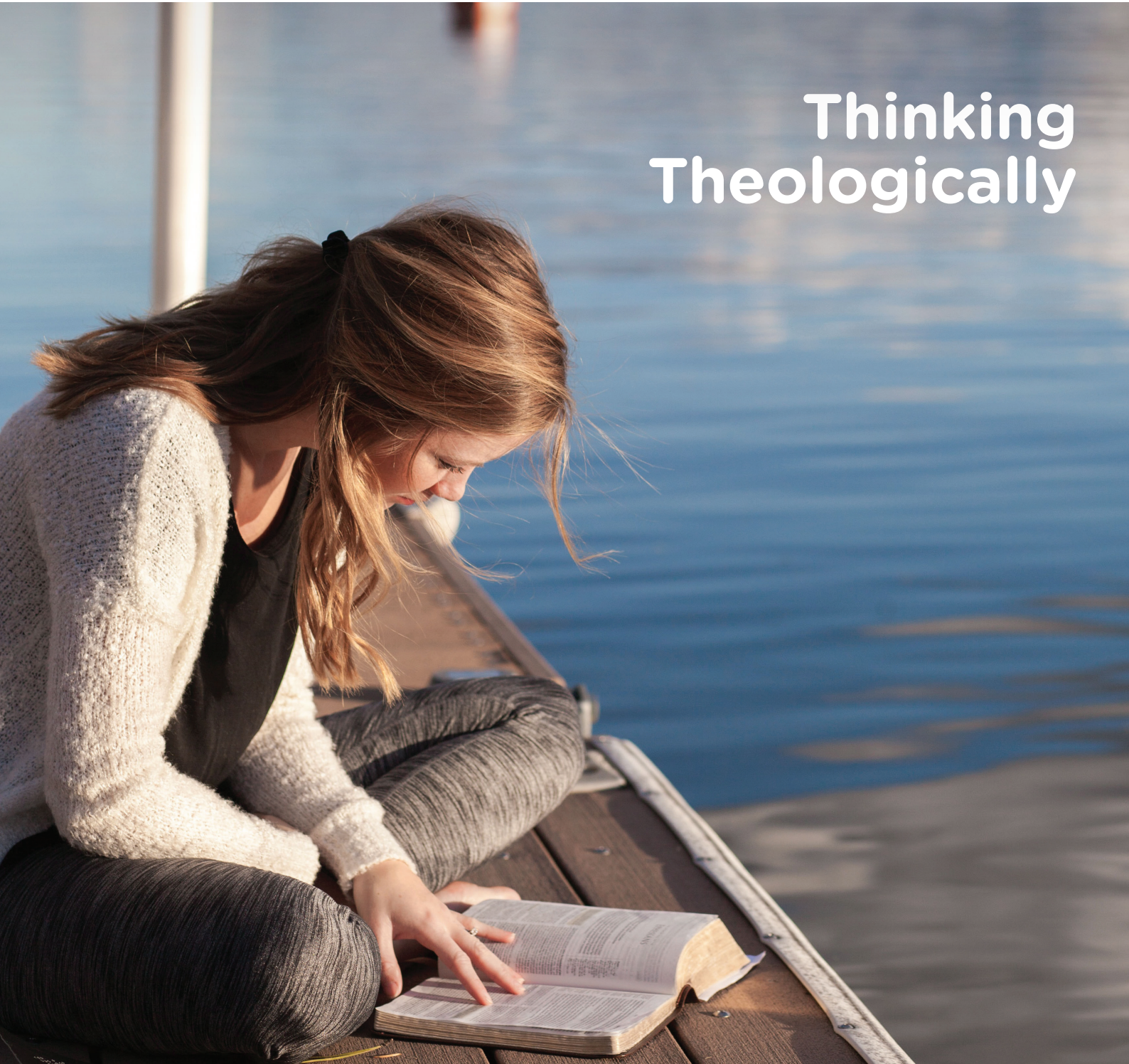


Thinking Theologically



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Thinking Theologically: what does it mean?

Mark Thompson / *Principal*

WHEN OUR GRADUATES TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY LEARNED AT COLLEGE, THEY OFTEN SPEAK OF LEARNING TO “THINK BIBLICALLY” AND TO “THINK THEOLOGICALLY”. WHAT DO THEY MEAN? WHAT, IF ANYTHING, IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO EXPRESSIONS?

“**T**hinking biblically” is about letting your thinking on any subject be shaped and disciplined by the teaching of the Bible. The apostle Paul’s great question, “What does the Scripture say?” (Rom 4:3; Gal 4:30) is our question. The Bible is the written word of God and as such it is the measure of truthfulness on every subject that it teaches. Because of this, we prize thinking biblically, we put effort into knowing the Bible, thinking hard about the Bible, even learning the languages in which the Bible was originally given to us. The Bible—Old and New Testaments—is uniquely God’s written word to us.

The expression “thinking theologically” does not stand in opposition to this. Instead, it points to the one who has given us Scripture, whose word it is. It reminds us that the Bible refers beyond itself to God. Thinking theologically means to relate all that we think and do to God himself. An old and tried definition of theology, going back at least to the medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas, is “thinking about God and all things in relation to God”. Because God is the Creator of all that is, everything stands in relation to him. That doesn’t mean that theology says everything about everything (though it seems some theologians have given it a go), but theology says the most important thing about everything: how everything, whatever it is, is related to the living God.

Of course, we can’t say that on our own authority. We can only speak of God because he has spoken to us. He created us to be his speech partners and to be



able to speak to others about him. Yet the God who created all things is greater than our created minds and thoughts. We don’t get very far trying to deduce the truth about him from the world around us or our own experience. What is more, he is always greater than our capacity to speak about him. We can never master him or comprehend him in this sense. So we are brought back to the Bible. The Bible enables us to speak truly about God even if we cannot say everything about God. Theological thinking is biblical thinking because without the Bible it is simply human imagining, but with the Bible it is following God’s own revelation of himself.

So thinking theologically is not about using strange and esoteric language, though theology has acquired its own share of technical vocabulary. Nor is it about analysing abstract ideas, though bringing various aspects of the truth about God and his purposes together sometimes involves explaining the connection using concepts and ideas. Theology is remembering that everything, absolutely everything, exists in the



presence of God and is accountable to God. Everything has its ultimate source in God, who orders even the distortions of the good world he made so that they further his eternal plan and purpose.

It makes a great difference when you think theologically about other people. They are created in the image of God, precious to him and to be valued because of that. God desires that all people should be saved and so no matter how frustrated we might be by the person standing in front of us, they must be seen as God sees them (lost outside of Christ) and treated as God treats them (with grace, love and compassion). Human beings are more than their biology, or their social networks, or their capacity to achieve great things. They are image bearers, related to God as creature to Creator. None of us can save ourselves. We all need God to save us.

It makes a great difference when you think theologically about ministry too. First and foremost, ministry is about ordering our own lives, and our lives together, in the light of what God has done for us. Peter spoke of ministers of the gospel as shepherds caring for Christ's sheep and needing to give account to the chief shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Speaking the truth, applying the truth to life in all its variety (comforting and challenging), and guarding against the error and misdirection thrown up ultimately by the evil one—all of this is involved in being a shepherd. But that ministry is always a gift and a privilege. It is not about achievement, theirs or ours, because God is a God of grace. It is not about us giving God something. We cannot give him anything because everything is his already. Everything we have been given, even every opportunity to speak of Christ and lovingly serve a

fellow human being, is entirely undeserved. So, we treat each other with grace because that is how we have been treated by God. The gospel brings about genuine humility because I am no better than anyone else. We have all been saved by grace—God's entirely undeserved favour—because of Jesus, his life, death and resurrection. We are all on the same level playing field.

At Moore College we want to think theologically and biblically. Our study of the Bible is not just a study of ancient literature but of the word of God through which God makes known himself and his purposes. More than that, our study of the Bible has a very practical import. It shows us how to live as those redeemed by Christ to be God's people, living joyfully and faithfully in relationship with the living God who has made his purpose and will known to us. God addresses his people with these words. That's why "thinking theologically" helps us to preach well. It helps us apply the Bible, drawing the line cleanly and sharply between the word of God and those who hear it.

I hope you will enjoy this issue of *Moore Matters* and find in it the fruit of good biblical and theological thinking.

Mark D. Thompson

Dr Mark D Thompson,
Principal



Does the Bible promote family values?

David Höhne / Academic Dean of Moore College

THERE ARE MANY AND VARIED WAYS IN WHICH THE BIBLE VALUES FAMILY, BUT IS THAT THE SAME AS SAYING THAT THE BIBLE PROMOTES FAMILY VALUES?

Like many aspects of ordinary life, our modern consumerist culture has a love/hate relationship with the idea of family values. So it is not surprising that Christians feel at home in the parts of society where the concept of family is loved and alienated from those parts where it is hated. We resonate with marketing images of happy family gatherings 'on the deck', in front of the TV, or piling into the new family car.

As often as not, these narratives focus on the intrepid mum, busy primary school-aged kids, a hapless dad, and a pet. So, the nuclear family easily becomes the focus of suburban church life with its 'cradle to grave' programmes offering inspiration for the intrepid and hope for the hapless.

Of course, for the *modern* family to have the broadest appeal and the approval of the Twittersphere, it should ensure that at least one of the parents has a brown face and/or that both parents have a beard. *These* blended families are contemporary versions of the nuclear ideal, whereas the more common blended approach must

admit to the possibility of tragedy or failure.

The global phenomenon of multigenerational families that spread vertically and horizontally in the same household admits too much complexity for the modern individual. Instead, the family of choice has increasingly emerged as a refuge from perceived alienation and as the bedrock of affirmation. In the family of choice, it matters little whether blood is thicker than water because depth of feeling and the freedom to be whoever you choose are unquestionable values. Again, not surprisingly, these scenarios or even a baptised version of them might linger on the edge of inner-city congregations, but overall, they make conservative Christians want to circle the wagons to protect the homestead.

When we consider what God values about family from the pages of the New Testament, we find comfort for the disturbed and some disturbances for the comfortable.

We start with the fact that the very idea of family flows out of God's way of relating to his creation or, as Paul describes it, 'I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.' (Eph 3:14-15) God is the origin of any creaturely group that we might recognise as family, but as in all things, most of those groups will experience his love as a blessing even if, at times, it also will mean wrath.

The most basic value of the family unit is marriage, and from the very beginning, as the Lord Jesus confirmed (Matt 19:4-6), this involves one man and one woman for life. The original two were intended by God our Father to enshrine the family of origin as fundamental to the pattern of humankind 'filling and subduing the earth', as the two grow together as *one flesh*—united but not uniform (Gen 1:26-28 & 2:15-25). Tragically, in the next chapter, we also read that the first man and woman envied God's determination for them and chose self-actualisation rather than dependence on Him. Consequently, they experienced how God values family as pain: 'Your desire will be for your husband, yet he will rule over you.' (Gen 3:16) Ever since, husbands and wives have lived with the constant struggle of whose flesh *the one* will represent most—his or hers.

Nevertheless, God's love for families cannot be thwarted, and so husbands and wives became parents with children—happily or (as Cain and Abel soon revealed) not. Yet, 'where sin multiplied, grace





multiplied even more' (Rom 5:20). From within these scenes of the first family failure and tragedy, our Heavenly Father perfected his will by making evil serve his good purposes: 'the Lord God said to the serpent, "I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."' (Gen 3:15) What ensues throughout the rest of the Old Testament story is the search for a child from the woman as both the natural pattern of family expansion and the hope for sinful humanity—beginning with Abraham and Sarah (Gen 12:1-4). Along the way, the *everyday* family values emerge in parental favouritism or sibling rivalry (e.g. Gen 27). Frequently, the dramatic accounts of long-awaited and hard-won offspring remind us that children are a gift from God—not a lifestyle option for consenting adults.

For that matter, the social significance of family is so much more than nuclear; God's value of families extends vertically and horizontally as time is measured in generations and space is the land allotted to tribe and clan—the children of Israel.

Finally, though, the child arrives as the ultimate gift from God, His one and only Son, born to a virgin by the power of God's Holy Spirit. With his coming, the theological value of family is revealed even as the creaturely pattern of it is relativised (though not erased).

For now, with the coming of the child called Son of the Most High, the long story of the children of Abraham is perfected even as God's intentions for the children of Israel are revealed. The institution of God's family is achieved in the resurrection of Jesus as the eternal and royal Son who, in the power of the Holy Spirit, establishes the church as the children of God. All who trust in Christ Jesus as Lord and saviour receive 'the Spirit of adoption' (Rom 8:15), and as such, they receive 'the right to become children of God...born, not

of natural descent, or the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God' (Jn 1:11-13).

The Spirit, writes Paul, 'testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children' (Rom 8:16) and the blessing of Abraham comes to those who trust the promises of Christ Jesus and receive the Spirit (Gal 3:14). From the perspective of the gospel, whoever has the Spirit of Christ is a child of Abraham, as much if not more so than the children of Israel, and becomes a child of God.

Now that the true Son is seated at the right hand of the Father, the value of family is revealed as husband and wife are joined together to witness to the promise that God our Father makes to the church through Christ (Eph 5:32). In the power of the Spirit the perennial struggle over whose flesh will make them one can be ceased.

Instead, husbands and wives can be so united in service to the Father that the husband seeks to emulate the self-sacrificial ministry of Christ to and for his wife even as she gives herself to be made holy and blameless before Him. However, while we must not despise it (1 Tim 4:3), the ordinary practice of marriage has no future (Matt 22:30), and the unmarried should consider themselves freed for the Father's service (1 Cor 7) as they are able. Where men and women give up their freedom in the Lord to marry in his service, children remain a gift from the Lord and should be raised accordingly (Eph 6:1-4). As with any of God's children, it is the fruitiness (Gal 5:22&23) with which freedom is exercised for others that God's family values, regardless of any other gifts and or talents that the Father distributes.

Over all these things we put on love in the form of generosity and forgiveness to ensure that God's value of family turns a house into a home.



Five misconceptions about Pastoral Consultation

Sarah Balogh / Head of Pastoral Consultation (Supervision) for Moore College's Centre for Ministry Development

Note: The terms 'Pastoral Consultation' and 'Pastoral Supervision' will be used interchangeably throughout this article. The Sydney Diocese has adopted the word Pastoral 'Consultation' rather than Pastoral 'Supervision' to move away from misleading management definitions.

I HAVE BEEN A PASTORAL CONSULTANT (SUPERVISOR) FOR ELEVEN YEARS, AND MANY THINGS HAVE HAPPENED OVER THAT TIME.

Eleven years ago, my clients were primarily Chaplains, and their ministries employed me to provide developmental, emotional, and ethical support. Fast forward to 2017, and the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse mandated that Anglican churches provide professional supervision (consultation) for all ministers. So, I now find myself consulting with ministers more than Chaplains.¹

Before we go any further, let us define pastoral Supervision/Consultation:

*'[Supervision/Consultation] provides an opportunity to reflect on our practice in light of our theology. It's time-out from the day-to-day stuff of what we do to think about why we do it.'*²

Pastoral consultation seeks to provide a regular and guided opportunity for a ministry worker to reflect on their practice through formative, restorative and normative activities.³

However, in my work with Moore College's Centre for Ministry Development (CMD) to develop Pastoral Consultation across the Diocese, I've noticed some



confusion about Pastoral Consultation.

Here are five common misconceptions:⁴

Misconception #1: 'Pastoral Supervision (Consultation) is about management and oversight'

The most problematic aspect here is the word 'supervision'. Supervision is associated with management and oversight in our language and culture.

However, Pastoral Supervision has nothing to do with management or oversight. Pastoral Supervision seeks to do the opposite of those things. Pastoral Supervisors don't 'manage' or provide oversight of their clients.

Instead, I have often heard supervision described as having 'SUPER' vision because it helps you see what is otherwise hidden and gain a broader perspective. Ministry supervision enables us to untangle our thoughts and emotions and facilitates a wider-angle view of our world.⁵

Therefore, the word supervision in this context is about perspective: processing new and different perspectives with the supervisee about issues they're facing.⁶

Misconception #2: 'Pastoral Consultation is Counselling'

Some see Pastoral Consultation as counselling. While Pastoral Consultants do use listening skills derived originally from the counselling profession, this is where the similarities end.

Pastoral consultants are not trained in therapeutic

1 'The term "pastoral" was chosen over "professional" to better reflect and distinguish the theological character of the practice and "consultation" over "supervision" to distinguish the work of the consultant from the supervision commonly provided by a line manager.' P. Lin. (May 2022) *Pastoral Consultation (pastoral supervision) Committee Recommendation*.

2 Courtesy of Mike Dicker, Principal of Youthworks College. <https://www.youthworkscollege.edu.au/youthworks-college-blog/the-how-and-why-of-pastoral-supervision>

3 The three activities which comprise the reflective practice undertaken in pastoral consultation can be described as follows: (a) the 'formative' activity is directive and educative, including both content and process such as guidance on handling difficult situations, skill development and developing self-awareness, offering different views, and encouraging growth and change; (b) the 'restorative' activity incorporates self-reflection and a supportive space in which to reflect through active listening, feedback, and encouragement, where the person is given the opportunity to share difficult feelings and focus on the impact on self; and (c) the 'normative' activity identifies and strengthens ethical and moral boundaries.

4 Broughton, G. *Journal of Anglican Studies* Volume 19, Issue 2, November 2021, pp181 - 192
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S174035532100022X>

5 See my article at <https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/ministry-supervision-what-it-is-and-why-your-ministry-needs-it/>

6 To this end, the Sydney Diocese has adopted the word Pastoral 'Consultation' rather than Pastoral 'Supervision' to move away from misleading management definitions.

interventions such as CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy), and Pastoral Consultation sessions do not follow therapeutic frameworks. Instead, the consultee brings an issue they have been struggling with in ministry, which becomes the session's focus.

Misconception #3: 'The Anglican Church is only doing this because it's mandatory'

While the Royal Commission has mandated Supervision for the Anglican Church, the Sydney Diocese's reasons for implementation go beyond mere adherence to this requirement.

A bigger concern for the Diocese is the welfare of parishioners and church workers. Recent research has found that Australian clergy are highly stressed, and 1 in 4 are likely to experience burnout.⁷ Pastoral Consultation has been found to enhance mental resilience and improves wellbeing.⁸ This translates into clergy wellbeing and supports gospel proclamation.

The Royal Commission also outlines that pastoral supervision should be a means of support that promotes healthy boundaries and culture over and above compliance.⁹ Furthermore, pastoral supervision can help ministers with all of their relationships.¹⁰

In other words, we want to protect the vulnerable among us, and we also want Pastoral Consultation to support and care to buffer the ever-increasing demands of the pastoral vocation. It's not just a box-ticking exercise.

Misconception #4: 'I don't have time for it!'

Ministry workers spend, on average, between 40 and 60 hours a week at work. An average of 50 hours per week is 2400 hours a year. Pastoral consultation is 10 hours of that 2400, which is 0.4 % of a minister's time.

More importantly, consultees have told me repeatedly that the time you invest in pastoral consultation will quadruple itself in the life of your ministry. Paul Grimmond, the Dean of Students at Moore College, who also receives ongoing pastoral consultation, sums this up nicely:

'I spent much of my early ministry life avoiding reflection because I was 'too busy'. In reality, my lack of reflection was a symptom of living in reactivity and not taking responsibility for proactively managing my life. Taking time out in supervision and stepping back to see the big picture has helped me to say no more often and to live a more thoughtful and healthily balanced ministry life.'

Misconception #5: 'I have ministry friends I meet up with, so I don't need a Pastoral Consultant'

I regularly hear this from ministers.

Yes, friendship is an enormous and essential blessing, especially friends who walk alongside us in our pastoral vocations and keep us accountable. Personally, I am thankful for the friends who have blessed my husband and I with listening ears over the years. Friends cheer us on, they have our backs, and mostly tell us what they think we need to hear to encourage us.

However, our friends' perspectives are limited because friends often shy away from asking us difficult questions if they feel it might affect the friendship.

Conversations with friends also tend to happen informally and are reciprocal. That is, they ask how you are, and vice versa. In a Pastoral Consultation relationship, there is no reciprocity. The Pastoral Consultant's job is to listen and reflect on your ministry situation. And should the Consultant feel they need to ask a difficult question, there is no friendship at stake.

Consultants are friendly and encouraging but are not our 'friends'.

The absence of formal friendship removes any conflicts of interest and changes the relational dynamic in a way that is helpful for ministry growth.

As Mike Begbie, Rector of Hornsby Heights Anglican, says:

'The wonderful thing I've experienced in pastoral consultation is that I feel free to share with honesty and vulnerability because my Consultant isn't a congregation member, family member or friend. The only hat they wear is to help me, and the only complexity in the room is the one I've brought in with me.'

In summary, we need friends, but friends and Pastoral Consultants perform different functions. We are wise to observe these differences. Pastoral Consultants can bring a broader perspective, observational skills, curious questions, and formalised care.

I pray that your understanding of what Pastoral Consultancy provides has grown as you read through this article. CMD is excited to be a leader in this new challenge to provide care to parishioners and ministers alike.



7 Francis, L.J.; Kaldor, P.; Shelvin, M.; and Lewis, A. (2004) "Assessing emotional exhaustion among the Australian clergy: Internal reliability and construct validity of the scale of emotional exhaustion in ministry (SEEM)". *Review of Religious Research*, 45(3), pp269-274

8 Bucknell, K. (2019) "The Moderating Roles of Self-Reflection and Self-Insight in the Relationship Between Religious Coping Methods and the Resilience of Australian Protestant Ministers"

9 *Royal Commission Final Report*, Vol. 16, Book 3, pp364-365.

10 *Royal Commission Final Report*, Vol. 16, Book 3, p365.

Interview with Susan An – Moore College's new Dean of Women

Susan An / Dean of Women at Moore College

SUSAN AN IS THE DEAN OF WOMEN AT MOORE COLLEGE, AND AN ALUMNA OF THE COLLEGE

Moore Matters: How did you become a Christian?

Susan An: I was born into a church-going family, but we did not always go to Bible-teaching churches. I had many questions about God and the Bible, but these were never really answered. I was told to 'pray my doubts away', which never worked! Through God's grace, we stumbled onto a Bible-teaching church when I was a teenager. My youth group leaders there didn't tell me to 'pray my doubts away' but continued to open up the Bible to answer my many questions. I realised, then, that whether or not I became a Christian depended upon what I thought of the Bible. Was it man-made or written by God?! Finally, it all came together when I heard a talk on Genesis 38 at Easter Convention one year on the sovereignty of God. I became convinced that only God could have written such a cohesive book, spanning many centuries, involving so many people. Once I believed that God had written the Bible, I had to accept all the truths within it: that Jesus died for my sins on the cross, and that to attain eternal life, I needed to repent and give my life to him.

MM: What's one of the best things about being a Christian?

SA: One of the best things about being a Christian is the knowledge that we are more precious and more valuable than we could have ever imagined. We were deliberately



created by a loving God who wanted us. We are so precious that even when we walked away from God, he had a plan to win us back. We were so loved that the Creator of the universe sacrificed his only Son to redeem us. In a world where people try to find meaning through their achievements and self-belief, this message is more empowering and refreshing than anything else! This knowledge is so effective in my fight against self-doubt.

MM: What's one of your struggles with being a Christian?

SA: One of my struggles with being a Christian is to let God's voice be the loudest in my life. The world can be a pretty distracting (and loud!) place, and I am not always aware that I've let the world drown out what God is saying. I'm

very thankful that God's provided me with his Word, prayers and incredible Christian friends and family around me to steer me back to God in those times.

MM: What are you looking forward to here at Moore?

SA: I am looking forward to meeting with godly men and especially women who have stepped up to be trained to serve God and his people. I am looking forward to getting to know them better, doing life with them, and being able to share any wisdom I can from my own experiences of being in vocational ministry. I love seeing God's people grow in their relationship with God—seeing their love for God deepen, being sacrificial in how they love Him and others, and becoming more



like Jesus. Moore is a great place to witness this happening!

MM: How has your background shaped you as a person? How has it impacted your faith?

SA: I was a speech pathologist before I was in ministry, giving me a keen interest in communication. If I have a communication breakdown with someone, I have an avid interest in analysing the interaction and where it went wrong! It also helped me to realise that whilst I enjoy helping people, helping to mend their communication and health is only temporary. I longed to tell people about the one thing (or person) that could heal their souls for all of eternity. I still have a keen interest in health, but whenever I meet a medical missionary, I have an itching to join them on the mission field! I also worked a lot with older people and was particularly unsettled by witnessing people struggle with dementia. This experience gave me the topic for my Issues in Theology paper in my fourth year. I ended up thinking about the soteriology of people with dementia. It was wonderful when I discovered that our salvation is not contingent upon our memories but on God's never failing, unchanging and timeless memory.

MM: What have been some of the challenges you've seen in ministry?

SA: The world continues to become increasingly hostile to Christians. It has been a challenge to train and equip the members of our church to stand firm on their beliefs, and to do that wisely. Most of us have been encouraged to be honest and

transparent in our Christian lives. But I think the time has come when we need to be wise in our honesty and transparency. Working out what it looks like to be 'wise as serpents and innocent as doves' (Matt 10:16) has been challenging and will continue to be so.

MM: What is one of the most powerful Christian relationships you have had, and why?

SA: I have been fortunate in that my biological sister is also my sister in Christ. We became Christians around the same time, so we have journeyed Christian lives together. She has spoken to me of Jesus' love in times where I doubted; she has spoken God's truths in times when I strayed; and she has urged me to keep running the race when I found the Christian walk difficult. We have prayed together, learned God's word together, laughed and cried together. To have such a mature sister in Christ within my own family, someone who knows me so well and can speak the truth in love to me, has been invaluable. I consider her to be one of my most precious gifts from God.

*Dean
-of-
Women*



Interview with Tom Habib

Tom Habib / Lecturer in New Testament

TOM HABIB IS A MOORE COLLEGE ALUMNUS, AND A NEW LECTURER IN NEW TESTAMENT AT MOORE COLLEGE.

Moore Matters: How did you become a Christian?

Tom Habib: I grew up believing that there was a God, but it wasn't until a friend of mine invited me to the local Youth Group that I started to read the Bible for myself and discover who Jesus is. Several moments in my teenage years led me to trust Jesus. I remember reading through Isaiah 53 at my first Youth Group camp and being struck by how Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus's death for my sins. Another time, I was convicted while reading Mark 8:36, 'What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?'

I realized that up until then, I had been trying to 'gain the world', and from then on, I wanted to live for Jesus.

My first year of Uni was important for me in my growth as a Christian. I had gotten into a great routine of reading my bible and praying and saw the Spirit working in me to change me. I was strongly convicted of my sin as I read through 1 Peter, particularly God's call for me to 'be holy, because I am holy' (1 Pet 1:16). At the same time, I gained wonderful assurance in my salvation by reading through the book of Galatians and found a deep joy in knowing that I was a son of God (Gal 3:26).

MM: What's one of the best things about being a Christian?

TH: That God's mercies are new every morning (Lam 3:22-23). There is always a tension as a Christian between the life you want to live and the life you are living now. J.I. Packer often wrote that growing as a Christian means growing *downwards*, as we grow in humility and repentance. The wonderful thing about being a Christian is that the more we become aware of our sinfulness, the more we become aware of God's incredible grace to us in Christ.

MM: What's one of the struggles you find in being a Christian?

TH: Knowing the joy of communion with God, it is always hard when your heart wanders from him, and you feel distant or cold. This can be a challenge for those in ministry or theological education. Charles Spurgeon encouraged students to whisper to their inmost soul, 'What a dreadful thing it will be for me if I should be ignorant of the power of the truth which I am preparing to proclaim.' Each day, I struggle to be rich toward God and find deep communion with him in his Word. Those days when I feel cold and distant toward God are the hardest, but I am constantly reminded to put my hope in my Saviour and my God, for I will yet praise him (Psalm 42:5).



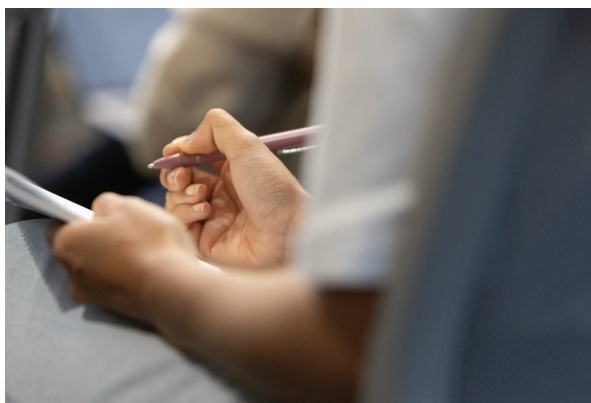


MM: What are you looking forward to here at Moore?

TH: My family and I are looking forward to getting alongside students and sharing our lives with them. We love that we learn in community at Moore and are keen to get to know everyone and grow together in our love for God. I also look forward to opening God's word with students this year and learning together. In the first semester, I will be teaching John's Gospel, my favourite (if you can have a favourite) book of the Bible. I've also heard amazing things about the food at Moore College, so I am definitely looking forward to lunch every day.

MM: How has your background shaped you as a person? How has it impacted your faith?

TH: With a last name like Habib, people have often wondered about my family background. My mother is Australian, and my father is Egyptian, immigrating to Australia when he was a teenager. Though growing up in a very Aussie, western home, my background has helped me in my ministry to connect better and engage with people from different cultures. It has helped me understand the importance of family, time, and food in many cultures and has occasionally opened doors for speaking about Jesus.



MM: What have been some of the challenges you've seen in ministry?

TH: I spent a large part of my ministry in the South-West of Sydney, which came with its particular challenges. We were under-resourced and reaching out to a community that was culturally very different to many people in our church. One of the challenges we faced was remaining patient and faithful in teaching the word while seeing little growth. When you leave college, you have so many hopes for how God might use you, and it can be discouraging when you don't see immediate fruit from your labours. It can be difficult not to tie your identity to how your church is going and to simply remain faithful to preaching the word and relying on God in prayer.

Another challenge we faced was finding ways to reach out and engage with people from other cultures. We found that certain cultures had formed very tight-knit communities that were largely closed to others. This was even more difficult when their religious background made them suspicious of Christians.

MM: What is one of the most powerful Christian relationships you have had, and why?

TH: Probably one of the most important Christian relationships I have had is with my minister from my home church, who was also my MTS trainer.

'Powerful' is not really the word that comes to mind because it is a fairly ordinary/normal relationship. Still, one of the things he taught me was to see the extraordinary in the ordinary—to see God powerfully at work in the mundane, day-to-day elements of my ministry and Christian walk. He helped me to grow as a Christian, and his calm, faithful, godly example has always been a model for me in my ministry.



Chaplaincy with the Defence Force

Tim St Quintin / College Alumnus

Photo Credit: Shutterstock.com / IOIO IMAGES

TIM ST QUINTIN IS A MOORE COLLEGE ALUMNUS, WHO IS ALSO AN ARMY RESERVE CHAPLAIN. MOORE MATTERS SPOKE TO HIM ABOUT THIS MINISTRY.

Moore Matters: Tim, you're a Defence Force Chaplain, serving with the Army. What does a Chaplain do in the Army?

Tim St Quintin: Army Chaplains are ministers of religion who are commissioned as Army Officers. They have a unique role and opportunity to provide a spiritual presence, religious ministry, pastoral support, advice to commanders, and to walk alongside those we're serving with.

MM: So Army Chaplaincy is focused on caring for the soldiers they work with?

TSQ: Yes, although not just the soldiers but their families and the wider Defence community. Occasionally it includes those beyond the Defence community

such as the communities impacted by bushfires and floods.

MM: What made you want to do Army Chaplaincy? What was your journey to get there?

TSQ: I was in the Army as an Officer before going to Moore College and into ministry. So I understood the context and had a concern for Army personnel. And I was then given the opportunity to serve as an Army Reserve Chaplain alongside my church-based ministry.

MM: So you've experienced military life and decided Army Chaplaincy was an excellent way to share the gospel, based on your new skills gained through Moore and ministry?

TSQ: That's right. The majority of our Chaplains don't have previous military experience. And so, for them, it's cross-cultural, at least in the beginning. But prior military experience shortcuts that cross-cultural element, as we're ministering in a more familiar environment.

MM: What are the gospel opportunities of doing Army Chaplaincy, particularly opportunities that you've seen and experienced?

TSQ: The nature of the Army's work is that our nation asks our soldiers to operate in some of the worst environments, in the darkest times, at great risk, and we witness the very best and worst of humanity and life in a fallen world. This raises questions that a typical Australian's worldview cannot accommodate. Yet the gospel offers hope, meaning, comfort, and a way to make sense of this fallenness.

Being a Chaplain in a unit provides opportunities as you walk alongside people through the ups and downs of their lives and of the experiences they face in their military service. Every second conversation I have starts with, '*Padre* [Chaplain], *I'm not religious, but...*' and our presence there prompts people to have conversations that touch on the spiritual. As you live life and go through hardship with people, people seek you out with personal

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and professional challenges. When they're looking to get married or have a funeral for their stillborn child, and they think, *I don't know anyone connected with the Church, but I know the Padre*, there are those opportunities.

Other opportunities I've had include leading the prayers at the dawn service on ANZAC Day at the Cenotaph at Martin Place. There are many official events, such as Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, and other significant military events, where there's still a welcome place for a Christian voice.

As a Chaplain, I connect with a whole group of people who would never walk through the doors of my church on a Sunday. I get to do life with them and speak into their life with the gospel perspective. Defence sees the value in having religious ministers serve those of all religions and none within Defence.

MM: So Defence opens the door for Chaplains like you to provide—they probably would say something like

a spiritual perspective—but to share the gospel?

TSQ: Yes, although those opportunities don't often include sitting down and doing Two Ways To Live with people. Our mission involves serving by our presence: we don't have a mandate to proselytize.

But as we share our lives and walk alongside people, we have opportunities that may lead to gospel conversations.

MM: What challenges have you found?

TSQ: There are challenges, often paired with opportunities. There are the challenges of spending time away from family, church, and other support. But some of the best ministry occurs when you're living alongside men and women in the Army, whether in training or on deployments.

There is also the challenge of being a Christian voice in a pluralistic environment. While I've not found many people who are overtly hostile to Chaplains, there are some.

You're also constrained by the chain of command, your Commanding Officer, and the freedom they might give you. Some commanders have different views on how the Chaplain should operate, which affects your ministry.

MM: Who should think about becoming a Defence Force Chaplain?

TSQ: There are some basic requirements for Defence Chaplaincy, such as being an ordained minister. You must also meet the physical and health requirements and pass the officer selection board.

But I think the people who make good Chaplains are those willing to love the people that God has given them, at personal cost, and continue that ministry with their eyes fixed on Jesus as their motivation.

If people want an easy ministry, don't come. Defence Chaplaincy is missional. It's stepping out of your comfort zone, pushing yourself physically and emotionally or being in an unfamiliar environment. But people who thrive in those situations will have a valuable ministry.

MM: What might be some good first steps for people to explore Defence Chaplaincy?

TSQ: Speak to someone who is serving as a Chaplain. I'm happy for people to contact me (timothy.stquintin1@defence.gov.au). There's also a Defence Anglicans website where you can get in touch (www.defenceanglicans.org.au/). Or you can contact Defence Force recruiting directly.





Centre for Christian Living appeal

Akos Balogh / External Engagement Manager

IS LOVE REALLY ALL YOU NEED?

2 PETER 1:7



THE OTHER DAY, I WAS SIGNING UP MY 13-YEAR-OLD FOR SOCCER VIA AN ONLINE FORM, AND REACHED THE OPTIONS FOR SPECIFYING THEIR GENDER: ALONGSIDE 'MALE' AND 'FEMALE', WERE 'NON-BINARY' AND 'PREFER NOT TO SAY'

This was for a kids' sports team. Such options would have raised parental eyebrows five years ago. A decade ago, they would have been unthinkable. But that is our world today: we are living through a moral revolution, particularly in the areas of sexuality and gender.

As a result, Christians find it increasingly tricky to navigate the moral complexities of our post-Christian world. Things once considered immoral are now celebrated, and things once regarded as good are condemned. Hence, many Christians feel a sense of cultural and even moral vertigo. What should you do when your child's school (or your secular workplace) insists on holding Wear It Purple days to support the LGBTIQ community, when your friend tells you she is trans, or when your chronically ill neighbour talks about wanting to be euthanised?

Christians need guidance in these novel and challenging areas. This is why the Centre for Christian Living (CCL) at Moore College exists: to bring biblical ethics to everyday issues—issues that Christians like you and me are facing more and more—issues from religious freedom to virtue signaling, from cultivating Christian virtues to human sexuality.

The stakes are increasingly high: the moral revolution is making people (Christians included) more confused about ethics, as we're now forced to confront issues our forebears couldn't even imagine (e.g. 'non-binary' gender). Yet we Christians must make sense of these issues to navigate our changing world in a God-honouring way. If we neglect to do so, we risk feeling bewildered and overwhelmed by these changes, we risk becoming angry and bitter at our changing world, and we risk getting sucked in by its new morality, which sees much of the Christian worldview as unloving and evil. The younger generation are particularly susceptible to these things.

On the one hand, moral clarity breeds confidence in God's good design for humanity and our lives. This helps Christians keep trusting in our great God. On the other hand, if we gain clarity about our morally

THE GLORY OF TRUE HUMILITY



VIRTUE IN AN AGE OF VIRTUE SIGNALING



SELF-CONTROL IN AN ERA OF SELF-ACTUALISATION



THE POWER AND PAIN OF PERSEVERANCE



confused world, we'll be more likely to hold fast to the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3), a truth that is as beautiful and good as it is unpopular.

The Centre for Christian Living aims to support churches and Christians in their growth and understanding of Christian ethics. Led by Moore College Theology and Ethics Lecturer, Rev Dr Chase Kuhn, the Centre deals with some of the thorniest issues confronting Christians today by bringing in some of the sharpest Christian thinkers in the theological and ethical space to present at our public events, speak on our podcast and publish resources on our website. Furthermore, it does this all for free.

This is why I ask you to consider giving to the Centre for Christian Living. By supporting the Centre, you're helping Christians across Australia and the world navigate our morally confused culture, and thrive as God's people. Your gift will allow the work of the Centre to reach more Christians in need of biblical clarity and confidence, to grow and support Christians and churches in these challenging times, and to nurture the next generation of Christian leaders, thinkers and writers in our Moore College student team.

Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible. To find out more about the Centre, visit ccl.moore.edu.au. Please give to the Centre for Christian Living, to help Christians navigate our confused culture and thrive as God's people. To give to the CCL, please visit ccl.moore.edu.au/donate, or scan the QR Code below:



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Moore Matters is the newsletter publication of Moore Theological College

Principal of Moore College » The Rev Dr Mark Thompson

Editor » Akos Balogh

Photography » Anna Zhu, Moore College students

Art and Design » Lankshear Design

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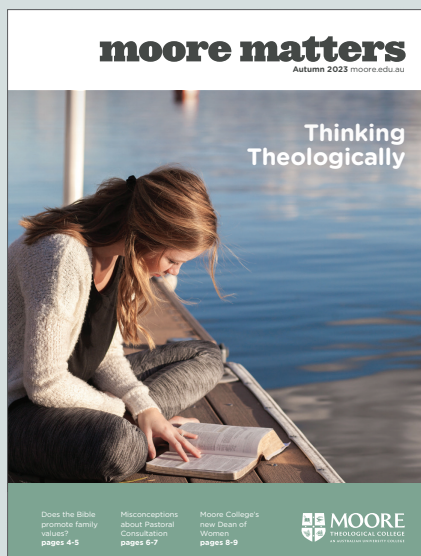
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About Moore College

Moore College exists to train men and women to take the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. Since 1856, more than 5,000 students have graduated from the College and have been sent out by God. Moore College has equipped men and women to serve in over 50 countries across the World. Today over 3,500 students are enrolled in our courses globally.

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THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
AN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

2023 OPEN EVENTS

Open Week 1	15 – 19 May
Open Night	15 May
Open Week 2	21 – 25 Aug
Open Night	21 Aug



moore.edu.au/open

