

## The Futures of Renewal

Editorial

Where's renewal going? It's an irresistible question. But the answers can only be varied. Just as evangelicals and Baptists have a range of future possibilities before them, even so there are a number of futures for renewal.

So what gives the edge to the question? That's easy. First generation renewal has been around some time now. The early leaders are beginning to get long in the tooth and are needing to hand over the reins. At the same time the fresh sparkle of novelty is increasingly replaced by familiarity. So where next?

### Petering out?

Church history is littered with one generation movements of reform. The first flush of enthusiasm has often waned fast. Even as St Francis of Assisi was dying, his devoted followers planned a building in his honour which would violate his principle of poverty. Spiritual inertia is a mighty force.

Recognition and approval can prove even more stultifying than inertia. When the Anglo-Catholics were at the height of their influence in the Church of England, some were appointed to the Bishops' bench. Others began to wonder when their turn could follow and began to play down their distinctive convictions. Recognition, far from strengthening the hand of radicals, can make them soft as putty. There are signs in some quarters that renewal is being tamed - a new domestication of the Spirit is under way.

Perhaps the worst trap of all is cynicism. The cynic is often a disappointed idealist, who began with hopes that were too naive or too short term. Some thought renewal meant jam today and jam tomorrow, with none of the inner fight of Romans 7 which is at the heart of genuine Christian living. Renewal is a form of revivalism, and every revivalist movement runs the risk of promising the earth just around the next corner. Change in local churches and in denominations is apparent for everyone to see in Britain today, but these things happen neither tidily nor overnight.

### Marginalised?

All reform movements run the same risk. In pursuing reform of existing churches the reformers can end by dividing from one another. It seems reasonable to assume that some will find it irresistible to continue the long tradition of Christian division, separating from existing groupings only to be separated from by others in due course. The secessionist future seems an inevitable minority route. But history suggests that those who suffer in secession often include the seceders themselves, for with their separation their message is often marginalised.

The other route to the margins where movements for reform become increasingly irrelevant is the quest for the exotic. I am in no doubt that, at its best, renewal represents the reclamation of the immanence of God among his people. It is a ➤

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### NEWSLETTER N° 39 - JANUARY 1991

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The Mainstream Newsletter is designed to encourage life and growth among churches within the Baptist Union. On the understanding that contributors are in sympathy with this aim, they have full liberty of expression. Views contained in the newsletter are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Mainstream executive.

decisive corrective to all forms of Christianity, including the "stiff upper lip" school of evangelicalism, which hold to the form of the gospel while denying its power. But a quest for the exotic distorts this sound emphasis on the presence of God. Time and again in Christian history this has led to the twin errors of illuminism and sensationalism.

In illuminism, the Spirit is said to offer a short cut to a "spiritual" knowledge which avoids the disciplines of Bible study and the use of the mind. In sensationalism, particular signs of the presence of the Spirit move to centre stage; the enthusiasts of the movement devote themselves to the special emphasis, gift or phenomenon. Over the years I have heard various gifts or experiences offered as the be-all-and-end-all of Christian living. Real life is more complicated than that. But those locked into the quest for the exotic will move onto the next illusion of ultimacy - the supposed answer to every need.

I believe the quest for the exotic is particularly strong in our culture. Existentialism has made us seekers after new experiences. Television has accustomed us to constant newness and instant gratification. So we often bring to our faith the desire for novel experiences which deliver instant results. But instant spirituality is like instant tea - an insipid imitation of the real thing.

### **Event or truth centred?**

It has been said that classical evangelicalism is truth centred - the glorious and saving truths of the gospel are celebrated and proclaimed - while classical pentecostalism is event centred. This reflects two routes into renewal among evangelicals. For some, the coming of the Spirit swept over them out of the blue, bringing a separation from their previous theology. For others, openness to the Spirit grew out of fresh study of the New Testament. In this second group, renewal was not over against evangelical convictions, but rather a growth into a fuller evangelicalism.

Those whose convictions are experience based will be event centred in their futures for renewal. Those whose commitment to renewal is based on biblical conviction will be truth centred in their Christian living - the events of the coming of the Spirit are then measured by the resultant conformity to Christ, not by tingles down the spine.

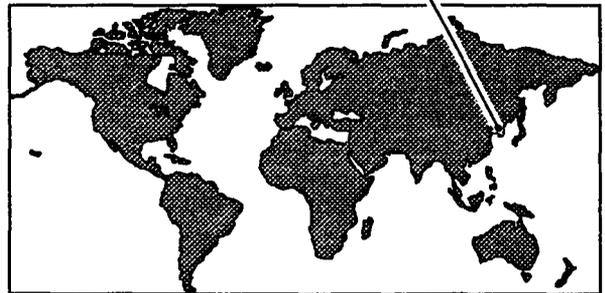
Renewal is the inheritor of the evangelical consensus in Britain today. But the jury is still out on whether it is a worthy inheritor. Renewal must prove that the baby has not been thrown out with the bathwater. We urgently need to see a recovery of biblical preaching. We urgently need to see fuller expression of the Spirit's biblical passion for

both evangelism and justice. We also need to see a recovery of the classical evangelical inheritance: the truth on fire of Wesley and Whitefield, Edwards and Spurgeon.

What futures for renewal? There are many, and more than one will come to pass. But if the finest future of renewal involves taking up the reins of evangelicalism, then that future entails a recovery of evangelical history. To be a vibrant and radical movement for reform, renewal must come to see itself not merely as a twentieth century novelty, but as a movement with a great and glorious past. We need to go back to the future - classical evangelicalism on fire.

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# THE SEOUL COVENANT



*A challenge to our churches from the Baptist World Alliance Congress, in South Korea, August 1990.*

**We dedicate ourselves anew to the task of world evangelization with the aim that by A.D. 2,000 every person will have the opportunity to respond to the message of God's love in Jesus Christ in an authentic and meaningful way.**

**We call upon Baptists, collectively and individually, to join in this covenant.**

To this end:

1. We confess that the mission in which we engage belongs to God. It is our joy and responsibility, inspired by the Holy Spirit, to be witnesses throughout the world to Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen Lord.
2. Since Baptists are part of the whole family of God, such witness calls us to pray and work with other Christians in this vital task.

3. Because all people stand under the judgment of God, the Gospel of Salvation needs to be proclaimed and demonstrated to every generation until Jesus Christ returns. We do this humbly, for we are all sinners saved by grace, yet confidently, for it is the power of God by which people are saved.
4. Believing that personal faith in Jesus Christ involves commitment to his body, the Church, we aim to build communities that will be effective signs of God's Kingdom in the world.
5. We confess that inherent within the Gospel is the need for God's people to work for a world where peace and justice are pursued, and whose environment is preserved.
6. As members of the Baptist family, we pledge ourselves to sacrificial giving for this purpose, and to provide resources to enable all to share the Good News of Salvation in their own cultures and languages.
7. Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. He is the centre around which our lives revolve. He is the Sovereign Presence in the Kingdom in which we live and work. His truth is eternal, His love unchanging, His grace sufficient. To him we commit our lives totally, joyfully, unreservedly.



# Baptist Church Planters

Church planting is happening. It's happening all over the UK. It's probably happening near you! It's happening among Baptists. In fact it's happening especially among Baptists!

Like flowers in the early Spring, new communities of believers are appearing as signs of a changing spiritual climate. Pioneering churches are breaking new ground. Associations are taking a fresh look at their own back yard and resolving to replant in areas where life has withered in the more hostile social and spiritual environment of recent decades.

Some have found that the ground is hard and stony. Many of us are discovering that we've almost forgotten what it was like to get out of doors, so accustomed have we become to tending the window boxes of our home church life. But it's invigorating to get out there and get our hands dirty in mission. And the seed is good! The seed really is good, isn't it!

So the seasons change, as the book of Ecclesiastes reminds us, and there comes a time to plant. And despite the thorns and the stones and the birds, we're being reminded that the Lord assured us that there is good ground out there waiting to be planted. There was no doubt among the delegates at the recent Baptist Union Consultation on Church Planting that such a new day was dawning for our churches. Despite the uncertainties and lack of experience in this form of evangelism, there is unquestionably a new confidence in the Gospel growing among us.

There is also a more realistic appraisal of the state of our own back yard. We've been praying and giving to send men and women abroad to plant churches for almost two hundred years but now Christians all over the UK are waking up to the fact that our own land is a mission field. It is perhaps in part due to the world mission link that we've enjoyed with churches like those in Brazil that the Spirit of God has been able to fire our minds with new and greater expectations for the re-establishment of the church in our own society.

Within this spreading vision for a renewed strategy of evangelism with church planting at its heart, there are real difficulties to be faced. I've already referred to the problem of lack of experience. Since the beginning of the second world war there has been virtually no Baptist church planting in the whole of London. That means few of today's church leaders have had experience of being part of a new church plant. Few of those we entrust to give direction at our church meetings, whether ministers or deacons, elders or others have had the chance to work through the practicalities or the faith challenges involved in pioneer work of this kind.

Thank God for those individuals and groups that have been bold enough to press ahead in faith despite this. Thank God for the Christians, such as the black-led churches and Ichthus, who have shown us it really can be done. But now there is a growing pool of expertise among our own churches and overwhelming enthusiasm has been expressed at the prospect of forming a network of Baptists committed to church planting. This network will create a much needed opport-

unity to share experience, provide support, promote study and develop strategies for the multiplication of witnessing communities.

David Coffey, Secretary for Evangelism, Geoffrey Reynolds, Superintendent of the Southern Area and Stuart Christine, Oasis director for church planting and evangelism at Spurgeon's College, were commissioned by the forty delegates at the Gorsley Consultation to take the idea forward into a reality that would serve the denomination. Every Baptist minister will receive an enrolment form. We expect a big response and take this opportunity of encouraging ministers and members alike to sign up and open this window into the exciting world of church planting.

What benefits can you expect to gain from your £5 annual subscription?

- 1) **Sharing.** You'll be linked with many who have some insight to offer. People you can get in touch with. Perhaps a church in a similar situation to your own that has faced the issues now being raised before you. Mistakes to avoid; problems that didn't prove as great as at first they seemed; the good, the bad and the ugly to inform and encourage you.
- 2) **Support.** Those on the front line need to be in contact with others who have been there and are facing similar pressures. Those not involved personally in a plant need to be encouraged to pray and support strategic initiatives through their link into the network.
- 3) **Study.** We've a lot of ground to make up and a lot of lessons to re-learn. For example: creative ways of financing church planting projects; the challenges of beginning new churches in the inner city and in areas of high ethnic mix. What about tent-making or bi-vocational church planters? Or the effectiveness of women in planting leadership?

The network will enable folk with special interests to get together in study groups, exchange insights and offer a means of getting information circulated among churches by means of the newsheets or planting papers to be published three times a year. Conferences will also be sponsored to create opportunities for new ideas, insights and methods to be shared. The first is scheduled for 2-3 July 1991.

- 4) **Strategies.** We want to develop more effective strategies for multiplying witnessing communities. A key theme at the Gorsley Consultation was the importance of co-operation between

churches at local and Association level in meeting the challenge of planting into the many church-less communities that surround us. The network should open up channels of communication for sharing vision and experience and provide Associations with contacts whose expertise could be drawn upon as each area develops its own plans.

In taking this initiative Baptists will once again, as in the area of training, be leading the way for other denominations in this vital area of mission. The network will undoubtedly serve as both a stimulus and a resource to other church groups giving added value to the prophetic contribution of Baptists to the ecumenical process. New church planting will certainly be one of the most important and exciting characteristics of this decade of evangelism.

**We invite you as individuals, churches, associations or colleges to plug into the network and make this vision an exciting reality for our denomination by enrolling straight away.**



If you are interested in forming or joining one of the proposed study groups then write a note to that effect to accompany your application form and £5 subscription fee. (For this first year Spurgeon's has kindly agreed to handle the account on behalf of the network and so cheques should be made payable to Spurgeon's College.)

Your application should be sent to:

Baptist Church Planters (BACUP),  
c/o Rev Stuart Christine,  
(Oasis Director for Church Planting  
and Evangelism),  
Spurgeon's College,  
189 South Norwood Hill,  
London SE25 6DJ.  
(tel 081-653-0850)

Stuart Christine



# BUILDING

## A CHURCH COUNSELLING TEAM

As a church begins to grow the demands on the time and energy of the Senior Pastor, and other Pastors in the church, also grow. This is particular true in the area of counselling. Studies have shown that it is vital for the pastoral care of a church to be decentralised and for the Senior Pastor to avoid becoming the Church Counsellor. There are three reasons for this.

Firstly, the pastor has many other responsibilities of leading the church, and counselling is time consuming, absorbing, energy sapping and emotionally draining.

Secondly, decentralised pastoral care ensures that people are cared for in an effective and realistic way, through the Body of Christ.

Thirdly, it releases other people to use the gifts that God has undoubtedly given them.

Over the last 1½ years we here at Altrincham Baptist Church have been seeking to implement a caring and counselling strategy into the life of our church. We have done this through Training, Recognizing and Releasing others with pastoral gifts.

Gordon MacDonald has devised a scheme of categorizing the four kinds of people that are found in every church:

1. V.I.P.s - The Very Important People are those who with the pastor share the responsibility for the leadership of the church. Those with whom he is sharing his vision for ministry. Today's leaders who are doing the work now.
2. V.T.P.s - The Very Teachable People are Tomorrow's leaders who need to be encouraged and trained today. They will be doing the work tomorrow.
3. V.N.P.s - The Very Nice People are wonderful to be around, but they make no difference whatsoever as far as the spiritual life of the church is concerned. The Church is full of these folk. They pay compliments but avoid work.
4. V.D.P.s - The Very Draining People are the ones who create a negative balance. The pastor is always giving to them, whether advice or encouragement or problem solving. Pastorally, you get absolutely no return from them. They are often the work itself.

MacDonald maintains that most pastors spend their time with groups 3 and 4.

However, according to Ephesians 4 a pastor should be spending a significant amount of his time, perhaps even most of his time, seeking to influence and work with groups 1 and 2, the leaders of the church not the problem people within the church.

I arrived here three years ago and it quickly became apparent that the pastoral counselling demands were extremely heavy. There were just not enough hours in a day to meet the needs. Like most pastors I retired home at the end of the day knowing that there were things left undone and that others expectations were not being met. It was very hard to overcome the feeling of guilt knowing that there were people with genuine needs that were just not being adequately cared for. It also became apparent that there were people in the church who had a genuine heart for people; God had gifted them pastorally.

As a pastor I take my responsibility for people seeking help very seriously. It is one thing for a person to approach someone in the church and seek help privately. However, it is quite another matter when someone comes to me asking for help from myself or from the church. I then feel extremely responsible for that person and I will only put them in touch with someone whom I consider to be suitably gifted and qualified. It is vital to have representatives of the church following clear procedures and guidelines in caring for people. Failure to do so will result in more time being spent in patching up the resultant problems, and also loss of confidence in the ministry of the church.

In June 1989 I began the long process of recognizing and releasing others into the caring and counselling ministry. I called a group together one Sunday afternoon inviting those who felt they were being called to a caring and/or counselling ministry to come along. I expected perhaps twenty people at the most - to my surprise and delight 45 people (some of whom I would never have thought of as being interested in counselling or being used in that way) came out of the 'wood-work'.

In September 1989 our Pastoral Team drew together some thoughts concerning the general pastoral principles and procedures in the church seeking to discover, in detail, how we could be a more caring church.

Coming out of that meeting we decided to approach Ted Collier, a member of our church, who is a trained counsellor with many years experience with 'Wholeness Through Christ'. Ted is also an excellent administrator. We asked him to come back with a proposal of how we could structure Caring and Counselling within the church. A couple of months later he produced a detailed document and made a general recommendation that we should view caring in church in two distinct ways: Level One - General Pastoring/Caring  
Level Two - In Depth Counselling

Ted also proposed that we establish a team of Counselling Co-ordinators who would be a focus group for known needs and who would then seek to 'match up' counsellors to those in need. The document ran to several pages and was discussed in detail by: the Pastoral Team; the Diaconate; the House Fellowship Group Leaders; the Church Meeting. At each stage comments and amendments were made. By March 1990 we felt that the vision had been caught and owned by the church.

After Easter we ran a six week series of evening seminars (which were held instead of evening services). One of the choices was "An Introduction to Counselling." and almost 80 people attended. All of those who had previously expressed an interest in caring or counselling were encouraged to come along, as were any others who felt they had a gift or calling in this area.

We then held a second series of seminars in June/July but this time it was only for people who really believed that God was calling them to a ministry in counselling. The course contained a number of 'hurdles' to filter out those people who were not being called specifically into counselling. We anticipated that this would reduce the numbers down to about 20, and at the end perhaps a dozen folk would be prepared to go through all these 'hoops and hurdles' for us. To my amazement over 40 people attended the second series of seminars and the level of interest and commitment was very high. At the end of the sessions I insisted on the completion of certain course work including a detailed personality profile and a video of them 'role playing' as a counsellor and as a counsellee.

Thirty three people completed that and so in September we all met on a Sunday afternoon and I spelt out what it would involve if individuals were going to be part of the counselling ministry of the church.

We asked for some specific information to help us discern their experience, expertise, gifting and heart for people. We were anxious also to have a broad based Christian counselling ministry, and not to be seen as only using a particular approach. So

we now have a cross section of those skilled in the secular Rogerian approach right across to inner healing and prayer counselling and everything in between.

We have now recognised 27 people as being part of those who help in the Counselling Ministry of the Church which has exceeded our wildest expectations and so we did spend some time discussing whether we should start with a very small group. We felt, however, that God had given us these people and so we should make full use of them, each one of them being eminently qualified. The range of people involved include: doctors, social workers, health visitors, trained counsellors, those with a caring heart for people - many different expressions and experiences of caring for people.

In the last three months since we officially started there have been many encouraging things happening and we feel 'we have put our first foot on the ladder' and look forward to the way that God will build us up as a team. In due course we would like to establish a Christian Counselling Ministry which would not only serve and care for those within the church, but also for those within our local community.

At the same time as looking for counsellors we were also looking for carers and invited folk to come forward if they felt called to a caring ministry as distinct from a counselling ministry. A list of these people was drawn up and passed onto our Pastoral Team and to the House Fellowship group Leaders.

These carers could then be called upon for every-day pastoring, to follow up folk, or just simply to be a listening ear. We have also insisted that our counsellors are also carers, believing that people become recognised as counsellors because they have first been recognised as caring people. We want our Counsellors not to be seen as 'problem-solvers' but as 'people-helpers.'

I believe that this structuring of Caring and counselling has come out of the life of our church and not from some theoretical approach to solve a problem. I believe that peoples lives will be touched and transformed through those who have willingly offered them-selves for training and service in this way. Our desire is that people will feel a greater sense of belonging as they are loved and cared for and helped (Counselled) within the Body of Christ. We hope therefore to fulfill the injunction of: "It was He who gave some to be Pastors and Teachers to prepare God's people for works of service so that the Body of Christ may be built up... for the whole body grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work."

Ephesians 4: 11 - 16.

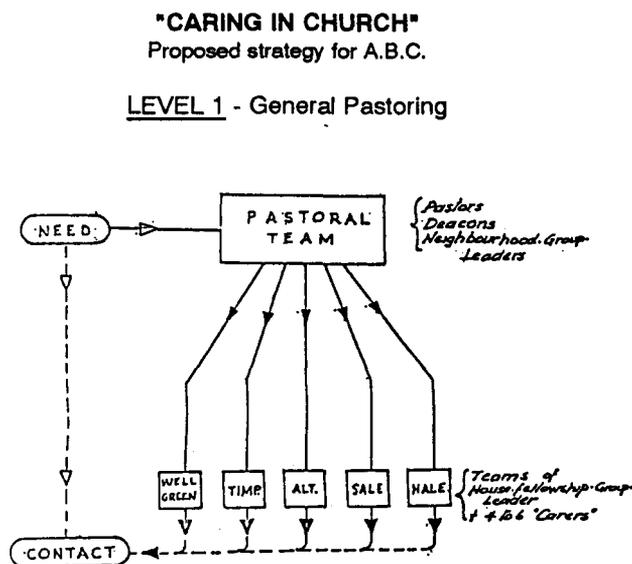
Justin Dennison

## THE CO-ORDINATOR'S ROLE

1. The co-ordinators to be a team available and approachable with a role to support Counsellors and to protect Counsellors.
2. To encourage contact with people:-  
Level 1 - via Neighbourhood and House Group Leaders.  
Level 2 - matching counsellors and counsellee with reference to age, sex, personal status: and the confessed or assumed need to counsellors with relevant training and experience.
3. To regularly assess the progress of the counselling situation and ensure follow up takes place, short term and long term that every cry for help is met.
4. Organise training for counsellors.
5. To make available resources:
  - i) A list of recommended books, (library?)
  - ii) Maintain current literature and information on outside counselling resources.
  - iii) A list of experienced counsellors who would train on specialised subjects.
6. To be on the lookout for more counsellors.

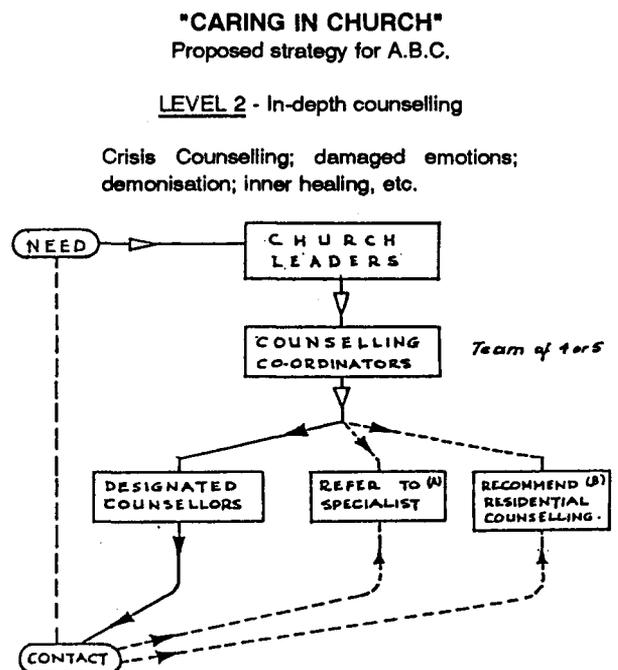
## THE COUNSELLOR'S ROLE

1. To have a heart for people - the right motivation to counsel.  
To have sensitivity to the right kind of approach.  
To be teachable: to be available for training as required, to meet together and discuss pastoral problems.
2. To evaluate and report back as necessary, to be accountable to centre.
3. To recognise the need for support and back up, so as not to become overwhelmed.
4. To recognise the counsellors own limitations, and to refer a counsellee back to centre if necessary.
5. To maintain close contact with the Counselling Co-ordinators so to avoid acting independently.
6. To recognise that as a counsellor they may also need help from time to time.
7. To be available for ongoing regular training.



"Carer" - Someone who will assist the House Fellowship Group Leader in visiting, being a listener, etc.

Examples: 'Casual pastoring'; visit the sick or house-bound; give practical help; participate in visiting every home, etc.



(A) 'Specialist' - Alcohol; Drugs; Marital; Child, etc.

(B) 'Residential' - Ellet Grange, C.W.R. etc.

# In Brief



John Stott warned evangelicals at an E.A. National Day in Birmingham last autumn of an urgent need to restore Biblical preaching to its pivotal place - "Nothing is more important for the life and health of the Church."

"Church growth is exciting. But the dropout rate, of which we don't hear so much, is alarming. The low level of Christian living is due more than anything else to the low level of teaching and preaching.

"Churches live, grow and flourish by the Word of God. Congregations change when the Holy Spirit takes the Word and carries it home with power to the heart, mind and conscience of the congregation."

Stott also argues that truly biblical preaching cannot duck today's controversies and felt needs, but nor can these issues be the sum of biblical preaching: "Traditionally evangelical preachers avoid talking from the pulpit about subjects like war and peace, human rights, Green issues and industrial relations. If we banish subjects which predominate outside the pulpit, we shall only confirm people in their sneaking suspicion that our Christianity is irrelevant to the modern world.

"...There is not an aspiration that you can mention to which Jesus Christ is not the answer and the fulfilment... Above all, we must preach Christ. Let people see him, then they will find in him their hearts' deepest need."

## MEN, WOMEN and GOD

Those sympathetic to the article in our last issue from Christians for Biblical Equality may like to contact the following address for information about the equivalent British organisation:

The Secretary,  
Men Women and God,  
c/o Christian Impact,  
St Peter's Church,  
Vere Street,  
LONDON. W1M 9HP.

Michael Cassidy, the founder of Africa Enterprise, has appealed for continuing prayer for South Africa. "First we must seek **supernatural wisdom** (see James 1:5ff) for Mr Mandela and his colleagues and for President De Klerk and his. There is nothing the Evil One would like more than to interfere with their efforts to bring healing, justice, and a new day to our land.

"Likewise, we must pray for **physical, mental and spiritual protection** for both leaders and their advisers. The release of Mr Mandela brings hope, but it also brings great risk.

"Let us also ask God to pour the **spirit of magnanimity** upon South Africa. This is really the 'Calvary spirit', for the Cross requires self-giving and unselfishness from whites, genuinely and deeply, to repent for the iniquities and inequities of apartheid.

"The Cross also requires the supernatural spirit of forgiveness from blacks for all that has been inflicted upon them. An African proverb says: 'He who forgives ends the quarrel.' Martin Luther King put it this way: 'We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive...Forgiveness is not just an occasional act: it is a permanent attitude.'

"Finally we must pray that in South Africa we may all be **controlled by Christian principles**. these would include dependence on God, love for enemy, humility, prayerfulness, mutual care, equality of dignity and opportunity, economic and structural justice (which is love built into laws, organisations and institutions) along with national repentance (required from whites), national forgiveness (required from blacks) and reconciliation for and between all.

"We in South Africa ask Christians elsewhere to pray fervently for us along these lines. And as you do, may the Lord bring his gentle and probing scrutiny into your hearts to challenge you about whether Christian principles and prayerfulness are controlling your own nation as well."

# BOOKS FOR LEADERS

A personal selection by Rob Warner

\* = not to be missed

## Handbooks

- Lion Handbook to the Bible
- \* International Bible Dictionary
- New Bible Atlas
- New Dictionary of Theology
- \* NIV Complete Concordance
- \* NIV Study Bible

## Doctrine

- I H Marshall Biblical Inspiration
- A McGrath Understanding Jesus
- A McGrath Understanding the Trinity
- \* B Milne Know the Truth
- \* J Packer Knowing God
- \* J Stott The Cross of Christ
- J Stott & D Edwards Essentials

## Church

- \* R Allen The Compulsion of the Spirit
- R Bakke The Urban Christian
- A Dulles Models of the Church
- M Harper Let My People Go
- \* R Hayden English Baptist History and Heritage
- \* H Snyder Liberating the Church
- \* F Tillapaugh Unleashing the Church
- \* D Watson I Believe in the Church
- N Wright The Radical Kingdom

## Evangelism

- S Gaukroger It Makes Sense
- M Green Evangelism in the Early Church
- M Green Evangelism Now and Then
- \* M Green Evangelism Through the Local Church
- M Green You Must Be Joking
- \* R Pippert Out of the Saltshaker
- \* D Watson I Believe in Evangelism
- \* J Wesley Journal  
(choose a 1 volume abridgement)

## Mission

- P Johnstone Operation World
- M Griffiths What on Earth Are You Doing?
- L Newbigin The Gospel in a Pluralist Society
- S Neill A History of Christian Missions
- H Roseveare Living Stones
- \* O Smith The Challenge of Missions
- \* R Steer J Hudson Taylor - a Man in Christ
- J Stott Christian Mission in the Modern World

## Social Issues

- D Kraybill The Upside Down Kingdom
- D Sheppard Bias to the Poor
- \* J Stott Issues Facing Christians Today
- J Wallis The Call to Conversion

## Men and Women

- A Atkins Split Image
- \* ed S Lees The Role of Women
- E Storkey What's Right With Feminism?

## Worship and Preaching

- G Kendrick Worship
- ed G Kendrick Ten Worshipping Churches
- M Lloyd-Jones Preaching and Preachers
- H Robinson Expository Preaching
- J Stott I Believe in Preaching

## Counselling

- \* G Collins Christian Counselling
- J Huggett Listening to Others
- R Hurding Restoring the Image
- \* G McDonald Ordering Your Private World
- H Nouwen The Wounded Healer
- D Tidball Skilful Shepherds

## Marriage

- J Huggett Conflict - Friend or Foe?
- \* J Huggett Marriage on the Mend
- \* C&J Penner The Gift of Sex
- W Trobisch I Married You

## Spirituality

- \* J Bunyan Pilgrim's Progress
- \* R Foster Celebration of Discipline
- J Huggett Listening to God
- C S Lewis Narnia Chronicles
- G McDonald Restoring Your Spiritual Passion
- JC Ryle Holiness
- A Wallis God's Chosen Fast
- \* J White The Fight

For devotional poetry don't miss John Donne,  
George Herbert, and Charles Wesley

## Renewal

- \* M Green I Believe in the Holy Spirit
- W Grudem Prophecy
- \* J Packer Keep in Step With the Spirit
- B Roxburgh Renewal Down to Earth
- J Stott Baptism and Fullness
- R Warner Rediscovering the Spirit
- \* D Watson Discipleship

## Healing and Deliverance

- M Green I Believe in Satan's Downfall
- \* F MacNutt Healing
- M Maddocks The Christian Healing Ministry
- M Pytches Set My People Free
- \* J Richards Deliver Us From Evil
- J Wimber Power Evangelism

## Church Growth

- \* J Hayford The Church on the Way
- J Mallison Growing Christians in Small Groups
- \* R Pointer How Do Churches Grow?
- P Wagner Leading Your Church To Growth
- R Warren In the Crucible

## Leadership

### a) qualities

- \* M Green Freed to Serve
- C W Han Learning to Lead
- J Perry Effective Christian Leadership
- \* O Sanders Spiritual Leadership

### b) tasks and skills

- P Beasley-Murray Dynamic Leadership
- J Finney Understanding Leadership
- E Gibbs Followed or Pushed
- \* J Tiller and The Gospel Community and Its Leadership
- M Birchall Leadership
- \* R Warren On the Anvil

# REVIEWS

## **The Gospel in a Pluralist Society**

Lesslie Newbigin SPCK 244pp £8.95

If you asked me to name just a few very significant books, this one would be among them. It is an amazingly seminal work to pour from the pen of an octogenarian. For many years Lesslie Newbigin worked in India. Perhaps that is why he can see the central issues of our missionary task so clearly. Having been out of our culture he can discern our cultural spectacles; filters which we have become so accustomed to that we have forgotten we are wearing them.

The book develops the thoughts with which those used to his other recent writings, like Foolishness to the Greeks will already be familiar but it presents these ideas on a much grander scale. The first five chapters are the most difficult. They present a philosophical critique of pluralism. He examines the divorce our culture has created between fact and value and show that there is no knowledge except that which arises from a tradition which defines what is acceptable and not acceptable to believe. Reason is not an autonomous or superior approach to knowledge since, "There are no canons of reason which are not part of a socially embodied tradition of rational debate." Reason and revelation are not two different sources of information but two ways of interpreting the same data which are available to all.

After this difficult start the book ranges over a number of vital missiological issues. Newbigin writes of election, the uniqueness of Christ, contextualization, Gospel and culture - always drawing on his deep and broad experience as he does so. And yet it is all thoroughly earthed. To set word and deed, preaching and action against each other is absurd. To witness to our white neighbours whilst we dialogue with those from different religious backgrounds is to sell those others short and to cause them offence. Mission is not to attend to the aspirations or problems of people but to attend to what God has done especially in the story of Jesus.

It means not only dealing with private individuals but claiming the public domain for Christ and challenging the powers he disarmed on the cross. The only real hermeneutic of the gospel is a congregation who believe it and live by it. Secular society is a myth. Britain is not secular but pagan; worshipping "gods that are not God". Ministerial leadership must "lead a congregation as a whole in a mission to the community as a whole to claim

its whole public life, as well as the personal lives of all its people, for God's rule."

It is challenging, inspiring and exciting stuff. No one, ecumenical or evangelical, will be left untouched by it. We must grapple with what is said here if we are not to build churches which are unfaithful to the biblical demands of mission.

Some will want to disagree with Newbigin's philosophical analysis. Others will differ at other points. I found his analysis of "principalities and powers" extremely insightful but wished he had included personal demons as well. I think he has a blind spot about the church growth movement at least in its British manifestation. But regardless of these and other questions here is a book to be savoured, grappled with and definitely not to be missed.

*Derek Tidball*

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## **The Smile of Love**

Joyce Huggett  
192pp £7.99

Joyce Huggett, author of 'Open to God' & 'Listening to God' has done it again! A skilful writer with an easy, intimate style, you feel as if she is speaking to you as a personal friend. She gives readily of herself, and of her own journey into God as she explores the reality and depth of divine love.

This is a handbook of prayer rather than a theoretical discourse. After two chapters on the nature and warmth of God's love, Joyce provides a series of short meditations, suitable for either an individual or a prayer group.

But that's not all. There is an admirable anthology of reflections on God's love, ranging from John Powell to CS Lewis, from John Stott to Julian of Norwich. There is a litany of love, for those who prefer a structured approach to their praying. Awareness exercises invite the reader to explore key issues including his/her own first pictures of God as a child, present perceptions of God, and learning to "sense God's smile". Prayer disciplines suggested include biblical meditation, prayer for enlightenment, writing to God, and drawing pictures of your present relationship with God and his world and what you would like this relationship to become.

In short, this is not a book to be read once and discarded. It is rather a book to be treasured as a long term spiritual guide, and the full colour illustrations and line drawing serve to reinforce its value. A suggestive book, rich with the insights of a Christian mature in prayer, which never cajoles your prayer life into rigid conformity with the personality of the author, but rather invites you creatively to go deeper with God.

Rob Warner

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