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Editorial

Standing in Glenn Avenue, Purley, shortly after the fatal rail crash and contemplating the carriages hanging crazily over the embankment, one could not help mentally screaming – “no! not again”. And writing so soon after Hillsborough, this cry is heightened and galvanised.

Not in living memory has there been such a catalogue of national disasters in such quick succession: Zeebrugge – Piper Alpha – Lockerbie – Clapham – M1 – Hungerford – King’s Cross – a tragic mosaic held together with tears. The rapidity of the repeated emotional thuds has the nation holding its breath, anticipating what next it might have to bear, while all the time repeating, “this must never happen again”.

One wonders what all this does to a nation: the cumulative effect on national life and character. Can we expect a softening or a hardening? A greater faith or a greater cynicism? To what end do the forces of tragedy mould us? What cannot be questioned are the wells of compassion which in the midst of a rampant, competitive individualism, never run dry and help to ameliorate the worst of times.

As far as the doctrine of Providence is concerned, the less said the better. So many “ explanations” sound more like rationalisations, more ingenious than ingenuous, and utterly fail to touch the broken and the devastated. Far more truthful is the faith that has seen sufficient of God’s love in Christ to live with mystery and to presume no further than the Tower of Siloam and the Book of Job in days of tearfulness.

R.E.O. White is the first of our contributors this quarter. One of the most prolific of Baptist authors, he shares something of the formative influences upon him: the books, people, ideas in a ministry of some fifty years. He invites us to travel with him on “A Personal Pilgrimage”.

How to keep world mission on the agenda in the face of an ever-encroaching parochialism is a constant challenge in church life. Fred Stainthorpe indicates one way in which this may be undertaken and the resources that may be called upon in “Small and Beautiful”. Following this Stephen Greasley takes us back to a truly biblical understanding of the concept of “blessing” in view of the current impoverishment as he sees it.

Among the many courses on Christian discipleship, “Masterlife” is one of the better known. Dane Baker, as consumer, reports on and evaluates the leaders’ workshop. Our final article comes from Larry Kreitzer who brings to our attention again one of the most significant personalities of the twentieth century. In “Schweitzer’s Enduring Contribution”, he focusses on the radical biblical scholar and the integrity of life and thought of the man of Lambaréné.

Preceding the Review Section is an appeal from Derek Wensley of the British Church Growth Association for help with research into lapsed and restored Christians with a view to more effective discipling in the future.

A PERSONAL PILGRIMAGE

The first serious book I remember reading was Blunt's *Undesigned Coincidences of Scripture*. Its thesis proved to be mistaken, yet it kindled an undying fascination for the text of the Gospels, later fed by T.W. Manson's *Sayings of Jesus*. And its title provides a curious clue to later experience: so many far-reaching consequences flowed from undesigned beginnings. For example, starting work in a newspaper office a few days before my fourteenth birthday I saw my first 80 words in print at fifteen, the forerunners of several millions, wholly unlikely then. Printer's ink, once it enters the blood, is said to be incurable.

Dusting someone else's books I browsed over 2-3 pages (all I could grasp) of Dornier's *Theology*, and was seized by my first fundamental philosophical idea. God's nature being love, an Object is necessarily implied – the Son; and a continual reciprocal outgoing between Father and Son, by the Spirit. Therefore the Trinity: QED. From that exciting accidental discovery sprang deep respect for the philosophical defence of religion, early nourished by James Orr's *Christian View of God and the World*, an education in itself. Weekly classes in Liverpool University School of Philosophy led, by wholly undesigned coincidence, to giving WEA lectures in Philosophy, and later Current Affairs. After such training before Merseyside adults no class of theological students could really frighten me.

A *Baptist Times* Christmas Essay competition on the sacraments left enough unused notes for an *Expository Times* article on Baptism. The reactions provoked seemed to demand a far more careful defence of our position, though the conclusions reached after nine years' research were not entirely those expected at the outset. This led eventually to other books: the habit is self-perpetuating. And also to the Scottish College appointment. All undesigned still.

Preparing for Ministry

Retracing for a moment: the Bible School at Porth (Rhondda) at 18-19 had kindled both an unvarying love of scripture, and a quite burdensome conscience concerning integrity, thoroughness, and the historical *control* of one's interpretation: Greek was required, Hebrew recommended; one three-year course was devoted to Romans 5-8. Here, too, reverence and love for preaching was inculcated. Principal R.B. Jones held all preaching to be expository; the essence of preaching was letting God's word free to do its work in the congregation. Tutor W.S. Jones homiletically analysed a passage with a surgical skill I met later only in McLaren. Later, too, Fosdick showed how to make sermons interesting by earthing them in history and biography, while J.S. Stewart did all this again with a grace, and an educational depth, that made preaching great. Unfortunately, one result of reverencing such models was perpetual dissatisfaction with one's own sermonising.

Leaving Bible School too young for complete pastoral charge, and rejected by Manchester, a full-time hometown 'student pastorate' gave opportunity to attempt the external BD the Bible School had urged. Here, at Stow Hill, Newport, a very raw and incompetent beginner, I was 'fathered' by two or three old deacons, to whose insight, loyalty and kindness I owe more than I can ever tell. And the abiding conviction that when Association, College and 'MR' have done their best, it is the church which receives a man's ministry which makes him a minister, both theologically and in practice. First ordination, and each renewal of it, should be by the receiving church, whatever support home-church and neighbouring

churches may lend. The church which creates a minister will patiently endure so very much from him!

Private study being the only way open, books had to be teachers, and the commerce of thought in the Common Room was a serious miss. Yet (as many now combining study with pastoral charge must be aware) there are gains, too, in 'doing theology' with one's feet on the same ground as lay Christians, pleasant as the Quad turf might have been. Wolsey Hall, Oxford (correspondence college) insisted upon Galloway for Philosophy of Religion (keeping very close to faith as historically experienced); Thorndike on Psychology (with not a jargon-word throughout); the Christian Ethics which modern problems demanded; Theology (Wheeler Robinson's *Christian Doctrine of Man*) hard down on NT and history. Academically, all very earthy, realist, pedestrian, penny-pinching; yet having some values of its own for a pastoral ministry.

One effect of non-Collegiate preparation was the immense excitement and enrichment of such "ministerial retreats" as one could afford. To sit for four hours under T.W. Manson (the Gospels), William Robinson (the Spirit), J.R. Scofield (Wisdom Literature), Henry Cook (Pastoralia), was to walk on air for three months afterwards. And to realise what privileges College students enjoyed. But almost equally valuable was to sit among older men, Pearce of Moulton, J.O. Hagger, Hawkins, J.O. Barrett, Smith of Morecambe, Grey Griffith, and dozens of others, listening to backchat, enjoying the hilarity, taking short cuts to wide and varied experience. Later "Probationers' Conferences" could not provide this.

A Changing Denomination

A perpetual spring of inspiration has been the BMS – an undesigned coincidence again. For the Ter-Jubilee Celebrations, and the matchless Carey story, broke upon me during the early war years, when church life at home was standing still in these beleaguered and preoccupied islands. Suddenly, the far horizon, and the ongoing work abroad, brought new hope and confidence, a total change of perspective. This was later reinforced by the privilege of Committee membership, especially of Candidate Board, a splendid undesigned training for interviewing College candidates. So BMS involvement has ever seemed to me to be investment, paying highest dividends for individuals and churches, in personal contacts, spiritual liberation, outflowing generosity, and enlargement of mind.

Of course, the churches have contributed most to the passing years, countless fine individuals whose character, service, faith and testimony have ministered to the minister far more than they knew. Including one outstanding Superintendent, Griffith Harris of South Wales. Moving from area to area constantly reminds one how varied Christ's disciples have ever been. Generalisations are partial and personal, but South Wales made up in fervour what it lacked in venturesomeness; Merseyside was energetic, divided, but very earnest; Hertfordshire hard-working, progressive, a trifle complacent; Scotland dogged, generous, but – well – somewhat disappointing, neither church life nor preaching quite what the southerner is led to expect.

From a Principal's desk I have sense a changed attitude towards the ministry since salaries became more adequate – a diminution of concern and affectionate

sympathy. To cite but one example: a kindly Scottish custom of filling the larder for the incoming minister met with the objection, "Oh, there's no need for that sort of thing *now!*" Those who have never experienced the earlier attitude may think the exchange worthwhile, but something is lost for all that.

A similar personal impression is that over these fifty years the denomination has become steadily more centralised. The individual steps have aimed at increased support, co-operation, and security for ministers and churches. But, perhaps inevitably, churches and men have become more closely dependent upon central organisation; the churches for building loans, insurance, extension, planning; and ministers for selection, recognition, settlements, supplementary salary, pension, retirement homes. Symptoms of the changed atmosphere include "inspirational" Assemblies in place of executive ones, much more propaganda on the doormat (fourteen items in one envelope, recently, for a retired man!); detailed suggestions for worship and sermons on endless "special days". Again, much is gained – and something lost. (Will Didcot prove to be another 'symptom'?)

Convictions

Nevertheless one reaches retirement feeling that one has received from the churches and the denomination far more of spiritual help than one has ever given. Writing brings less of spiritual return than one might expect, though the occasional letters from various parts of the world, appreciating, arguing some point, criticising, indicating mistakes or misprints, begging free copies, or enquiring if I am still alive, do mount up over the years. Kind remarks added to letters about other things are often heartening. But books and articles are usually bread cast upon the waters, sometimes to sink without trace.

As for the garnered 'convictions' that are enquired for, J.O. Hagger warned me truly that time reduces the number of one's certainties, and increases the preciousness of those that remain. The old evangelical roots survive; as I replied, presumptuously, at MR interview 51 years ago, "the scaffolding of my faith has been changed, but the gospel is still my home". Someone long ago taught me to distinguish religious opinions (which ought to change with reading and maturity) from Christian convictions (which prove themselves unchangeably true in daily experience). And Paul declares that we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth – a significant assurance and warning. A persistent regret has been that a better informed theology does not always evoke the dedication and devotion of a less educated faith. Somehow we lose "the dynamic force produced by a system of theology of which we can point out the weaknesses without being able to reproduce the power".

J.D. Jamieson's dictum "God cannot bless what lacks integrity" has often recurred to mind, in connection with preaching, church politics and decisions, and personal attitudes. And so has the insight (origin unremembered, but confirmed by long-term observation) that a quiet church at a street corner will do far more lasting good over the years than the most costly and best publicised "mission" ever organised. The years have strengthened too the conviction that there was far more real fellowship across denominational boundaries sixty years ago, before "ecumenicity" was invented, than exists today.

One major theological interest has been the problem which has occupied so many this century: how to bridge the gap between the apostolic age and our so different world. Catholics hold that the living church bridges it; the Reformers, that a believing grasp of the story sufficiently bridges it; Bultmann and others, that the apostolic gospel must be translated into philosophic principles to accommodate modern thought. I have not, so far, found a better bridge than a sacramental encounter with God – a present-day experience of the grace of God shaped, informed and expressed in the ordained and inherited pattern of baptism and supper *redemptively understood*. (Why ever did the Revision Committee omit from BHB Palgrave's most beautiful handling of this fundamental problem – "Thou sayest, 'Take up thy cross'.."?)

Probably a better understanding of the Spirit would ease this question, provided we remember that the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, and would not do what Jesus did not do. Who would have thought that, of all the NT churches, Corinth would be held up for our emulation! An increasing tendency towards a Protestant form of Christian superstition – spiritual power without moral conditions – has obscured contemporary investigation of the Spirit. But the essentially supernatural heart of Christianity, with moral basis and results, must I believe be emphasised if we are to have any real gospel for the modern world.

All in all, hardly a "pilgrimage", obviously, unless of the Abrahamic variety, "not knowing whither". More like orienteering, finding the way as you go, and often missing it; and more understandable looking backwards than forwards. Mostly undesigned. Yet hopefully not wholly unplanned; and the better part certainly undeserved.

R.E.O.White

Small and Beautiful

The missionary sermon and valedictory service during the Baptist Assembly are inspiring occasions, but not all of our people can attend them. Missionary conventions such as Bulstrode (W.E.C.) and Bangor draw thousands, but many more stay away. B.M.S. deputations only visit us once a year, if we are lucky. So how can we maintain missionary interest in our congregations? One way is by holding our own missionary convention. Like the Israelite in Deuteronomy 12:21 who lived too far from the Temple, we can kill and eat our meat at home. Home-grow food often tastes best.

This is what we did at Wednesbury recently. Some months before, the local Diocesan prayer calendar had asked for my requests. I asked that the church might regain its evangelistic and missionary zeal. Then the idea of a missionary convention took shape in my mind. Perhaps the Lord was helping me to answer my own prayer.

Planning and Resources

We decided to hold three evening meetings just after Easter. This was fitting for two reasons. Firstly, Easter should give rise to mission. All the Resurrection appearances conclude with the commission to go and proclaim that Jesus is risen. Secondly, it gave us the chance to hold it before Sunday School Anniversary and holidays pushed it out of everyone's mind.

As we wanted to focus on world mission generally we would need other speakers as well as B.M.S. Where would we get them from? A moment's thought provided the answer. We are fairly near to Birmingham. The Selly Oak Colleges provide a rich resource of personnel from all over the world. Both the Leprosy Mission Midlands Representative and our B.M.S. "man", Peter Briggs, live in Birmingham. Recently, a Methodist minister, Michael Sheard, became Lichfield Diocese Officer for World Mission and came to live near us. So we were better off than I thought. I cleared the dates with the church, rang up the speakers and set the stage for April 20th-22nd (1988).

We have no missionary council and so I relied heavily on the church's B.M.S. secretary and Home Mission Representative for support. They readily agreed and as always the ladies of the church rallied round to provide refreshments. The local Christian bookshop agreed to help us set up a bookstall although they told us they would need to supply general literature also because, sadly, "Missionary books do not sell well nowadays".

Some of the church members were not very sure what was going to happen. They kept talking about "this missionary convention thing"! Apparently the church in its 150 year history, had never held one. I hoped that once it was over they would realise its value and even ask when we would hold the next one.

Ideas for publicity came easily. The *Baptist Times* agreed to mention it in its "Information Desk", and we began to publicize it locally. Each church in the town and area received a poster. I often interrupted pastoral visits to push one through church doors, feeling grateful that their owners were not too draught-conscious. Every contact seemed to provide a new opening. The secretary of a local workers' Christian Union took several posters and thus spread the news to a number of churches further afield.

The local media proved helpful too. Michael Blood runs an excellent Sunday morning churches' programme on Radio West Midlands. He is always eager to hear what is happening, so we sent him word about it in good time. The local free paper is also very co-operative. For years past they have publicised announcements of our Christmas and Easter services and now agreed to tell the town. Two of our people had made a large banner with the words of Matthew 28:19 on it. A friend of ours "snapped" us one day when the women's meeting was on the premises and the picture, with appropriate comments, appeared the week before the meetings. We even made the the front page Newfile: "Baptist Church holds its first missionary convention".

So everything was set and we awaited the first session. Would everything be all right on the night or would we be playing to empty houses?

Response

Church members surprised us by turning out in good numbers. Some even came on all three evenings. The speakers offered us a good and varied ministry. David Grainger, Principal of St. Andrew's Hall, spoke about Acts 10-13 about the start of the Gentile mission; and Bill Nicholls of the local Bible Society Action Group then focussed our thoughts on Africa's need for the Scriptures. On the following night, Michael Sheard showed slides of growing churches in Sarawak and Don Williams, recently returned from India and Nepal, spoke about God's

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healing work among leprosy sufferers there and in Nigeria. It lifted our hearts and informed our minds.

Peter Briggs, on the final evening, helped us consider the gap between ourselves and the poor of the world and Marlin Summers of Wolverhampton challenged us to get moving and adopt mission as a life-style rather than a hobby. So we had reason to praise God for the teaching given and the vision offered. We sold quite a number of books. People complimented us on the banner and suggested further places where people might be glad to use it.

There were disappointments. Few of the town churches, apart from one Methodist congregation, put in an appearance, although some of the South Staffs Baptists came. Not one local minister came. Some of our congregation, whom we had expected to come, stayed away. So our rejoicing was tempered with sadness. It made me realise that we still have a long way to go before our people are world-mission minded. It is still the withered arm of the home church.

However, people expressed their appreciation. We planted seeds in their minds. Perhaps they will organise their own conventions later. In any case we always have to walk by faith, not sight, and we can trust God to fulfil his purpose in His own way.

Part of this may be to inspire you to do something similar. You do not need to emulate Keswick or Spring Harvest to be successful. Your own area can provide enough resources. Small can be beautiful.

Fred Stainthorpe.

Theology of Blessing

A couple of years ago I attended a Mainstream conference at Gorsley Baptist Church. The theme was, "Preaching the Old Testament". The speaker was Rev. Dick Lucas. The conference involved detailed study of several Old Testament passages and the use made of them in the New Testament. However, the highlight of the conference was the final session. At the height of a glorious spell of summer weather that week, we decided to congregate outside for our final discussion session. The only convenient place happened to be the graveyard! When we had gathered together Dick Lucas asked a question. "If you could remove one word or phrase from theological jargon what would it be?" There were several suggestions. But, far and away the most popular choice worthy of the incinerator was the word "blessing".

Many of us have, I'm sure, become heartily tired of this rather glib phrase, or its verbal form, being trotted out in Christian circles with monotonous regularity. "Lord, we pray that you'll just bless Aunt Edith...", "Oh God, we ask for an outpouring of your blessing upon...". Quite often it has become a weapon of last resort. Whenever we are momentarily stuck for a plea or petition in the midst of extempore prayer, we can always fall back upon "blessing" as a sure way of receiving an approving "Amen" from our fellow worshippers. The phrase has become banal: devoid of any real meaning.

It was some time after this conference at Gorsley, however, when I came to realise that perhaps the idea of blessing was one that was worth re-examining. This realisation came about through an examination of "blessing" in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament and Barak

The Hebrew verb *barak* (to bless) can be used to address God in the sense of adoration. "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem". (Gen 9:26) It is also used by one man addressing another as when Melchizedek blessed Abram (Gen 14:19). Moreover, it is also used by God when addressing his creation in general – ("God blessed them and said, Be fruitful and multiply .."Gen 1:22) – or when addressing man in particular – ("God blessed Noah and his sons saying, Be fruitful and multiply.." Gen 9:1). Whenever it is used, however, the Hebrew, *barak*, is quite clearly an active principle. It is dynamic. There is nothing glib, trite or banal about the word. When God blesses someone it is seen as his favour resting upon them. When God blessed the latter part of Job's life (Job 42:12) it was a reversal of all the misery that had previously afflicted the wretched Job. God's favour returned to him, and his prosperity recovered.

Perhaps, however, two episodes in the Old Testament which convey something of the power and spiritual significance behind the Hebrew, *barak*, are the accounts in Genesis 27 of Isaac blessing Jacob, and in Numbers 23 & 24 of Balaam blessing Israel.

In Genesis 27 we are introduced to the aged and blind Isaac. He has two sons, Jacob, the younger, and Esau, the elder. According to tradition and Isaac's will it is to Esau that the Patriarchal blessing must come, and with it all the promises that God made to Abraham. Isaac summons Esau before him saying, "Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die" (v2). Jacob, however, aided and abetted by his mother, Rebekah, sets out to deceive Isaac and to gain the blessing for himself. Armed with Esau's clothes, goatskin over his neck and arms, and with some tasty food hastily prepared by his mother, Jacob enters his father's tent and feigns to be Esau. Despite Isaac's initial suspicions, the deception works, and the old man blesses the wrong son:-

"May God give you of heaven's dew
and of earth's richness –
an abundance of grain and new wine.
May nations serve you
and peoples bow down to you.
Be lord over your brothers,
and may the sons of your mother
bow down to you.
May those who curse you be cursed
and those who bless you be blessed." (Gen 27:28-29)

What is of most interest, however, in regard to our understanding of "blessing" is the aftermath. When both Esau and Isaac realise what has happened they are distraught. Esau pleads for a separate blessing from his father. But Isaac's distress at the deception of his son is compounded by the fact that the blessing he has imparted upon Jacob is somehow irrevocable. Although he now realises

the trickery of his son, having once brought God's blessing upon Jacob there is no way he can remove it. The blessing is permanent. Though Esau persists with his father for some blessing, reluctantly Isaac can only say to his son:-

"Your dwelling will be away from the earth's richness
away from the dew of heaven above.
You will live by the sword
and you will serve your brother."

The dynamic nature of the blessing was such that once it had been uttered, and God's favour secured, there was no way of retracting it.

In Numbers 23 & 24 we have a similar crisis. Balak, King of Moab, in his war against Israel, has tried to enlist the support of Balaam, son of Beor. Balak appeals to Balaam to curse the people of Israel so that victory for Moab will be guaranteed. The ploy backfires as Balaam delivers one oracle after another blessing Israel, not cursing them. As Balak hears the first blessing he cries out in distress realising the enormity of what Balaam has just done: "Balak said to Balaam, 'What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies, but you have done nothing but bless them'." (Num 23:11) Balak recognised that a blessing upon Israel would inevitably mean defeat for Moab.

Balak tried a second time to get Balaam to curse Israel. But on hearing only a blessing Balak cries out, "Neither curse them at all nor bless them at all". (23:25) Balak would rather Balaam say nothing at all than utter a blessing upon Israel which would mean doom for Moab. So that when, on a third occasion, Balaam blesses Israel Balak felt that he had no option but to send Balaam packing.

"Then Balak's anger burned against Balaam. He struck his hands together and said to him, 'I summoned you to curse my enemies, but you have blessed them these three times. Now leave at once and go home!'" (24:10-11)

The blessing of God was bound to result in success, prosperity and joy. Balak's hope of securing this blessing for himself had backfired. Instead, Balaam's fourth oracle declares that Moab will be crushed while Israel will grow strong. The people whom God blesses will be blessed indeed.

The Blessing in the Church

Having looked then at the significance of the verb barak within the Old Testament, and the dynamic effect it had, let us see how this can be translated into our situation. If the idea of blessing is far more than a glib piece of theological jargon but is rather securing God's favour – a guarantee of His abiding presence – then this should have quite an influence upon our use of God's blessing in the church today.

It can, of course, bring tremendous significance to the Infant Dedication Service. After we have read the introductory sentences and statement, and after we have heard the promises of both the parents and the church, surely the climax of that Service is the blessing uttered by the minister. As the minister places his hand upon the child she/he will say:-



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“The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you; The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you his peace”.

In the same way that Jesus took the little children in his arms and blessed them (Mark 10:16), so too the minister at that moment in the Dedication Service is asking God’s presence and favour to rest upon that child, bringing to her/him the health, prosperity and joy that were associated with the Hebrew, barak. The Infant Dedication Service, which can so easily be devoid of any true meaning can be given a whole new lease of life if we discover afresh the significance of asking God’s blessing upon the child. A quaint ceremony has become the occasion at which we ask God to involve Himself in the life of this child, with all that entails. This renewed understanding of the dedication can resurrect the Service for not only the minister, but also for the parents and the church if we spell out properly the significance of what we are doing.

Similarly, this renewed understanding of blessing can become very significant during both the Marriage Service and Christian Baptism. As we pray God’s blessing upon the married couple or the baptismal candidates we are asking God to be involved with them in a very special way; protecting them; keeping them safe. We are asking God to help the married couple grow in understanding and love for one another. We are asking God to help the baptismal candidate grow in her/his faith and love for their Lord. We are asking God to be on their side.

Moreover this understanding of the theology of blessing can also have a very liberating effect upon the way in which we conduct that most regular, yet often neglected, aspect of our weekly services – the benediction. We have met with God. We have sung His praise and offered Him worship. We have heard the word, written and spoken. We have offered our prayers. But now as we prepare to end our worship, and prepare to move out into the world outside one thing remains to be said:-

“And now may the blessing of God almighty; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us all this day and forever more”. Amen

No Service is quite complete without asking for the blessing of God – His favour, love, protection and presence – to go out into the week ahead. As we pronounce the blessing we are committing the people into God’s care for another week, asking that once again He would be intimately involved in our lives and favourably disposed towards us.

The word, “blessing”, is not one to be stricken from our theological vocabulary. Rather, it is a word to be rediscovered with all its ancient power and significance, and restored again to its proper place in Christian worship

Stephen Greasley



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The Course

The MasterLife one week workshop is advertised as a teaching overview of the course for Pastors and Leaders. It is designed to initiate into the methods and materials of the MasterLife discipleship training process, but there are benefits even if one does not immediately inaugurate the programme in the local church.

During the week there is a mixture of experiencing the study materials, and instruction on introducing the course to a local church. Thus while attending the Leaders' Workshop, the leader is himself challenged as a student and disciple of Christ.

The MasterLife course is intended to last 26 weeks or if taken more slowly, it lasts for a year. It is material for committed Christians to develop their discipleship in the areas of life in Christ, knowledge and application of the Bible, praying with faith, fellowship, witness in the world and service. The methods and materials were worked out by Avery T. Willis Junior while serving the Church in the Philippines. He then developed the course for use by the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board, USA. The principles of MasterLife include: doing as Jesus did, group discipleship and support, a church-centred programme, a scripture base and leaders modelling the roles to be followed. The six months course is called a 'process' partly because it is intended that lessons learned will be applied day by day and this would include sharing the course with others; graduates of MasterLife are intended to become new group leaders. Commitment to the course involves about an hour each day to complete assignments.

The week's Workshop gives the attender a very full programme which is a selection from the Bible studies and presentations of the total course. The challenge of Christ: "Follow me" is reiterated and then the basics of one's spiritual life are sifted through with studies on your personal spiritual state, the use of a quiet time and time in general, and the "disciple's personality" is rediscovered. Many of the areas covered (such as evangelism) should be "old-hat" to a pastor but some may be found not so. Certainly the challenge of Christ and the scriptures should come through to the most seasoned church leaders if only because the Bible is constantly open and studied.

The Workshop presentation was very good and the use of media equipment would give instruction on communication to most pastors. Leaders who have experienced the material are used in the small groups during the week. Having these men and women present prevents the assumption that MasterLife is merely a singular, slick presentation. These co-leaders have already overcome some weaknesses within it, in their local church.

Evaluation

The main problem with the material seems to be the question of who it is intended for. If the material is intended to produce leaders, should only people

THE BAPTIST INSURANCE COMPANY P.L.C.
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To the Readers of the Fraternal.

Dear Friends,

In my letter which appeared in the issue of last January I referred to the many agency accounts held with this Company in the names of Church Officers.

Over the past few months we have been writing to the majority of these Officers explaining that we have transferred the agency into the name of the Church to ease administration wherever there is a change of office bearer. We have taken the opportunity to enclose a copy of the Code of practice for all Intermediaries which, as members of the Association of British Insurers we are asked to bring to the attention of our agents.

As Company Agents acting only for us in this capacity we accept responsibility for the manner in which the agency is conducted and the Certificate we issue confirms this.

I mentioned in my previous letter that we seek only an introduction to Church members who express an interest in placing insurances with us. We will provide information and service thereafter. I would like to record our appreciation of the loyalty and support given by so many Church Officers over all the years this Company has been in existence.

Yours sincerely,

M.E. PURVER

considered "leadership material" do the course? The Workshop week was crammed full with a variety of studies so that even the "prayer retreat" was hurried. Does this mean people in the churches will have difficulty finding the time to do it? The materials are expensive: won't this exclude some people or churches? Isn't the material a little one-tracked to involve a whole church? As a week's study leave, is it the best a pastor can do with the opportunity?

I understand that there is enough room in MasterLife for the local leader to make it applicable to the people he is working with; that is necessary and good. There is a degree of discipleship required to start the course and that will include finding the time and perhaps the money (though a church could sponsor some people's costs).

Having completed the Workshop (June 20-24 1988) I now have a useful resource to help build up the church. Though the week was pleasant with good friendship, good food and the beautiful Yorkshire scenery, I could hardly recommend it as a holiday; it is a little bit too much like work. I can recommend it as study leave – a useful time for a pastor and his church. So much concentrated Bible study and discussion ought at least produce a few sermons, but the probability is it will yield a closer walk with God for the pastor and better equipped disciples of Jesus in his church. I have already benefitted from some of this and I hope for more benefits in the future.

Dane Baker

Schweitzer's Enduring Contribution

Albert Schweitzer is remembered for many different reasons.¹ His life of 90 plus years was filled with rich contributions in a variety of fields. For some it is his musical talents which are remembered. His masterly interpretation of Bach's organ works remains one of the classics of the field and his biography on Bach is still in print even today. For others his philosophical and ethical systems of thought remain his greatest contribution. His respect for the "Reverence of Life" goes far in summarising much of the major concerns of his life and has experienced something of a revival among ecologically minded groups today. It should not be forgotten that he was one of the very first public figures to speak out against nuclear weapons, at a time when it was far from popular to do so. His Nobel Peace Prize address in 1953 was given over to addressing this theme.

For most people, however, I suspect that Schweitzer is best remembered for his selfless service as a missionary medical doctor in Africa. Ask the average person on the street to describe Schweitzer and the image most likely given is one of an elderly man dressed in white, wearing a campaign helmet to protect himself from the sun, and hiding his face behind a bushy moustache. People still respect this side of Schweitzer's memory even though they have little understanding of the inner working of his mind which led him to the sacrificial life in Africa. For myself, I must admit that all of these aspects of Schweitzer's personality help to make him an attractive personality for me. His sheer versatility and breadth of accomplishment is magnetic in itself. However, it is his work within the area of New Testament interpretation which fascinates me most of all, probably because of its comprehensiveness and the fact that it prepared the ground for all of the other fields of study in which Schweitzer excelled.

It is proper to stress that in many ways Schweitzer's first and most enduring impact has been within the field of Biblical studies. It should not be forgotten that his first Doctorate was a study of the eschatological teaching of Jesus and that his first publications were major studies into the New Testament writings. Schweitzer's books on the New Testament have had an enormous impact; it is true to say that his revolutionary work on the subject of eschatology sent shock waves through the field of Biblical studies which are still being felt today – nearly 85 years after they first appeared in print. I hope that we will remember that alongside Schweitzer's many talents and humanitarian contributions which rightly earn him a place in the annals of history, he also stands as a first-rate interpreter of the New Testament. It would be very hard to overestimate the importance of his work in the area.²

This is not to suggest that Schweitzer's work has been uncriticised. A lot of water has passed under the theological bridge since Schweitzer began writing his study of Jesus and it is necessary that his views be modified and clarified in the light of subsequent developments within New Testament scholarship. Yet Schweitzer's name remains a staple within serious theological studies today. Most who have any theological training know that he is a watershed but few have really bothered to read his books and discover *why* he was so important. He is often too easily dismissed as being a writer of "the past century" and we rob ourselves of the joy of discovering his contributions and realising that he was a "trailblazer" who opened up a whole new theological continent which had up until that time been unexplored. Here I would like to make a small attempt at redressing that imbalance and briefly introduce Schweitzer's work to those who are uninitiated, or perhaps confused, or even simply curious.

1. Schweitzer and "Consequential Eschatology"

Schweitzer wrote four major books dealing with New Testament studies. They all have as their common theme the importance of eschatology as a means of understanding the true message of the New Testament. The four books were all written in German but quickly translated into English and are, in chronological order of publication:

1. *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God* (1901)
2. *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1906)
3. *Paul and His Interpreters* (1911)
4. *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (1931)

As will easily be seen by the titles, the first two books deal with Jesus and His relationship to eschatology while the second two deal with Paul and his relationship to the same subject. The second and third books are critiques of scholarly interpretations of Jesus and Paul respectively. Two comments are needed to set the books in proper perspective. First, we should recognise how important it is for us to understand that Paul is, in Schweitzer's work, a logical extension of Jesus insofar as the question of eschatology is concerned. That is to say, that for Schweitzer the Pauline studies are necessary as a bridge of explanation between the Jesus material at the inception of the Christian faith and the more ecclesiastical Christianity of the second century. According to Schweitzer, Paul shared much of Jesus' understanding of the coming Kingdom of God and yet, by his own writings, paved the way for the gradual "Hellenization" of the gospel message and thereby ensured its success as a religious movement among later generations.³

Secondly, some mention must be made of the fact that there is a 19 year gap between the publication of *Paul and His Interpreters* and *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*. This time-lag is potentially misleading and we might be tempted to think that the latter book was written much later. This is not the case. *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* belongs to the same period as the earlier works and was very nearly ready for publication itself in 1911. It was only the pressures of a very busy schedule, combined with ill-health, which prevented its earlier appearance. In the end Schweitzer put the finishing touches on the book in 1929 while on his way to Lambaréné, but all four works should be seen as essentially products of a single fertile period in Schweitzer's life. All are thus works dated prior to the First World War.

As is well known, the major contribution of Schweitzer to New Testament studies is his insistence upon the importance of eschatology for correctly interpreting the life and ministry of Jesus. A crucial question here involves the nature of the Kingdom of God and Jesus' understanding of that Kingdom. Basically, Schweitzer emphasized Jesus' dependence upon Jewish apocalyptic forms of the day to help explain this relationship. We must remember that, according to Schweitzer, Jesus rejected both the nationalistic, material kingdom which focussed on a Davidic king ruling in Jerusalem over an earthly kingdom, as well as a purely spiritual kingdom which focussed on the present spiritual rule of Christ in the world. Instead Schweitzer said that Jesus set forth an understanding of the Kingdom of God which was based upon conventional Jewish apocalyptic forms, a Kingdom of God which did not belong to this world at all. Thus Jesus taught, so Schweitzer argues, a belief in the imminent end of this present Age and its replacement by a New Heaven and a New Earth.

Schweitzer based this interpretation upon four major Jewish apocalyptic texts: Psalms of Solomon; 4 Ezra; 2 Baruch and 1 Enoch. Taken together, these documents provided the framework for constructing a "late-Jewish" apocalyptic viewpoint about the imminent Kingdom of God. Jesus was thought to conform, in large part, to such an interpretation and most of his distinctive teaching is reflective of these ideas. For instance, Jesus' ethical teaching (his so called "interim-ethics") is only understandable with the backdrop of an apocalyptic world-view. In short, it is this apocalyptic understanding of the end of the world which is at the heart of both Jesus's and Paul's message of salvation. Paul is essentially seen by Schweitzer to conform to the pattern set by Jesus with respect to the apocalyptic view-point and modifies the teaching of Jesus only slightly as a result of the Christ-event.

Schweitzer's Abiding Impact

We might be tempted to ask why Schweitzer's interpretation of the message of Jesus was so accepted and earth-shattering? Several factors must be pointed to as helping to explain this fact. First of all, we cannot over-estimate the powerful way in which Schweitzer wrote his books. His style and eloquent use of language did much to spread his ideas. Secondly, the historical situation of despair following World War 1 seemed to justify and support the apocalyptic interpretation of history and undermined the naïve liberalism which said that society was inexorably progressing to a greater good. Most importantly, the fact that Schweitzer's ideas on New Testament eschatology became integrated within his own ethical and philosophical systems of thought is very important. More specifically, the fact that his life style reflected that integration is of prime importance. His

commitment to a life of sacrificial service in Africa stands out in the minds of virtually all who knew of his life. Such dedication to humanitarian causes meant people were willing to read and grapple with his thought just because of *who* he was. I have no doubt that his writings on the New Testament enjoyed a wider audience because of his across-the-boards appeal as the humanitarian doctor in Africa.

Perhaps it is at this point that we need to consider Schweitzer's abiding importance for us today in 1989. It is far too easy to remember him *only* as a New Testament scholar; or *only* as a musician; or *only* as a dedicated physician in Africa. To approach him in this way is to do him a great disservice. He was a complex, brilliant individual. But we must not forget that he was a man who was forced to integrate the various concerns of his life just like any of the rest of us. If we are to appreciate him wholly we must struggle to understand how all of the concerns of his life were woven together to form the beautiful tapestry that it was. Each of us has the responsibility of approaching Schweitzer in all of his fullness, not to idolize him or refuse to admit that areas of his teaching, such as his faulty eschatological viewpoint, were beset with inadequacies. Nor can we sit idly by and allow shamefully poisoned attitudes about him³ warp our evaluation of him as an individual. It saddens me to meet many in America and Great Britain who carry an imbalanced view of Schweitzer and describe him as a dictatorial recluse who was obsessed only with his own self-worth. It is so easy to condemn him from our privileged position in the 1980's and forget that he first went to Africa nearly 75 years ago. It is hardly fair to judge him and the hospital in Lambaréné by modern medical standards.⁴

If you and I are to discover what it was that motivated Schweitzer, what it was that drove him to accomplish so very much within his 90 plus years, we must do our best to understand how the various concerns of his life and thought fitted together. We should rightly remember the importance of his eschatological studies within the history of New Testament scholarship, even if some of his ideas are now known not to have been entirely correct, even false. But we must also stress the important place such thought had within the life and service of Schweitzer himself. I doubt very much if we can properly appreciate Schweitzer's very important humanitarian contributions without understanding his own religious experience, and the conception of Jesus' call, which helped to shape them. Schweitzer's decision to dedicate his life in Africa was part and parcel of his understanding of Jesus' place as an ethical model, as any cursory reading of his books on the subject will confirm. One of the most moving passages which demonstrates this to me is the description of his performing an operation to relieve a native from the agony of a strangulated hernia. Schweitzer describes the scene thus:⁵ "The operation is finished, and in the hardly lighted dormitory, I watch for the sick man's awakening. Scarcely has he recovered consciousness when he stares about him and ejaculates again and again: "I've no more pain! I've no more pain!!" ..His hands feel for mine and will no let it go. Then I begin to tell him and the others in the room that it is the Lord Jesus who has told the doctor and his wife to come to Ogowe, and that white people in Europe give them the money to live here and cure the sick negroes. Then I have to answer questions as to who these white people are, where they live, and how they know that the natives suffer so much from sickness. The African sun is shining through the coffee bushes into the dark shed, but we, black and white, sit side by side and feel that we know by experience the meaning of the words: "And all ye are brethren" (Matt 23:8.)" We may level all sorts of criticisms against Schweitzer's neo-imper-

ialism as expressed in the passage, but we must remember that it was written in 1914! I still find the pathos of the scene undeniably powerful and compelling.

In a very real way Schweitzer threw himself on his own "wheel of destiny" and was motivated to do so by his understanding of what was timeless (and demanding) within the message of Jesus. In this way Schweitzer serves as a complex man who deserves not only our criticism, but our praise, respect and emulation. At least he was not afraid to put his faith into action, a lesson we all could stand to re-learn.

In an age where New Testament scholars have become professional researchers, like factories which produce bricks to be used by others in constructing buildings, it is nice to reflect upon one who was not only an expert at producing the bricks themselves, but a mason who attempted to build with the raw materials of his studies of the Gospel and construct a temple to God out of his life. He stands as one who was concerned with making his Christian commitments extend beyond mere study of the Gospels and Epistles and as such deserves continuing interest on our behalf.

Footnotes

1. The best biography on Schweitzer in English is now James Brabazon's *Albert Schweitzer: A Comprehensive Biography*, (Victor Gollancz: London) 1976

2. For an excellent summary of Schweitzer's contribution to New Testament studies see C.K. Barrett, *Albert Schweitzer and the New Testament* ExpT 87 (1975-6) pp 4-10.

3. Such as those expressed in Gerald McKnight, *Verdict on Schweitzer* (1964). This book has had an impact way beyond its value.

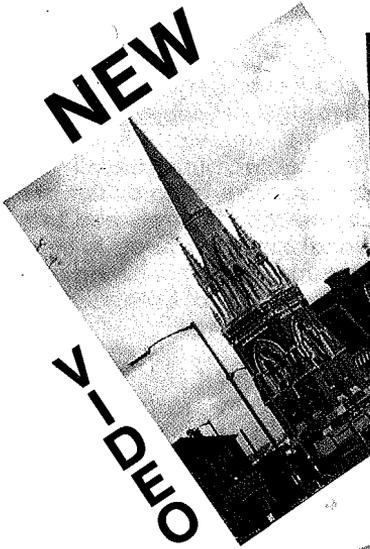
4. Even Don Cupitt's segment on Schweitzer in his BBC documentary entitled *Sea of Faith* , despite its fairly accurate description of Schweitzer's contribution to the history of Biblical scholarship. falls into the trap of anachronistically judging Schweitzer's medical work in Lambaréné.

5. *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest* (Fontana: London 1956) p71.

This paper is a slightly emended version of a lecture given on 16 June 1985 at the 13th annual "Johannistreffen" held at Schweitzer's home in Gunsbach, France. It was prepared in honour of the 75th anniversary of the publication of *Paul and His Interpreters* . I would like to record my thanks to the Maison Albert Schweitzer for their invitation to attend the meeting.

Larry Kreitzer

NEW

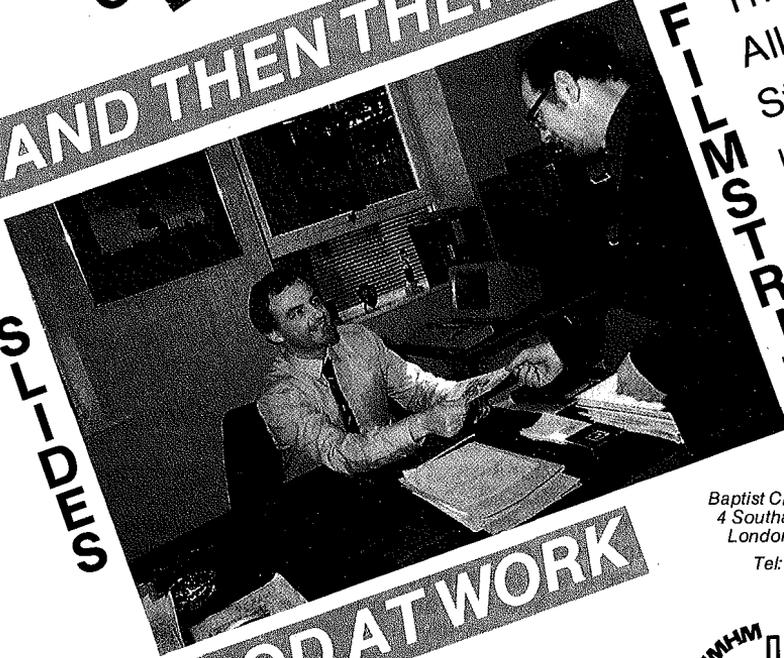


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**And there's more from
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Restoring Lapsed Christians

Many concerned Christians will note with sadness how over one million Church members have been lost to the British Churches during the last decade.

I am researching not only the reasons why these losses occur, but especially how it is that lapsed Christians are being restored to faith. In concentrating on this area of Restoration Growth, I should like to hear from anyone who has returned to an active faith and invite them to take part in a national survey. I hope to make available the results of my findings as a contribution to a better understanding of effective Evangelism and Discipleship prior to the coming decade of Evangelism.

Rev Derek Wensley
British Church Growth Association
Council Member
C/O 107-113 Stanstead Road
Forest Hill
London SE23 1HH

Book Reviews

People of the Book? John Barton: (SPCK 1988.112pp, 4.95)

I enjoyed reading this short but stimulating, and thought provoking book, subtitled: "The Authority of the Bible in Christianity". It offers old arguments in fresh ways. It is novel in its approach, it is enthusiastic for its subject, and, within the limits imposed, comprehensive.

This author has a deep love for the Bible and a high estimate of its authority and its essential place in the Church; but he is no Fundamentalist. On the contrary, this writer is a liberal who, believing very much in the Word, strongly objects to the Fundamentalists claiming to be the only ones who truly appreciate the Bible as God's Word. This book is an apologia for a critico-historical approach to Scripture as the one which does most justice to the witness of the Bible itself.

In a brilliant tour de force, he employs seven arguments used by Fundamentalists to support their high view of scripture, and shows that only as one adopts a critical approach can one bring out the best in these arguments. For example, he looks at the attitude of Jesus and St. Paul to the Bible, and shows, convincingly, that only as you recognise the ambiguity or tension in their attitudes can you fully understand their views. On the one hand, both accept the Bible as God's Word, inspired and authoritative and yet on the other, they are both so free in rejecting aspects of the teaching or interpreting it quite freely.

In other chapters he looks at the argument from prophecy and its fulfilment, at the place of the Canon as a guide to Biblical authority, and so on. Each time he offers an interpretation that *does not* require a supernaturalist understanding of inspiration.

He says he owes a lot to the writings on the Bible of James Barr, but he differs from Barr in that he is less consistently polemical. In this published version of the Bampton Lectures, John Barton, who is the University Lecturer in Old Testament at Cross College, Oxford, does something special for this reviewer. His book has enabled me to lay once and for all the ghost of needing to accept a Bible that in some ways is so inspired and unique that it is not, in whole or parts, human. Somehow or other, many of us who have no antennae to pick up Fundamentalist waves whatever, still hold to a superstitious belief that the Bible needs to be treated with kid clothes lest we sin against God. Barton offers a strong case on critical grounds for accepting an authoritative Bible without the need for a view of inspiration other than that which other books have or human nature can provide.

This book will clearly strengthen the presuppositions of folk like myself; but I think any Fundamentalist will learn a great deal from this work. I now want to read other works by this man!

George R. Neal

Persecution: A "Today's World" discussion paper: Baptist Men's Movement Current Affairs Committee. 25p.

This is a most worthwhile six page pamphlet on a subject which, unfortunately, is still all-too-relevant in our modern world. It concentrates on the persecution of fellow-Christians, but readily recognises the widespread nature of political and religious persecution and our Christian responsibility towards all who suffer in this way. It indicates that there are many thousands at this very moment who are being persecuted for their beliefs in over a hundred different countries. The actual form that persecution may take varies greatly from place to place, but always it is a denial of human rights and a betrayal of human dignity.

Helpful suggestions are made concerning ways in which we can be practically involved in the removal of this terrible blight on humanity. Scripture passages, topics for discussion, suggestions for further reading and the names and addresses of helpful organisations round off a most useful pamphlet which should provide a helpful tool for use in discussion groups and other similar gatherings.

David S. Russell

Twenty Questions about Healing: by Morris Maddocks. (SPCK, 1988, 144pp, 2.95)

No doubt a theologian would wish for fewer questions and deeper answers from a person of Morris Maddocks's knowledge and standing. But these are questions which are constantly asked, and the book is an attempt to give direct and simple answers. As such it is a very useful book for the church bookstall; for those asking "What is healing?", "What should we expect?", "How do we pray?". Liturgical and less traditional methods of healing are explained. The problem of special gifts and the need for intercession, prayer and loving care are all examined. A chapter on resources available to the Church in the healing ministry is valuable. The background is evangelical, and the deeply devotional character of the writer shines through. Therefore his advice on intercession and prayer are particularly helpful. The place given to the laity in the healing ministry

is much in keeping with the view that the pastoral ministry can no longer be a one man task, but must be shared. Some Free Church people might have reservations about the efficacy of the sacraments, but we would do well to consider their importance. I find it hard to accept suffering as a method of divine teaching, preferring to identify some human suffering as part of Christ's ongoing redemptive suffering.

The book is especially good on the need for churches to be open and usable by the Spirit, involving the discipline of careful devotional preparation, rather than focussing on special gifts and wonders.

Leonard C. Wilson

The Anointed Community: by Gary M. Burge. (Eerdmans, 1987 269pp, 15.50)

The place that the Spirit/Paraclete has within Johannine materials in the New Testament has perplexed (and delighted!) students of scripture for years. Here we have the first full-length treatment of this complex subject by a judicious and competent scholar; the first such study to appear in English since Barrett's *The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition* (1966). Dr Burge's work is a revised version of his PhD thesis pursued under Professor J.D.G. Dunn – a fact which provides some index into its depth, quality and pastoral aims. It is a highly readable book with convenient summaries and helpful charts which help guide the reader through the maze of questions related to John's doctrine of the Spirit. It is subtitled: "The Holy Spirit in the Johannine tradition".

Dr Burge divides his study into two major parts: 1) The Paraclete and Pneumatology. 2) The Holy Spirit in John. There are five major chapters which cover between them almost all of the critical issues of the topic. For instance, included in the second section is a chapter on "The Spirit and the Sacraments" in which Dr Burge attempts to unravel the precise attitude that John's Gospel has to baptism and the eucharist (is he essentially "sacramental" or "anti-sacramental"?) Here the focal passages are John 3 (on baptism) and John 6 (on eucharist); an extended discussion of the meaning of John 3:3-5 is particularly helpful. The cryptic passage of John 20:22 is also the subject of a major discussion with Dr Burge declaring in the end that "The Fourth Evangelist considered John 20:22 to be the fulfillment of his expectation so carefully developed in the Farewell Discourses...the insufflation is the climax of the disciples' relation with Jesus"(p 149). Thus, John's doctrine of the Spirit is seen as the key to his resolution of the tension between realised eschatology and future eschatology which is evident in the Johannine writings.

The book will serve as a stimulating study of the Gospel of John and will also gently guide the interested student through the major trends of Johannine research which have taken place in recent years. The footnotes are exhaustive, yet the reader will find that he or she will be continually driven to consider the biblical text itself. Be warned: you will need to use your Greek to take best advantage of the book. Few books can claim to make a genuine contribution to research while, at the same time, providing a sensible, thoughtful aid to the meaning of that research for the Church today. This one does, and it is well worth the investment of the serious pastor who is grappling with these questions.

Helplessness and Hope: by Bruce D. Rumbold. (SCM,1986, 160pp, 5.95)

Can any good thing come out of Australia? "Neighbours"? Helplessness and hope? if not the former, then certainly the latter. Bruce Rumbold is Professor of Pastoral Studies at Whitley College, the Baptist College of Victoria. The book, however, had its origin in work undertaken during a two year stay in the Department of Social and Pastoral Theology in the University of Manchester. It is subtitled: "Pastoral Care in Terminal Illness"

Most of us will die in an institution (hospital, hospice, nursing home etc); our care in the hands of professional carers. The author offers a critique of our present methods of terminal care, identifying some major inadequacies and also suggesting approaches which may lead to improvements.

The 160 pages of this book may suggest it is lightweight: do not be deceived. It is packed with insight and fresh thinking, and while it is not intended to develop strategies in detail, it does offer many practical ideas for a way ahead. The considerable experience of the writer shows through, though it is never paraded, and the approach is such that it would be a significant value to many others working in this field who are not "Christian carers".

Chapters include, Hope, Dying Well, Better Terminal Care, with splendid attention given to Pastoral Perspectives. An appendix gives four Reflexion Exercises, "a la Ignatius Loyola", on considering our own deaths, and the values we say we live by.

The biblical perspective is never lost, neither the insights learned from other disciplines, and the reminder that the roots of our present caring system has its roots in the values and methods of the pastoral tradition of the church.

The future of the Hospice Movement is given an interesting review, and the book ends: "Fundamentally what is needed is more people to become involved in a journey of self-discovery as helpers, searching for new directions, exploring alternatives". Professionals are not let off easily — we as ministers are among them, and need this kind of spur to our thinking and practice.

I am buying another copy for a friend who is a McMillan Nurse. She is not having this one.

David Hoskins

***Get Together: by Frank Cooke and Brenda Piper (Longman)
Students' Assembly Book (1988, 144 hymns/songs, 2.95)
Teachers' Assembly Book (1987, 228pp, 10.95)
Teachers' Music Book (1988, 144 hymns/songs, 10.95)***

This attractive package of School Assembly material is presented by Rev Frank Cooke, minister of Andover Baptist Church, in conjunction with a colleague, Brenda Piper. His background and experience in the work amongst young people are worthy qualifications to commend this contribution among the variety of material already available.

All those called upon to conduct the school Act of Worship are always on the look-out for this sort of resource. This package, however, is not for the person in a hurry, who seeks a quick answer to producing an assembly at a relatively late hour. To be used well it does require careful preparation and a series of value judgments to do the material justice. There are thirty wide ranging themes from "Why Praise God?" to the intriguing "Knowitallitis". It includes practical school topics like "Facing Examinations", whilst observing all the major Christian Festivals. Each theme is presented in two forms, for the full School Assembly and the smaller gathering. There is also additional material and useful addresses for those who have long term planning in mind.

The music contribution in the form of the Teachers' Music Book and the Students' Assembly Book, have been skilfully compiled in an age where there is a wealth of material dispersed among many sources. Old and new are well represented in the 144 songs and hymns chosen. Recorder parts are included in the simplified accompaniments. The music, generally, is most manageable.

In the new Education climate with a return to the Christian emphases, this material will be most welcome and fill important gaps. Ministers can confidently direct the attention of teachers in their congregations to these worthy books. Youth leaders will certainly find much work already done for them if they are seeking "audience participation". Ministers will find the Teachers' Book useful for those first ten minutes of Sunday morning worship!

Alan Tetlow

Books Also Received

- Growing Older* by Una Kroll (Fount 2.95)
- God's World (Doctrine of Creation)* by Trevor Huddleston (Fount 2.95)
- Good Night Lord (Meditations)* by Georgette Butcher (Fount 2.50)
- Christian Faith (Systematic Theology)* by Hendrikus Berkhof (Eerdmans/Paternoster 24.55)
- The Measure of a Man (Meditations)* by Martin Luther King (Fount 1.95)
- Letters (to Giovanni Calabria)* by C.S. Lewis (Collins 10.95)
- Sharing Surprises (Reflections)* by Rita Snowden (Fount 2.50)
- Conversion (A Spiritual Journey)* by Malcolm Muggeridge (Fount 2.95)
- Invisible Network (T.V. Ministry)* by Frank Wright (Fount 2.95)
- A Call to Witness (Matthew's Gospel)* by Oliver McTernan (Fount 2.50)
- Through the Year with Francis of Assisi* by Murray Bodo (Fount 3.50)
- Love and Marriage (Anthology)* by Anne Townsend (Collins 5.95)
- Letters (Collected)* by C.S. Lewis (Fount 5.95)
- Being in Love (Prayer)* by William Johnston (Collins 10.95)
- Hidden Hands (Child Workers)* ed. Peter Stanford (Fount 2.50)
- The Great God Robbery (Apologetics)* by George Carey (Fount 2.95)
- Lenten Lands (Memories of C.S. Lewis)* by Douglas Gresham (Collins 12.95)
- Mere Christianity (Apologetics)* by C.S. Lewis (Collins 10.95)
- Accept This Offering (Theology of Eucharist)* by Kenneth Stevenson (SPCK 3.95)
- The Guide to the Here and the Hereafter (Jewish Spirituality)* by Lionel Blue (Fount 3.50)
- The Evangelism Cookbook ("Hands On" Evangelism)* by Derek Cook (Paternoster 2.95)

Living with Contradiction (St Benedict) by Esther de Waal (Fount 2.95)
Seeking the Face of God (Prayer) by William Shannon (Fount 4.95)
Mastering Sadhana (Memories of Anthony de Mello) by Carlos Valles (Fount 3.95)
From East to West (Eastern Spirituality) by Brigid Marlin (Fount 3.95)
The Dark Face of Reality (Self Awareness) by Martin Israel (Fount 2.95)
Friendship with God (Lent Book) by David Hope (Fount 2.50)
The Coming of Reality (Advent Worship) by Robert Brown (Milton Keynes Christian Foundation 3.50)
Volunteers: A resource for Your Church by Lesley Edmonds (The Volunteer Centre U.K. 3.50)
Healing Through Caring (Bible Studies) by Howard Booth (Arthur James 1.95)

If any reader would like to review any of the above, we would be glad to hear - Ed.

NEEDED OVERSEAS

ZAIRE

Theology teachers.	Doctors for rural medical centre.
Logistics officer.	Secondary school teacher.
Electrician (short-term).	Nurses for hospital and rural health work.

BRAZIL

Pastoral couples for evangelism, church planting and urban work.
 Hostel parents for missionaries' children.

BANGLADESH

Pastoral couple or Pastor for evangelistic and lay training work.
 A Doctor for a medical centre.

NEPAL

Primary teachers for missionaries' children.

For further information please write to:

**The Personnel Secretary,
 Baptist Missionary Society, 93 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4AA**