



REFORMATION TODAY



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Websites www.reformation-today.org

The editor's personal website is <http://www.errollhulse.com>

<http://africanpastorsconference.com>



African Pastors' Conferences to take place in October and November are shown on this map.

Reformation Today is strengthened by the addition of associate editors, Mostyn Roberts, pastor of the Evangelical Church, Welwyn, and chairman of Evangelical Press, Irving Steggles pastor of Birchleigh Baptist Church, South Africa, a director of African Pastors' Conferences and chairman of London Theological Seminary, and Kees van Kralingen of the Netherlands. Kees is an elder of the assembly at Papendrecht and is a director of Evangelical Press.

Front cover picture. Group photo at African pastors' Conference in Lilongwe, Malawi

Editorial

THE GOVERNMENT HAS PUSHED THE same-sex marriage Bill through Parliament, and brushed aside concerns about civil liberty protections for people who believe in real marriage. This has come as a shock and wake-up call to those who care about the family. A huge debt of gratitude must be paid to the Christian Institute and to Colin Hart in particular for his outstanding work to defend biblical/traditional marriage. He reminds us that 'Parliament cannot change what is hard wired into the nature of our existence. They could pass a Bill saying the moon is made of cheese, but it doesn't make it so. Marriage remains the union of a man and a woman, whatever the politicians say about legal marriage. Marriage predates British law, and it will carry on into the future. Jesus said marriage will exist right up to the end of the world, so we can take comfort in that (Matt 24:37-38).'

Colin Hart also observes (see pages 35-37) that not everyone at Westminster danced to the tune of the party leaders. Over 300 MPs and Peers were exceptionally courageous in standing up for real marriage. David Burrowes MP led the campaign in the Commons, and Lord Dear led the campaign in the Lords. Five national newspapers – who are more

in touch with real Britain than the broadcast media – have repeatedly raised concerns about redefining marriage. Fleet Street has not given the Government an easy ride on this issue, far from it. This shows it's not just Christians who care about marriage.

Assessment after the battle

An after-the-battle assessment can be made as to our enemies and our allies. As we see all the way through biblical history our enemies are false prophets. It was the Sanhedrin that plotted the condemnation of Jesus. It is the bishops of the Church of England who signally failed to fight robustly for maintaining true marriage. It is the Archbishop of Canterbury who has invited the gay rights Stonewall into Church of England Schools to 'challenge homophobic bullying', which will of course mean that they are able to promote the gay agenda unhindered.

The situation for evangelicals in the Church of England is untenable. Already if a clergyman does not sign up to work with women elders he will be demoted to a remote parish. Next on the agenda is forced acceptance of practising homosexuals in the ministry.

Also to be considered is the Establishment. How can Prince Charles, a self-confessed pluralist, be head of the Church of England? As it is we have seen the Queen sign legislation that is contrary to Scripture and a denial of her coronation vows. Underlying that is the bizarre idea that the head of the Church can be appointed by a political apparatus. Christ is the only Head of his universal Church.

How can Church of England evangelicals continue in a body which denies the gospel?

The idea of secession for Church of England ministers is hard, because what are they to secede to? They observe the instabilities of independency. In addition to that true pastors do not abandon their flocks.

The best solution would be to follow the example of the secessionist body called CESA – the Church of England of South Africa. CESA was formed in 1938 when ministers resigned from the main Anglican Church in South Africa and joined together to form a thoroughly reformed and faithful denomination. Reformed Baptists in South Africa gladly unite with CESA ministers like Frank Retief in promoting the Reformed faith. For more information about CESA see pages three and four.

There is no discipline in the Anglican Establishment and that means an essential mark of Christ's Church

is missing. When the Establishment occupies the broad road that leads to destruction it is certainly time to secede from it. 'Jesus suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore' (Heb 13:12-13).

Evangelical Christianity in the UK will be greatly strengthened when evangelicals unite in preaching the gospel of salvation which is something we never hear from C of E bishops who always side with popular opinion as we have seen with the same-sex marriage legislation. 'Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them' (Eph 5:11).

It is all very well reminding others about what they ought to do. Those who hold to a Confessional 1689 position have failed to follow the example of the early Reformed Baptists who united together in association which is recommended in the Confession, chapter 26 paragraph 15. It is urgent that Reformed Baptist churches across Western Europe unite in association.

Liberal teachers who deny the Bible infiltrated the Methodist, Baptist Union and United Reformed denominations. When a leader Michael Taylor denied the deity of Christ in the 1970s and no discipline was exercised a number of ministers seceded from the Baptist Union.

CESA

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN SOUTH AFRICA CONSOLIDATED ITS POSITION IN 1938 BY ADOPTING A CAREFULLY formulated constitution which confirmed its Anglican and evangelical roots. The first bishop to be appointed under the new constitution was the Rt. Rev. Fred Morris in 1955. Until that date he had been Bishop in North Africa but was willing to move to the other end of the continent to meet the need.

In 2011 CESA was made up of approximately 150 churches and 130 ordained clergy, as well as a number of full-time students, youth, women's and children's workers.

What are CESA's distinctives?

1. We are a Word-centred church.

As expressed in our motto 'Your word above all things', the Bible occupies a central place in our denomination. The Church of England in South Africa is a 'Biblical' church.

We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God written and to contain all things necessary for salvation. The Bible is to be translated, read, preached, taught and obeyed in its plain and canonical sense.

Article 6 'Holy Scripture sets forth everything that is necessary for our salvation. Consequently, nobody should be required to believe as an article of the Christian faith, or to regard as necessary for salvation, anything that is not found in Scripture or that cannot be proved from Scripture.'

2. We are a Missional church

We are evangelistic and missionary in outlook. We gladly accept the Great Commission of the risen Lord to make disciples of all nations, to seek those who do not know Christ and to baptise, teach and bring new believers to maturity. It is our aim 'to take the gospel to every man's front door' and to bring all people under the instruction and Lordship of Jesus Christ.

3. We are an Evangelical church

In the words of Bishop J C Ryle we are evangelical because of 'the absolute supremacy we assign to Holy Scripture, the depth and prominence we assign to the doctrine of human sinfulness and corruption, the paramount importance we attach to the work and office of our Lord Jesus Christ and the salvation He has wrought for mankind, the high place which we assign to the inward work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man and the importance we place on the outward and visible work of the Holy Spirit manifested in the life, conduct and behaviour of the believer in overcoming the world, the flesh and the devil'.

4. We are a Protestant church.

Traditional Protestantism stands for the following: Scripture Alone, Justification by Faith Alone and the Universal Priesthood of all Believers.

The universal priesthood of all believers implies the right and duty of the Christian laity not only to read the Bible in their own mother tongue, but also to take part in the government and all the public affairs of the Church. It is opposed

to the hierarchical system which puts the essence and authority of the Church in an exclusive priesthood, and makes ordained priests the necessary mediators between God and the people.

The Church of England in South Africa upholds the priesthood of all believers. It believes it can only be effective in evangelism and mission if it trains and empowers its laity for gospel ministry.

5. We are a Reformed church

The Church of England in South Africa holds to the five points of doctrine which lie at the heart of the Reformation – grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone, Scripture alone and to the glory of God alone.

Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury in the time of King Henry VIII, was able to bring Martin Luther's rediscovery of these great truths into the heart of the Church of England.

The Church of England in South Africa is Reformed in that it embraces and articulates these great biblical insights taught by Luther, Calvin and the other reformers.

6. We are a Creedal (Confessional) church

The Church of England is a church that uses confessions of faith to express the teaching of the Bible. We uphold the four Ecumenical Councils and the three historic Creeds as expressing the rule of faith.

Article 8: The three creeds, namely the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and what is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, should be received and believed without reservation, because they may be proved from Holy Scripture.

For continuation of CESA articles consult [www](http://www.cesa.org.za).

The Church of England in South Africa can be called a covenantal church because it emphasises God's one single covenant with his people promised to Abraham, which is a covenant not simply with individuals but with families. The promises of God included Abraham's children. We believe that God causes his covenant to run in the line of continued generations, i.e. with believers and their children. It follows that the children of believers should receive baptism, the sign and seal of God's covenant.

8. We are an Episcopal church

The Church of England in South Africa is an Episcopal church. It values Bishops as an ancient and well-tried form of ministry, agreeable to Scripture (though not actually required by Scripture). Bishops are viewed primarily as pastors and teachers.

We recognise that God has called and gifted bishops, presbyters and deacons to equip all the people of God for their ministry in the world. We uphold the classic Anglican Ordinal as an authoritative standard of clerical orders.

The ministry of women in the church is vital, but it does not require them to be ordained as Presbyters or Bishops. The proposal to admit women as Presbyters or Bishops would be a denial of the headship of the man as taught by the New Testament. For continuation consult [www](http://www.cesa.org.za).

'Tis Immortality

Nigel T. Faithfull

IN THE PREVIOUS ARTICLE 'A LOST ETERNITY' WE CONSIDERED THE NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING AN orthodox belief in a hell of continued suffering for the unbeliever in face of opposition from those holding to conditional immortality or annihilation theories. This is mainly because we believe Christ taught that eternal torment was the fate of sinners, and that he came and suffered to save mankind from having to undergo such a punishment for their sin. For everlasting misery in hell to be possible, it must also be true that all men must be born with immortal (or everlasting) souls, and that immortality is not just for believers. Calvin commented, 'The human body is formed for immortality ... By sinking into death it does not utterly perish' (on Gen 35:17) .

Everlasting life

It should be stressed that 'everlasting life' is a term particularly applied to a gift from God to believers. This can be deduced from John 6:27, 'Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.'

We read in Daniel 12:2, 'Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.' The unbeliever, therefore, will also awake from death, and his lot will be to endure everlasting contempt. Our Lord said a similar thing: 'Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life: but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him' (John 3:36). The above quotes show clearly that the unbeliever will have God's wrath continually upon him, even after death. If Daniel believed in man's everlasting existence, was it by direct revelation, or did he find clues in the older books of the Old Testament to which he had access? We will try and find some answers.

Man is special

From Genesis 1 to 3 we see that man is a special creation. The beasts and

birds (Gen 2:19), as well as man (Gen 2:7), were made from the dust of the ground, and presumably the water which came up as springs from the earth (Gen 2:6). All the necessary chemical elements required to form a living body were present – apart from life itself. Both beasts and man would need an extra gift from God, not available from inanimate earth, to create a living and reproducing creature. It is only with regard to man, however, that it is recorded that God ‘breathed into his nostrils the breath of life’ (Gen 2:7). With hindsight we see that God breathed more than mere physical life into Adam – but an eternal and spiritual existence also.

We read in Genesis 1:26-27 that God created man alone to be in his own image and likeness. He could think, reason, talk and worship. He had every expectation that he would live for ever. God’s essential nature is to be eternal, and man had an imputed eternal life because he had been made to resemble God. In fact, he would not know what death meant at this stage.

The tree of life

Adam was placed in a garden to exercise his creative skills, and there were in the middle of this paradise of Eden two trees. One was the tree of life, the other the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:9). He was not to eat of the latter, but he was presumably allowed to eat of the former. After the Fall access to this tree of life was barred (Gen 3:24). This was necessary to prevent Adam and Eve using the fruit and leaves to prolong their earthly lives indefinitely, and so negating the curse of death. The tree reappears in the New Jerusalem in Revelation 22:2, the next verse pointing out that there will no longer be any curse. The ultimate source of eternal life is of course Christ, and he is the source of permanent healing for the nations. Just as Moses lifted up the brazen serpent, and all who looked in faith to it were healed, so those who look to Christ lifted up on the cross for them, will also be permanently healed from the effects of sin: ‘Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life’ (John 3:14-15).

Dust and spirit

The terrible conclusion to God’s curse upon Adam after the Fall is: ‘For dust you are and to dust you will return’ (Gen 3:19). Adam’s sin was that of disobedience and rebellion against God his Creator and Lord. There was just

one thing God told him not to do, and that was to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. No other explanation or reason was given by God, other than that if he did so he would surely die (Gen 2:17). Because all of future mankind was to arise from Adam's 'loins' or offspring, then Adam's fate would be inherited by his successors. This would be the inevitable result of the Fall; we cannot complain that it is unfair that we are born guilty sinners. There could have been no other outcome. It was probably Solomon who tells us in Ecclesiastes 12:7, 'And the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.' This is quoted by Berkhof in his argument against conditional immortality.

Redemption

God did not leave man to simply disappear into a heap of dust. He was answerable to the God who at that time talked with them on earth. After Eden men must still give an account to God, and this will happen at the judgment (Heb. 9:27). It is inconceivable that those who get away unpunished in this life for sins of cruel torture and murder would not have to face their Creator and receive an appropriate sentence.

God in his grace would not be thwarted by the devil in his ultimate plans for man. Before the creation of the world he had resolved to save a multitude to be the bride of Christ (Eph 1:4) and had already prepared a kingdom for them (Matt 25:34). So God began to reveal his great plan of redemption – firstly to the devil, declaring that the seed of the woman (Christ) would crush his head (Gen 3:15b), then by making leather garments for Adam and Eve he showed that the shedding of blood was necessary for the forgiveness of sin and restoring a right relationship with God.

God reveals his truth gradually

An objection from some is that it was unfair of God to hide the fact that all men had eternal spirits that would be judged and could suffer for ever in hell. But we forget that God is God, and can deal with his creation as he thinks fit: 'But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'" (Rom 9:20).

It is plain that God didn't choose to reveal the Scriptures all at once, but over many centuries. The Old Testament saints had to learn obedience to the law,

and the necessity of the shedding of sacrificial blood for the atonement of their sins. They also had to learn to have a personal faith and trust in God, and to look forward to the coming Messiah. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, there were times when they knew they would live beyond the grave and be welcomed by God into heaven. We read as early as Genesis 5:24 (also Heb 11:5): ‘Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.’ Job said, ‘And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God’ (Job 19:26). In Psalm 23:6 David writes, ‘Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.’ Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven (2 Kings 2:11). God told Malachi (Mal 3:16-17) that the names of those who feared the Lord would be written in a scroll in his presence, ‘They will be mine’, says the Lord Almighty, ‘in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him.’

Immortality is no illusion

Believers are God’s jewels, his treasured children who are heading for a glorious future in heaven with a loving Father. For them eternal life is a great blessing. How sad that Jean-Paul Sartre could say: ‘Life has no meaning the moment you lose the illusion of being eternal.’ He understood that immortality was the only thing that could give human life any meaning. James Montgomery (1771-1854) found personally that ‘life from the dead is in that word, ’Tis immortality’. Let us thank God for our immortal spirits, and if we have not already done so, seek that pearl of great price, everlasting life in the kingdom of the Saviour, and be like the wise merchant who went and sold all that he had, and bought it (Matt 13:46).

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- 1 [http://www.davidcox.com.mx/library/C/Calvin%20-%20Genesis%20Vol%202%20\(b\).pdf](http://www.davidcox.com.mx/library/C/Calvin%20-%20Genesis%20Vol%202%20(b).pdf)
 - 2 Berkhof, Louis, *Systematic Theology, Banner of Truth*, 1966 reprint, p 601
 - 3 Montgomery, James, *Grace Hymns*, 2nd ed., 1984, No. 781
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Born in Bristol, Dr Nigel Faithful attends St Mellons Baptist Church, Cardiff (pastor Andy Christofides). He is a regular contributor for Evangelical Times. Day One has published his Thoughts Fixed and Affections Flaming, being a biography of Matthew Henry with 1400 of his selected sayings.

Lee Roy Shelton Jr

The early life of Lee Roy Shelton Jr

by Erroll Hulse

TODAY MT ZION CHURCH JOINED TOGETHER WITH THE LITERATURE MINISTRY OF CHAPEL LIBRARY serves 95 nations in 14 languages. To this must be added a significant ministry into 4,000 prisons. In addition there is the provision by way of gift books and correspondence of a 'seminary in the home' for pastors who cannot afford to go to seminary. The proportions of this work are massive. It all emanates from a small church and a handful of workers. A daily morning prayer meeting is the principal expression of dependence on the Lord for his blessing. What the Banner of Truth books represent in the theological renewal in the English-speaking world from the 1960s onwards Chapel Library represents in supplying free grace literature to the wider developing world from about the 1980s but with the added dimension of evangelism.

Lee Roy Shelton Jr was the initiator, architect and mainspring of this extraordinary ministry. Before he left for his eternal reward in 2002 the work was committed to the leadership of Pastor Jeff Pollard and elder Steve Frakes. In the development of printing and distributing free of charge evangelistic tracts, a multiplicity of booklets, paperbacks funding has been provided from churches and individuals.

As I begin to describe the early life of Lee Roy Jr, I draw attention to the fact that the years of spiritual preparation were many. It was only at the age of 49 that Lee Roy Jr began to pray for a world-wide ministry. Born in 1923 he worked in secular business for twenty-two years until the call came to assist his father in a full-time pastoral capacity in 1961.

LeeRoy Jr learned the principles of ministry from his father who exercised a powerful preaching and evangelistic ministry so diverse in character that it was

like a mini-empire. It included a widespread radio gospel ministry, a literature ministry, colporteurs and church planting. All the evangelistic enterprises were church-based emanating from First Baptist Church of Algiers, New Orleans.

From this introductory overview we go back to the beginning.

Born 22nd August 1923 in Morrow, LA to Pastor Lee Roy Shelton Sr and Dola Myrtis Simmons, the baby was left to die on the living room couch. The reason was that his birth was a difficult one and the doctor was instructed to save the mother. The Lord had his plans, for the baby survived the precarious early hours of his life. As Albert Shelton grew and learned to speak he would say, 'My name not Albert, me 'Ee Oy.' His name was changed to Lee Roy Shelton Jr.

Lee Roy Jr had two older sisters Jessie Marie and Ora Nell. He had a younger brother Iley Judson and younger sister Carol Rowena.

Times were hard growing up during the depression years of the 1920s and 30s and the rationing years of the early 1940's due to World War II. Lee Roy started working at the age of eleven as a paperboy and the 25 cents he made each week went to help put food on the table. His mother cut up a meatball to share with the many preachers and missionaries that were in and out of their home. At age 16 Lee Roy started working at Todd Johnson Shipyards as a riveter's helper building warships.

Lee Roy met Frances Loraine Reeves when she was 13 and he was 14. Her uncle was a pastor and it was through a church gathering that Lee Roy and Loraine met. She lived on the east side of New Orleans and he on the west side. This meant crossing the Mississippi River by ferry boat and travelling by street car to her home. Lee Roy courted her with only a dime for transportation and a pack of chewing gum in his pocket. Much of their courting was done via telephone.

Lee Roy graduated from Martin Behrman High School in June of 1941. This was the only formal education he ever received. After a 5-year courtship he married his childhood sweetheart on 21st August 1942, one day before his 19th birthday.



Lee Roy Jr and his father L R Shelton are shown here in the foreground surrounded by workers of Radio Missions. The radio ministry (54 stations) was very extensive as the size of the team suggests. Radio messages were printed and mailed out to listeners all over the USA and in 48 countries abroad.

Just six weeks after they were married Lee Roy, now working at Standard Supply and Hardware Company, was injured during a company softball game. He ruptured one of the discs in his lower back and had major surgery. This was the first of 24 major surgeries that he would have during his lifetime. He suffered physically most of his adult life. His daughter Sharon found a note that he wrote during one of those times: 'I have called upon the name of my Great Physician hundreds of times for healing according to his will, for wisdom to know what to do, for holding and keeping grace, for mercy to help in time of need, to keep me broken at his feet so there would be no bitterness, no complaining, no murmuring, to increase my faith and to show forth his faithfulness. And praise his name he has given grace and more grace, mercy upon mercy, faith to strengthen me when needed and has fulfilled for me 2 Cor 12:10 many a time!'

The surgery in Oct. 1942 showed God's providence in his life. In Feb. 1943 he was conscripted into the army but he did not pass the physical requirements because of his back injury. He was classified 4F for the duration of World War II. The men he was conscripted with that day fought in the Battle of the Bulge where over 90% were killed.

The next 21 years Lee Roy spent working at Standard Supply and Hardware Company and raising his family. Sharon was born in 1944, Lee Roy III in 1948 and Zechariah (Zack) in 1950. The family was close-knit. His daughter recalls, 'We enjoyed doing things together and have wonderful memories of camping trips and ball games. My youngest brother Zack was an all-city basketball player and my dad followed all his games. We went to many college basketball and football games during those years.' The major back surgery he had in 1942 prevented him from actively participating in sports. The second major back surgery in 1964 set limits on on what he could undertake for the remainder of his life.

He was always actively involved in the church and many Saturday mornings would find him passing out Christian tracts to seamen on the many ships docked in the New Orleans harbour.



*Pastor L R Shelton and assistant pastor Lee Roy Jr looking at the map
pinpointing the broadcasts.*

At this point it will be helpful to return to the Metropolitan Tabernacle, New Orleans, also known as the First Baptist Church, Algiers.

In 1927 L R Shelton Sr began his ministry at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. He was exceedingly talented and possessed extraordinary energy. He was a powerful free grace preacher. Under his leadership the gospel thrived in many directions especially in radio to which was added a tape ministry. A large tent was used for evangelism outreach. A 64-page monthly magazine was published with the title VOICE OF TRUTH. A publishing ministry and colportage work thrived. There was a large bookshop filled with reformed literature including books by A W Pink and C H Spurgeon. The early publication of the three volumes by Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity*, *The Ten Commandments* and *The Lord's Prayer* sold well. Foxe's *Christian Martyrs* and Rehwinkel on the Flood were advertised in VOICE OF TRUTH. 1964 was the time that the Banner of Truth publishing company was expanding. Such was the free grace ministry at the Metropolitan Tabernacle that Humphrey Mildred, working then for the Banner of Truth, paid a visit. He remembers Pastor L R Shelton as a man of large frame with a gripping preaching style. In one meeting Humphrey (who is pastor of the Reformed Baptist Church in Edinburgh) witnessed L R

Shelton Sr on stage in verbal competition with a man of enormous stature. The contest was about which of the two was the greatest sinner.

L R Shelton Sr was a born leader who gave birth to vigorous gospel enterprise. 1964 copies of VOICE OF TRUTH magazine reveal a broad successful gospel ministry on many fronts. Every church member had a work to do. Church planting was on the agenda. In preaching the emphasis was on the total depravity of a fallen race, sovereign grace in salvation and a strong evangelistic emphasis, namely the necessity of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

However there was a serious flaw which illustrates how careful Christian leaders need to be especially in keeping to justification by faith alone. L R Shelton Sr fell into the trap of adding to justification by insisting on a high degree of spiritual experience as a proof of conversion. Often it is those of Pentecostal persuasion who fall into this error. L R Shelton Sr was definitely not a Pentecostal. It is required that believers must be joined to Christ by faith and that they will have an experimental dimension as it says in Romans, 'God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us' (Rom 5:5). This can easily be distorted if high degrees of experience are expected, namely, that unless a person is able to give a glowing testimony of heart experience he is not accepted as converted. Even though that person passes the tests of correct doctrinal belief in Christ and the Trinity, is in humble submission to the moral law and principles of church practice, and loves the church family -- even though that may all be correct, that person may be regarded as deficient. Of course it is possible that a person professing faith is lacking real Holy Spirit regeneration but once you set the bar of experience at seven-feet high you are adding to justification by faith alone. It has become justification by faith plus a seven-feet high spiritual experience.

It is here that we discover that Lee Roy Shelton Jr, although accepted into the ministry as co-pastor alongside his powerful father in 1961, came to be regarded as unconverted. But this was rectified when he did claim to have a seven-foot high experience. Some therefore thought that his conversion was as late as 1965. Another allied mistake to the requirement of a seven-feet high



Lee Roy Jr and Loraine with their daughter Sharon and two sons.

experience is the addition of a set form of fundamentalistic behaviour. This was very common among evangelicals in the first half of the 20th-century. For instance if you saw a believer smoking that was a sign that he or she was not truly converted. Or if you saw a professing believer going into a cinema that would be a sign that that person was not converted. But that is adding to justification by faith alone. It is adding a certain set code of behaviour to justification.

Against this kind of background it is impossible to mark the exact time of Lee Roy's conversion.

Tensions developed between Lee Roy Jr and his father. These intensified in 1970. The situation became impossible when L R Shelton Sr publicly accused his son Lee Roy Jr of stealing a large sum of money. At this point the testimony of Lee Roy's daughter Sharon explains this crisis: 'All my grandfather had to say was that they couldn't account for the money and no one would ever openly question my grandfather. There was never any money missing -- just someone giving my grandfather incorrect information that could be used to make my Dad resign. This accusation was made before the choir members right before we went on the air live for a Sunday morning broadcast. I was completely devastated. As soon as the broadcast was over I left and went to the home of the bookkeeper and asked if there was any way my Dad could have stolen \$10,000 and cover it up. She said no and was shocked to hear what had happened. But the damage was done. The accusation was out there and was never taken back even though no money was missing.'

Soon after this impasse during May of 1970 Lee Roy Jr left New Orleans and moved far north to Minnesota. This cleavage left deep wounds in Lee Roy's soul. It explains why he always insisted on observing the difference between L R Sr and Lee Roy Jr. It also sheds light on why Lee Roy Jr was extremely cautious and slow in trusting others.

Moving away so suddenly was a traumatic experience. He testified to being comforted by the words of Genesis 12: 'Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.' He knew of a small group in Litchfield, Minnesota in need of a pastor. It was on his way to visit the group in Minnesota that he completely dedicated his life to the Lord's will for his future. In a motel room in Baldwin WI he prayed for guidance and the words from Jeremiah came into his heart: 'Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not' (Jer 33:3). 'Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?' (Jer 32:27). 'For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end' (Jer 29:11). In June 1970 Mt Zion Bible Church was started in the home of Guy and Kay Anderson in Litchfield.

When Lee Roy Jr left New Orleans with nothing but his family and household possessions his father-in-law gave him \$2000 to make the trip and start a new life. The next eight years in Litchfield were his experience on the 'backside of the desert' where the Lord taught him and prepared him for the work to come.

He sold cars for Anderson Ford Dealership during the week and preached on Sundays. In February 1971 he had another ruptured disc in his back. This would make his 3rd major back surgery and left him with a permanent disability.

After 18 months in the Anderson home Mt Zion Bible Church was able to purchase a two-storey building in downtown Litchfield. The lower level formed the sanctuary and later housed the first printing equipment. The main level became the home of Mt Zion Bible and Bookstore. And the upper level was the parsonage.

His vision for a radio and world-wide literature ministry intensified in 1973. In September 1974 he dedicated his life to live by faith. This is the key to understanding the subsequent course of his ministry. Time and time again he would face insurmountable financial obstacles but in every one of these he persevered with persistent intercession. It was as though he had an omnipotent friend to whom he spoke in intimate terms. 'How can you not meet these paramount needs that face me now? - You have never let me down, Surely, Lord, you will not let me down now!' Often it was a major financial need and sometimes it was an urgent need for suitable workers.

During the 1970s two brothers living in Montana became well-known as 'the Bouma brothers' on account of their imaginative and enterprising work of publishing a series of Puritan paperbacks. In 1975 they visited Lee Roy and shared their knowledge and experience. Some of the titles after that visit were books loaned from Lee Roy's library. It is one thing to publish books but it is another to distribute them. It was for the advertising and distribution of the Puritan paperbacks that the ministry of Gospel Missions was started in alliance with the Summit Book series published by Baker Book House.

By 1978 the Lord was leading in the direction of Pensacola, Florida. Through all the years of ups and downs in New Orleans, Litchfield and Pensacola, two

people were a constant support in his life, his beloved wife Loraine, and his sister Ora Nell Myers. (Her husband John was sympathetic toward the work of Mt Zion.) Though both his wife and his sister served in different ways they provided a consistent source of encouragement.

The spiritual foundation of Lee Roy's daily life was the infallible Word of God. I visited Chapel Library and stayed with him every year for eight years in the 1990s. He was always up early to read his Bible and engage in meditation and prayer. This would precede the all-important daily morning prayer meeting. Carefully brewed tea was his first physical sustainer. Breakfast came after the prayer meeting.

Lee Roy Jr did not watch TV. He loved meditating on Scripture. A favourite passage was Isaiah 44:3,4, 'For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.' The verse that helped shape his ministry came from Isaiah 41:14,15, 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.' He considered himself a worm that the LORD could use to thresh the mountains.

In 1978 Lee Roy Jr moved to Pensacola, Florida where an all-round ministry continued to expand.

To be continued. Next time we will learn how stage by stage amazingly generous provisions were made by which the work increased greatly. When most needed Michael Snyder of Jewish background arrived to become a dynamic worker and organiser alongside Lee Roy Jr.

The Prophecy of Caiaphas

Bob Davey

John 11: 47-57

THE CLAIM OF JESUS, 'I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE,' HAD BEEN SPECTACULARLY PROVED TO BE TRUE by the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Jesus was beyond doubt the long-expected Messiah and the Son of God. There were repercussions. Many of the Jews who witnessed the miracle became disciples of Jesus (verse 45). Others returned in haste to Jerusalem in order to report to the Pharisees what had happened (verse 46). The reaction of the religious authorities was that of dismay.

The dilemma facing the Jewish authorities

Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this man works many signs".

gathered a council. An official meeting of the Sanhedrin was called. The Sanhedrin was the supreme Jewish law court. Under the Romans, the Sanhedrin had authority over all matters of Jewish law. A death sentence by them, however, needed the agreement of the Roman authorities.

The Sanhedrin (literally 'a council') was made up of seventy men plus the high priest as president. This followed the pattern given to Moses by God (70 elders plus Moses; see Numbers 11:16). In the time of Jesus the Sanhedrin was made up of Sadducees and Pharisees. Membership was by appointment, with a ceremony of the laying on of hands, the symbol of authority (Num 27:18-23). Another name for the Sanhedrin was 'body of elders' (Acts 22:5).

"What shall we do?" The Passover festival was near when Jerusalem would be filled to overflowing with pilgrims. From the point of view of the leaders of the nation, the last thing they wanted to hear was that Jesus had raised to life a man who had been dead for four days. It was the worst news at the worst time.

For this man works many signs. The reason they were at a loss was because there could be no doubt about the truth of all the many miracles that Jesus had done, including this one of raising to life Lazarus who had been dead and buried for four days. Can we doubt that they would have denied the truth of the miracles if they could? But they had been too many, and too widely witnessed, for them to be denied. Certainly the general public at large believed in them and enthusiasm for Jesus as the Messiah was growing rapidly.

If we let him alone like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.

The council had to look at the situation from a political point of view. The dilemma they faced was expressed. What are we to do about Jesus? If they were to continue their policy of doing nothing it would end in tumult and disaster for the whole nation. On the other hand they had absolutely no legal grounds on which to arrest Jesus and put a stop to him.

everyone will believe in him. A popular movement with Jesus as Messiah would not be a religious movement only, it would be political as well. The Pharisees and the people believed that the Messiah, the Son of David, would set up a political kingdom with Jerusalem as his capital. Indeed on Palm Sunday the crowds were to shout out that very thing. They were to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem as their king, the Son of David, the rightful heir to king David's throne.

the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation. If Jesus gathered too many followers, an armed rebellion against Rome would be inevitable. The Roman authorities would send an army to deal with the rebels. It would end in disaster for the Jews. Both the temple, 'our place', and the 'nation' would be 'taken away' that is to say destroyed (the same word is used in Matthew 24:39). Both these things were indeed to happen at the hands of the Romans forty years into the future in AD 70. The present threat to the nation was indeed a real threat. To their credit it was the public good that concerned members of the Sanhedrin most.

The counsel of the high priest

And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You



Jerusalem

know nothing at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish."

When no one could suggest a solution, the president of the meeting suggested one.

Caiaphas, being high priest that year, This was early in the year AD 30. Caiaphas was the high priest from AD 18-36.

said to them, "You know nothing at all". The rudeness with which Caiaphas spoke to his fellow counsellors was typical of the man. He was also both unscrupulous and cunning (Matt 26:3,4).

"Nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people". Caiaphas did not shrink from shedding innocent blood for political purposes. The council followed his lead. Together they walked down the pathway of expediency rather than that of principle and justice.

The prophecy of Caiaphas

Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for that

nation only, but also that he would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

The words of Caiaphas turned out to have a deeper meaning than he intended or understood. The apostle John gives us that deeper meaning. The words of Caiaphas unknown to himself were prophetic concerning Christ.

Now this he did not say on his own authority .. he prophesied. Caiaphas was led by God in the choice of his words. His very words were inspired by God, though truly his own. We have here an illustration of how the Scriptures came into being.

He prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation. Jesus came to save the Jews, not to destroy them. The cross opened the way of salvation for the Jews.

but also that he would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad... The Jews who lived abroad were called the 'diaspora' (the dispersion, the scattered ones). It was believed that the Messiah would gather back to the homeland the Jewish exiles who had been scattered among the heathen nations of the world. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit this belief was taken up by the apostle John and applied to Christ and his Church.

The cross opened the way of salvation for all the world (3:17; 12:32). Under the New Covenant Christ will gather to himself a people from the whole world. All who believe on him receive adoption into the family of God as children (1:12,13). These all, both believing Jews and believing Gentiles, will be gathered together from the whole world into the one Church of Christ (10:16).

The inspiration of the Scriptures

The Scriptures, down to the very last word, were fully inspired by God (2 Tim 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21), though written by men. Because the Scriptures were inspired by God they teach the truth, because God cannot lie. God, in his providence, has preserved the Scriptures in their purity in a remarkable way. We can trust our Bibles. They are reliable.

All the prophecies made in them have been fulfilled or are yet to be fulfilled

in the future. Nearly all the books in the Old Testament and most in the New Testament have prophecies in them. True prophecy is always fulfilled exactly as predicted. The Bible is unique in this way. The prophecies confirm that the source of the Scriptures is God, not man. Normally the prophets knew when they were being inspired by the Holy Spirit, even if they did not fully understand the meaning of what they were prophesying (1 Peter 1:10-12).

It can also be said that Christ is the substance of all Scripture (Luke 24:44).

The Bible is fully inspired in each and every word in the original. Errors that may have happened in the copying or in the translation of the Bible are so few and so insignificant that they do not affect any truth or doctrine taught in Scripture.

Because the Bible is one book, whose real author is God, there is a unity in the whole that could not have been achieved by the greatest cleverness of man. The Bible is unique. It stands head and shoulders above all other writings. Difficult scriptures are to be interpreted in the light of others that are more clear.

The prophecy begins to be fulfilled

Then, from that day on, they plotted to put him to death.

The advice of Caiaphas was agreed to by the council as a whole. The decision was taken that Jesus should die. It was official now. Careful plans were laid how to bring his death about.

Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with his disciples.

Jesus knew that he had stirred up a hornets' nest. He quietly withdrew to a safe place with his disciples, to wait for the coming Passover festival. The location of Ephraim is not known today. The wilderness of Judea was to the east and south of Jerusalem, but not to be confused with the ancestral lands of Ephraim were to the north of Jerusalem.

And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves.

The crowds were gathering from all over Israel for the Passover festival in Jerusalem. They gathered early in order to go through the ceremonial washings that fitted them to participate.

Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think – that he will not come to the feast?" Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where he was, he should report it, that they might seize him.

The hot topic of conversation was Jesus. The miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead was widely known by now, as was an order from the Sanhedrin. The order was that if Jesus were to appear in Jerusalem, his whereabouts must be reported to the authorities at once. The authorities could then pick their time and place to arrest Jesus. So the question on everyone's mind was whether Jesus would dare to come to Jerusalem or not.

They got the answer on Palm Sunday.



NEXT TIME WE CONTINUE
with the biography of Lee
Roy Shelton Jr,

who at a critical juncture in the
development of Chapel Library,
was joined by Michael Snyder an
experienced Jewish Wall Street

Stockbroker. The two were opposite in temperament but formed a
spiritual chemistry which proved dynamic.

Charismatics in Africa

By Conrad Mbewe

MANY EXPLANATIONS HAVE BEEN GIVEN FOR THE EXPLOSION OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT in Africa. Many have seen this as a powerful visitation of the Holy Spirit. Whereas there is probably more than one reason, I want to add my own observation to this for what it is worth. I do not refer to the old conservative form of Pentecostalism once represented by the Assemblies of God churches. I have in mind the current extreme form that seems to be mushrooming under every shrub and tree in Africa. How can one explain this phenomenon?

I think that one reason why the Charismatic movement in Africa has been like a wild bushfire is because it has not challenged the African religious worldview but has instead adopted it. It has simply baptised it with Bible verses and Christian words that previously meant something



Conrad Mbewe

totally different.

The African Spiritual Worldview

Let me explain what I mean. The African spiritual worldview consists of four tiers.

1. God
2. Angels and demons
3. Ancestral spirits
4. Human beings

It is because of this reality that Africans do not question the existence of God, as is the case with many people in the

Western world. To an African, God is there. He is the Creator and ultimate Governor and Benefactor of the whole universe.

Rather, in our spiritual worldview, although God is there he is very far away. Between him and us as human beings lie two layers in the spirit world. One is that of angels and demons (i.e. bad angels) and the other—which is even closer to us—is that of the spirits of the departed.

So, although God is a benevolent, loving, and caring Being, unless the beings that dwell in these two layers that lie between him and us are appeased, his blessings cannot reach us. It is, therefore, important to appease the ancestral spirits and defeat the demons. Only after that will God's blessings come upon us.

This is where in African traditional religions witchdoctors come in. They are the people with the mysterious power to break through these two layers. They tell us what we must do in order to appease the spirits of our forefathers. They also engage the

demons for us through their midnight trances, dances and incense.

So, a person who is beset with perennial illnesses, failing to get a job, failing to find a spouse or to have children, whose business is failing to thrive, etc., simply goes to the witchdoctor who alone has the key to look into the spirit world. He is told that it is either a deceased person or an evil spirit who is frustrating him.

Sometimes the enemy is a person who is alive. However, the reason why this living individual seems to have a mysterious hold over your life is because he has plugged into those two layers (of either dead ancestors or evil spirits) and you have not plugged in. With the help of a powerful witchdoctor you can outsmart him in those two layers, and the blessings of God can once again begin to flow into your life.

Whichever way, the power of the witchdoctor is not in explaining truth but in mindless frenzy. His grip upon the popular mind is his eerie mysteriousness and his capacity to

knock you out of your senses and then pronounce you delivered. Of course, this is never done by benevolence. You pay for his services.

The Charismatic Movement's Rendition

I do not mean to be unkind, but what the modern Charismatic Movement in Africa has done is to simply take this entire erroneous superstructure of African religious worldview and baptise it with wrongly applied Bible verses and Christian language. The only difference is that the layer of dead ancestors and evil spirits is now one hotchpotch of confusion. This is why the nonsense of demons becoming spirit husbands and wives, and wreaking havoc in marriages, is taken for granted! This is also why the heresy of generation curses has become so popular. In our minds bad luck can be passed on from that layer of dead ancestors.

In the African Charismatic circles the 'man of God' has replaced the witchdoctor. He is the one who oozes with mysterious power that enables

him to break through those two impregnable layers, which we lesser mortals cannot penetrate. So, when blessings are not flowing our way despite our prayers, we make a beeline to his quarters or his church for help. This explains the throngs in these circles. The crowds are not looking for someone to explain to them the way to find pardon with God. No! They want the 'man of God' to pray for them.

This also explains the stranglehold that 'men of God' have on the minds of their devotees in these circles. In the Evangelicalism of a former generation 'men of God' were primarily preachers of the Word of God, but in the new set-up they are primarily priests who enter the inner sanctuaries to bring down blessings to us.

This also explains why the answer to almost any problem that you take to these 'men of God' is 'deliverance' and 'breakthrough'. God wants to bless you, but you need to break through these impregnable layers before those blessings can reach you. The prayers of the 'man of God' will bring deliverance because at the

overnight prayer meeting or on the hill he will bring about a breakthrough. Who can doubt that these two phrases have become the key words of this movement?

This also explains why prayer in the modern Charismatic Movement in Africa is literally a fight. In fact, the people praying are called 'prayer warriors'. Although they begin by addressing God, within the first few seconds they divert from God and begin to fight the spirits in these impregnable layers with their bare knuckles. The language is almost always, 'We bind every unclean spirit in Jesus' name! We loose the Spirit that breaks the yoke in Jesus' name!'

The 'prayer warriors' scream at the top of their voices and chant the name of Jesus. They sweat as they put up a gallant fight with these spirits, straining every muscle of their beings until they prevail (so they think). That is when they reach through to God and his blessings begin to flow. This is nothing more than the African traditional religious worldview sprinkled with a thin layer

of Christianity.

Notice also how teaching is not the strength of the modern Charismatic Movement in Africa. Its chief proponents survive on a few, well-worn, tortured verses: 'By his stripes we are healed,' 'We are not the tail but the head,' from Denteronomy 28:13 etc. There is absolutely no effort to properly exegete Scripture. Rather, by chanting phrases and making people drop under some trance, in witchdoctor fashion, they are holding sway over the popular mind. The people love it and are paying for it! The 'men of God' are becoming stinking rich as the crowds just keep on coming.

This is not Christianity

What worries me is that this is so obvious that I am wondering why we are not seeing this for what it is. Or if we are, why we are not warning Christians against this? For the love of crowds, we have allowed African traditional religion to enter the church through the back door. Like the Arabian camel it has since kicked out

the truth. This is why I am not excited by the multiplication of churches—or ministries—under this banner.

We need to sound the warning that this is not Christianity. I know that this approach is filling our church buildings and classrooms to overflowing, until we have to multiply church services in order to accommodate the crowds.

But this is not Christianity. It does not lead to heaven. It is a thin coating over the religion that has been on African soil from time immemorial, which Christianity was meant to replace. We have lost the Christian faith while we are holding the Bible in our hands and using some of its words. This is really tragic.

The religion of the Bible does not teach a God who is so far away from us that unless some powerful humans come in and give us a breakthrough he cannot bless us. No! The Bible teaches a God who is near us. The only barrier between God and us is our sin, and Jesus has dealt with that by his death on the cross.

When we pray, we are in the throne

room of divine grace talking directly to God. We do not need to address demons and ancestral spirits before we break through to him. We do not need to chant and jump around like witchdoctors around their fire under the midnight moonlight. God is our heavenly Father. Only our sin can hinder our prayers.

Listen! Angels and demons exist, but they are not an impregnable spiritual stratum that needs someone reeking with anointing to break through their layer before we can access God's blessing. They are simply beings that either carry out God's commands or the devil's commands. They are not between God and us!

Finally, we do not need 'men of God' to lay hands on us every Sunday (or at Friday overnight prayer meetings, or on hills in the outskirts of our cities) in order for us to know God's blessings. There is only one Mediator between God and us—it is the man, Christ Jesus. All others are imposters and must be rejected with the contempt they deserve.

Psalm for singing today

THE INCREASING USE OF TODAY'S 'WORSHIP SONGS' RAISES SERIOUS QUESTIONS. Too often the content is thin, repetitive, emotional and far too self-centred and subjective. Many provide a diet of sugar and starch, are short on protein, vitamins and iron and are far from Scripture's 'psalms, hymns and spiritual songs'.

There is no question that we need to return to more biblical material in our worship, more intelligent content (1 Cor 14:15) and a higher standard of writing.

Here pastors must realise their responsibility for what happens in public worship. The selection of hymns and songs should not be left to the musicians, it is the pastor's duty, although he must of course consult the organist or pianist or those who provide the music. So he must have a wide knowledge of hymns and other worship material, old and new, in order to make a balanced and edifying choice. Any failure in training of individuals who are given leadership in public worship is to be deplored.

A return to singing the Psalms would help enormously. They are scriptural, rich in content concerning God, encourage prayer, serious confession of sin and heart-felt cries to God for revival, and many exemplify praise. Perhaps their use would oblige us to search the related Scriptures! We need Psalm versions that are faithful, clear and singable.

But not the Psalms alone. There are hundreds of good hymns in modern English, as well as modernised versions of classic texts by Watts, Wesley, Newton, Lyte and others. The neglect of these riches is puzzling and requires positive action by pastors today.

David Preston

Editorial note. We are organising the RT Website so that the section on Psalms can be immediately accessed.

UK

RECENTLY DAVID CAMERON HELD A RECEPTION FOR LESBIAN, gay, bisexual and transgender campaigners at Downing Street. They celebrated the passage of the Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Legislation. The Prime Minister spoke of his 'pride' and thanked them, saying: 'I want to thank all of you for the support that you've given, and for the pressure that you've kept up, for this really, really important change.'

During his speech the PM also expressed his intention to 'export' same-sex marriage around the world, especially to Commonwealth countries. He said:

'There's a lot more work to be done as Britain in the Commonwealth, talking to our Commonwealth partners about decriminalising homosexuality in various countries...

'I've told the Bill team I'm now going to reassign them because, of course, all over the world people would have been watching this and we've set something of an example of how to pass good legislation in good time.

'Many countries are going to want to copy this. I talk about how we've got to export more, so I'm going to export the Bill'.

Syria

It was only a few weeks ago, at the G8 summit in Northern Ireland, that David Cameron was demanding the removal of Syria's president, Bashar al-Assad, claiming that he had 'blood on his hands' and that it was 'unthinkable' that he could play any part in Syria's future. Yet it now seems increasingly likely that, far from being forced from office, President Assad will retain control of much of the country. Certainly the recent successes recorded by pro-Assad forces appear to have had a disastrous impact on the morale of rebel fighters, with hundreds deciding to take advantage of an amnesty offered by Damascus to surrender their weapons and give up the fight.

This remarkable turnaround is in part due to the unstinting backing Damascus has received from its allies, Russia and Iran, both in terms of military support and diplomatic cover – especially Moscow's refusal to sanction any UN resolution authorising intervention. The rebels' cause, meanwhile, has been undermined by constant infighting and attempts by Islamist militants to hijack the opposition agenda; the presence of fighters with links to al-Qaeda has been one of the main reasons why those who wanted to arm the rebels have grown more cautious.

However the situation continues to be volatile. Some in the north have recently had to flee homes and villages as Islamist fighters moved into their area.

Wales

From June 24 to 28 at a Revival Conference at WEST I was privileged to present five papers on the subject of revival. One of these was devoted to praying for revival using OPERATION WORLD. The newly built hall where we met was given to the seminary WEST (Wales Evangelical School of Theology) by a church in Korea with ten thousand members. There is a plaque declaring that this is in remembrance of the first martyr in Korea who was from Wales. The hall is equipped with electronic equipment so that I could use the OPERATION WORLD website. Maps were projected to large screens to enable a visual idea of the growing extent of Christ's kingdom in Africa, Asia and Latin America. I drew attention to the fact that during the development of OPERATION WORLD the compilers in South Africa organised weeks of prayer. The fundamental principle in these was that it is information which fuels prayer. Sessions began with information. Prayer ensued. Churches today are enriched when there is a weekly focus on a country presenting its needs and challenges. Information first: then intercession. Daily use of OPERATION WORLD is inspiring for individuals but for the assembly we need to be selective so as to

provide a coherent overall perspective of the nations of the world. With maps and factual information in, say, a seven-minute focus a congregation can be well-informed for prayer. Psalm 2:8, 'Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.'

Editor

Madagascar

Pastor Ken Brownell of East London Tabernacle has recently returned from ministry in Madagascar. His description of the situation there from a reformed and evangelical perspective is found in the present issue of the IFRB newsletter.

Belgium

Roland Eskinasi, formerly pastor of Goodwood Baptist Church, Capetown, has moved to Brussels where he is to take up the pastorate of the Brussels International Church.

Egypt

Egypt is the largest Arab nation and the centre of much Islamic thought and education. Developments there influence the Muslim World. The recent fall of Egypt's first Islamic government shows that there is an increasing disenchantment with Islam among educated and young Muslims. This is similar to Iran where disenchantment has increased over the last twenty years.

Romans - a Review

Paul's Letter to the Romans

Colin G Kruse. 627 pages plus 42 pages of prelims, hardback.

Eerdmans in the USA, Apollos in the UK.

IN THIS COMMENTARY COLIN KRUSE GIVES US THE benefit of fifty years of study. He has spent his life teaching theology in seminaries in Indonesia and Australia. D A Carson is the general editor of the Pillar New Testament Commentaries. In the series this one replaces the 576 page commentary on Romans by Leon Morris. Those who love the Romans letter will be happy to have both Morris and Kruse. In some areas Morris is superior.

Considerable value has accrued in this volume by the addition of 49 essays/expositions woven into the book on subjects that come out of the text. These add up to about 100 pages. *The Identity of the 'I' in 7:7-25*, eight pages; *The Nature of Homosexual Practice Condemned by Paul* is six pages and six on *All Israel will be Saved; Baptism in the Pauline corpus*, three pages; *The Righteousness of God*, two and a half pages, *Hospitality, Wrath of God and Israel's Jealousy* and most other additional notes have one or two pages each. To the 49

additional notes must be added a six-page discussion of the influence of the New Perspective (Sanders and Dunn) and a five-page exposition of the work of the Trinity in Romans.

The bibliography of modern authors runs to six pages. Hodge and Haldane are omitted. The modern commentators and scholars most interacted with and most cited are C K Barratt, B Byrne, C E B Cranfield, J D G Dunn, J A Fitzmyer, Robert Jewett, E Kasemann, D Moo, T R Schreiner and N T Wright.

In stating the purpose of Romans Kruse places first Paul's intention to present a clear statement of what the gospel is, and second, his desire for unity among the Jewish and Gentile believers in Rome. 'When the Christian Jews who had been expelled by Claudius in AD 49 were allowed to return, they found the Christian house churches in Rome had developed a form of organization quite different from the synagogal form they had when they had left.' (As his source he cites Wolfgang Wiefel's research into the origins of Roman Christianity).

On Romans 1:16,17 Kruse cites Cranfield as interpreting the righteousness of God in 1:17 as the status of righteousness that God bestows on those who believe. Instead

of pressing home that meaning Kruse goes on to discuss an alternative view which is abstruse. This early approach of concern with different ways that the text can be interpreted is the style followed through much of this commentary. It reaches absurdity in Romans seven when Kruse outlines no less than ten ways in which Romans 7:7-25 can be interpreted. One would need the imagination of Dr Who to come up with some of these alternatives. When the apostle wrote this chapter his intention was to express only one meaning, namely the plain meaning that he is testifying as a Christian who delights in the law in his heart but has a conflict when the law searches out the remaining sin in him. That sight makes him feel wretched which denotes an inward struggle for holiness. The experiences of Romans 7 and 8 are to be taken concurrently.

The Reformed Confessions, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Westminster Confession of Faith cite Romans 7:7-25 as descriptive of the spiritual conflict within the life of a believer, the same battle as is described in Galatians 5:16-17.

The eclectic approach is used again by Kruse in explaining Romans 11. There he describes six different interpretations. In his introduction under the heading Israel in the Purposes of God (p.29) he takes the view that Paul is declaring that

Israel's acceptance of the gospel will be as 'life from the dead' for the Gentiles. Jews converted here and there is one thing but Jews believing as a 'fullness' is another. Later in outlining the six different ways of taking Romans 11 Kruse changes his position and embraces the idea that 'all Israel' is the accumulation of believing Jews over a long period of time.

The eclectic style of exploring all the possibilities has some advantages but the power of truth is often lost in too many irrelevant details. I came to the doctrines of grace through reading Robert Haldane on Romans chapters one to three. I ignored those parts where Haldane refutes the liberals of his time because my concern was to digest the plain meaning of the Romans text. To be fair to Kruse he is concerned for that but concedes too much.

Kruse is rock solid on Romans one and the doctrine of sin. He exposes the fallacies of the New Perspective. He has unearthed some priceless quotes. There is one from Jacob Neusner, a prolific Jewish author. Neusner says that 'in regard to Rabbinic Judaism Sanders' book is so profoundly flawed as to be hopeless.' Yet there are some who thought that Sanders had laid an ostrich size egg. It is the size of a wren's egg.

This commentary is commended for its erudition and its easy-to-read style.

Same-Sex Marriage

This is an historic letter from Colin Hart the Director of the Christian Institute

IAM DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED, BUT UTTERLY RESOLVED to keep proclaiming the truth. Like us, you are no doubt deeply disappointed by the way the Government has pushed the same-sex marriage Bill through Parliament, and brushed aside concerns about civil liberty protections for people who believe in real marriage.

Have our prayers been ignored?

I have been praying earnestly that this Bill would not succeed. I have been asking God to keep the real meaning of marriage in UK law. I know that many of you have been too. Short of a miracle it now looks as though David Cameron will get same-sex marriage on the statute book.

It was right for Christians to pray against this Bill; it was the right thing to do and we can still pray that the nation would return to the correct view of marriage. Our society doesn't deserve God's mercy, given the way marriage and family values have been denigrated over the decades.

God sometimes allows, or hands over, a nation to go the wrong way so that it experiences the consequences of its actions. But even in this campaign there have been many mercies. Opposition has been very vocal. A very large network of pro-marriage supporters has been set up with C4M which will do much to expose those who want to punish others who believe in traditional marriage.

We are right to be concerned

Our nation is still very blessed by God in many ways. But we are right to be very concerned about the impact that redefining marriage will have on society and the church.

Even though we are deeply saddened and perplexed by the consequences of same-sex marriage, we need to remember that God is good. His ways are perfect.

We have been working very hard to uphold the principle of marriage, as established by God, for the good of everyone. We have been attacked, ridiculed and derided for believing in marriage. This Bill is a direct assault on the meaning of marriage, and I am convinced that the social cost will be extremely high.

Who initiated this Bill?

Unlike past gay rights issues, this Bill was not initiated by homosexual lobby groups. Polling of gay people shows that only a minority regard it as a priority. Many gay people are opposed to redefining marriage. Britain's leading gay lobby group, Stonewall, was less than enthusiastic about campaigning for same-sex marriage. No, this Bill was initiated by the Prime Minister in Downing Street as a political rebranding exercise, and it was only possible with the strong backing of the Liberal Democrats and Labour. Cameron could not get a majority of his own MPs to vote with him.

The leaderships of the three main political parties have been ranged

against us without any attempt to properly engage in the debate. Prolific use was made of whipped votes. Whatever the parties may say, these votes were far from free. The party machines have manipulated procedure and deceived the electorate. They refused all our attempts to hold on to real marriage, and ignored our calls to introduce adequate civil liberty protections. They have recklessly swept away the meaning of marriage without any attempt to properly engage in the detail.

The campaign has been important

There have been some positive changes to the Bill. The Government has made clear that opposing same-sex marriage is not, in itself, a hate crime. And the Government has accepted an amendment which widens the safeguards against churches and clergy being compelled to perform same-sex weddings.

In addition, the Government has put some very important things on the record – without going so far as to put them into the Bill. The Government has said, publicly, that no individual, organisation or school teacher should be penalised for their beliefs about marriage. It claims their beliefs are protected by law. We will hold them to that.

None of that would have happened if Christians had not been raising concerns.

Where do we go from here?

Our campaign to defend and promote religious freedom, including the freedom to act upon beliefs about real marriage, will continue long after this Bill has cleared Parliament. We

will make sure that cases of injustice are brought to light. We will help Christians to hold the Government to account.

I am sure we will be busier than ever in that regard. The redefinition of marriage is one of the biggest threats to religious freedom seen in my lifetime. But we have no intention of keeping our heads down. We are not going to let them push Christians into a corner.

The party leaders may think they are reflecting popular opinion, but they're wrong. They are only reflecting the values of the metropolitan elite in the Westminster bubble – including the values of those in the broadcast media.

They do not represent the views of the ordinary British voters. Time and again, the redefinition of marriage has proved to be a vote-loser. Christians, naturally, want to see politicians elected who respect their values.

Has marriage changed forever?

Parliament can't change what is hard wired into the nature of our existence. They could pass a Bill saying the moon is made of cheese, but it doesn't make it so. Marriage remains the union of a man and a woman, whatever the politicians say about legal marriage. Marriage predates British law, and it will carry on into the future. Jesus said marriage will exist right up to the end of the world, so we can take comfort in that (Matt 24:37-38).

Not everyone at Westminster has been dancing to the tune of the party leaders. Over 300 MPs and Peers have been exceptionally courageous in standing up for real marriage. In particular, I would like to thank David Burrowes MP who led the campaign

in the Commons, and Lord Dear who led the campaign in the Lords. There are many others who also deserve the sincere appreciation of Christians.

We should also remember that five national newspapers – who are more in touch with real Britain than the broadcast media – have repeatedly raised concerns about redefining marriage. Fleet Street has not given the Government an easy ride on this issue, far from it. That shows it's not just Christians who care about marriage.

Still much good that can be done

We should also remember the other good work being done by The Christian Institute. At the European Court of Human Rights, the Ladele case along with three similar cases did secure some important modifications on the way religious freedom is handled in the British courts. It's already bearing fruit.

Before that ruling from Strasbourg, the British Government said that the religious liberty of Christians was guaranteed because they were free to quit and find another job (or another business) if they were in difficulty because of their faith. But that argument was rejected by European judges, and it is beginning to have a positive impact in UK court cases.

The Strasbourg ruling was quoted helpfully in a recent case involving B&B owner Susanne Wilkinson. Although she lost her case, the Court of Appeal made some useful remarks that could improve the situation for others. It shows we are making progress.

It is important to remember that we can still win in Parliament on other issues, even though a majority may be against us on marriage.

We should remember the good work that was done when we successfully campaigned, with others, to reform Section 5 of the Public Order Act. The reform has yet to come into force, but when it does it will be a big help. We will continue to be vigilant against further erosions of gospel freedom.

And we should remember that Parliament has voted decisively against legalising assisted suicide in recent years. So there's still much that can be done in Westminster.

Summary

Yes, we are deeply disappointed about the way the same-sex marriage Bill has been pushed through Parliament. We are frustrated by the way the main political parties have refused to pass civil liberty protections. But we are determined to keep proclaiming the truth, and we should also remember the other good work that's going on.

Most of all, we should remember we have a sovereign God who reigns over all things. He is working out his purposes, he loves his Church, he delights to save, he has the ultimate victory, and we have utter confidence in his unfailing love. With his help, and your support, we will keep proclaiming the truth.

Yours in Christ,

Colin Hart

Director

The Christian Institute

Irving Steggles

MIKE MARS LAND, APC MANAGER FOR THE last 17 months, ceased formally working for APC on July 31st, but will continue to help occasionally. He is now involved in church planting in Potchefstroom. We are grateful to God for Mike's zeal and faithfulness as the first full-time APC Manager. Please pray for Blake Cassell from Kentucky, USA, who will take over as full-time Manager in November.

APCs are planned for October when Dr Grave Singogo of Zambia is the visiting preacher. For geographic locations see front inside cover. Theme 'Preaching Christ Crucified'.

21-23 October. Louis Trichardt, Limpopo Province. This is the vicinity of the Limpopo Bible Institute led by two American missionary pastors, Paul Schlehlein and Seth Meyers, who are fluent in the Shangaan language.

24-25 October. Shoshanguve. This is an area of immense population in the sprawling townships north of Pretoria, along with Ga Rankuwa, Mabopane and Hammanskraal. The first APC last year was well received by pastors. We also hope to attract men from downtown Pretoria.

29 October. Bloemfontein. South Africa's judicial capital is surrounded by townships. The second APC will

be hosted in one of the township churches. This is the second APC conference in a city of some significance. The first Reformed Baptist Church is being planted in the city by Richard Raven who trained at London Theological Seminary.

31 October, 1 November. Maseru, Lesotho. This is the first APC in this small mountain kingdom. There is considerable enthusiasm about the upcoming conference. This beautiful country is in gross spiritual darkness.

The visiting preacher in November is Rafael Banda of Zambia

12-14 November. Empangeni, Kwa Zulu Natal. Last year's first APC was most ably organised by Dr. Gavin Charlton.

15 November. Mseleni, Kwa Zulu Natal. In the far north the rural pastors have little English, so the expositions are translated into Zulu. Surgeon Dr. Victor Fredlund organises this APC.

18-10 November. Ermelo, Mpumalanga. This is a first-time APC in this area.

Donations can be gift aided and should be posted to Pastor Phil Roberts, 121 Hartshill Road, Hartshill, Stoke on Trent, ST4 7LU

E mail Phil@tentmaker.org.uk

New article 1

Mission Yesterday and Today.

WHEN WE CONSIDER THE GREAT commission the question arises: Over 2,000 years how far has the Church progressed in fulfilment of this command? 'Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" (Matt 28:18-20).

The responsibility to obey and fulfil the Great Commission lies with our churches. It is our responsibility.

The editor views missionary history in six epochs or paradigms. Lessons are drawn from each. The paradigms are as follows:

1. The apocalyptic paradigm of primitive Christianity
2. The Hellenistic paradigm of the patristic period 100 - 500

3. The medieval Roman Catholic paradigm 500 - 1517

4. The Protestant (Reformation) paradigm 1517 - 1700

5. The modern Enlightenment paradigm 1700 - 1970

6. The emerging ecumenical paradigm 1970 onwards

As we look back over Church history the vital principle must be observed that there is only one Church of those who are united to Christ by faith. It is one united family from beginning to end. God elects and calls out a people for himself in every generation (Ps 102:13). There are changes in emphasis but the same desire for the glory of Christ indwells believers from century to century. There are times such as the medieval Roman Catholic period, when the gospel was almost extinguished and when we have to search hard for those who exhibited the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. He, the Holy Spirit, is the Spirit of mission. In this study the idea that the 16th-century Reformers were lacking in missionary vision is corrected. The age of revivals is described as the means to quicken missions to the ends of the earth. Attention is drawn to the fact of alarming decline

(about 30 percent) in missionaries sent out from Western Europe over the last ten years. At the same time there is a major increase in missionaries being sent out from nations in the far East.

The purpose of this study is to inspire interest in and prayer for mission. It concludes with a warning that we must not be side-tracked by an incarnational model of mission which is not the same as the Great Commission.

With illustrations throughout, this article is 31 pages.

New article 2

This is a 16-page review by Dr Gary Crampton of a most important book by Dr R C Sproul with the title ARE WE TOGETHER? A Protestant Analyses Roman Catholicism.

Reformation Trust Publishing/
Ligonier Ministries; Hbk; 129pp;
£10.90; ISBN 978-1567692822

There have been two crises which have divided the Christian Church across the world. The first was the separation of the Eastern Church from the Western Church in 1054. There are an estimated 225-300 million Christians in the Eastern Orthodox Church worldwide. The umbrella of Eastern Orthodoxy includes the following churches: Serbian Orthodox; Orthodox Church of Finland; Russian Orthodox;

Syrian Orthodox; Ukrainian Orthodox; Bulgarian Orthodox; Romanian Orthodox; Antiochian Orthodox; Greek Orthodox; the Church of Alexandria; the Church of Jerusalem; and the Orthodox Church in America.

The second great division was the 16th-century Reformation in which Protestantism were separated from the Roman Catholic Church. All Western nations are affected by this. Over the last fifty years in Latin America there has been a massive drift away from the Roman Catholic Church to Pentecostal churches. Some have been puzzled by ECT (Evangelicals and Catholics Together) a small movement, mainly in America, which advocates unity of evangelical Protestants and evangelical Catholics. Does change within the Roman Church warrant such unity? The essential question is, What change has taken place? Has Roman Catholicism changed? There have been changes which are cosmetic. A lady can use cosmetics which can change her appearance but not her character.

R C Sproul focuses on central issues: Scripture, Justification, the Church, the Sacraments, the Papacy, Mary. His manner is fair and accurate and is not strident.

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Bound volumes are available: 71-90, 91-110 and 111-130 are £22 (\$35) each, 131-148 is £25 (\$40), 149-172 is £40 (\$60), 173-190 and 191-208 are £25 (\$40) each and 209-226 is £35 (\$56)

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