'MEN!'

P.F. JENSEN

"THE CHRISTIAN FAITH"

Men as such have come in for a bad press in recent years. They are, it seems, a necessary evil but hardly more than that. Come to think of it, there are many who would drop the word 'necessary'. It's all to do with the womens' movement, I suppose, and the results are fairly obvious. A new word 'sexism' has been invented, and although it could refer to the exploitation of men by women, it in practice refers to the exploitation of women by men.

Now it would be possible to be humourous about the excesses of this movement. Indeed some feminists seem to need a certain type of stuffy solemnity like feet need shoes. It would be possible to be humourous, but it is wrong. For the facts about which the feminists are complaining are true.

Consider the ten most common problems about which women write to magazines for help. This comes from the Australian Book of Lists, and has been compiled by Kate Samperi of the Womans Day. I won't read out the whole list, but it's very significant how often men as men figure in the various problems that are raised. Top of the list is marriage problems - "My husband isn't interested in me anymore", and "the husband seems more interested in going out with the boys than being at home with his wife"; then there's the question 'How do you find a good man?' Women apparently often write 'to find out where they can go to meet men who have the proper intentions and aren't going to look upon them just as pick-ups'. Finally there's the problem of violence: 'women write complaining of physical violence at the hands of their husbands, de factos or boy friends and ask where they can go for help'. In fact it has become perfectly clear in recent days just how widespread

violence against women and children is in our community.

I remember years ago seeing a TV debate between a famous Australian Feminist and an equally famous Australian clergyman. To my mind the faminist was the clear winner. It was not that I approved of her positive suggestions. Rather, she had a far clearer view of the failures of men and wasn't diverted by the rather romantic notions of her opponent.

Oddly enough, the feminist was closer to the Christian view than was the clergyman. After all no-one who reads the Bible should have any illusions about the evil possibilities of human nature. Three of the greatest heroes of scripture themselves killed people at some stage of their career. The Bible describes us as 'dead in trespasses and sin', and our evil nature will find its outlet in the exploitation of those weaker than we are. Where I would disagree with the feminist is in ascribing most evil to men - women are no better, but their opportunities for evil - and for good are different.

I would disagree, too, about the positive answers. There can be no substitute to a return to God in our society. Our violence and malice can be directly attributed to our rejection of his rule over us. Until we return to him and put ourselves under his control, society will always be sick.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
is broadcast every Sunday at
7.10 p.m. over Radio 2CH

Copies of these weekly broadcasts may be obtained ($5 per year posted) by writing to The Christian Faith, c/- 2CH, York Street, Sydney N.S.W. 2000

12/7/81 27/81