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LEAVE THE LORD'S PRAYER ALONE

Man in the street doesn't want change

Leave the Lord's Prayer alone!

This was the near-unanimous plea of Sydney people today against the Church of England Commission's proposed changes to the Lord's Prayer.

"The Sun" spoke to housewives, labourers, university lecturers and students, teenagers, businessmen.

Ninety per cent of them were horrified at the thought of changing the classical beauty of the 1662 version of the world's most widely used prayer.

"Inelegant"

A senior lecturer in English at Sydney University described the proposed revision of the prayer as "awful and inelegant."

A parish minister, among scores asked for their opinion, referred to the changed version as "gobbledegook."

The Commission which has recommended the radical changes in the Lord's Prayer was set up by the 1962 general Synod of the Church of England in Australia.



ARCHBISHOP LOANE

Under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Grafton, Bishop R. G. Arthur, it comprised 32 episcopal, clergy and lay members, including the new Archbishop of Sydney, the Most Rev. M. L. Loane.

Its recommendations will go before the General Synod, which meets in Sydney next week.

In addition to the

changes in wording of the Lord's Prayer, the recommendations cover a revision in modern language of the entire 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

Not right

Here are the views of a wide cross-section of Sydney people on the proposed alterations to the Lord's Prayer:

Miss J. Boucher, of Gardeners Road, Mascot: "The new version is alien to all I am used to in church."

"I don't like it right now. Perhaps that's because I haven't got used to it yet."

"But I don't like the words."

Mr J. Langton, university student, of Edwin Street, Greenwich: "I don't go to church much, but I do know the Lord's Prayer, and I repeat it often to myself."

"The old words have brought me a sort of security. I have come to rely on them."

"The new words are not part of my Lord's Prayer. I'll stick to the old version."

"Cold"

Mrs R. Heard, saleswoman, of Goodhope Street, Paddington: "I do not like the words or the flow of the new prayer."

"I believe there is need to modernise the church. But this new Lord's Prayer is cold."

"A new Lord's Prayer is a step in the right direction, but this new prayer says nothing to me."

Mr S. Duval, University student, of Glebe Road, Glebe: "I am all for modern prayers but the new Lord's Prayer has no rhythm."



MR MATTHEWS

FORGED TICKETS

League Grand Final

FORGED tickets for Saturday's Rugby League Grand Final are believed to be on sale in Sydney.

N.S.W. Rugby League secretary Mr Harold Matthews today warned the public about buying the tickets.

He said he had been told a man was selling tickets outside Sydney Cricket Ground last Saturday for the big match next Saturday.

"He was selling the tickets at the right price and this could mean they were forged," Mr Matthews said.

All grandstand tickets for Saturday's match were sold out on Monday.

The remaining few hundred Hill tickets were sold this morning.

It is believed that 100 forged tickets were on sale outside Sydney

Cricket Ground last Saturday.

The tickets are believed identical with the official printed tickets.

"Forged tickets were on sale at the Third Rugby League Test against England and about 50 got past us," Mr Matthews said.

Mr Matthews said 53,500 tickets had been sold for Saturday's Grand Final.

If all members attended there would be a crowd of close to 68,000 to see St. George play Balmain, he forecast.

Because of the all-ticket Grand Final, the crowd will be about 10,000 less than last year's record of 78,056.

CHANGE FOR THE WORSE—EDITORIAL P. 4

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Change for the worse

THE 70 words of the Lord's Prayer are known almost universally among the 280 million people who speak English as their mother tongue.

They are hallowed by faith and time and usage and they have — and have always had — a beauty and a music which fit their purpose.

Also, they are practically as plain today as when they were taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew and incorporated into the English Book of Common Prayer nearly three centuries ago.

This does not mean that the wording of the English Bible and Prayer Book should never again be touched. Revision is necessary from time to time.

A commission of the Church of England in Australia has proposed changes in wording of the major services covered by the Book of Common Prayer.

There is a radical re-write of the Lord's Prayer which will raise many doubts and objections, and a change in the heart of the marriage service which will upset many brides.

Cadence lost

The Australian commission has reduced the 70 words of the St. Matthew version of the Lord's Prayer to 68 words—which in itself is no merit — and in doing so it has lost much of the cadence and reverence of the traditional version.

And, most surprisingly, it has actually added a touch of obscurity.

To the average layman, the line "and lead us not into temptation" is clear, while its proposed replacement, "and do not bring us to the ordeal" is quite puzzling, not to say ugly.

Attempts to alter the Lord's Prayer have not been happy.

An old house

After struggling for years, the greatest Protestant scholars of Britain produced a 57-word version, which is as uninspiring, flat and conversational as the Australian version, but mercifully shorter.

The existing version of the prayer—or something pretty close to it—still has much to commend it.

The late Ben Hecht, a Jew with a religious cast of mind and a profound reverence for English, remarked that the Bible is an old house which belongs to us all, and that we should enter it with care, disturbing it as little as possible.

That is true of the Prayer Book, especially when it borrows directly from the Bible.

"New prayer awful"

says Uni lecturer

1966 VERSION

Our Father in heaven, your name be hallowed.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done, as in heaven so on earth.

Our bread of the morrow give us today And forgive us our debts.

As we too have forgiven our debtors.

And do not bring us to the ordeal,

But save us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

1662 VERSION

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our tresspasses

As we forgive them that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Continued from page 1

"Prayers should have feeling . . . a beat.

"This new Lord's Prayer has nothing. It's just words."

Mrs D. Pico, of Darlinghurst Road, King's Cross: "It is not right that religious words should be changed.

"Like it"

"The Lord's Prayer is a holy tradition with me. I do not like the new one."

Mrs B. Watson, secretary, of Pacific Highway, North Sydney: "I am not impressed with it."

Mr N. Jackson, labourer, of Perouse Road, Randwick: "I like it . . . especially the part that says 'Forgive us our debts.'"

"I'm willing to forgive those who owe me a few quid."

Mrs J. Laing, housewife, of Salisbury Road, Kensington: "Why can't people leave things as they are!"

"The Lord's Prayer has beautiful verse. The new version is terrible.

"I will never use the new prayer. It isn't right."

Mr J. Church, truck driver, of Greenway Road, Ryde: "A change in the Church is long overdue. I like the new prayer."

Mr A. L. French, senior lecturer in English literature at The University of Sydney: "I think the new prayer is awful.

"The language is inelegant, even though it may be closer to the original meaning of the prayer.

"If this is an attempt to render the prayer in contemporary language, it is a failure.

"I doubt very much if this is modern English."

"Curious"

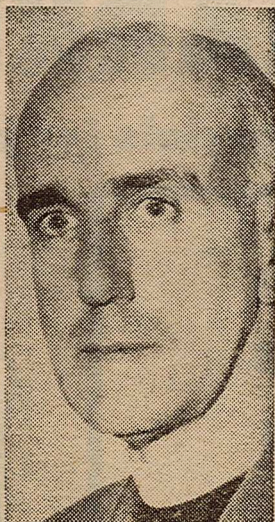
Most ministers interviewed were critical of the radical version, but the majority advocated modernisation of the Lord's Prayer.

The Rev. E. Pattison Clarke, of St. Mary's, Waverley: "Many people will be upset by the change.

"The 1662 version is a better translation of the prayer than this radical version.

"The line, 'Our bread of the morrow give us today,' is a very curious sort of phrase."

The Rev. G. B. Gerber, rector of St. Alban's, Belmore: "The radical new version of the Lord's Prayer is nothing but gobbledegook."



BISHOP ARTHUR

"Some have said the old version was gobblegook. This is doubly so."

The Rev. J. L. Drayton, St. Columba's, Flemington: "The new version is a step in the right direction.

"But I think the line, 'Our bread of the morrow give us today,' is awkward."

Mr Tom Clinton, businessman, from New York: "The new prayer is stiff.

"I don't believe it will appeal to the man-in-the-street.

"In the States the Negroes have rejected the old manner of worship.

"Their services are modernised and a pleasure to listen to.

Sensible

Bishop Arthur, chairman of the Synod Commission, today said he believed conservative revision of the prayers and services would be met with wide acceptance in the churches.

"It is sensible that we speak in intelligible English," he said.

"It is 300 years since these prayers and services were written. The meaning of words has changed greatly.

"The Commission is suggesting that both the conservative and radical versions be tried out as an experiment.

"We should let the people decide. Nothing is going to be put over them."

Bishop Arthur said the Commission had been asked to tackle the revision because it was felt much of the Prayer Book was "out of touch with the people of today."

"I am not surprised people say they prefer the traditional version of the Lord's Prayer," Bishop Arthur added.

"I don't really think we should revise the Lord's Prayer without consulting with other churches."