as far as we are concerned is the right of assessment as to the relative merits of manuscripts extant. We are not contending for any one translation. All we are saying is that we must esteem the integrity of fellow believers who differ in judgement on this matter. ■

Front cover

This photograph was taken outside the Reformed Baptist Church at Crawley at their Thanksgiving Service. From the left: Malcolm Parsons, founder member and deacon; then the three elders, Michael Parsons, Don Evans and Austin Walker. On the right, Geoff Thomas, Aberystwyth, who preached a challenging sermon on the call of Jonah to Nineveh.

Front inside cover

Students and staff at the Bible Institute, Kalk Bay, Cape, South Africa. Murdo Gordon, the principal is on the right and next to him Clive Tyler and David Streater with Brian Williams on the lower right: all tutors. For details of the front cover see above paragraph.

Jonathan Edwards, the latter-day New England Puritan who died of a smallpox vaccination on 22nd March, 1758, at the age of 54, was among the noblest and ablest Christians of his age, and can now be seen, two centuries after, as one of the greatest theologians ever given by God to his Church. As saint and scholar, evangelist and educationist, pastor and teacher, missionary and metaphysician (all of which he was, and with distinction), he showed a grasp of the grandeur of God's sovereignty and the glory of divine grace equalled only by men of the calibre of John Owen and John Calvin.

During his 23-year pastorate at Northampton, Mass., he saw revival twice, once in 1735 and again in the 'Great Awakening' of 1740, when George Whitefield, the Spirit's human spearhead, visited the town. From the revival years came Edwards' Narrative of Surprising Conversions (the 1735 story), Five Discourses on the Soul's Eternal Salvation (object-lessons in evangelistic theology and theological evangelism, including a classic account of justification by faith), Thoughts on the Revival (of 1740), and The Religious Affections. These works, together with the sermon-series, A History of the Work of Redemption, entitle Edwards to be called the theologian of revival, in the same sense in which Augustine, Luther and Calvin are rightly called the theologians of grace, justification and the Holy Spirit respectively.

Despite the fruitfulness of his ministry, Edwards' congregation fell out with him over his attempts to maintain discipline, and in particular to bar unbelievers from the Lord's Table, and in 1750 he left them. Dwight appends his last sermon to the Memoir which opens this volume, calling it the best farewell sermon that was ever written. Edwards then moved to the village pastorate at Stockbridge, on the border of Western Massachusetts; there he became a successful missionary to Red Indians and wrote four great works of philosophical and polemical theology. His Stockbridge ministry was ended by his election to the presidency of Princeton College in 1757; there he died after only a few months in office.

So writes J. I. Packer in an introduction to the republication by the Banner of Truth in 1974 of The Works of Jonathan Edwards in two large volumes. To distinguish him from his son of the same name Edwards has become known as President Edwards. The outlines of the lives of both father and son are derived from the Religious Encyclopaedia edited by Philip Schaff which was published in 1883. The biographer was Edward A. Park.

Jonathan Edwards and his son

THE ANCESTORS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS IN AMERICA WERE NOTABLE MEN. His great-grandfather, William, and his grandfather, Richard, were among the pillars of society in Hartford, Conn. His father, Rev. Timothy Edwards, was born at Hartford, in May, 1669, graduated with distinguished honour at Harvard College in 1691, ordained pastor of the Congregational Church in 'Windsor Farms', now East Windsor Conn., in 1694. He remained pastor of this church more than sixty-three years, and died 27th January, 1758, at the age of eighty-eight. There was a marked resemblance between the sermons of the father and those of his son.

The mother of Jonathan Edwards was Esther Stoddard, daughter of the noted 'father in Israel', Solomon Stoddard, who for more than fifty-six years (1672-1729) was pastor of the Congregational Church in Northampton, Mass. She was a woman of queenly presence and admirable character. She was born in 1672, married in 1694, became the mother of eleven children, and died in 1770, in the ninety-ninth year of her age. Ten of her eleven children were daughters; Jonathan being the only brother in a nest of sisters, four of whom were elder, and six younger, than himself.

He was born in East Windsor, Conn., 5th October, 1793. In his early years he was instructed, partly at the public school, chiefly by his parents and sisters, at home. His father being an excellent classical scholar, his mother being uncommonly intelligent and refined, his elder sisters being well trained in Latin and Greek, were the best instructors he could have had. He began the study of Latin when he was only six years old. Before he was thirteen, he had acquired a good knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. In his childhood he was taught to think with his pen in hand—thus to think definitely, in order that he might express his thoughts clearly. When he was about nine years old he wrote an interesting letter on Materialism, and when he was about twelve he wrote some remarkable papers on questions in natural philosophy.

One month before he was thirteen years of age, he entered Yale College. There he spent four years, and was graduated, with the highest honours of his class, in 1720. At the age of fourteen, one of his college studies was *Locke on the Human Understanding*. 'Taking that book into his hand upon some occasion, not long before his death, he said to some of his select friends who were then with him, that he was beyond expression entertained and pleased with it when he read it in his youth at college; that he was as much engaged, and had more satisfaction and pleasure, in studying it, than the most greedy miser in gathering up handfuls of silver and gold from some new-discovered treasure.'

As a child, his sensibilities were often aroused by the truths of religion. He united himself to the church, probably at East Windsor, about the time of his graduation at college. After his graduation he spent nearly two years as a resident scholar in New Haven: then and there he pursued his theological studies. He was 'approbated' as a preacher in June or July, 1722, several months before he was nineteen years of age. From August, 1722, until April, 1723, he preached to a small Presbyterian Church in New York city. Here he penned the first thirty-four of his well known *Resolutions*, and some exquisitely poetical descriptions of the spiritual life. His eloquence in the pulpit moved his hearers deeply. They desired him to become their pastor, but he felt impelled to labour elsewhere. In September, 1723, he was appointed a tutor in Yale College. He devoted himself to severe study in the winter and spring of 1723-1724, and entered on his tutorship in June, 1724. In this office he remained about two years.

On the 15th of February, 1727, when in his twenty-fourth year, he was ordained as pastor of the Congregational Church at Northampton. On the 27th of the next July he was married to Sarah Pierrepont, daughter of Rev. James Pierrepont, 'an eminent, pious, and useful minister at New Haven', one of the fathers and trustees of Yale College. At the time of her marriage she was in the eighteenth year of her age, was distinguished by her graceful and expressive features, her vigorous mind, fine culture, and fervent piety. The description which Mr. Edwards gave of her in her girlhood was regarded by Dr. Chalmers as a model of fine writing. During her married life she relieved her husband of many burdens which are commonly laid upon a parish minister, and thus enabled him to pursue his studies with comparatively few interruptions.

During the first two years of his pastorate he was colleague with his grandfather, the celebrated Solomon Stoddard; but in 1729, after the death of his grandfather, he took the entire charge of the congregation. As a youthful preacher he was eminent for his weighty thought and fervid utterance. His voice was not commanding, his gestures were few; he was apt to keep his eye fixed upon one spot above the front gallery of his meeting-house: but many of his sermons were overwhelming. He wrote some of them in full. Often he spoke extempore, oftener from brief but suggestive notes. The traditions relating to their power and influence appear well-nigh fabulous.

In 1734-1735 there occurred in his parish a 'great awakening' of religious feeling; in 1740-1741 occurred another, which extended through a large part of New England. At this time he became specially intimate with George Whitefield. During these exciting scenes, Mr. Edwards manifested the rare comprehensiveness of his mind. He did not favour the extravagances attending the new measures of the revivalists; but he felt compelled to advocate the principle out of which those extravagances needlessly sprang. He did more, perhaps, than any other American divine in promoting the doctrinal purity, and at the same time quickening the zeal, of the churches; in restraining them from fanaticism, and at the same time stimulating them to a healthy enthusiasm. His writings were in his own day, and are in our day, a kind of classic authority for discriminating between the warmth of sound health and the heat of a fever. He did not remain stationary, like the centre of a circle: he moved in an orbit not eccentric, but well-rounded and complete.

As early as 1744 he preached with great vehemence against certain demoralizing practices in which some of his parishioners indulged. He offended several influential families by his method of opposing those practices. In process of time he became convinced that his grandfather, Mr Stoddard, was wrong in permitting unconverted persons to partake of the Lord's Supper. He feared, that, in resisting the authority of Mr. Stoddard, he would make a sacrifice of himself. He followed his convictions: he made the sacrifice. After a prolonged and earnest controver-

sy, he was ejected from the pastorate which he had adorned for more than twenty-three years.

In August, 1751, about a year after his dismissal from Northampton, Edwards was installed pastor of the small Congregational Church in Stockbridge, Mass., and missionary of the Housatonnuck tribe of Indians at that place. Here he was in the wilderness. He was sadly afflicted with the fever and ague and other disorders incident to the new settlement. His labours were interrupted by the French and Indian War. He persevered, however, with marked fidelity in his mission. He preached to the Indians through an interpreter. He gained their admiration and their love.

While living in a kind of exile, among the Indians at Stockbridge, he was invited to the presidency of the college at Princeton, N.J. He was elected to the office on the 26th of September, 1757. He was reluctant to accept it; but finally yielded to the advice of others, and was dismissed from his Stockbridge pastorate, 4th January, 1758, after having laboured in it six years and a half. He spent a part of January and all of February at Princeton, performing some duties at the college, but was not inaugurated until the 16th of February, 1758. One week after his inauguration he was inoculated for the small-pox. After the ordinary effects of the inoculation had nearly subsided, a secondary fever supervened, and he died on the 22nd of March, 1758. He had then resided at Princeton about nine weeks, and had been the inaugurated president of the college just five weeks. His age was fifty-four years, five months, and seventeen days. His aged father died only two months before him. His son-in-law, President Burr, died in his forty-second year, only six months before him. His daughter, Mrs. President Burr (the mother of Vice-President Burr), died in her twenty-seventh year, only sixteen days after him. His wife died in her forty-ninth year, only six months and ten days after him.

The works of Edwards have received the highest encomiums from Dr. John Erskine, Dugald Stewart, Sir Henry Moncrief, Dr. Priestley, Dr. George Hill, Isaac Taylor, and other British scholars. Robert Hall says, 'I consider Jonathan Edwards the greatest of the sons of men. He ranks with the brightest luminaries of the Christian Church, not excluding any country or any age, since the apostolic.' Sir James Mackintosh says of Edwards, 'This remarkable man, *the metaphysician of America*. . . His power of subtle argument, *perhaps unmatched, certainly unsurpassed*, among men, was joined, as in some of the ancient mystics, with a character which raised his piety to fervour.' Robert Morehead says, 'Edwards comes nearer Bishop Butler as a philosophical divine than any other theologian with whom we are acquainted.'

Jonathan Edwards the younger

Jonathan Edwards the younger was the second son and ninth child of Jonathan Edwards the Elder, and was born at Northampton, Mass., 26th May, 1745. In 1788 he said of himself, 'When I was but six years of

age, my father removed with his family to Stockbridge, which at that time was inhabited by Indians almost solely, as there were in the town but twelve families of whites, or Anglo-Americans, and perhaps one hundred and fifty families of Indians. The Indians being the nearest neighbours, I constantly associated with them: their boys were my daily schoolmates and playfellows. Out of my father's house I seldom heard any language spoken but the Indian. By these means I acquired the knowledge of that language, and a great facility in speaking it. It became more familiar to me than my mother-tongue. I knew the names of some things in Indian that I did not know in English. Even all my thoughts ran in Indian; and, though the true pronunciation of the language is extremely difficult to all but themselves, they acknowledged that I had acquired it perfectly, which, as they said, had never been done before by any Anglo-American. On account of my skill in their language in general, I received from them many compliments applauding my superior wisdom. This skill in their language I have in a good measure retained to this day.'

The elder Edwards, being himself a missionary to the Indians, intended that his son should be one also, and therefore sent him, in October, 1755, to a settlement of the Oneida Indians, on the banks of the Susquehanna, in order that he might learn their language. At this time the boy was not eleven years old. He was accompanied by his father's friend, Rev. Gideon Hawley, and resided about six months in the family of Mr. Hawley, the noted missionary to the Oneidas. The boy endeared himself to the Oneida tribe; and on one occasion, when they expected an attack from the French, the Indians took him upon their shoulders, and bore him many miles through the wilderness to a place of safety. The settlement of the Oneidas was about one hundred miles distant from any English settlement; but young Edwards exhibited a rare degree of courage, fortitude, and perseverance. He uttered no complaint, when, in the depth of winter, he was compelled to sleep on the ground in the open air. He returned to Stockbridge in 1756, and resided there until January, 1758, when his father removed to Princeton. In less than ten weeks after that removal his father died, and in less than seven months after the father's death the mother died; and thus in his fourteenth year young Edwards was left an orphan.

He entered the grammar-school at Princeton in February, 1760; was admitted to Princeton College in September, 1761, and graduated there in September, 1765. He became a member of the church in 1763, studied theology with Dr. Joseph Bellamy in 1765-1766, and was 'approbated' as a preacher, in October, 1766, by the Litchfield County Association in Connecticut. In his early childhood he had been afflicted with an ocular disease, and therefore did not learn to read at so early an age as his instincts prompted. His father's ecclesiastical troubles deprived him of certain facilities for his education; but his natural abilities triumphed over all discouragements. He was indefatigably diligent while at college; was

appointed a tutor there in 1767, remained in that office two years, and received an appointment (which, however, he declined) to a professorship of languages and logic in the college. On the 5th of January, 1769, he was ordained as pastor of an important church in New Haven, Conn. He remained in this office more than twenty-six years. Several members of his church were advocates of the 'Half-way Covenant': he opposed it. His pastorate was also disturbed by the spiritual reaction which had followed the 'great awakening' in 1740-1742, and by the demoralising influences of the Revolutionary War. The result was his dismissal from his pastorate on the 19th of May, 1795.

In January, 1796, he was installed pastor of the church of Colebrook, Conn. Here he desired and intended to pass the residue of his life. His parishioners were intelligent, affectionate, and confiding. They gave him leisure to pursue his theological and philosophical inquiries. In May, 1799, however, he was elected president of Union College, Schenectady, N.Y. As he had declined a professorship at Princeton, so he was prompted to decline the presidency of Union College. He applied to an ecclesiastical council for advice: the advice was in favour of his removal. He was therefore dismissed in June, and entered on the duties of his presidency in July, 1799. He discharged his duties with his accustomed fidelity. His reputation as a philosopher gave him an uncommon influence over his pupils, and his skill as a teacher heightened his reputation as a philosopher. He remained in this office, however, but a short time. About the middle of July, 1801, he was attacked by an intermittent fever, and on the 1st of August, 1801, he died. A sermon was preached at Schenectady, on occasion of his death, by his friend Rev. Robert Smith of Savannah; another sermon was preached at New Haven by President Timothy Dwight.

The college at Princeton conferred on Mr. Edwards the degree of D.D.: hence he is usually styled 'Dr.' Edwards, in distinction from his father, who is styled 'President' Edwards.

As a theological teacher Dr. Edwards was eminently successful. He was powerful in his conversation with his pupils, a prince among disputants. Several of his scholars in theology rose to eminence.

The most celebrated of his discourses are the three *On the Necessity of the Atonement, and its Consistency with Free Grace in Forgiveness*. They were 'preached before his Excellency the Governor, and a large number of both Houses of the Legislature of the State of Connecticut, during their sessions at New Haven, in October, 1785, and published by request'. Closely connected with this volume was another, entitled *The Salvation of all Men strictly examined, and the Endless Punishment of those who die impenitent, argued and defended against the Reasonings of Dr. Chauncey in his book entitled 'The Salvation of all Men'*.

Dissimilar as the two Edwardses were in some, they were similar to each other in many, respects. Dr. Samuel Miller of Princeton says, 'The son greatly resembled his venerable father in metaphysical acuteness, in ardent piety, and in the purest exemplariness of Christian deportment.' The son, like the father, was a tutor in the college where he had been a student; was first ordained over a prominent church in the town where his maternal grandfather had been the pastor; was dismissed on account of his doctrinal opinions; was afterwards the minister of a retired parish; was then president of a college; and died at the age of about fifty-five years, soon after his inauguration. His Memoir states that both father and son preached, on the first sabbath of the January preceding their death, from the text, 'This year thou shalt die.'

A REFORMED CRITIQUE OF THE CHURCH GROWTH MOVEMENT

(Continued from page 13)

- pline, mission, small groups) and they also experience growth—but not from the Holy Spirit!
- (ii) The approach tends to be sociological rather than theological, pragmatically determined rather than biblically directed.
- (iii) American cultural factors are very significant in this movement, and are sometimes misunderstood for biblical ones.
- (iv) Emphasis on organisation may turn preachers into administrators.
- (v) Preoccupation with numbers tends to become impersonal.
- (vi) Individual presuppositions are highly questionable.
e.g. Ministry to the responsive—too success-oriented? What of Jeremiah?
e.g. Homogeneity—what about 'all one in Christ Jesus'?

Even James Kennedy, the successful Presbyterian, gives too little place for

repentance, and offers syllogistic assurance.

I am grateful for the reminder of our evangelistic mandate and the many insights Church Growth provides (despite the fact that Richard Baxter used many of the best ones 300 years ago!). However, I must strongly reject the doctrinaire basis of the movement. Paul says: 'I planted, Apollos watered, but *God* gave the increase'. Church Growth too readily usurps and arrogates to itself the prerogative of 'giving the increase'. St. Matthew never told us 'how to grow a church', but recorded the word of him who said 'I will build my church'.

We do well to be wary of this movement, but this is no reason for us to fail in God's command for us 'to do the work of an evangelist'. May his Spirit endow us and anoint us that we may be the instruments of blessing to many.

Civil and Religious Liberty

By Herbert Carson

A Witness emerging from the fires of persecution

THE BAPTIST WITNESS FOR FREEDOM OF conscience was tempered in the fires of persecution. The Protestant princes of Germany in the time of the Reformation who backed Luther were bitterly opposed to the Roman Catholics, but both found common ground in their hatred of those they scathingly called 'Anabaptists' or re-baptizers. They not only agreed in their attitude but formulated a common policy when in 1529 they issued the edict of Speyer imposing the death penalty for the crime of what they called re-baptising. Great numbers of Baptists were butchered by sword and by drowning. While Rome excelled because of her long practice at such persecution, Protestant leaders were also involved and indeed the first Baptist martyrs perished in Protestant Zurich.

Both Protestants and Roman Catholics were persuaded that there was such a thing as a national religion and a national church and that to refuse to conform was rebellion. The 'Anabaptists' denied that a ceremony in infancy could make anyone a member of the church of Christ. They rejected the notion that the church was simply the religious aspect of the nation. They asserted that the church was a company of believers which must not use either persecution or a denial of religious freedom as its weapons, but rather the persuasion of the Gospel. Their insistence on civil and religious liberty emerged out of their own intense suffering.

Intolerance lives on . . .

Intolerance lived on in Europe. In England it led bloody Mary to send

nearly 300 Protestants to the stake, but it also led Protestant Elizabeth to execute Congregationalists. It led to an Anabaptist martyrdom under James I and an execution for heresy in Edinburgh late in the seventeenth century. It led to the penal laws against the Puritans, though sadly, when the Pilgrim Fathers fled to North America they took intolerance with them and it was the Baptists in the new colony of Providence, Rhode Island, who had to contend for civil and religious and liberty on American soil.

William of Orange brought respite to English non-conformists but not entirely, for the iniquitous Test Act which made participation in Anglican communion a test for public office remained on the statute book until 1829. But the disabilities of English non-conformists were only pin-pricks beside the penal laws imposed on Irish Roman Catholics. For example, if the eldest son of a Roman Catholic became a Protestant he got all the land at the expense of his brothers. If a Protestant woman married a Roman Catholic she forfeited her land to her Protestant next of kin. If a Roman Catholic woman became a Protestant she got control of her husband's land. It is no wonder that these laws, together with the collection of tithes for the support of the clergy of the Church of Ireland, sometimes enforced with the aid of police and troops, left such a legacy of bitterness in Ireland. The laws ultimately failed, as religious coercion usually does. Their failure demonstrated that the way to win men to the Reformed faith is not by denying them their civil rights, or by a worldly attempt to make Protestantism the attractive option.

Baptists stand for civil and religious liberty

Baptists, however, still maintained their conviction that civil and religious liberty were to be extended to all. Men, they claimed, were not converted by force, nor could heresy be excluded by penal legislation. Even when they abhorred a man's views they were still prepared to defend his liberty to hold them and to propagate them. To them the notion that the Christian message should be defended by an alliance with the forces of the state or with worldly men of any persuasion or of none would have been intolerable. The idea that a mixed multitude should be summoned to a confrontation to maintain the integrity of the gospel would have been seen as totally unbiblical.

. . . and follow the teaching of Scripture

It is good to recall these lessons from history for they are, after all, illustrations of how our spiritual forefathers applied biblical truth. It is to the Scripture that we make our ultimate appeal and it is in the same Scripture that we discover the truths which impelled those who have gone before us. There we see that the Lord Jesus was quite emphatic in rejecting any use of force for the advancement of his cause. The disciples who cited the precedent of Elijah's action in desiring the destruction of the hated Samaritans were rebuked—the new age required new spiritual weapons (Luke 9:54-56). In a community like ours here in Northern Ireland the cleavage of Jews and Samaritans finds its counterpart in the bitter gulf between Protestants and Catholics, the picture of Elijah on Mount Carmel challenging the apostate king and destroying the false priests is clearly attractive to some. It seems to portray the kind of leader we need until we hear Jesus rebuking his disciples as they point to Elijah, 'You

know not what manner of spirit you are of for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them'. He was ready with a similar rebuke to Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane when the disciple was about to use his sword to defend the Lord (John 18:11). Can we really imagine that the Lord who so rebuked his disciples would ever countenance an appeal to the passions of ungodly men to mount a 'confrontation' in defence of the gospel? 'The weapons of our warfare' says Paul 'are not carnal but mighty through God' (2 Cor. 10:4). He adds also in his description of the minister of the gospel, words which sorely need to be heard in Ulster, 'The servant of the Lord must not strive but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves' (2 Tim. 2:24-25).

Traditional phrases accepted without thought

It is so easy to accept traditional phrases without thinking. We hear someone speaking about a Protestant Country and we nod in agreement. But we really ought to ask what is meant. Does it mean that all who are called Protestants are born-again believers? Or does it mean that a majority of them are such? Some door-to-door visiting would soon disabuse us of such ideas, if our ordinary contacts with unconverted neighbours and others did not already convince us that true believers are in fact a minority group in the community. Men need the Gospel but often they are blinded to their needs by the persuasion that being Protestants they have some favoured position in the kingdom, even if they have no experience of the Gospel's power. Behind the religious intolerance of the past, and its present ugly manifestations, is the totally unscriptural idea found in Ireland both North and

South, that you can equate the church of Christ with the nation. It is as if we were still in the days of the Old Testament theocracy and the King himself had not come to inaugurate the new covenant in which the church of Christ is composed of men and women of every nation, and where no earthly ruler has any status within the church. One perceptive critic, Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien noted how this fallacy of the sacral or religious nation was held both North and South. He pointed out that, in Gaelic poetry, there is an identification of the Celtic Irish with the people of God in the Old Testament—"The Gaels were the children of Israel and of course "the enemies of God" were the Protestants, who were themselves the children of Israel in their own eyes. One could say that Ireland was inhabited not really by Protestants and Catholics but by two sets of imaginary Jews' (*States of Ireland*, p. 287).

We must maintain our distinctive testimony

Are we then to abandon our New Testament convictions and join forces with unconverted men to defend gospel truth? God forbid! There is a strange brand of anti-ecumenism which resists Roman error and is quick to detect ecumenical compromise, whether real or imagined, but is happy to join forces with ungodly men in an alleged defence of the truth. But God does not need the ungodly as his allies. The gospel does not require a mixed multitude for its support whatever ecclesiastical banner they may carry.

As Baptists we must continue to maintain our distinctive and, we believe, biblical testimony to the truth that the church is a company of

believers, and must not use coercion either to propagate or defend the faith. Religious liberty accorded to those whose doctrines we repudiate is one aspect of this disavowal of worldly methods. To sink our distinctive gospel testimony in the ambiguous mass of Protestantism, with its medley of godly and ungodly members, is to forsake the pattern of the New Testament for a hotch potch of religion and politics in which inevitably the politics come out on top. It is also to hinder our efforts to spread the Gospel in Roman Catholic areas. We are thankful for the liberty we enjoy to send missionaries to the Irish Republic. Are we to deny such liberty to Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland if they wish to invite one of their ecclesiastics across the border? I recall an indignant letter sent to me when I lectured on Rome in the Mansion House in Dublin. My correspondent asked vehemently how a priest would fare in the City Hall in Belfast!

Yet it is not simply the need for consistency as we continue to work in the Irish Republic which impels us. It is because the Gospel is too precious, and the honour of Christ too dear to be allied with the message or the methods of any political party. Let men misrepresent us as they will—as compromisers, ecumenists or whatever. They did much worse to our Baptist forefathers! God give us grace to think with biblical clarity, to resist false teaching from whatever direction it comes and to maintain our gospel, not as a religious device to buttress some constitutional position, but as the Word of Life both for Unionists and Republicans, for Protestants and Roman Catholics. ■

Pastor John Campbell, Riverton Baptist Church, Western Australia lectures in Theology and history at the Western Australian Baptist College. He is chairman of the Western Australian Baptist ministers fraternal. In the first of three articles he expounded on the need for contemporaneity in our churches today. In the second he provided a Reformed critique of the Church Renewal Movement. In contrast to that movement there is the Church Growth Movement which he reviews in this the third and final article in the series.

A Reformed Critique of the Church Growth Movement

CHURCH GROWTH LEADERS CLAIM William Carey as their forefather, this ought to make Reformed brethren sit up and pay attention! We may be sickened by over-exposure to Church Growth Seminars, conferences, and jargon (as I am in the Australian scene!), but we must examine the movement objectively to understand it. Even more important, we cannot be among those who go to the other extreme of only occasionally mentioning evangelism to assuage a guilty conscience. Should we not rather be numbered with Whitefield and Spurgeon in implementing the Great Commission in the power of the Holy Spirit?

The Church Growth movement was anticipated by the methods of Nevius in Korea (100 years ago) and the writings of Roland Allen (50 years ago). From 1930-1955 men such as Donald McGavran, Kenneth Latourette, J. Wascom Picket and Melvin Hodges made specific studies in indigenous church growth. Anthropology, sociology and communication theory became prominent factors. From 1955-65 there evolved formal organisation of Church Growth thinking. Roland Allen's books were reprinted, Church Growth Bulletins were sent out, and the Institute of

Church Growth (U.S.A.) was established. Since 1965 many books have appeared, and special seminars are now offered by Jack Hyles, Win Arn, Robert Schuller, etc. *Understanding Church Growth* by McGavran (1970) is a basic, academic textbook on the subject.

Other names of leaders or contributors are Peter Beyerhaus, Dean Kelly, Peter Wagner, J. Robertson McQuilkin, Alan Tippett, Hollis Green and Gordon Moyes (Australia). There are semi-pelagians like Robert Schuller, and Calvinists like Donald McNair (who obviously does not hold some of the basic tenets of the others). D. James Kennedy author of *Evangelism Explosion* claims to be a consistent Calvinist, but some observers reserve their opinion!

Here is J. Robertson McQuilkin's summary of the basic principles of the movement. I quote from his *Measuring the Church Growth Movement*:

(1) *Numerical Church growth is a priority in Missions*

Enthusiasts quote the vast numbers mentioned in Abraham's Covenant, certain Psalms, the Great Commission, and the Revelation. They insist on optimism, but also assert that quanti-

tative success will not affect the quality of Church life (reference being made to the early church after Constantine!). They divide ministry into both 'discipling' and 'perfecting'. They even quote Spurgeon on soul-winning!

(2) *The Church should concentrate on the responsive elements of society*

An example of this principle of selectivity is given in Paul's gravitation to the synagogues. Church Growth planners do not ignore the hard elements in a society, but would place the bulk of workers in strategically responsive areas. 'He that has, to him shall more be given!' Does this mean that human strategy superannuates the guidance of the Spirit?

(3) *One desirable sort of growth is multi-individual, interdependent decision*

The household conversions in Acts anticipate modern 'people movements'. Tribal cohesion and cultural barriers, accordingly, must be respected. McGavran and associates do not equate this phenomenon with 'group conversion'.

(4) *Anthropological factors affect a people's responsiveness*

These must be analysed and utilised. This involves heavy dependence upon sociology, psychology, communications and anthropology. Certain implications have been drawn, the most hotly disputed being the principle of homogeneity. This says that a church will grow significantly only if its core is 'my kind of people', i.e. don't cross cultures. Proponents say that the mistake of the Judaizers was to attempt cultural imposition.

(5) *If these principles are followed, large church growth will often result*

Some enthusiasts, taking seriously the parable of wheat and tares, are now admitting that they are being forced to rethink their pessimistic pre-millennialism!

An example of a consistent Church Growth approach is that of Peter Wagner (*Your Church can Grow*). He states that certain factors are *indispensable* to growth:

- (i) Leaders with vision. (ii) A well-mobilised laity. (iii) A large enough church. (iv) Balance of functions—large and small groups. (v) Ministry to homogeneous unit. (vi) Direct evangelistic methods. (vii) Properly arranged priorities.

EVALUATION: There are positive and negative features to consider:

Good Points:

- (i) Church Growth highlights the great commission.
- (ii) It overcomes mental limitations with a positive approach.
- (iii) It attempts to achieve an informed leadership, strategy and set of priorities. McGavran's analysis of five leadership types is most helpful.
- (iv) There is a realistic assessment of growth types (biological, transfer, conversion, etc.).
- (v) Writers provide useful surveys of growth hindrances (e.g. lack of training, vested interests, leaders chained to non-productive work).
- (vi) Longer pastorates with continuing goals, direction.
- (vii) Emphasis on direct evangelism, and even Arminians tend to talk of 'disciples, not decision'!

Bad Points:

- (i) There is a great danger of *assuming that natural means can produce spiritual results*. Much of the movement is a recrudescence of Finneyism, and its implications for the doctrines of the Holy Spirit and sin are very serious. The pseudo-christian cults use similar techniques (e.g. strong leadership, literature, mobilized laity, disci-

(continued on page 8)

Dr. Robert Lescelius is dean of the Howland Christian School which offers courses by extension in theology, Greek, and other subjects related to the Christian ministry. The address is 8957 East Market Street, Ohio 44484. Dr. Lescelius has become the leader in annual gatherings rather like the Carey family conferences being the director of the Maranatha Youth Ranch and Bible Conferences Incorporated, Box J, Worthington, Pa. 16262. The subject of revival has received much attention in these camp meetings. We share brother Lescelius' passionate interest in this subject. When he wrote as to the worthwhileness of the conference here reported we urged him to come. It is of the utmost importance that we take an interest in all awakenings of the Holy Spirit, at the same time (as Dr. Edwin Orr points out) maintaining realistic criteria as to what constitutes a genuine revival. We have always said, and declare again, that Jonathan Edwards in his writings is most perceptive on this subject and always recommended as a priority for study.

Oxford Revival Conference

IT WAS MY PRIVILEGE TO BE INVITED AND enabled to attend the conference on revival conducted by the Oxford Association for Research in Revival (or Evangelical Awakenings), held at Regent's Park College, Oxford, 23-27 July, 1979. The conference was directed by Dr. J. Edwin Orr of Fuller Seminary, Los Angeles, California. Dr. Orr is a recognised authority on the subject of revival and its history. The Oxford Association has met for a number of years, bringing in scholars and other qualified men, to do research on the subject of revival. Past Oxford conferences have been given lectures or papers on a variety of subjects: Biblical Revivalism (Prof. F. F. Bruce), The Pentecostal Prototype (Dr. J. Edwin Orr), the Puritans (Dr. J. I. Packer), to name but three.

While past conferences were given to revivals in past history, this year's conference centred on post-World War II revivals. Dr. Maynard James of Liverpool, editor of *The Flame*, read an eye-witness account of Duncan Campbell's on the revival in the Hebrides (1949). Rev. James Sweitzer of Switzerland, who was a missionary

in China before and after World War II, read a paper on the revival among students in the period 1945-49, prior to the Communist take-over. Rev. Ivor Jones of Australia read a paper by Warland Rival on revival movements in Papua, New Guinea, around 1973-74. The recent Canadian revival in Saskatoon, Sask., 1971, was unfolded by a participant, Dr. Nick Willems of Canada. Remarkable, spontaneous workings of revival in U.S. colleges were reported by two men. Dr. Tom Askew, professor of history at Gordon College, Mass., gave a general history of revivals among students in the U.S.A. and centered on two post-World War II movements, 1950 and 1970. The 1970 movement affected 130 Christian colleges and seminaries. Dr. George Failing, editor of the *Wesleyan Advocate* in Indiana gave an eye witness account of a revival movement in Houghton College, N.Y., in 1951. Rev. Bill Dunlap, a presbyterian minister from Phoenix, Ariz., read a paper on the outpouring of the Spirit in Brazil in 1952, a movement still continuing. A revival movement in the Solomon Islands around 1970 was also reported on by

Rev. David Jacobsen of New Zealand. Revival in Borneo, 1973 on, was the subject of a testimony by Rev. Tom Hamblin.

Along with the above papers on more contemporary revivals, Dr. J. Edwin Orr lectured each day on the evangelical awakenings since the Reformation. Revival was defined as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church and the world. The most significant fact I observed from these lectures was the evident waves of revival that have come and how they extended to the limits of the Church's outreach. Dr. Orr's observation was that revival does not fit Finney's concept of revival as the result of the right use of the appropriate means, but that of Edward's 'work of divine grace'. One was burdened and encouraged to pray for the Spirit's outpouring as the mighty outworkings of God in the past were recounted.

There were other papers of interest read also, such as *Robert Robinson, Revival and Reform*, by Dr. James Bradley, church history professor at Fuller Seminary. He also read a paper of a peer on *Charles Simeon, The Revival at Cambridge*. Mr. Richard Burr of California, gave an interesting analysis of prayer from a former businessman's viewpoint.

Times set aside for discussion did not prove to be as productive as the papers. A discussion of the Indo-

nesian Revival did prove enlightening, and some of the confusion resulting from some books written about it was cleared up. A discussion of whether the Charismatic Movement is a true revival was not as fruitful. Beside having some forty participants from various parts of the world (England, N. Ireland, New Zealand, Australia, Switzerland, Uganda, Canada, and the U.S.A.), there was too broad a spectrum of theological opinion present to settle that issue.

Over all, I found the week to be one profitably spent. There may be varied convictions as to what true revival is, yet this conference has afforded the evangelical world a great source of input of material from which one can form one's own conclusions. The Oxford Association for Research in Revival is fulfilling the biblical admonition on its letterhead. 'Tell them about the mighty works God did, for he commanded our fathers to teach them to their children, so that each generation might set its hope afresh in God, and not forget his glorious works' (Psalm 78:1).

For those interested in more information about the conference and the literature available from past conferences, write to Dr. J. Edwin Orr, director, Oxford Association for Research in Revival, 11451 Berwick Street, Los Angeles, CA. 90049.

R. H. Lescelius.



Tour of Israel 1980

Pastor Douglas D. Jones of Gloucester is due to lead a further party to Israel for Holy Land Travel from 3rd to 17th May. The one last year included several readers of *Reformation Today* and others committed to the doctrines of grace. It proved to be a time of spiritual refreshment. Those interested should write to Pastor Jones, 156 Finlay Road, Gloucester GL4 9TF.

Peter Misselbrook replies to letters received which challenge some of the conclusions made in his article published in R.T. 51, 'How we received our Bible'.

Wilbur Pickering and D. A. Carson on the New Testament Text

MY ARTICLE 'HOW WE RECEIVED OUR Bible' in the last edition of *Reformation Today* has stirred up many to write taking issue with some of my conclusions. Several of these make reference to Wilbur N. Pickering's book, *The Identity of the New Testament Text* (Nelson, 1977). Pickering's book has already received an admirable reply from D. A. Carson in his book, *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism* (Baker Book House, 1979). I would like to take this opportunity of saying a few words about both of these books.

Wilbur Pickering argues that there was a great deal of communication between the early Christian churches with travellers taking letters and manuscripts from one church to another, and not always in the same locality. The consequences of this, he argues, are twofold. Firstly, there are no distinct textual families associated with different areas for the traffic in manuscripts would have prevented *local* variations. There is therefore no such thing as an Alexandrian type of text. Pickering therefore rejects the term 'Byzantine text' since this suggests a local family; he speaks instead in terms of the 'majority text'. Secondly, Pickering argues that the circulation of manuscripts would have prevented serious errors from creeping into the majority of manuscripts. Where serious errors did occur they would soon have been recognised and the defective manuscript would not have been perpetuated

in copies. We should therefore expect that the majority of manuscripts would be free from serious defects.

This central thesis is supported, says Pickering, by the following facts. Firstly, manuscripts which are supposed to belong to the same textual family differ greatly one from another. In particular, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus (usually thought to be among the best 'Alexandrian' witnesses) differ from one another almost as often as they differ from the Received (or majority) text. Secondly, the readings which most critics think are distinctive of the Received text, and which they therefore often reject as late corruptions are also found in the early manuscripts and papyri and in the writings of the ante-Nicene fathers. In support of this Pickering quotes the work of Edward Miller, the editor of Burgeon's works.

From this material Pickering draws the conclusion that the best text is the majority text—the text which differs little from that behind our Authorised Version. If there are no text families then one cannot weigh one family against another, one must treat each manuscript as an independent witness. One is therefore bound to follow the majority reading. But this is not only an unfortunate expedient, for, according to Pickering's theory of textual transmission serious errors would not be continually perpetuated and would therefore not be widespread. Hence the majority text is the best text.

Before we look at Carson's book I would like to make a very brief reply to the thesis of Pickering. Firstly, I do not think that Pickering's theory of textual circulation and transmission will stand up to the evidences. It is generally recognised (both by Pickering and by critical scholars) that the majority of textual variants, including the worst corruptions, occurred within the first two centuries of the Christian church. In the early days of the church texts were produced in an unsupervised and amateur fashion and churches did not have a vast number of other texts by which to check the copies sent to them. In this period errors *were* generated and *did* go unnoticed. By the time the production of copies was carefully supervised and the task was performed by professional scribes the textual variants had already been generated. There was no generally agreed and universally accepted text in these early days; in each locality the scribes believed that the best text was the one with which they were familiar, and they were quite ready to 'correct' other manuscripts accordingly. This can be seen from the 'corrections' and counter 'corrections' to codex Sinaiticus. It is thus impossible to speak about a 'majority text' at this period.

Secondly, Pickering's criticism of textual groups of families is misdirected. He argues that because there are differences within the 'families' and because no clear geneological relationships can be demonstrated there can be no families at all; each manuscript is an independent witness. In my own article I tried to make it clear that the 'text types' are not completely hard and distinct groups; there is diversity within each group and connections between the groups. But this does not mean that it is quite impossible to speak of textual groups. In the Gospels

Sinaiticus and Vaticanus agree against the Byzantine manuscripts in more than 50% of the occurrences of disagreement. If the majority text were the best text and if Sinaiticus and Vaticanus were independent 'corruptions' of this text we should not expect them to agree against the majority text at all, or only on a handful of occasions when 'by chance' both, independently, made the same error. Thus the evidence does demand the supposition of textual relations and groups, and thus the manuscripts cannot be treated as independent witnesses.

Thirdly, the evidence cited by Pickering to prove that the distinctive readings of the majority text are early are also quite beside the point. As we mentioned above, it is generally recognised that the majority of textual variants were generated in the first two centuries. What is distinctive about the Byzantine text is not its individual variants but the combination and conflation of readings. While it is true that individual readings of the Byzantine text are found in the early fathers yet it also remains true that no ante-Nicene father seems to have used a text which has the characteristics of the Byzantine, or present majority, text. The question of the origin, growth and development of the Byzantine text is one which presently exercises critical scholars and on this matter the theories of Westcott and Hort have been left far behind. I am sorry that my statement about Lucian of Antioch was printed in my previous article: I retracted it after further study, but evidently not in time to change the published article. The origin of the Byzantine text is unknown. (Those who wish to grapple with the very real problems of the history of the Byzantine text might begin by reading the chapter by J. N. Birdsall on 'The New Testament Text' in the *Cambridge History of the Bible*,

vol. 1, pp. 308-337, especially pp. 318-322.)

D. A. Carson's book, *The King James Version Debate* is, I believe, the best book of its kind. The book is written at a popular and readable level while at the same time it does not ignore or seek to diminish the complexity of the issues involved. The book begins with six short chapters (typically 3-5 pages each) covering the transmission of the text and the origin of the text types including the Byzantine text. Chapter six outlines the modern defence of the Received Text. Chapter seven is the heart of the book (a chapter of 35 pages). Here Carson sets out his own position in the form of 14 theses. Unfortunately we cannot look at these theses in detail here, though we would urge all those who have an interest in this debate to examine them carefully. He sets out to show that many of the popular arguments used by those who defend the superiority of the majority or Received Text are misleading, unsound or based upon insufficient evidence in the manuscripts and dubious historical constructions. Chapters eight and nine are concerned with non-textual arguments for the superiority of the A.V. These do not concern us here though they also merit careful consideration. In a 19 page appendix to the book Carson presents us with a critique of Pickering's work.

May I urge all who have read and approved of Pickering's work to read this book also and to consider its arguments carefully. Carson presents a far more detailed critique of Pickering than we have been able to give here.

In conclusion may I make a twofold plea. Firstly, let us beware of pride and arrogance. This is a real danger for both sides in the debate. On the one hand, those who defend the Received Text are apt to present themselves as defenders of the Word of God and to accuse those who defend

an eclectic text of being incipient liberals, undermining the doctrine of the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. Such an accusation is completely unfounded and is quite unjust. On the other hand, those who defend an eclectic text may be tempted to think of themselves as the true scholars, and thus may be tempted to despise others of the Lord's people who ignorantly (so they think) defend the Received Text. However much we may believe that the popular arguments in the defence of the Received Text are misguided and artificial we should appreciate that they spring from a genuine concern for the pure Word of God. We must love and respect such concern, however much we disagree with these arguments.

Secondly, may I plead that attitudes over textual criticism, and therefore over versions of Scripture, are not made a test of orthodoxy. On both sides of the debate there are born again believers who love the Scriptures and believe them to be the very word of God. In full acknowledgment of our disagreements we must embrace one another unreservedly as brethren in the Lord.

May I end by quoting a hymn of John Newton:

Zeal is that pure and heavenly flame
The fire of love supplies;
While that which often bares the name
Is self in a disguise.

True zeal is merciful and mild,
Can pity and forbear:
The false is headstrong, fierce and wild,
And breathes revenge and war.

While zeal for truth the Christian warms,
He knows the worth of peace;
But self contends for names and forms,
Its party to increase.

May God give us the wisdom to distinguish between his truth and our prejudice, and may he give us grace to defend the former but not the latter. May God enable us to face areas of disagreement in a spirit of love and of Godly concern one for the other. ▀

Widows and their Ministry

TO STUDY THE PASTORAL EPISTLES IS TO FEEL THE PULSE OF A CHURCH vibrating with life and energy. The members as a whole are being mobilised to exercise their spiritual gifts in order to build up the body of Christ. Here is an expansion of the teaching of Ephesians 4:1-16 where Paul sees the gifts imparted by the ascended Lord being used to edify the church. The Pastors and teachers expound the Word in order that the believers should be equipped to exercise their own distinctive ministries for the common good.

In the Pastoral Epistles we see this general aim being worked out in detail. The elders are to oversee the church and to feed the flock by the diligent teaching of the Word. The deacons are to engage in administering the offerings of the congregation and in a widespread ministry of care and compassion. The women deacons are to exercise a similar compassionate ministry especially among the women of the church. The older men and older women also have their part to play as they set an example to the younger members (Titus 2:1-7).

It is in this context of a church, in which every believer is called to minister in love to fellow believers, that we encounter the special ministry entrusted to widows. It may surprise some to hear of a ministry exercised by widows since they are often viewed solely in their passive role as the recipients of the sympathy and of the practical help of the church. In a day when there was no such thing as a welfare service, a widow was entirely dependent on the help of family or friends. Thus it was the obvious responsibility of the church to care for the widows. They had the weight of Old Testament teaching to reinforce this concern. Old Testament religion had the care of the widows and the fatherless at its heart. So it is not surprising to find in Acts 6 the financial care of the widows being organised, or in James 1:27 to have this care being described as the mark of 'pure religion'. But closer examination, particularly of 1 Timothy 5, reveals widows who are not so much being ministered to as ministering. In verses 3-8 it is the needs of widows which are in view, but in verse 10 widows are seen in an active role exercising a ministry which is distinctively theirs. It is not simply that they are expected to share in the common ministry exercised by believers in general. They are, rather, a recognised body within the church, authorised to exercise their gifts especially among the younger women of the fellowship.

Clearly there was a list of widows in which they were enrolled. The Greek word which is translated in the A.V. 'taken into the number' or in N.I.V. 'put on the list' is one which was used in classical Greek of enlisting soldiers. It is thus associated with a decisive action in which someone is put in an official or authorised roll. So these widows were clearly listed

within the fellowship in the same way as the elders or deacons were listed.

A further important point is that membership of this list was not linked to their financial needs. It was not simply a roll of those widows who were in need of financial help. Some of them may well have been in such need but others might not be dependent on the gifts of the congregation. This may be demonstrated by the fact that while the church is to care for its widows, Paul is also insistent that where a widow has children or grandchildren they should be responsible for her, and so relieve the church of the obligation in order that it may help those who are without family help. However, one of the requirements for those enrolled on the list is that they should have brought up children, and it is highly unlikely that they would all have outlived their children or grandchildren. So we are dealing with a group of widows, some of whom were in this special list, not because of their need, but because of the work they would do within the church. Others on the list would be maintained by the church, but in either case qualification was neither dependence upon the congregation nor dependence upon the family. It clearly had nothing to do with their needs or the particular way in which their needs were met, but rather with the special ministry to which they were appointed.

A further reinforcement of this view of the list of widows is the fact that they had to be over sixty years of age. There would be widows in the congregation who would be much younger than that but would still be in financial need. Indeed some with young children but without family support would be destitute. Clearly they would be a charge on the church, yet they did not qualify for the official list. Once again we can see that the list was not in terms of benefits to be received but of ministry to be exercised.

That the enrollment involved a serious and binding commitment is seen also in the fact that they pledged themselves to remain unmarried. This is not because Paul thought it wrong for a widow to remarry. On the contrary he considered it highly desirable that the younger widows should marry and have a family. But for someone who had committed herself to remain a widow and had then married it would involve the breach of a solemn pledge (verse 12). The A.V. gives the impression that they are guilty of apostasy. But Paul would hardly have put remarriage in this category, especially as he advised it as desirable. It must therefore have been a pledge to remain unmarried—a pledge after all which was not an onerous one in view of the advanced age of the widows involved, for sixty years of age represented a more aged condition than it would in these days of higher life expectancy. Hendriksen takes a similar view. He sees them as having 'pledged themselves to an important spiritual ministry and who then nevertheless, break their pledge by marrying again'.

A further reason for excluding the younger widows from this list is that,

in Paul's view, they were, as a class, much more liable to let a ministry degenerate into more social activities. It is clear that the ministry in view involved visiting women in their homes, and listening to their problems and needs. But such a task, in the hands of one who was immature, could lead to the unhappy situation where the counsellor deteriorated into a congregational gossip. Paul clearly wanted to avoid that, for, realist that he was, he knew that human nature, even in the case of the regenerate, responds all too easily to tittle-tattle. Hence the women who were to engage in household visitation must know how to bridle their tongues, and respect the confidences of the women to whom they ministered.

The role these ministering widows were to have is reflected in their qualifications. In the first place they will be women of prayer. Their widowed state, which could easily be a reason for lonely self-pity, is in fact their opportunity for a sustained ministry of prayer. One hears an echo of Anna who welcomed the infant Christ, and who is described by Luke as a widow 'who never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying' (Luke 2:37). So here the woman who has lost her husband 'puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help' (verse 5). Many a minister of the Word, and many a missionary, has learned to value the prayers of some such godly widows. The younger women to whom they minister will also have the assurance that the older friend who brings the encouragement of the Lord is one who is often in prayer on their behalf.

The ministering widow must have come from a stable marriage in which Christian standards have been maintained. It is difficult to decide how to interpret the phrase 'having been the wife of one man' (verse 9 A.V.). The R.S.V. interprets it in the sense of not being married more than once, but in view of the injunction to young widows to remarry it is hard to see Paul excluding such in later years from the list of ministering widows, should they have been widowed a second time. It would seem best to see it in the same context as the stipulation that the elder and the deacon should be 'the husband of one wife'. The background of the New Testament was a pagan society with polygamy or very loose marriage ties. The elders and deacons had higher standards imposed in view of their leadership, so that a polygamist could not be an overseer in the church. Similarly it seems best to see the requirement for the widow, that she had been partner in a monogamous union. After all, she would be involved in helping younger married women with personal problems, and she could do so only from the standpoint of one who had herself had a stable marriage.

She must also have an already-established reputation for concern for others and in general for good deeds. This would be seen in the first place in the way she had brought up her own family. If she had been neglectful here she would not be in a position to help younger women

coping with the difficulties of growing children. We do not need to interpret with a bald literalism which would exclude a widow who had been unable to have children. What is in view is the attitude to children which characterises not only a good mother but also those women who, without children of their own, yet show love in their relationship to nephews or nieces or the children in the church. To speak of a widow who has brought up children, would no more exclude such women, than the stipulation that the elder or deacon should be 'the husband of one wife' would exclude a bachelor from the eldership or the diaconate!

Her 'good deeds' however must not have been restricted to her own family. She must be well known as one who had practised hospitality, when she was better able to do so than she is now, now that she is dependent on others. The practice of hospitality was viewed as a very important piece of service in the early churches. It is not only laid down as a general obligation for Christians (Heb. 13:2) but is also one of the specific qualifications of an elder (1 Tim. 3:2).

Closely allied to a reputation for hospitality is one for willing service. The traveller who tramped a dusty road in open sandals would appreciate as a first gesture of welcome the basin of water to remove the grime from his feet. In wealthy households it was the task of the slave to perform the menial service of foot washing, hence the demonstration of humility by the Lord Jesus in washing his disciples' feet. It was this example that the early believers aimed to follow in caring for one another. The widow who was to be involved in a ministry of compassion must already have had long practice in caring activities.

She must also be a woman of sympathy. There were always people in trouble both within the church and outside. The callous indifference of the world where all too often people were immersed in their own affairs was foreign to the whole Christian understanding of love. Paul had urged the Romans: 'rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn' (Rom. 12:15). It was a call to believers to be sensitive to one another's troubles, and to be ready to enter into a sympathetic understanding which meant sharing at a deep level with the needs of others. It was from such a background of sensitive caring that the widow was committed to exercise this ministry more extensively, now that her condition left her free to be available to a much wider circle.

Someone may raise an objection. Could not a widow exercise this kind of ministry without being enrolled in a list? Apart from the obvious answer that quite clearly Paul is describing such a list, there is the further fact that it is good that those who engage in a specific ministry should be acknowledged openly by the church. After all, every believer is called to serve, but the congregation nonetheless sets apart deacons as those who have been tested and approved to exercise an official ministry. Similarly, any woman may serve, and indeed should serve, but it is good that the

church should recognise those who are set apart for the purpose, so that a young woman who may be in need will know to whom she can turn with confidence. She may want to share some problem but fears the breach of confidence which can be so disastrous. To know that an older widow has been approved by the church would give her the added assurance that this was one to whom she could entrust her problems. From the point of view of the widow herself, it would give her the authority to engage in visiting as one authorised by the elders for this purpose.

John Calvin, in his commentary on this passage, sees the widows engaged in an official way and refers to 'the discharge of their office'. While he views them as serving particularly the sick and the poor, it is a ministry which has been committed to them by the church. Indeed, he goes so far as to say that 'there was a mutual obligation between them and the Church'. He refers to 'communities' of widows who 'were not intended for leisure or lazy inactivity, but to help the poor and sick until the women were worn out and could honourably rest in retirement'.

Let me end this series of articles on a personal note. My aim has not been to introduce novel ideas or practices, either on the ministry of widows or of women deacons. It is simply that in the course of expounding the Pastoral Epistles in our mid-week prayer meeting I have been discovering varied ministries in the New Testament churches to which I had been blind before. I have been compelled to look more deeply at the diversity of ministry within the church, and to look more closely at our own structures. There is much misplaced talk about bringing the church up-to-date. What is more important is that we should give serious thought to biblical pattern of life and ministry within the congregation. Beyond that serious reflection lies the further issues of implementing what God has taught us! ■

Subscription Rates for 1980

Our accountant Bob Campen will not be staved off any longer! He says we have only just enough cash to meet our commitments and that we will be running into trouble if we do not raise the subscriptions to match the horrors of inflation.

From January 1980 the annual subscription will be £2.50. The overseas rates will also be raised in proportion.

Sincere and hearty gratitude is expressed to those whose generous financial support has enabled us to delay the subscription increases so long. Also we thank the members of the Chelmsley Wood Reformed Baptist Church, Birmingham, and the members of the Womberal Reformed Baptist Church, New South Wales, Australia, for their constancy in practical giving to the work.

Good News from Crawley, Sussex

WE REPORTED IN THE WINTER 1971 ISSUE OF THIS MAGAZINE THAT A NEW WORK had been started in Sussex. In 1975 the Crawley Reformed Baptist church was formally constituted; no longer under the supervision of the church at Cuckfield.

At the beginning of that year there was only a handful but over the years the Lord has increased numbers—both by sending along new people and by enlarging their families! Membership now stands at 21 and Sunday morning congregations often number over sixty. Anticipating that accommodation might soon be insufficient, the church is already investigating ways of dealing with the problem.

When Geoff Thomas preached at the Thanksgiving Service on 15th September he was seeing the fruition of a seed sown over 14 years ago. Having enjoyed the blessing of God over the years the Crawley church was now, at last, able to invite one of their elders and founder members Austin Walker to undertake full-time pastoral duties. Austin was introduced to Reformed principles during his undergraduate days at Aberystwyth. When he became convinced of his call to the ministry it was Geoff's influence again that directed his steps to Westminster Theological Seminary.

Providentially Austin and his wife Mai returned to England in 1971 at the time when the old chapel at Crawley was being reopened. At the beginning the ministry of the Word was shared between Austin, Ian Randall and Don Evans. After the Walkers moved to live in Crawley a year later the whole responsibility for preaching and pastoral care was gradually assumed by Austin and Don, who were later joined in the eldership by Michael Parsons. The three of them teach at local Comprehensive schools, their subjects being, respectively, Geography, Mathematics and English. It was only by sharing responsibilities that the load of work could be borne. With young and growing families, many a Saturday saw the conflict of loyalties to church and home. They were very much aware that they dare not neglect wives and children in order to nurture this growing flock of Christ. It was not a case of full-time ministry but of double full-time! A prominent preacher was once asked how long he took to prepare his sermons. He replied 'Twenty years and twenty minutes.' Not having the twenty years behind them the brethren at Crawley usually needed more than 20 minutes!

From the start priority was given to expository preaching on the Lord's Day. Other meetings and Sunday School were only established as more manpower became available. Now that their children are growing up they are exploring the possibility of some form of youth meetings. House-to-house visitation has been engaged in over the years and it is now hoped to increase effort in this area. But primarily it was an increasing and persistent consciousness of the serious demands of a faithful, expository, stimulating, prayerful and pastorally and evangelistically relevant ministry, together with the willingness of the church to produce hard cash (often the acid test of sincerity), that led to Austin's being asked to resign his teaching post to give all his time to the ministry of the Word.

Crawley is an industrial town with a rapidly increasing population. We have great hopes and aspirations for the future.

Don Evans



The Whitefield fellowship of ministers meets from time to time at 5 Fairford Close, Haywards Heath. Over fifty ministers attend these gatherings although they are not all able to be at every meeting. On 22nd October Austin Walker of Crawley gave an excellent address on the problem of homosexuality, a synopsis of which follows. Prior to his exposition and the discussion which followed, Austin showed the standard films being propagated throughout the country by the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE).

It is most important that all parents be alerted to question the headmaster of the schools. If these films are to be shown a strong protest should be made. The films are wholly humanistic, a-moral and anti-Christian in their basis.

Austin points out that the tenor of the abstract will lack the spirit in which he gave the paper, the whole of which is being typed for duplication. The discussion which followed the paper confirmed the tenor of the speaker, the emphasis being on restoration of the whole person which requires a great deal of counselling, guidance, patience and wisdom.

The Homosexual Problem

1. *The Need to tackle the subject*

Our aims must be:

- (a) To shepherd the flock of Christ and teach his disciples his word in every area of their lives.
- (b) To protect our young people in particular from the godlessness of our age.
- (c) To refute those who oppose the truth, even within the professing church.
- (d) To provide a responsible Biblical ministry to homosexuals.
- (e) To influence for good the public moral standards of our society.

2. *Homosexuality in context*

Homosexuality is not a special case. The current campaign for recognition is part of a widespread change in attitudes and practices, not necessarily sexual.

The present situation is largely a legacy of the teachings of Marx, Nietzsche and Freud. This has led to a rejection of Biblical norms. In law we have moved away from what is based on God's word to sociological law that is basically hedonistic, arbitrary and subjective.

Such thinking says homosexuality is not a moral problem. Moral standards are relative. Immorality is redefined. Laws are immoral which limit an individual's freedom or which discriminate in *any* way against such as homosexuals.

At bottom there is a struggle between principles—one set originating from the eternal God, the other from man in rebellion against God, making his own standards. A comprehensive and positive approach to the church will depend on how well she has grasped the opinion and mood of the day.

To a large extent the church has failed to understand homosexuality. The church must proclaim the truth and show compassion to sexual sinners. She must avoid if possible the danger of deadlock by making the issue one of authority.

3. *The Biblical teaching*

Five biblical texts clearly indicate that sexual genital activity outside the heterosexual marriage bond is detestable to God, abnormal and unnatural. These texts are Leviticus 18:22, 20:13, Romans 1:24-26, 1 Corinthians 6:

9-10 and 1 Timothy 1:10. Add to these Genesis 19 (and related New Testament passages in 2 Peter 2:1-22 and Jude 7), Judges 19 and especially Genesis 1-2 which establishes the heterosexual relationship as being the only natural sexual relationship. The apparent confusion in evangelical churches over the sinfulness or otherwise of the homosexual orientation and desires must be sorted out if they are to give adequate counsel to homosexuals seeking help. Our view is that homosexual desires are sinful. This is consistent with a Biblical view of sin and establishes the moral responsibility of the homosexual and the hope of change from a homosexual life-style.

4. *The Response of the Church*

Two extremes must be avoided, 'Mr. Alarmist' whose condemnation is expressed with self-righteous indignation, and 'Mr. Complacent' who writes them off as beyond hope.

The homosexual's problem is bigger than his/her sexual orientation and/or practice. Often they are lonely and sensitive individuals desperate for acceptance and recognition and self-assurance as individuals. We are dealing with men and women, people made in the image of God.

Many who claim to be both gay and Christian assert that loving, caring homosexual relationships are good and blessed by God. This is basically an antinomian spirit.

The following guidelines are proposed:

- (a) no practising homosexual should be allowed membership of the church of Jesus Christ; they should be admonished with a view to repentance and restoration.
- (b) no practising homosexual should be considered for ordination as an elder or deacon because the basic qualification for such is blamelessness.
- (c) repentant sexual sinners should be

welcomed into membership and may be considered for ordination providing they fulfil the basic Scriptural requirements. This assumes a responsible Biblical ministry to homosexuals who desire change which aims at a remodeling of the whole life style and not just specific homosexual aspects. For some a heterosexual orientation may be possible, the other option for a Christian is chaste celibacy.

- (d) Christian parents should be so equipped as to be able to teach their own children on sexual matters including homosexuality.
- (e) from the pulpit passages such as Genesis 1-2, Matthew 19:1-12, Ephesians 5:22-33 and 1 Corinthians 6:12-7:40 must be preached as they deal with God's eternal ordinances. Passages thought to be 'too embarrassing' must not be avoided. The Song of Solomon and passages in Proverbs are also helpful. The place of the law in the Christian life must also be preached to offset the antinomian spirit.
- (f) Public moral standards are also the church's concern. We must do what we can for good in our own situation and not stand still while others foist ungodly principles and practices upon our society.

5. *Conclusion*

The church should have confidence in the truth and power of God. Only a full Biblical Christianity is adequate to deal with the issues.

The most comprehensive books on the subject which deal with the interpretation of the Scriptures are:

Richard F. Lovelace *Homosexuality and the Church*, The Lamp Press, 1979.

Greg. L. Bahnsen *Homosexuality: a Biblical View*, Baker Book House, 1978, chapters 2 and 3. ■

The Writings of Augustine

By Sharon Hulse

Augustine of Hippo lived and worked in the intermediate age after the decline of classical civilisation before the beginning of western culture. Though this period is sometimes neglected, it was the era of the first great doctrinal controversies and theological definitions. By the time of his death in 430 Augustine had become well known as one of the foremost defenders of the faith. As a Bishop of the Church in Africa he had to deal with one breakaway Donatist sect who used violent methods to assert their exclusive claims. More wellknown is the long drawn out controversy against the Pelagians who held that man by his free will could merit grace. The writings of Augustine form the response of a great Christian thinker to the pressing needs and problems of his day, yet they contain much that is of interest and profit to us now. And learning from one of the early church fathers can balance out any tendency to consider church history as having started with the Reformation!

The Confessions

This is perhaps the most widely read of Augustine's works. Here if anywhere is a convincing account of God's irresistible grace reaching out to save and to use one who, with Paul and later Bunyan, regarded himself as the chief among sinners. We have Augustine's own account of how as a brilliant young teacher of rhetoric he engaged on a search for 'truth', but in reality was fighting against the Holy Spirit. God however honoured the persistent prayers of Augustine's mother, and used the preaching of Ambrose as well as the reading of Scripture to bring him to repentance. It is to be hoped that the recent publication of a 'modern English' translation¹ will encourage many more Christians to read and profit from the testimony of this fourth century Christian. This book could also be given to our non-Christian friends who are searching, as Augustine himself did, for truth. It is a powerful witness to the fact that God has indeed made us for himself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in him.²

*The City of God*³

This second book is a work on a different scale altogether. If the *Confessions* are a heartwarming demonstration of the truths of salvation, we find in the *City of God* the theological foundation for these truths. 'I have taken upon myself the task of defending the glorious City of God against those who prefer their own gods to the founder of that City' wrote Augustine at the beginning of this massive work. He was writing in response to the sack of Rome by barbarians in 410 BC, which had triggered off a pagan reaction towards Christians, as it was thought that pagan gods had protected Rome in the past. This traumatic event also resulted in

deep uncertainty among many Christians who had begun to identify the kingdom of God with the Roman Empire.⁴ Now their whole world seemed to be crumbling. Augustine encourages them—and any Christians who see themselves as standing at the end of a civilisation—by showing that the City of God is eternal. In defending it he found himself expounding the central truths of God's redemptive and creative work. And so, amidst many polemical and topical sections, some fascinating, and some frankly boring digressions, we find gems of biblical exposition and wonderfully clear statements of truth.

All is seen in terms of the contrast between 'the two cities, one of God, the other of this world'. One definition is as follows: 'I classify the human race into two branches; the one consists of those who live by human standards, the other of those who live according to God's will. . . . By the two cities I mean two societies of human beings, one of which is predestined to reign with God from all eternity, the other doomed to undergo eternal punishment with the devil.'⁵

The City of this World

Some have thought of Augustine as a complete pessimist because he clearly stated the absolute inability of any political, legal, economic or social system to bring about the ultimate good of man; all these things being part of the City of this world. In fact his was only the 'pessimism' of one who recognises the consequences of man's fall into sin. God created man perfect, but when his will was transgressed man died, in that every faculty was to some degree corrupted. 'God created man aright, for God is the author of natures, though he is certainly not responsible for their defects. But man was willingly perverted and justly condemned.'⁶ After the fall, Cain founded a city,⁷ a forerunner of all earthly states, founded on self love,⁸ and beset with quarrels, wars, battles, death.⁹ Augustine sets out to prove decisively that the world can never provide true justice, justice being the conformity to order that God wills for all men.¹⁰ Nor can the world give real happiness, which comes from serving God.¹¹ In practical terms the members of the earthly city show themselves by living for temporal concerns alone.¹²

The City of God

Given the utter depravity of man, his only hope of salvation is found in the free grace of God extended to those he has elected in eternity.¹³ If Cain belonged to the city of man, 'the other son Abel belonged to the City of God . . . one who was a pilgrim and stranger in the world. . . . He was predestined by grace, and chosen by grace, by grace a pilgrim below, and by grace a citizen above. As far as he himself is concerned he has his origin from the same lump which was condemned as a whole lump at the beginning. But God like a potter made 'out of the same lump one vessel destined for honour and another for dishonour'.^{14 15} And how are citizens

of this Heavenly City made? Augustine gives the answer in many places. For instance: 'When we were overwhelmed by the load of our sins when we had turned away from the contemplation of his light and had been blinded by our love of darkness . . . even then he did not abandon us. He sent to us his Word, who is his only Son, who was born and who suffered in the flesh which he assumed for our sake . . . so that we might be purified from all our sins by that unique sacrifice.'¹⁶

Anyone, 'if he is reborn into Christ and makes progress'¹⁷ is a member of 'that Republic whose founder and ruler is Christ'.¹⁸ Augustine made it clear that those who are reborn are not necessarily all members of the church—he thus made the distinction between the visible church and the invisible City of God. Ultimately only God knows his elect. 'While the City of God is on pilgrimage in this world, she has in her midst some who are united with her in participation in the sacraments but who will not join her in the eternal destiny of the saints.'¹⁹

The Grace of God shown even in the earthly City

God shows a particular love to the elect, but Augustine shows that grace is extended to maintain an order that embraces even the unrighteous.²⁰ Without this restraint man could not survive, for his fallen instincts would inexorably lead to anarchy. Order is achieved through means adapted to man's unrighteousness—the state, government, slavery, property. God is in absolute control of all these affairs. If he has taken meticulous care in creating the physical world 'it is beyond anything incredible that he should have willed the kingdoms of men, their dominions and their servitudes to be outside the range of the laws of his providence'.²¹ The beauty of the created world is to the advantage of all mankind, saved and unsaved. Of such beauty Augustine showed a keen appreciation, writing of: 'The manifold diversity of beauty in sky and earth and sea, the abundance of light, and its miraculous loveliness, in sun and moon and stars, the dark shades of woods, the colour and fragrance of flowers; the multitudinous varieties of birds, with their songs and their bright plumage, the countless different species of living creatures. . . . Then there is the mighty spectacle of the sea itself, putting on its changing colours like different garments, now green, with all the many varied shades, now purple, now blue.'²²

The Christian in the World

The common grace extended to the whole world ensures a certain order, so that the children of God may worship him in peace without fear of anarchy. But what is our rule as believers *in* this present order? Augustine had much to say on this subject.²⁴

(a) 'God is to be worshipped as well for temporal as for eternal benefits'²⁵ he wrote. We are to appreciate the beauty of God's creation; have

gratitude for a measure of peace and restraint on evil; depend on God for all earthly goods. Such temporal blessings are not to be underestimated. 'Anyone who exalts the soul as the Supreme Good and censures the nature of flesh as something evil is in fact carnal alike in his cult of the soul and in his revulsion from the flesh.'²⁶

(b) However, the Christian must have a transformed and spiritual attitude to these earthly things. We must always know that 'the inferior goods of the world, although essential for this transitory life, are to be despised in comparison with the eternal blessings of that other life'.²⁷ Citizens of the Heavenly city may be discerned in that they 'refer those (earthly) concerns to the enjoyment of eternal peace'.

In certain cases a passive attitude to the ordering of earthly affairs is called for: 'the servants of Christ are enjoined to endure even the most wicked and vicious commonwealth, if so it must be, that so they may by this endurance purchase for themselves an eminent place in that most holy and august Parliament of angels and in the celestial republic where the will of God is law'.²⁸ Such submission will, says Augustine, be a consistent and positive witness to the transforming power of Christ.

(d) In more favourable circumstances it is God's will that his people play an active part in the maintenance of order and peace in the world. A believer may participate in political activities,²⁹ wrote Augustine, as long as he remembers that the aim of these activities is fundamentally different to the aim of spiritual activities. In participating in state affairs a Christian cannot expect to change the hearts of other men and he has to use 'rough' means of justice; law courts, sentences, even the death sentence; remembering that they are part of God's providence to the sustaining of order in the universe among unrighteous men. Such means, suitable for the city of this Earth, are very different to the means appropriate in the city of our God, where tenderness rather than coercion is the rule.

(e) Augustine does not therefore enjoin Christians to abdicate responsibility in the Earthly city. His very clear conception of two cities in no way involves a 'sociological separation' in this world because until the Judgment men are being saved from Babylon to Jerusalem. Indeed it was a sect against whom Augustine contended for most of his life (the Donatists) who envisaged the Christians' separation from the world in literal terms. We are to regard the world as a temporary abode, but while in it we should contribute as we are able to the maintenance of the order ordained for it by God. That this order exists at all is a sign of the forbearance of God, though it is only an 'image of justice' compared with the 'vera iustitia' in God's kingdom. It is to this eternal kingdom that the believer's ultimate allegiance must be given. So while we must be salt and light in the world, with Augustine we look forward to 'the eternal rest not only of the spirit but of the body also. There we shall be still and see; we shall see and we shall love; we shall love and we shall praise. Behold what will be, in the

The Differences Between

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT and the NEW COVENANT

1. Is old	Is new
2. Was initiatory (to be continued)	Is final
3. Was preparatory	Is complete
4. Was to be added to:	Cannot be added to:
a. by the passover	is fulfilled in Christ
b. by the Mosaic administration	is fulfilled in Christ
c. by the Aaronic priesthood	is fulfilled in Christ
d. by the Davidic covenant	is fulfilled in Christ
5. Is different in its subjects	
The Abrahamic covenant included:	
a. All born into the family	All born of the spirit
b. All belonging to the clan (nation)	Believers of all nations are now included (Gal. 3:28, 29).
c. The flesh was first. New birth second	Now it is faith first and new birth first, not covenant status or human descent—John 1:12, 13.
d. Only males received the sign	Now there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female—unity with Christ by faith is the only consideration—Gal. 3:28.
6. Is different in mode	
Administered in the flesh with a knife	Administered upon the whole body.
7. The spiritual meaning of circumcision became more clear with the unfolding of God's purposes.	The spiritual significance of baptism is immediately clear in the New Testament.
8. Embraced a physical land first with a better one in view later on—Gen. 17:8, Heb. 11:11.	Embraces no special land in this world but only embraces the world to come.
9. Embraced one nation only	Embraces all nations, tongues, and tribes—Rev. 5:9.
10. The contrast was between Israel and the Gentiles	The contrast is between the believing Church and the world.

This above is taken from notes by the editor in preparation for the publication of a booklet in reply to Prof. Douma's treatise 'Infant Baptism and Regeneration'.

(Continued from previous page)

end, without end! For what is our end but to reach that kingdom which has no end?"³⁰

NOTES

1. 'The Confessions of Augustine in modern English' translated by Sherwood Eliot Wirt. Asian Lion Paperback 1978. £1.75.
2. *Confessions* 1.1.
3. It is certainly not to be recommended that the attempt be made to read this 'cover to cover' but some may find, as I did, that to invest £3.50 in Henry Betterson's translation (*Penguin Classics* 1972) is well worthwhile. All quotations are from this translation.
4. This tendency had reached a peak with Eusebius who spoke of Christian Emperors in almost messianic terms.
5. *City of God* 15. 1.
6. 8. 14.
7. 15. 5.
8. 14. 28.
9. 15. 4.
10. 19.
11. 14. 25 and 5. 24.
12. 14. 28.
13. 15. 1.
14. Rom. 9:21.
15. *City of God* 15. 1.
16. 7. 31.
17. 15. 1.
18. 2. 21.
19. 1. 35.
20. 5. 11.
21. 5. 11.
22. 22. 24.
23. 19. 13.
24. esp. 19. 14.
25. 11. 14 cf 22. 24 for a wonderful list of 'the good things of which this life is full even though it is subject to condemnation.'
26. 14. 5. Augustine had himself been associated before conversion with the Manicheans. This sect held a dualist view of the universe such as it here and elsewhere refuted.
27. 19. 13.
28. 2. 19.
29. 19. 17.
30. 22. 30.



Index for Reformation Today Issues 1-50

MICHAEL KEEN, A MEMBER OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, ALFRED PLACE, Aberystwyth, has completed author and subject indexes for *Reformation Today* numbers 1-50. He has employed an electronic computer to provide all the information—first the authors and then the subjects. The book reviews are indexed separately.

The articles are identified by an issue and first page number, and all the individual papers from the following are indexed:

The Ideal Church, 1972

Local Church Practice, 1978

Preaching Yesterday and Today, 1972

Reformation for the Family, 1974

The Way Ahead, 1975.

Most of the chapters in *The Believer's Experience* by Erroll Hulse, 1977, have been indexed, and all Carey Publications have been indexed by keywords from title and author. News items, brief book news, correspondence and editorial comments have not usually been indexed. The final index gives authors and titles of books reviewed.

Much time has been saved here at No. 5 through having this index. Thank you brother Keen for your work and also to friends who have encouraged such a compilation. Some have attempted the task but have lacked the sophisticated technology necessary.

The cost of the index which is sixteen pages in length is 50 pence per copy.

Back numbers

Back numbers of the magazine cost 35 pence per copy post free. The following issues are still available:

Numbers: 11, 12, 15, 17 to 20, 21, 27, 29 to 42 and 44 to 50.

Binders

Attractive binders which can take 12 issues are available at £2.00 per binder including postage.

Cloth bound volumes

Cloth bound volumes No. 3 (issues 25-36) and No. 4 (37-48) are available at £5.00 per volume including postage. The dollar rate has been fluctuating and we leave it to those ordering items to pay the equivalent exchange rate.

The Carey Conference

THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMME HAS BEEN PROPOSED FOR THE FORTHCOMING Carey Conference for ministers at the University of Cardiff, Wales, 1st-3rd January, 1980.

	9.00-10.30	11.00-12.30	4.15-5.45	
Tuesday 1st January			Arnold Dallimore	8.00 p.m. Achille Blaize
Wednesday 2nd January	Donald MacLeod	David Kingdon 'Liberation Theology'	Geoff Thomas 'Divorce' (could go on until about 6.10 p.m. if necessary)	7.30-8.30 p.m. Sharing/ prayer 8.45 p.m. Arnold Dallimore
Thursday 3rd January	Donald MacLeod	Bob Sheehan 'Bible Translations'	Stuart Olyott 'Trade Unionism' (also to 6.10 p.m. if necessary)	7.30-8.30 p.m. Sharing/ prayer 8.45 p.m. Achille Blaize

Prayer 7.45 a.m.

Breakfast 8.15 a.m.

Coffee 10.30 a.m.

Lunch 12.45 p.m.

Tea 3.45 p.m.

Supper 6.15 p.m.

(1.30-3.45 p.m. recreation)

The booking fee is £5.00 which should be sent to John Rubens, 23 Brickhill Drive, Bedford MK41 7DA who will supply details upon request.

A helpful Spanish magazine!

Noble D. Vater pastor of a Baptist church in Puerto Rico is now editing *Heraldo de Gracia*, a magazine similar in emphases to *Reformation Today*. The price is 45 American cents plus, at your discretion, a few cents for postage. The address is: Noble D. Vater, Siena 289, College Park, Rio Piedras, P.R. 00921.

Carey Publications

Just received from the printers:

1. The Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689, rewritten in modern English. The popular title is *A Faith to Confess*, third edition, price 90p.
2. *The Genius of Puritanism* by Peter Lewis, second edition, price £2.10.
3. *Baptism and Church Membership* by Erroll Hulse, fourth edition, price 45p.

Under preparation. An answer to Prof. Douma's *Infant Baptism and Regeneration*.

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