

Editorial

Remarriage and Church Law

The meeting called to discuss the remarriage of divorced persons was in every way a personal triumph for the Archbishop. In a situation that he clearly found difficult, with great grace and not without genuine generosity, the Archbishop set out his own views and handled questions from the floor. His categorical statements that he was not enquiring as to what clergymen were doing, and not going to conduct inquisitions, but, was deeply concerned about the possibility of a rift over the issue, reflect the tenor of his presentation.

However, it was also a triumph in another way. As was the Archbishop's stated intention, the legal and pastoral questions were in the end put to one side (although the latter were the predominant sort of questions asked), and the meeting ended up talking about the remarriage of divorced persons entirely on the Archbishop's terms. Within that framework his Grace stated that Synod should consider setting up a Commission to draft a suitable ordinance to clarify the situation. It was clear that the meeting generally concurred with that proposal.

No Commission, No Ordinance!

But the Church Record, for reasons we will now put forward, asks Synod to treat the Archbishop's proposal with great care. In short, at this stage, we strongly suggest that there should be no Commission set up to draft an ordinance regulating the remarriage of divorced persons. For this we advance two major reasons.

"Consensual Compact"

First, to thus pass an ordinance on the subject is to endorse the basis of the Archbishop's present position, "consensual compact", as being true; and thereby potentially open up a Pandora's box.

Plainly, from the questions asked, this "consensual compact" was for most men a new expression. His Grace defined it as the voluntarily agreed rules of association that existed in the minds of Australian Anglicans, especially their bishops, from about 1830-1860. It is, the Archbishop pointed out, a largely undefined body of material that one has to hunt-out from obscure documents and ancient letters. On the basis of this "consensual compact", his Grace argued, the bishops of Sydney diocese has since 1982 ruled that all proposals for remarriage of divorcees be decided by the Archbishop.

We must await the release of the full text of the Chancellor's advice before we can speak at length about "consensual compact", but, for the time being certain things can be said by way of historical perspective.

Formation of Synod 1866

From about 1830 the Church of England was no longer the "established church" in N.S.W. and could no longer look to the Government to act for it. The full meaning of this situation did not really come home to the church until the 1850's when certain cases heard in the English courts concerning the church in South Africa made it plain that we were operating under a loosely defined form of voluntary assent to certain basic creeds and practices — e.g. the Act of Uniformity, use of the surplice, and so on. To regularise this situation the Australian churches started to form Synods as the legally recognised body competent to govern the church and to give expression to and modify the "consensual compact". Victoria, or Melbourne, formed its Synod by Act of Legislative Council in 1855; Sydney followed in 1866.

From 1866 onward Synod has been the only legally competent body to make new church law in Sydney. Any new decisions by bishops since then, unless through Synod, are *ultra vires*. To put it in the blunt terms of the lawyers, all archbishops of Sydney, who since 1892 have ruled that cases of remarriage of divorced persons must be decided by their office, have been acting beyond the law. As the A.C.R. pointed out in its issue of July 25, there is no ordinance governing the issue. Synod has never ruled on the matter.

English Law applied till 1866

But, it may be objected, the 1892-1983 practice of our Archbishops may be based on the practice of the church under the "consensual compact" of 1830-1866. It may be, but it is up to those taking that position to prove it, and not just assert it.

The probability, however, is otherwise. It is clear that until 1866 it was widely believed by our bishops that English church law, although not binding on the State, was nevertheless ecclesiastical law here.

As the 1981 report from the Australian General Synod on Canon Law says "it must be pointed out that although theoretical hindsight may attribute a consensual compact to New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, the great probability is that the churchmen of the nineteenth century may well have considered such an idea abhorrent and insisted that they were members of a church by law established" (page 51).

Bishop Barker is a case in point. So convinced was he that English law was ecclesiastical law here that he refused to allow the Synod to make an ordinance introducing the "Shorter Services Acts". Why? Because, Bishop Barker said, since the act was law in England, it therefore was already law for the church in Sydney. He deemed English ecclesiastical law automatically to apply here. After Bishop Barker's departure, the Synod in 1883 immediately passed an ordinance to make the good bishop's personal introduction of the Shorter Services Act legitimate!

As we pointed out on July 25, the 1857 English divorce act which gave the parish clergyman, not the bishop, the discretion to remarry all divorcees, (to treat them on a par with first time marriages), would have applied in N.S.W. as ecclesiastical law. When the state in 1892 passed an act governing civil divorce, it was, in effect, only catching up with the English situation, and local ecclesiastical law from the 1857 English act already pre-existed to deal with the remarriage of divorcees.

Archbishop has arbitrated

To sum up, concerning the question of how divorced persons are to be treated in the matter of remarriage, prior to 1866 the precedent, the source of recognised authority in N.S.W. was the English act of 1857 which gave the local minister the power to make the pastorally relevant decision. Since 1866, the only legally competent body able to make rules is the Synod. The rules drawn up by the Archbishop in 1892, and reportedly followed by all Archbishops since then, are *ultra vires*.

It is for that reason that, in spite of his protestations to the contrary, our Archbishop is arbitrating between views on the law. There is absolutely no reason to doubt that his Grace sincerely believes he is not arbitrating, (which he has publicly stated is not in his realm to do so), but the fact is that since the contrary opinion on the subject puts forward a case for the illegal nature of the situation since 1892, he is deciding in favour of one view over another.

Hence, we advise utmost caution in formation of a synodical Commission to draft an ordinance governing the matter. Its formation would, in the present context, endorse an illegality, and potentially open up the Pandora's box of "consensual compact". If a loosely defined "consensual compact" becomes an authoritative source of church law, then who knows, on the present understanding of it, what may be dragged up from obscure letters and documents to threaten that freedom which is essential for the parish man to have if he is to directly minister the gospel to the hearts and minds of his people. Without the Chancellor's advice before us it is impossible to speak in more detail about this issue.

Commission too Legalistic

The second broad reason for not forming a Commission in the presents circumstances is that a Commission, by its very nature, is unlikely to just pass an ordinance affirming the present right of every minister alone to give dispensations in the remarriage of divorced persons in accord with the pastoral situation and the teachings of Holy Scripture. Its only likely effect is to limit the liberty for pastoral decisions that the minister already has.

By its very nature, a Commission is likely to draw up rules, developing a casuistry which will in detail declare when a remarriage of a divorcee may, or may not, be granted. Given the Alice-in-wonderland prospect of such a list of rules being completely acceptable to all biblically minded ministries now working in Sydney, nevertheless, such rules laid down by an ordinance would be fixed, almost "timeless" statutes tying the hands of all future generations as well. The situation would be intolerable.

Further, because ordinances tend to be debated in Synod mainly by the lawyers, and their implications only understood by many clergy and lay members much later on, any ordinance put forward by an expert Commission would almost certainly receive automatic, if not fully informed, acceptance.

So please, Synod, proceed very cautiously in this area, lest you put your hands on a tar-baby that is not of your making!

Release of Chancellor's Advice

Also, for reasons of public information, we respectfully and urgently request the Archbishop to release the full text of the Chancellor's advice in the immediate future in sufficient numbers for all Synodsmen so that there will be plenty of time for it to read, absorbed, and publicly debated.

As some clergy at the Friday meeting frankly admitted, the concepts behind the advice — canon law, "consensual compact", English common law, etc. — are not well understood. If that is the case with ministers, how much more with the lay majority of Synod? There is less than 6 weeks to Synod, the advice needs to be released now. In our opinion, because the agenda of Synod is so (necessarily) crowded there will be insufficient time for enough debate, explanation, and inward digestion to facilitate fully informed responses if the proposed release is delayed.

The Present Situation

The Church Record maintains that the present ecclesiastical law as the remarriage of divorcees is clear. The 1857 act gives the sole prerogative to the parish minister. Since the formation of Synod in 1866 there has been no ordinance altering that position. The Archbishops of Sydney, since 1892, have ruled beyond their authority. In the context of the Archbishop's present position, a Commission and ordinance from Synod is not only unnecessary, but potentially fraught with the most unhappy consequences; we can never have more freedom than we have now.

could be interpreted to forbid the "public reading of the Bible"

Over recent days I have been involved in the production of Bible Drama scripts.

It was explained to me when I began this project that it was necessary to guard this material by copyrighting it, otherwise someone could reproduce it and forbid me to continue to print it.

After consulting the copyright office I settled on the following wording.

"This script may be reproduced in limited quantities for private use by churches or schools but not in quantity for resale. The copyright expert assured me that if the matter ever needed to be tested legally the intention in this wording is clear.

This may be the way forward for others who are involved in publishing materials.

Of course the wording I would prefer to use, were it not for the existence of people who are eager to make a fast buck, is found in A.I.O.'s book of Little Bible Pictures.

I quote.

"No copyright applies you may cut, clip and reproduce with our blessing".

That's really delightful don't you think?

Yours sincerely,
Owen C. Shelby.
Scripture Union.

Canon Law

Dear Sir,

The fact that such an editorial as "Canon Law and Gospel Freedom (Aug. 8) was allowed into print worries and saddens me for the sake of the ACR.

The opening sentence is both ungrammatical and a prime example of gobbledegook. It sets the tone for the rest of it. As a former English teacher, I would have to fail any HSC student in his trial English examination who showed such a poor comprehension of English writing. Just what is meant by "our scheme", "impersonal bureaucratic relationships" and "freedom to exist to facilitate"? Some issues ago Mr. Pain pointed out the frequently-occurring "Rev." solecism and we have got used to bad grammar, poor spelling in the paper.

But the final sentence with its reprehensible reflection on "our bishops" "who for reasons of ecclesiastical tradition turn to the rule book first and the Bible (proper noun and capital B please) second" takes the cake for rudeness, lack of charity and execrable logic. Sydney is very well served usually by "our bishops (and archbishop) and we rejoice that they are godly men who do not turn to the Bible second.

The ACR is ill-served and the evangelical

Continued page 6

THE GOSPEL IN THE CITY

We continue our series in which we seek to investigate some of the problems facing Christian ministry in contemporary Australia. The series is designed to attempt two things — to expose the real situation in Australian ministry, to stimulate an open and ongoing dialogue. We hope you will become part of the process.

No.3 Evangelism

The Record questioned four parish ministers, in different pastoral situations, about their evangelistic efforts. The questions fell into five broad groups. What were they actually doing, and how were their congregations involved? What stages did they think a congregation needed to go through before their members were able to generate a successful and on-going programme of evangelism? How did they measure the success of their programmes? What did they find to be most difficult in their evangelistic work? Where were they getting their ideas from? We also interviewed Brian Telfer of the Sydney diocesan Department of Evangelism for insights into its work.

A Traditional Area

Brian King is the Rector of St. Paul's Wahroonga, an upper middle class, almost entirely Anglo-Saxon/Celtic area of Sydney where a recent survey showed that 35% of the population viewed themselves as 'Anglican'.

St. Paul's uses a number of strategies to form a continuous broad approach to evangelism in the local area — luncheons, letter-box drops, shopping centre musical witness, vacation bible schools for children, public religious occasions like the "Carol Service", etc. But the heart of their efforts is the **Evangelism Explosion** programme of visitation evangelism which is now used by some 180 churches around Australia.

E.E. offers a total pastoral package ranging from recruitment and training of Christians in the art of "gossiping the gospel" to making pastoral contacts, follow up, and introducing a new convert to the on-going teaching and fellowship of the congregation. Basically, it depends on the parish minister who must invest some 50 to 70 training hours with a small number of his parishioners in both classroom and lounge room situations. They in turn, under the minister's guidance, do the same for other members of the church.

"In my experience, unless there is a structured programme which includes on the job training and assured meetings with non-church attenders, evangelism does not take place", said Brian King. Leadership from the top is essential.

St. Paul's, which is using E.E. for the 5th year running, used to measure its success rate by the number of professions of faith and the number of presentations of the gospel to non-Christians. Now, it measures success by the on-going nature of the programme.

"The goodwill of the visit is our first concern", commented Brian. This is gauged by the number of follow up visits granted. At present, about 75% of their contacts result in a second visit. By experience, they have found that for an outsider to properly understand the Christian gospel up to four visits are needed. "E.E., which is based on the idea of just one visit, is weak here, and needs to come to grips with the more pagan nature of Australian culture", says Brian.

Own Method

Because of the same difficulty with Explosion Evangelism, and the overwhelming problem of gaining enough contacts for visits, Michael Bennett, while a minister from 1975 to 1981 in two congregations in the southern region of Sydney, evolved his own method, **Christianity Explained**.

Christianity Explained has four stages. First, a block of 200 houses is selected and a letter box drop is undertaken inviting interested people to take part in a six week course in Christianity to be held in a church member's home in the area. The people are assured that they will not be asked questions, and no-one will be asked to read the bible or pray. Then these 200 homes are followed up by door knocking for acceptances. In a typical response, Michael had six acceptances by outsiders, and with a small number of congregational members and some contacts among

neighbours, audio-visual presentations designed for home use, dialogue meetings, counsellor training, and others. Practical training is by means of role plays, structured gospel presentations like **Two Ways to Live**, observation of home visitations, and completing step-wise assignments in the surrounding community — leaflet drops, seeking permission to place literature stands in doctor's surgeries, and so on.

The group then did six basic bible studies from Mark's gospel. If people came to the first study, they usually stayed the full six. Finally, a six week follow-up course was offered. "About two thirds of the original group, even including professed non-Christians, kept coming for this phase; largely, I think, for relationship reasons", Michael said.

During that period in the southern area, eight full courses were run. Other churches, with some degree of success in both the country and the city, have also run the programme.

Now reflecting back on that experience, Michael Bennett concludes that six stages, under the two broad heads of **Preparation and Delivery** are needed in a church based evangelism programme. Preparation: recruitment, training, selection of target group — in all these E.E. can prove useful. Delivery: method of presentation, gospel content, follow-up — supplied by the Christianity Explained course.

Problems

In the parish of Caringbah, Michael used three measures of "success" — effective communication of the gospel to non-Christians, professions of conversion, integration into the local church. Effective communication with those who did the basic course was satisfactory. Church members and their friends were the most productive for professed conversions. The surprising observation was that very few of the rank-outsiders who made professions and went on with the follow-up studies joined the local church!

It is the non-movement of converted rank-outsiders to the institutional church which is seen as his biggest problem. "It often seems easier to bring people to Christ than to Church", Michael commented.

To overcome this problem he is currently working on a second version of Christianity Explained based more on one to one than a group structure. Already the signs are encouraging in parishioner involvement, genuine converts, and better church integration.

"This problem is less than a year old, but a workable model seems to be emerging", said Michael.

Congregational Readiness

Both Brian King and Michael Bennett observe that congregations need to go through certain stages before their members are able to generate a successful and on-going programme of evangelism. There must be a firm base of converted people who have a spiritual desire and sufficient relational gifts for the work. The minister must give definite leadership, conducting an effective programme of on the job training. Further, the church itself needs to be able to relate to new converts and entice them into a family network of relationships. Hence, certain elementary forms of biblical understanding and caring relationships need to exist; and the congregation needs to be gently persuaded as to the appropriateness of the method offered.

"Motivation, confidence, and Christian love need to be present", said Brian. Neither man has had any direct help from the diocese in the matter of parish evangelism, although Michael has had verbal encouragement.

Western Area

Neil Flower of Soldiers Memorial Church Cabramatta in the south-western area of Sydney is another minister who has worked up his own evangelistic programme.

The basic philosophy has been to train all congregational members in a wide number of evangelistic skills. A typical training group is not only motivated for the job and taught the content of the gospel, but also introduced to a variety of methods — scripture distribution, placement of literature stands in strategic community locations, lending simple evangelistic cassettes to friends and

neighbours, audio-visual presentations designed for home use, dialogue meetings, counsellor training, and others. Practical training is by means of role plays, structured gospel presentations like **Two Ways to Live**, observation of home visitations, and completing step-wise assignments in the surrounding community — leaflet drops, seeking permission to place literature stands in doctor's surgeries, and so on.

The aim is to allow each church member to find an appropriate level of competence at which they can engage in the evangelistic task. A smaller number of suitably gifted Christians, approximately 10% of the class, go on to be involved in visitation evangelism. About 50% of any training group are practically involved in some form of gospel outreach by the end of course.

Ethnic Work

Arising from the mixed ethnic make-up of Cabramatta, the church also has two full time ministers for the Chinese congregation. The diocese, through its Home Mission Society, pays the full salary of one of these workers. This ministry, through visitation, Sunday and language schools, and social contacts is primarily evangelistic.

Neil observes that his biggest problems are the general apathy of God's people and the high turnover of residents in Cabramatta. The average yearly turnover of parishioners is about 15-40%. This has meant that in some years Neil has had to start the training course from scratch. However, it is clear that not only are about 25% of his present congregations there through conversion, but these new Christians also accurately mirror the ethnic and socio-economic spread of the area.

Inner City

In the square mile surrounding St. Michael's Flinders Street there live 12,000 people of whom only a quarter are of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic descent. This segment of the population has three major subgroupings — the single unemployed, about 1,000 pensioners living in Housing Commission units, and "trendy" young business and professional people. The rich live next to the poor. The area is so socially and economically deprived that the Home Mission Society pays for a full time worker to run a drop-in centre in the church hall.

The Sunday congregation averages 30 people. Ron Johnson, the minister, can

Continued next page



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Christian Womanhood Course

Dear Sir,

In your last issue (ACR 25/7), Lesley Hicks gives an enthusiastic account of a training weekend for 82 leaders for the Philosophy of Christian Womanhood Course.

I would like to point out that there has been much serious criticism of this course for some time in this diocese.

The distortion of Gen 1:27 in which 'man' is interpreted as 'male' only is pointed out by Alison Reid in Southern Cross November 1982.

Dr. D. B. Knox stated that 'the basic' error of the course is a failure to understand what is

We are indebted to our readers for continuing to send us their incisive and helpful letters. However, for reasons of space we now request that you keep correspondence to 250-300 words in length. Because editing of a personal response presents itself to us as an 'interfering', and therefore slightly onerous possibility, letters in excess of 300 words may not be published, but returned to their authors. Ed.

implied in the passage from God's word, 'the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man and the head of Christ is God' (1 Corinthians 11:3). Southern Cross February 1983).

It is time a careful revision of this course were undertaken and a healthier scriptural model of mutuality in marriage promoted.

Rosemary Christmas

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Mrs. Christmas has voiced a view held strongly by many evangelicals who have knowledge of the Philosophy of Christian Womanhood Course. The A.C.R. has commissioned a full review of this course by theologians (including a woman!) who will attempt to assess it from a biblical viewpoint. We intend to publish this full review in a future issue.

Copyright

Dear Sir,

The subject of copyright was aired in a recent issue of Church Record where your correspondent writing under the title of Saleo 11 playfully suggested that the current law

lose 50% of his congregation in 2 months. Beside that statistic, the average annual turnover of 75% looks quite modest! At the present time St. Michael's is a young congregation (average age 28 years) primarily made up of singles, but representing the full socio-economic and educational range.

In this atypical Anglican parish Ron Johnson has been using Evangelism Explosion for four years. The participants in the programmes have always reflected the real make-up of the congregation. Currently, five teams are involved in weekly visitation. Ron, as with Brian and Michael, finds that several visits are needed to effectively communicate the gospel.

Besides the transient nature of the suburb, the major problem at St. Michael's is not of finding enough visits, and certainly not of being welcomed back, but the need to constantly show team members that they are adequate for the task and can cope with the learning involved. As these feelings of inadequacy are overcome, Ron has observed a near perfect successful completion of the course to the point that members undertake clear and self-initiated verbalisations of the gospel with non-Christians. He estimates that about 50% continue to do so after the programme is finished.

Orange Boxes

All strata of the surrounding English speaking society are being reached. Some conversations have been conducted while sitting on orange crates. But for all that receptivity, the work requires a patient long-term commitment. Often, Christians have to be taught how to develop friendships and caring relationships. Much of the total ministry at Flinders Street involves "pre-evangelism". And Ron, like Michael, has found difficulties with transferring some converts from the home to church. To alleviate the pastoral problem this raised, groups of three or four have met informally for prayer, bible study and mutual encouragement.

Ron says that for a congregation to have an on-going programme of evangelism it needs, "a core committed to an inner-city ministry and an inner city way of life — to see it as a call from God, not just a stopover on a secular journey."

Further, Ron stresses, "Most members of most churches need to get their priorities right — a full appreciation of the Holiness of God, the utter sinfulness of man, and the awesome message of the Cross. When we understand what it cost God to forgive us, and that he has called us to declare that great message, then we must stand challenged to on-going evangelism."

Dept. of Evangelism

What the diocesan Department of Evangelism does is related to the gifts of its evangelists. Currently the department supplies evangelists for public forums, a few dialogue meetings, work amongst the business community in the city, and assistance in the organisation and running of regional outreaches. There is an ethnic evangelist attached to the department who works in the Italian communities.

With respect to work in the context of the local church, the Dept. is thinking more closely about stimulating parish evangelism. Cassettes and literature on "how to preach evangelistically" will be available soon. It continues to train both ministers and laypeople in the **Two Ways to Live** method of evangelism; although over the four years of this centralised operation it has not measured the rate of transfer into the practical suburban and office situation. Further, lacking a survey, the department is unable to state to what extent it sees the task of evangelism being fulfilled in Sydney.

One of the department's major priorities is teaching church groups just "what is the gospel". Outside of Sydney, John Chapman, their chief missionary, has trained clergy and lay people in evangelistic skills in Armidale and Grafton and conducted missions in Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne and overseas.

Sources of Ideas

Amongst the parish men we interviewed the sources of their evangelistic ideas are widespread. Apart from the predominance of Evangelism Explosion, stimulation comes from the Fuller School of Mission, the Lay Institute for Evangelism, the Sydney Diocesan Department of Evangelism, World Home Bible League, Australian Baptist Department of Evangelism, various books, the ministers themselves, and of course, conversations with like-minded colleagues.

Not surprisingly, given the passionate commitment these men have to the task, the input of ideas and practical schemes is fairly constant and with a palpable readiness for more of the same.

Strategy

Several points stand out. There is successful evangelism going on in the city. The work is hard and requires constant and intelligent application.

Although a centralised diocesan "take-over" of parish evangelism would be unreal, some stimulation, especially for men in difficult or hide-bound situations, might prove useful. What would be helpful are seminars, resource gathering, informed analysis of methods, trends and needs. Maybe a strategy is needed.

Certainly, the prospect of one or all three of the large city churches given over to full time evangelistic preaching, teaching and outreach amongst the hundreds of thousands who spend a large proportion of their waking hours in the business district excites the imagination. Then there is the need for some hard thinking about current problems — the busyness of christian people and its effect on their commitment to evangelism, changes in parishes and the ethnic constitution of Australia, home units, fast growing housing areas.

There is only one gospel of Jesus Christ, and it shouts out to be shared, for it is the power of God for salvation.

(The ACR wishes to thank all those who so freely gave their time and frankly shared their experiences and opinions for our benefit.)

The next article in this series will be on Education.

Great Achievements from Listening

Listening is the foundation of both development and change, says the special advisor on women's issues and healthcare for World Vision International.



Helen Eversole Photo: World Vision

Helen Eversole, a member of the Anglican Church, was in Australia as a keynote speaker at a conference exploring the role women play in development programs. She also led a number of sessions with members of World Vision International Clubs, a grassroots group of women around Australia.

"Listening is very important", insists Helena Eversole, "because it forces the person talking to struggle with the reality of their life."

"When we ask people questions about themselves we force them to think through who they are, what their convictions are and where they stand on issues."

Helena Eversole believes that women perpetuate the cycle of poverty, because they are generally the poorest members of the community. They have children at a very early age, thereby losing most opportunities to further their education and to learn particular skills. Often their husband is under - or unemployed so the woman is forced to find work that requires little formal training. The children go with her and that frequently prevents them having a chance of a decent education. And so the cycle goes on.

So much of Helena Eversole's time is spent with the poor, sitting with them listening to their stories and sharing their ambitions.

In health care Helena believes agencies and missionaries usually take the easy way out.

"Sometimes it is simpler to set up a hospital or clinic in a village, rather than sit with the community and work through the issues, empowering the poor to take control over their lives and become aware of their problems and then do something about it", remarks Helena Eversole.

Churchman rival to be launched

The Break-Away editorial board of the old 'Churchman' magazine are to launch a new theological journal, it was announced last week.

The board were replaced by the Church Society council earlier in the year for taking the Society's journal too far to the 'left' of evangelical theology.

At the beginning of this month a high-powered working party agreed that a rival magazine, produced by members of the sacked board should be set up, hopefully in the new year.

Alcohol awareness week

The N.S.W. Temperance Alliance has announced that September 11th to 18th is Alcohol Awareness Week in N.S.W. They are encouraging Churches to participate by providing outline sermons for preachers to use.

The N.S.W. Temperance Alliance also has deputation speakers available throughout the year. Their General Secretary, Robert Bowden, is concerned that increasing alcoholism is occurring throughout the world.

Chuck Colson contd . . .

of Bolivia; Mrs. Evelyn Christensen (USA); Roger Riaenda (Philippines); Aradon Tedla (Ethiopia) and a former inmate of a jail in Thailand, Rita Nightingale.

Chuck Colson plans to visit the Derry Prison, a Roman Catholic stronghold, and Bangor Prison, a Protestant stronghold!

The theme, based on II Corinthians 5:16, speaks of "God, reconciling the world to Himself in Christ".

This historic meeting in Belfast could have a significant place, in the life of the Church, to do just that.

Ramon Williams

Aboriginal Ministry in Rockhampton

The Anglican Diocese of Rockhampton has asked a specialist consultant to help it determine the future direction of its ministry with aboriginal and islander people. The Rev. Fred Wandmaker, Secretary for Aboriginal Affairs of the Australian Board of Missions, a national agency of the Anglican Church, will visit the Diocese.

The Rev. Wandmaker will travel to Duaringa, and spend the following day meeting with members of the aboriginal community at Wooralinda. For the remainder of the week he will be meeting with a variety of aboriginal and church agencies, including the Diocesan Council and the Anglican Council of Aborigines and Islanders of Central Queensland. Visits to Yumbah House, the Neville Bonner Hostel and Etna Creek Prison Farm are also planned. In addition, there will be opportunities for other groups and individuals to meet informally with the Rev. Wandmaker.

Church grant rescues children-at-risk project

The Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne, Archbishop Robert Dann, has made a \$40,000 grant from Church trusts to "rescue" Beryl Booth Court from closure.

Beryl Booth Court in Berry Street, East Melbourne, operated by the Mission of St. James and St. John, has been for five years an intensive residential support and treatment centre for mothers with children at risk.

The Mission's Associate Director, Ian Paxton, said today:

"Its closure was imminent because of the failure over the five years of Government departments to provide programmatic funding, despite the stated commitments of various governments to increase services in the child abuse area and to the most disadvantaged families."

W.C.C. Assembly in Vancouver

The 6th W.C.C. Assembly was held in Vancouver. The Australian Church Record prints here a report of the Assembly without editorial comment at this stage. Many of the criticisms we have made in the past of the W.C.C. are underlined by reports from the Assembly. Our report is from the A.C.C. Information Officer.

Assembly Opening

Colourful ceremonies and solemn worship combined as 15,000 people took part in the opening events of the WCC Assembly on July 24. About 3,000 delegates and visitors gathered in the worship tent in a service that featured spirited singing in several languages, the music of several Pacific cultures and prayers in many languages. Opening the Assembly Dr. Potter said, "Our presence here is itself a sign of the unity God wills for all people. Let us now bear witness to our intention to live together."

Dr. Phillip Potter, General Secretary, WCC, reports to the Assembly

In his report to the WCC Assembly here in Vancouver, the General Secretary Dr. Phillip Potter said that, "At a time when the very survival of the human race is daily threatened, the Gospel of Reconciliation calls churches to take a clear and unequivocal stand for God's will for peace and justice."



Archbishop John Grindrod

He said: "The world will be watching us to know whether we will meet the test of being truly a house of living stones, built on the rock of faith in God who wills peace for all, and the rights of all to be fully themselves whatever their creed or sex or race and class or nation."

Potter warned delegates of the temptation to become overwhelmed with the dangers facing the world: "Some may be tempted to adopt an attitude of resignation as though all that is necessary is that we keep the faith and let the world go up in flames — an attitude which often goes with accommodation with the deadly military policies of the powers. Many will be impatient that we are not doing enough and urgently enough to proclaim the Gospel to the world, or to work for peace and justice for all, or to achieve the unity of the churches. We are called to be steadfast in faith, and we will not shrink from speaking and acting boldly in hope and love," the WCC General Secretary said.

Grindrod Intervention

In the first business session, four speakers, from churches which have broken, mildly took the WCC General Secretary Dr. Phillip Potter, to task for a remark he had made in his report about the way in which some Church leaders express their ecclesiastical authority. The first to speak was the Anglican Primate of Australia The Most Rev. John Grindrod of Brisbane, who pointed out that Dr. Potter's phrase "the heresy of magisterial authority" could be taken as an attack on the ordained ministry of some of the WCC's member churches. He also put in a word for the Faith and Order Commission of the Council. He said that it was "of fundamental importance" that its faith and order work have enough financial resources. He was joined in his response to Dr. Potter by three Orthodox representatives. Replying the General

Secretary said that his purpose had not been to deny the historical ministry. He said it was a plea for a "listening, humble ministry, which exercises its authority in the way Jesus did". This ministry he said had finally taken Jesus to the Cross.

Archbishop Ted Scott, Anglican Primate of Canada and Moderator of the WCC

In his report, Archbishop Scott said that the Vancouver Assembly is happening at the end of an era during which the current two ideologies — those of Communism and Capitalism — may well be bankrupt.

He told the opening Plenary that while each of the competing systems has achieved the "almost incredible", neither can any longer satisfy the deepest human aspirations.

Scott, completing his term of Moderator of the WCC Central Committee which governs the international ecumenical body between assemblies, remarked that Christians have often accommodated themselves to the cultural values enshrined in the systems, instead of critiquing them from a Christian perspective.

He said that only by forming a new vision, based on Jesus as a life giver could Christians help the world to break out of the cultural captivity that has dominated and polarised it during the lifetime of the WCC.

Dr. Allen Boesak

One of the most vocal speakers at the Assembly and one who has attracted much public attention is Dr. Allen Boesak, aged 37 and President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. He is a theologian and leader of the NG Sendingkerk Church — A Missionary Church for coloured in South Africa. He is also a member of the Executive Committee of the South African Council of Churches. As a coloured, he does not have the vote in his own country.

Speaking to the opening plenary session of the Assembly he said, that increasing church opposition to the worldwide nuclear arms race could lead the ecumenical movement to create an "ideology of oppression" that will be used to justify justice.

He said "many Christians in the Third World are concerned that the issue of peace will be separated from the issue of justice making peace primarily a North Atlantic concern, while deprivation and injustice, particularly in Third World countries are ignored".

"Good News" — for the Materially Poor or the Spiritually Poor?

Whether God's "Good News" is meant for the materially poor or the spiritually poor was debated by two well-known African preachers before 2,500 people here. The session was the first of three public forums sponsored by the Local Planning Committee in connection with the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

Ugandan Anglican Bishop Festo Kivengere, exiled from his country during Idi Amin's reign, and South African theologian Allen Boesak, outspoken critic of his country's apartheid policies, presented differing interpretations of the Biblical injunctions in Luke 4 to preach "Good news to the poor" and to set free the oppressed.

"Jesus dealt with the whole person," Kivengere said, by "poor", he meant not only material poverty but "the poverty of those whose material needs are more than amply met . . . those with an emptiness in the midst of plenty".

Boesak told the crowd, "My problem with the Bishop's presentation is that the Gospel never comes to us hanging in the air. The Gospel comes to us in the situation in which we live, struggle and

Continued back page

What a World



Caring For The Neediest II

Lesley Hicks

Last issue I wrote about two needy groups in society, the terminally ill and the mentally handicapped. I asserted that the quality of a society can be measured by its care, or the lack of it, for its most helpless and vulnerable members.

Two more groups come to mind as tests of our compassion and integrity — tests which we are tending to fail. The most threatened group of human beings of all in Australian society are those not yet born. Statistically, there is no more dangerous place for a child to be than in its mother's womb.

The Unborn

It saddens me to hear of an expected out-of-wedlock baby, but where its conception has been an unplanned "accident", I thank God that the mother concerned has resisted the "easy" abortion option. She goes up in my estimation. I still deplore the virtual abandonment of the adoption option — for all the sadness and trauma involved in giving up a baby, it is an infinitely more ethical solution than the casual disposal of an unwanted life by abortion.

Methods of Disposal

Perhaps we need to look behind the euphemisms of termination of pregnancy to the techniques involved. The two most often used for abortions in the first three months are Dilation and Curettage (D & C) and Vacuum Aspiration, a newer method. In the first the cervix is dilated and a sharp instrument, the curette, is inserted into the womb to slice the foetus and its placenta up into small pieces (quite recognisably human from about eight weeks), and sucks them out through a tube.

After the first three months, abortions are discouraged as being increasingly dangerous for the mother. Methods then favoured are saline abortions (scalding the baby to death in a strong salt solution), prostaglandins (injecting hormones inducing premature labour which can deliver a live baby that is then left to die) and hysterotomy (the same procedure as Caesarean section, except that the baby is allowed to die of neglect).

I make no apology for bluntness here. To write of the reality of abortion is more honest than to use the euphemisms that seek to conceal what really happens. And

a rough and possibly underestimated figure is that some 80,000 potential Australians are disposed of annually by one of these methods, whether legally or illegally.

Counter Measures

Of course, simply to make it a subject of single-issue politics, or to picket a clinic and harass the women visiting it, does not really begin to solve the problem. Genuine pregnancy help services however, are a positive and valuable approach. Law changes and education of one kind have largely moulded public opinion into acceptance of the slaughter; perhaps education of another kind could help swing back the pendulum. More important is the need for a swing against sexual permissiveness. There are some signs of a fear-generated swing caused by the epidemics of venereal diseases like herpes and AIDS. But most crucial of all is the need for profound, widespread repentance and a turning to God. Our moral disorders and family disintegration go so deep that only Christ can restore us.

AIDS Victims

A further hurt, vulnerable group of a very different kind comes to mind. Recent articles in magazines Newsweek (April) and Time (July 4) have focussed on the fear and despair caused in the male homosexual subculture of America by the AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) epidemic.

Time reports that by the end of June 1983, the U.S. had had 1641 known cases, of which 644 had died, in the two years since the syndrome was identified — an average of 165 new cases per month. Elsewhere, 122 cases had been diagnosed in 17 other countries, including Australia. So far 75.9% of the victims in the U.S. have been active homosexual men, mostly quite young. Other groups at some risk are intravenous drug users, immigrants from Haiti, and haemophiliacs dependent on blood transfusions.

The cry of the AIDS victims and of others in the high risk groups, especially promiscuous, self-proclaimed homosexuals, is that they are now being treated like lepers. Jesus loved and touched and healed both the literal and the moral lepers of his day. Although society may need to protect itself from AIDS by some drastic public health measures, on the level of care for the sick and despairing, Christians, as his followers should be in the forefront.

DIRECTOR OF CHILD AND FAMILY CARE

The Wesley Central Mission is seeking to appoint a Director for its Child and Family Care Division. For 90 years, the Mission has provided out-of-home care for children in need. In recent years, new programmes have been developed in foster care and homeless young people. Major research has recently been undertaken to determine the future direction of these programmes, and an exciting plan of development is now under way. This will include the development of new family support services, and other innovative programmes.

This key position presents an excellent opportunity for a mature person with skills in social welfare administration experience in the child care field, an ability to liaise with Government at a senior level, and who has a desire to be involved in an area of Christian service by being able and willing to identify the spirit and purpose of the Mission and its Dalmar Child and Family Care Division.

The Director will be responsible to the General Manager of the Mission for the total work undertaken by this Division. This includes oversight of professional welfare staff, development of new caring programmes, staff training, financial control, and deputation and public relations activities.

A salary commensurate with the responsibilities of this important position will be negotiated. Family accommodation and the opportunity to participate in a generous superannuation scheme are available.

The successful applicant would be expected to commence duties by the 1st October 1983, or sooner.

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The General Manager
Wesley Central Mission,
210 Pitt Street,
SYDNEY, N.S.W. 200



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Applications, accompanied by two references, should be addressed to:

The Bursar, Calrossy School,
140 Brisbane Street, Tamworth 2340.

RECREATION OFFICER

A temporary position is available for a Resident Recreation Officer for Term 3, 1983. The position calls for a person with ability to support the Christian aims of the school.

Duties include supervision of weekend and after-school activities for secondary school boarders.

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Applications accompanied by a detailed curriculum vitae should be addressed to:

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Chief Executive Officer, T. J. BLAND

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NOTICES

50th Anniversary Holy Trinity, Canterbury Road, Glenfield. 25th September at 10.00 a.m. Afterwards "bring your own" basket luncheon held at Glenfield Community Centre, Newtown Rd., Glenfield.

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MAINLY ABOUT PEOPLE

Rev. P. Evans has been issued with Permission to Officiate.

Rev. T. J. H. Littleton has been licensed as Provisional Field Officer in Education.

Rev. W. J. Ogle has been licensed as Locum Tenens of the Parish of Toorak Gardens from 7th August, 1983.

Rev. P. Williams will be inducted as Minister in Charge of St. Margaret's, Darlington on 26th August, 1983.

Rev. A. J. Taylor will be inducted as Rector of St. Theodore's, Toorak Gardens on 25th November, 1983.

Rev. G. B. Head will be inducted as Rector of St. Barnabas', Croydon with St. Edward's Kilkenny and the Church of the Good Shepherd, Bowden on 14th October, 1983.

Letters contd ...

cause is weakened by such writing. Canon law and desuetude and common courtesy are complete mysteries to the writer of this dreadful editorial.

Yours sincerely,
Rex Meyer.

Craddock and Teenagers

Dear Sir,
May I, through your columns, thank Mr. Craddock for his articles on Teenagers. Reading them, it occurred to me that other readers who found them of particular interest may be helped by a Conference being arranged by The Mothers' Union on Friday, 30th September, 1983, at St. Thomas' Anglican Church, Coronation Pde, Enfield. Speakers will be Mrs. Joyce Bragg — "Let's Explore — Is the Family an Impossible Dream?" and Mrs. Annie Hickson, a lecturer on Child Care, — "Drugs and You" The film "Crisis in the Home" (James Dobson, Billy Graham) will also be shown. The Programme commences at 10.30 a.m. and should be interesting and helpful to all women striving to build strong, loving family relationships.

Yours faithfully,
Publicity Officer
The Mothers' Union.

Abortion and Protestants

Dear Sir,
It was most encouraging to read the statement from the General Synod in England opposing abortion and calling on the government to amend the Abortion Act 1967. The motion passed stated that "all human life including that developing in the womb was created by God in his own image and was therefore, to be nurtured, supported and protected".

For over 12 years I have been deeply involved with pro-life groups and have been greatly saddened by the lack of interest and support from fellow protestants. There have of course been one or two statements from the Anglican Church in Australia (Sydney Diocese) e.g. Synod Committee Report on Abortion 1970 and a motion passed by the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney, 1981. By and large though it has been left to Catholics to maintain a firm stand on this issue which as Mr. O'Brien from Chelmsford Diocese said when moving his original motion, "is possibly the most pressing moral issue of our day".

Some of the consequences of accepting the right to destroy those yet unborn can be seen only too clearly in the view that abortion is simply a form of contraception, in the growing call for infanticide, euthanasia and the possibility of eugenic genetic engineering.

In Britain and in America protestants have formed denominational groups. This may or may not be desirable but there are groups here like the Right to Life and Foundation Genesis which would welcome greater involvement from all Christians and others who do not accept that love for our neighbour is best expressed by taking his life.

As the Secretary of Foundation Genesis, a fairly new Pro-Life Research and Information Centre, I would be delighted to have more fellow Anglicans join us. Enquiries can be made to P.O. Box 554, Strathfield, N.S.W., 2135, or by phoning 747 3603.

Yours sincerely,
Patricia Judge,
Secretary.

TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER

Being Judgmental vs Being Concerned

It is well for Christians to avoid standing in judgment upon each other. I have often written on this subject, especially insofar as careless and unloving judgmental attitudes can jeopardize family relationships. However, is it possible that sometimes, in our efforts to avoid being judgmental, we become weak and fail to take a stand on important issues?

The possibility of going from one extreme to another is all too real. For example, one Christian couple had had a very lengthy period of marital and family conflict which they wanted to end. The wife had been an extremely judgmental person. She had tried to mould her husband and children into a shape which made sense to her in the light of her own very rigid values. Her technique was to belittle the person and to arouse great feelings of guilt surrounding any failures to conform to her expectations.

Sometimes her values were reasonable, but her methods produced unhelpful and unreasonable emotional turmoil. Furthermore, her tactics tended only to produce a superficial conformity from the other family members. They obeyed out of fear and as a result of emotional coercion, not out of understanding, belief or respect for the values involved.

Eventually she gained some insight into her behaviour and she made an

outstanding effort to change her ways. She stopped being judgmental and she no longer expressed her viewpoint. She aimed to be tolerant and patient. She went from one unhelpful extreme to another.

Her new attitude could not be fathomed by the rest of the family. At first they were suspicious, but this turned to dismay. She gave the impression of having given up on them. It was as if she had got tired of coercing them and had decided to let them have their freedom. What puzzled and hurt them was that it appeared that she didn't care anymore and even that she had abandoned all her values.

The family were relieved that Mum had stopped being judgmental and emotionally aggressive, but she had appeared to give up on them and this hurt them. The children, especially, could not understand their mother's lack of guidance in areas which had previously been helpful. It was clear that not all of the mother's behaviour had been judgmental and destructive. On the contrary, there was no doubt that she loved her family and many times this had expressed itself in lovingly presented teaching and guidance coming from an older and wiser parent.

What the mother needed to do was to assess her attitudes and behaviours carefully. She needed to differentiate

between the judgmental and unhelpful compared to the objectively valid and helpful areas of attitude and behaviour. In order to stop being judgmental and coercive she did not have to become a person without a viewpoint. She needed to check out her viewpoints. She needed to reconsider the means of asserting that viewpoint. She needed to recognize the difference between constructively questioning a behaviour or activity and destructively attacking the person who engages in them.

There are many Biblical precedents for this kind of assertiveness which is motivated by loving concern. Consider these two examples. In the first case, when writing to Timothy, Paul is very frank about his attitude towards Alexander the metalworker who is described as having done Paul a great deal of harm. Paul has chosen to say something about this rather than remain silent. His reason? He is concerned for Timothy: "Be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message." (II Timothy 4:14-15).

Paul has a viewpoint and is prepared to express it and there is a good reason for doing so. There is little to be gained and much to be lost by indulging in an unrealistically generous and tolerant attitude. However, note that Paul is not being judgmental and that he avoids the temptation to take vengeance into his

Alan E. Craddock

own hands. He states in verse 14 that repayment is a matter for the Lord.

The second example involves Christians' concern for providing loving correction of a fellow Christian who appears to be in error. In Acts 18-19 Luke describes the work of Apollos, a learned Jew with a "thorough knowledge of the Scriptures", who "had been instructed in the way of the Lord" and who "spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John". (Acts 18:24-25).

Two Christians in Ephesus heard him and discerned some weaknesses in his message. Priscilla and Aquila were sufficiently concerned for the gospel and for Apollos that they took the trouble to share their viewpoint with him. "They invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately." (v. 26)

The attitude of Priscilla and Aquila was one characterized by love and firmness. They wanted to be honest as well as hospitable. They could have remained silent out of a desire to be encouraging and in order to avoid being judgmental. But silence in this case would not have been constructive. To carefully share one's viewpoint in love, out of a concern for the truth and for the person, is not to become involved in unloving judgmentality and emotional coercion.

Book Reviews

The Everlasting God

D. Broughton Knox
Evangelical Press, pp 128

This book gives the lie to our usual assumption that a book of doctrine, especially the doctrine of God, will be either so profound and deep that no-one can understand it or else so predictable and over simplistic to be a waste of time. The Everlasting God certainly covers a very wide field in a very short space. In just over one hundred pages Knox deals with how we know God, God's goodness, power and wisdom, the relationships of the Trinity, the depths of the work of Christ and the doctrine of election. The language and style of writing are simple and straightforward. Yet there is little that is predictable or over simplistic about his thoughtful and often moving treatment of such important issues. In fact the rather plain presentation of the book, the absence in the main of reference to other works and authors and the lack of an index may all have the unfortunate effect of restricting its usefulness and hiding the original and seminal thoughts the book contains.

Personal Relationships — the most real thing there is

The chapter on the Trinity argues strongly that the doctrine of the Trinity is "the foundation of the Christian religion". It is a truth known only from God's revelation — though I'm sure there's an element of overstatement in Knox's statement that "Knowledge of the trinitarian nature of God is only attained and understood if every word of scripture is accepted as given by God's Spirit so that every word is given its full place in revelation."

It is in discussing the significance of the doctrine that Knox shines. The Trinity is the glory of Christianity because "it tells us that the ultimate reality is personal relationships". The centrality of personal relationships runs through the whole book. It is founded in the triune God because he is a God who "has relationships within himself" and so we learn that "the value of relationships ultimately belongs to reality in its most absolute form." In fact Knox states "Personal relationships are seen to be ultimate to most real things there are." The character of all true relationships is

"other-person-centredness", a term Knox uses to explicate the relationship of the Father with the Son and the Spirit. It is therefore the key to all our relationships also. "Any philosophy of life or any social theory which contradicts this reality (of other-person-centredness) will certainly be running into the shallows."

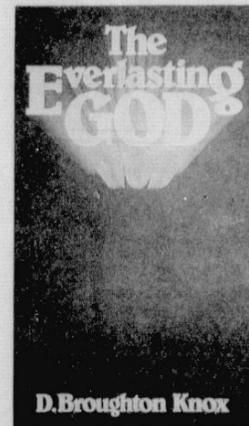
Healthy Corrective to Popular Imbalances

Knox has much more to say on Trinity. His treatment of the unity and distinctiveness of the Father, Son and Spirit is a healthy corrective to some imbalances still found in popular evangelism, to play off the kind Son against the distant and threatening Father, or to speak about the lordship and divinity of Christ as if the Father had retired in favour of his Son. Knox writes "The Father dwells in the Son and does the work that the Son does and at the same time the Son dwells in the bosom of the Father and does everything the Father shows him", and again "Jesus cannot be called Lord apart from the Trinity." On the Holy Spirit, Knox shows that as the Father and Son are welded together the Spirit so now are we to each other and them. "The Spirit is the bond between Father and Son and between God and the believer, for the Spirit is the glory and the love. The Spirit's presence is the presence of Christ and the presence of love." There is much more under the general heading of Trinity, especially the work of the Spirit, the image of God in man and order in relationships which has some important implications for how we understand and express headship in family and congregational life.

Jesus — the faithful example

Knox's treatment of the person and work of Christ is no less interesting. A great deal is made of the example of Jesus. Jesus' example and command to seek the kingdom of God, not food and clothing is, according to Knox "the one which is most consistently and flagrantly disobeyed by Christians in our society." He has strong words for materialism disguised as seeking the advantages of our family. It's Jesus' faith however which is the most important example. Jesus lived by faith. Following D. W. B. Robinson and others Knox believes we

should translate the phrase "the faith of Christ" of Galatians 3:22, Philippians 3:9 and Romans 3:22 not as our faith in Christ but Jesus Christ's own faithfulness. So it is we are saved by Christ's faithfulness to the Father, that is, his obedience even to death. Our faith is that which we "in response exercise towards him". Against those who deny that Jesus had faith because he already knew everything,



Knox argues that in his human life our Lord's knowledge was by the Father's will limited and so "there was room for faith". I wonder if he has gone far enough. The assumption that faith can only exist because of incomplete knowledge should be itself challenged, especially in light of the reformers' insistence that faith was knowledge, not its substitute. Does not the Son always live by faith in the Father in the eternity of the Godhead?

Thus Jesus' faith and obedience are our example. "It is wonderful to think that by exercising faith in Christ we are walking in the footsteps of our Saviour."

The unlimited work of the Cross

However there is also an important difference between Jesus and us. "It is important to recognise and maintain the distinction between formal obedience to God — a duty we share equally with Christ — and the material obedience of Christ which was unique to him." Knox goes into some detail outlining Christ's special and unlimited work on the cross. "In this way Jesus achieved what humanity had never yet achieved, perfect obedience to God tested to the fullest extent imaginable." Thus Jesus discharged every man's obligation to keep the law. He bore every man's

penalty of separation from God. He overcame and bound every man's enemy, the devil. The redemption our Lord achieved on Calvary was unlimited with regard to humanity; He took every man's nature; He underwent every man's curse; He fulfilled every man's obligation; He overcame every man's enemy. There is no limit in the provision of forgiveness which Jesus achieved at Calvary. All the children of Adam may share it if they call upon the name of the Lord."

God's Feeling. Human Freewill

Other themes and issues could well be highlighted from this interesting and at times quite moving book. The principle that authority is derived from responsibility not simply power is applied even to God himself — as well as to the question who has authority with the congregation. In the matter of judgement we read "A gospel without tears because it is without judgement is not the gospel of the New Testament." God is impassible not in that he is without feelings but he is not passively controlled from without.

The thoughtful treatment of predestination and election is careful and illuminating. "Although our wills are free wills," he writes, "it is incorrect to say that they are independent wills over against God's will." The whole chapter is outstanding and will be a great help to Christians caught up in the complexities of this issue.

I wasn't convinced that Knox's treatment of prophecy was adequate. Knox writes that "Prophecy is the only possible criterion for 'canonicity' (ie inclusion in "the rule" of Scripture). Yet the early church's criterion for the canon was more restrictive than simply including all extant prophecy. Can we not also then distinguish the normative writings (the canon) from whatever other inspired writings or utterances there may or may not be?"

Don't be fooled by this book. Although The Everlasting God looks simple and although you will come across the occasional overstatement, it is a most thoughtful and thought provoking work of theology. As one friend of mine put it, "He (Knox) has given us our agenda for years and years of thought and writing in that one book."

Robert Forsyth

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