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# The Baptist Ministers' Journal

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reflect those of the Editorial Board"

# Editorial

Today, as divisions based upon class wither, those based upon philosophy and life-style multiply. This is the problem of talking about "Christianity and culture", for we are bound to ask "which culture?". There is, for example, the conservation culture, which has captured the idealism of many young people, who in a different age, might well have directed that same idealism in the direction of Christianity. There is the drug and rave culture, the latest expression of pleasure-loving hedonism. And there is the health and well-being culture, a construct of aromatherapy, meditation, vegetarianism, work-outs and homeopathy. Not, of course, that these disparate sub-cultures exist in water-tight compartments. It is recognition of such cultural distinctiveness which has led increasingly to "people group" mission, involving specialised insight and understanding of where such people are coming from, the better to touch them and reach them.

Running like a thread through such a society is the phenomenon increasingly known as "*post-modernism*". It is the belated recognition that for any generation to describe itself as "modern" is not the proud boast it was once. This is because we now recognize two things. Firstly, that such an adjective is relative - what is up to the minute today is old hat tomorrow. And secondly, that to be modern, is to pay a price in terms of the destruction that invariably accompanies progress. This has been termed the "Janus-face of modernity". So in our generation the rape of the earth and consequent poverty for future generations is the price we have paid for "development". As a result, modernity is increasingly viewed with a jaundiced eye and its values, goals and very rationale questioned. This, essentially, is "*post-modernism*".

In this edition we have provided a "primer" in the shape of an article by Nick Mercer. To help us get the feel of the phenomenon, he not only describes it but employs the language of *post-modernism*. After this, Michael Bray and Tony Noles, joint consultants to the scheme, describe the genesis, growth and purpose of the *B.U. Scheme for Pastoral Care and Counselling*. It is clearly important that this facility is as widely known and trusted as possible. One of the signs of spiritual health among Baptists today is the heightened attention paid to the Lord's Supper. No longer is it almost an after thought, tagged on to a service, and the point at which half the congregation leave. Paul Beasley-Murray reflects on its theology in the light of both the *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM)* document and our own *Patterns and Prayers for Christian Worship*.

Fourthly, a guest writer, Joel Edwards, addresses the issue of what it means to be black in the British Church today. With most congregations not the least integrated and with overt racism on the increase in society at large, what is the prognosis for the future? Then, is the European Union, and particularly the British Government's decision to opt out of the Social Chapter, a legitimate target for theological critique? Paul Allen believes it is and states his case. Finally, from Fritz Haus, a long-time citizen of South Africa, who has lived through the wasting years of apartheid, before experiencing the new day, comes a dispatch straight from the heart.

# Postmodernity and Rationality - The Final Credits or Just a Commercial Break?

Rather than writing an article on The Post I want to hit you with it. You should be listening to floaty, ambient music like The Orb or Enigma, Björk or Enya, or the theme music of Twin Peaks. Taverner would do at a push....

The degree by which you are disturbed by this article is a measure of how much you have been influenced by postmodernism - if you find it disorientating and confusing then you are very much a Modern. You don't like those TV programmes where several things are happening at the same time as text is appearing on the screen (like Def II) and you don't like alternative worship - I went to a service where the Latin Tridentine Mass was being said against a heavy House rhythm while slides of icons were displayed on a high nave screen and several abstract videos were running on banks of TV screens. Most over 40s are firmly entrenched in modernism, and almost all evangelicals of any age.

But first some terms....

**The Post** - Postmodernism, or high modernism, or late modernism or Pre-postmodernism - the present intellectual and artistic climate in Britain, arguably; the philosophical and cultural accompaniment to the New Age.

**Zine** - a magazine or fanzine. Glossy and expensive like Mondo, or cheap FAXed and Xeroxed. The guys in my house produce Heartbreak Hotel every term. Look along the magazine racks in the 'pop' section of Tower Records, or a big HMV or Our Price.

**Metanarrative** - some overall story or set of ideas which binds all cultural activities together in a project or system which proposes to make sense. Christianity is such a metanarrative - postmodernism denies the possibility of such Grand Narratives.

**Structuralism** - focuses our attention on the text itself, and the understanding of a text in its cotext and context.

**Deconstructionism** - is the daughter of Structuralism and concentrates on the reader-response to a text. All 'meaning' or authorial intention breaks down. Bad biblical preaching has always been like this and Lewis Carroll knew about it in the last century: "When I use a word," said Humpty Dumpty scornfully, "it means what I want it to mean, neither more nor less."

"My dear old thing", said the March Hare, "there's more to it than that. When you say or write something, you've got to reckon that you can't keep tabs on it. Other people might take what you say quite differently from how you meant it. It's like setting a bird free. Once it's gone, it flies where it wants".

I have been to MacDonaldis in Berlin, London, NY, SFO, Manila, Hong Kong, Paris, Stockholm, Worthing, Johannesburg, Athens, Madrid, Brugge, Toronto...They are PSZs (Personal Security Zones - Toffler) in our turbulent Global Village. There was a time when Baptist Churches were PSZs. But now they are menacingly unpredictable, even in the Home Counties.

I am a compulsive consumer - you are a consumer - of this article - of worship services and books and sermons and Goods. Productivity has collapsed into the black hole of consumption.

I am a producer. We are trapped in the cash-nexus and bind of consumerism: every time you spend money, you're propping up systems you loathe. The structural sin that so tightly binds.

I am a target market. Somebody wants to sell me something, somebody who knows my needs, desires and anxieties, and will use this knowledge as a crowbar to alter my behaviour and therefore open my wallet...or am I paranoid?...or cynical?

Of all the 'somethings' I am supposed to buy, I am to keep buying them. So they are obsolete or out of fashion almost as soon as I buy them.

Global Village - Universal Culture. Driftwood shanty towns, with TVs and satellite dishes. two billion people watch the world cup.

The Post is cultural white noise - makes no sense, but it is on TV. Democracy increasingly makes false promises. Politicians are more concerned with image than integrity. So the media, the Image Makers, control the political machine, while claiming they are serving the democratic process.

The Post is a Soup of floating cultural fragments - Scientific Revolution 17th Century...Enlightenment 18th Century...Romanticism 19th Century...Modernism 20th Century...Postmodernism 21st Century...Relativity (Einstein) Uncertainty (Heisenberg) Incompleteness (Gödel) Chaos (Mandelbrot).

"Fake it till you make it", we all have to look the part, we have to consume our images. Images are the most ephemeral of commodities, shifting fashions keep us purchasing in an accelerated culture. Shopping Malls are the temples of creativity and diversity. I shop therefore I am.

"Just as unitarily conceived ultimate reality encourages fragmentation, so, by contrast a God conceived trinitarianly, a God who contains within himself a form of plurality in relation and created a world which reflects the richness of his being can surely enable us better to conceive of something of the unity in variety of human culture". Colin Gunton

"People bind themselves into numbered seats and fly across time zones and high cirrus and deep night knowing there is something they have forgotten to do". Don DeLillo. The Space/Time compression of the last 20 years. Breakfast in London; lunch in New York. (Luggage in Munich) This week 70s funk, next retro-funk. And we eat in shiny new 1940s restaurants decorated with expensive memorabilia we threw away in the 1950s.

Fragmentation and surfaces, shifting personal identities - these are the essence. Relationships - not depths or permanence - unless you want them...

Raves - "E"-drugs are simply states of mind - Coenaesthesia (Emotional Anaesthesia). it's the only way To Be. Or Not To Be. Good Choruses will do the trick; or laughing in the Spirit or being slain in the Spirit or anything that can unbind our future-shocked and stressed emotions.

"When there is enough out-of-placeness in the world, then nothing is out of place." Don DeLillo.

Virtual Reality merges with reality. "The world looks suspiciously like a 20-channel satellite TV with a madman holding the remote control; before you have

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**THE BAPTIST UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN**

time to make sense of the story, the screen beams other images, to be replaced with yet other images, before you begin to know what they are images of; and all comes from nowhere and melts into nowhere again". Zygmunt Bauman

Humour is serious. Irony rules - Humour is the White Man's burden.

The Failure of the Enlightenment Project. Cogito ergo sum, cogito. The Enlightenment Project was to illumine everything. It has turned everything into the material and realised that nothing is knowable. Come in Humanism, your time is up.

"Contextualisation in the setting of modernity is both amplified promise and amplified threat". Os Guinness

"This statement is unprovable". Kurt Gödel

The Xerox Revolution - The Zine Scene - proliferation of small circulation/highly specific publications. All you need is a relatively inexpensive personal computer with word processing and desk top publishing software and access to a photocopier.

Death of the Importance of the Individual - Ochlocracy - the crowd wear Levis and are thin and are for abortion and against the government.

Breakdown of Cultural Coherence - social fragmentation and lack of metanarrative. Modernism had the confidence that it knew all the answers and even if it did not it was only a matter of time before it did. Now it has lost its confidence.

The church is the plausibility structure of faith. God is Community. Relational Ontology - Colin Gunton, *The One, The Three and The Many*

"No one agrees about the language of moral discussion. But we all have a sense of 'ought'.." Alasdair McIntyre

Negotiated norms - Issues based society - AIDS, Green, Education, Health...

Everything you know is wrong.

"Its like this dad. You can either have a house or have a life. I'm having a life".

Deconstructionism is logical positivism ad absurdum.

The good thing about The Post is it takes apart ideologies - communism and churchianity. The bad thing is The Post denies transcendence.

"In the twilight of the gods, men came forth as giants.

In the twilight of the men, all the gods came back again." Rob Draper

Belief in history is a step of faith, which having taken it, proves reasonable.

Belief in rationality is a step of faith, which having taken it, proves rational.

Faith is risk. The Holy Spirit is the witness to transcendence and the inspirer of risk.

"When there is the 'death of God' in a culture, it becomes increasingly hollowed out, 'weightless'" Nietzsche.

Truth is relative. That may be true for you, but it is not for me.

"When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" Jesus

Jesus is either mad, bad or who he said he was - so what?

"The clock cannot be put back to the world of the 1950s in which the theology, apologetics and missiology of the post-war revival of evangelicalism in the Church of England was formed". Chris Sugden

"Christendom's ultimate worlding today is not the Christian liberal but the

Christian conservative” Os Guinness

“At least five times the faith has to all appearances gone to the dogs. In each of the five cases it was the dog that died”. GK Chesterton

### **And so for us?**

### **Postmodernity makes evangelism easier but discipleship harder.**

Traditional, rational apologetics was fine for modernism, but it will become increasingly irrelevant to western postmodernism. However, there are more contact points than ever for sharing our faith. At the same time we find it harder to live with the grey areas in our Christian living. The Roles of Women and Men? Divorce and Remarriage? A Baptist Minister?

### **Story**

Everyone has beliefs and a story to tell. (Short Cuts is a good example of postmodern cinema). The people of God have glorious beliefs and a magnificent story to tell.

### **Community**

God, the Holy Trinity, is community, and in that community of love we find our identity in the postmodern sea of shifting images and personal fragmentation. Jesus' command has never been more relevant: “Love one another as I have loved you..by this everyone will know that you are my disciples”.

### **Transcendence**

A vibrant, corporate, spiritual life, whether charismatic (including Laughing in the spirit and times of refreshing), or Anglo-Catholic, or Alternative worship, points to the transcendence which The Post denies but which our image of Godness yearns after. (“You have set eternity in their hearts..”) We need to grasp people's hearts before we can restore their minds.

### **Goodies**

We should rejoice in the good things postmodern society brings but realise with CS Lewis that “All joy emphasizes our pilgrim status, always reminds, beckons, awakens desires. Our best havings are wantings”.

### **Radical Holiness**

It is not by deliberately setting up a Christian counter-culture, but by affronting society with godly living that we challenge people to consider Christ.

### **Hope**

“The true postmodern church will propose a rethink of theology to meet the needs of a fragmenting, image-overloaded, decaying world, whose inhabitants find it increasingly hard to know who they are and how they relate to each other, the planet and the universe”. Brian Draper

¶ Denote good places to start...

Zygmunt Bauman *Postmodern Ethics* Blackwell 1993

¶ Zygmunt Bauman *Intimations of Postmodernity* Routledge 1992

Zygmunt Bauman 'Deceiving The Twentieth Century' *The New Statesman* 1/4/94 p24

Steven Connor *Postmodernist Culture* Blackwell 1992

Robert Cook 'Postmodernism, Pluralism and John Hick' *Themelios* Vol 19 No1 Oct 1993

¶ Douglas Coupland *Generation X* Abacus 1992

Valentine Cunningham *In the Reading Gaol* Blackwell 1994



- Don DeLillo *Miao II* Vintage 1991  
 Terry Docherty *Postmodernism: A Reader* Harvester Wheatsheaf 1993  
 Mike Featherstone *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism* Sage 1992  
 Mike Featherstone (ed) *Theory, Culture and Society* Vol 5 Nos 2-3 June 1989  
 Ernest Gellner *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion* Routledge 1992  
 William Gibson *Neuromancer* Harper Collins 1984  
 Anthony Giddens *Modernity and Self-identity* Polity 1991  
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 ¶ David Harvey *The Conditions of Postmodernity* Blackwell 1992  
 Dick Hebdige *Hiding in the Light* Comedia 1988  
 Linda Hutcheson *A Poetics of Postmodernism* Routledge 1992  
 J Ingleby 'Posimodernism: A Laid-Back Pluralism' *Third Way* 1992 15/4 p25  
 Scott Lash *Sociology of Postmodernism* Routledge 1990  
 Alasdair MacIntyre *After Virtue - A Study in Moral Theory* Duckworth 1993  
 Leslie Newbiggin *Gospel in a Pluralist Society* SPCK 1989  
 Christopher Noah *World Postmodern Fiction* Longman 1993  
 Michael Ovey 'Deconstruction: Gagging the Speaking God?' *Cambridge Papers* 2/4 1993  
 Gérard Raulet 'From Modernity as One-Way Street to Postmodernity as Dead End' *New German Critique* No 33 Fall 1984  
 J Reader 'Theology, Culture and Postmodernity: Response to Graham, Walter and Newbiggin'. *Modern Churchman* 34/5 1993 p58  
 B Smart *Modern Conditions Postmodern Controversies* Routledge 1992  
*World Evangelisation* Vol 18 No 65 December 1993  
*Transformation* Vol 10 No 4 October/December 1993  
*Mondo, Viz and Fanzines*  
*The Player*  
 ¶ *Short Cuts*  
*Reservoir Dogs*  
*Jacob's Ladder*  
*Something Wild*  
*Mad Max*

Most recent films directed by David Lynch, Peter Greenaway or Robert Altman

**Nick Mercer**

# Pastoral Care and Counselling for Ministers and Spouses: The B.U. Scheme

*"This has been a letter from heaven. I don't know what I would have done without you."*

*"Thank you for listening to me. I didn't think anyone would have the time or the patience to listen to my story".*

*"It was great to have someone listen without feeling under judgement".*

*"If only I had known about you and the scheme earlier then maybe I would not have got into the mess I did. Thanks, anyway, for helping me to sort it out".*

Such have been the expressions of appreciation received by the Baptist Union Scheme for the Pastoral Care and Counselling of Ministers and their spouses.

Now into its second year, this project has already provided counselling help for over 85 ministerial families.

Statistics say little of themselves, but behind the figures are many stories of individuals or couples struggling with emotional or relationship problems which have threatened to end marriages or ministries.

The right kind of skilled, professional help, often over many months, has enabled those concerned to make a new beginning. That is not to say all situations have had successful outcomes, as we normally understand such a term, but even where marriage or ministry has sadly come to an end, help received has usually made this a much less painful and destructive process.

## How It Came About

Origins of the scheme go back to a meeting of the Bodey House Counselling Centre of the West Ham Central Mission in 1986. Several people with experience of ministry and its stresses drew up a paper entitled "Manse Marriages", a subject about which there had been a growing concern. Nothing came of this early initiative but the seeds had been sown.

In 1987, the General Secretary of the BU approached the Baptist Union Health and Healing Group asking it to look into problems facing ministers and their families. The subject appeared on the agenda of every Health and Healing Group executive from then on. It became apparent that the problems facing ministers and their families were wider than marriage breakdown. They included stress, lack of boundaries between professional and private life, dealing with transference feelings projected on to ministers and their families, coping with obstructive members while wanting to be seen as loving and caring, emotional problems that had their origins in the past but were now affecting pastoral relationships, etc.

From these early beginnings a small group of concerned people, including two Area Superintendents, met in July 1990 with the Secretary for Ministry, to discuss ways in which professional pastoral care could be given to ministers and their spouses. The group included members of the BU Health and Healing Group and the Director of Bodey House, who was already involved in counselling ministers

and their families.

One major question that arose was the relationship of any proposed scheme to the pastoral care ministry already exercised by Area Superintendents. It was acknowledged that although Superintendents fulfil a vital role in this aspect of their work, it was also clear that because of the considerable pressures they have to bear, it would normally be impossible for them to give the kind of long term counselling that some situations require. Also, there are 'boundary' issues that emerge because Superintendents are involved in placement of ministers, sometimes making a pastoral relationship difficult. In view of this it was felt that ministers and their spouses needed access to independent professional counsellors.

After a consultation with the Baptist Union and the Superintendents' Board, approval was given for such a scheme to be established. It involved the support and blessing of the Superintendents but, in terms of confidentiality, operated completely separately from them.

The question of payment for counselling also had to be resolved, since professional therapists usually make a charge for their services. It was agreed that ministerial couples should pay for counselling help wherever possible but, recognising some would find this an added burden, the Baptist Union was asked to provide a budget to assist those who needed such help. It was noted that Superintendents could sometimes provide additional financial support where necessary.

So a Steering Group was formally established, comprising a Superintendent, the Secretary for Ministry and five other members. This steering group set the scheme running, appointing an Advisor plus a number of qualified counsellors for each Area of the Union. It now meets regularly to administer and review the working of the scheme.

### **The Support It Can Offer**

All ministers and spouses have been informed personally of the scheme together with the name and phone number of their Area Advisor. They have also been provided with details of Advisors for other Areas so that, where preferred for personal reasons, a request for help may be made to someone outside a minister's own Area.

When someone contacts an Advisor she/he is referred to a counsellor appropriate to the situation. Arrangements are then left to the counsellor and client. Payment is made direct to the counsellor and any request for subsidised help is channelled through the advisor to the Baptist Union but without any reference to identity. For once it is comforting to be just a number!

Although the Scheme has not been heavily used across the country- perhaps more publicity is needed - it is certainly providing a service to a good number of people. Other denominations have become aware of this project and signalled their interest in either making it a joint venture or in starting up their own provisions along the same lines. Discussions as to these possibilities are currently taking place.

Ministry is one of the most demanding vocations. Few of the boundaries that protect other professions exist for ministers, yet they work with the traumas and tragedies as well as the joys and successes of the people in our churches and communities. These stresses and strains, the constant availability and vulnerability that is a minister's lot, can and do take their toll of minister and family. The Counselling Service exists to help ministers make sense of what is happening to

them and to enable them to continue to give good service to Christ and His Church. What the counsellor won't do is to tell the minister what to do!

You can see from this that it is not necessary for counselling help to be restricted to major crisis situations. Some ministers or spouses have taken the opportunity to use a counsellor for self-appraisal or for support, especially with regard to church pressures. Whatever the reason, the value of having an objective person with whom to share one's deepest concerns can be immeasurable.

We warmly commend the Counselling Scheme to all ministers and spouses.

**Michael Bray and Tony Noles, joint consultants to the Scheme**

If you do not know who your Area Advisor is then you can find out from either of the Counselling Scheme Consultants:

Revd Michael Bray  
17 Gaynesford Road  
Forest Hill  
London  
SE23 2UQ

Tel: 081 699 4140 (home)  
081 778 8601 (office)

Revd Tony Noles  
Woodley  
High Street  
Stock, Ingatestone  
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This article first appeared in the *Baptist Times*

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# Celebrating The Faith at the Lord's Table

In this paper I wish to examine the way in which Baptists celebrate the Lord's Supper, with reference to the Lima document, *Baptism, Eucharist and the Ministry (BEM)* on the one hand, and the recently published *Patterns and Prayers for Christian Worship (PPCW)*.

According to BEM, "The eucharistic liturgy is essentially a single whole, consisting historically of the following elements in varying sequence and of diverse importance:

- hymns of praise;
- act of repentance;
- declaration of pardon;
- proclamation of the Word of God, in various forms;
- confession of faith (creed);
- intercession for the whole Church and for the world;
- preparation for the bread and wine;
- thanksgiving to the Father for the marvels of creation, redemption and sanctification (deriving from the Jewish tradition of the 'berakah')
- the words of christ's institution of the sacrament according to the New Testament tradition;
- the 'anamnesis' or memorial of the great acts of redemption, passion, death, resurrection, ascension and Pentecost, which brought the Church into being;
- the invocation of the Holy Spirit ('epiklesis') on the community, and the elements of bread and wine (either before the words of institution or after the memorial, or both; or some other reference to the Holy Spirit which adequately expresses the 'epikleptic' character of the eucharist);
- consecration of the faithful to God;
- reference to the communion of saints;
- prayer for the return of the Lord and the definitive manifestation of his Kingdom;
- the Amen of the whole community;
- the Lord's prayer;
- sign of reconciliation and peace;
- the breaking of the bread;
- eating and drinking in communion with Christ and with each member of the Church;
- final act of praise;
- blessing and sending.

For the purposes of this paper I intend to group these 21 elements into 12 sections:

## 1. Opening Worship

According to BEM, the Lord's Supper should always take place within the context of the worship of the church. Such worship will naturally include **hymns of praise**, an **act of repentance**, and hopefully a **declaration of pardon**. With such a view most Baptists today would wholeheartedly agree, apart from the reference to "a declaration of pardon". Thus PPCW prefers to speak of "the assurance of forgiveness" - and rightly so. The Word - not the priest - declares absolution.

## 2. The Proclamation of the Word

Just as at the Last Supper there would have been a solemn recitation of the events leading up to the first Passover (the Passover 'haggadah'), so when the first Christians gathered to break bread and drink wine, they would have recited the story of how God in Christ has set his people free. This is what is behind the words of Paul in 1 Cor 11:26. It is not eating and drinking which proclaim, but the actual telling of the story of our salvation. If, therefore, we are to continue to "proclaim the Lord's death", then the Lord's Supper must always be accompanied by the preaching of the Word, however long or short that preaching may be.

Significantly, this same emphasis is present in PPCW 67: "The Supper is inseparable from the Word, and should always be preceded by the declaration of the Gospel...The Word needs to be broken as well as the bread".

Incidentally, do note that the Word needs to precede the Supper. In the Supper the worshippers respond to the love of God. To allow the Supper to precede the Word is to run the risk of reducing the eating of bread and drinking of wine to a magical rite.

## 3. The Prayers

Prayer, both silent and spoke, will pervade the whole of the Lord's Supper. In addition to those prayers which form part of the church's opening worship, there will hopefully be prayers of **intercession**, in which the needs of the wider church as also of the world are remembered. Here, alas, many a Baptist church falls down. Baptists are good at remembering the needs of the fellowship - indeed, as PPCW reminds us, in many Baptist churches the Lord's Supper forms the occasion when pastoral concerns are shared, and members and friends of the church are prayer for. But, as PPCW also notes, the needs of the wider church need to be remembered too. However, and this aspect is absent from PPCW, in so far as at the Table we remember that God's love in Christ encompasses the whole world, it behoves us to go on and remember the needs of the world in general. Just as there are no limits to God's love and concern, so too there should be no limits to the love and concern of God's people!

God's love and concern include, of course, not only people in the present, but also those in the past. Indeed, those who have died in Christ are very much people in the present. **The reference to the communion of saints** mentioned in BEM is surely very apposite. Particularly for those who have lost loved ones, it is good to be reminded that we come to worship God with "angels and archangels and all the company of heaven" (PPCW Pattern 2). In our Baptist tradition we may not pray for the dead, but we can certainly give thanks afresh for the safekeeping of those who have died in Christ, and look forward to the day when we shall be reunited with them - as also with all God's people.

BEM suggests that prayers include **prayer for the return of the Lord and the definitive manifestation of the Kingdom**. In so far as the Lord's Supper involves not only a looking backward to the passion and death of the Lord Jesus, but also a looking forward to the day when he shall return in glory, it is natural to pray for that return. Likewise as in our prayers we remember the needs of our sad and sorry world, it is natural to pray for **the definitive manifestation of the Kingdom**, when right and not might will prevail.

PPCW Pattern 2 gives expression to **the Amen of the whole community** with the following acclamation taken from the Anglican ASB:

- Leader: Your death, O Lord, we commemorate  
Your resurrection we confess.  
Your final coming we await.  
Glory be to you, O Christ.
- Response: Christ has died.  
Christ is risen.  
Christ will come again.

In some Baptist churches it is also customary to say together **The Lord's Prayer** within the context of the Lord's Supper. This practice is encouraged by PPCW Patterns 1 and 3 with the comment: "A modern version of the Lord's Prayer may be said to emphasise unity in the Body of Christ".

#### 4. Invitation to the Table

This is the one element not specifically included in the BEM list of 21 elements which have historically belonged to the eucharistic liturgy. Maybe this is a specifically Baptist contribution?

Somewhat sadly, PPCW provides little direction on this point. It speaks of the "need for clear words if invitation", but in fact lacks specificity. Although it offers a number of "invitations", the nearest it comes to fencing the Table is in the following:

"The Table of the Lord is spread. It is for those who will come and see in broken bread and poured out wine symbols of his life shed for us on the cross and raised again on the third day. The Risen Christ is present among his people and it is here that we meet him. It is for those who know him a little and long to know him more. We invite all who are seeking him and all who are weary of their sin and doubt to come and share in the feast. If you do not feel able to take a full part, you are welcome to remain among us without receiving the bread and wine."

This wording does not, in fact, take us much further than the more common invitation to "all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ". If church discipline is to be taken at all seriously, then at the very least we add "...and have confessed their faith in him".

#### 5. The Greeting of one Another

At some stage within any worship service opportunity should be given to the congregation to greet one another.

The Church of England through its ASB has revised the ancient practice of **The Peace** to which the BEM refers. Here members of the congregation are encouraged to greet one another with the words "the peace of the Lord be always with you", to which the reply is made "and also with you". PPCW Pattern 2 suggests additional responses: "Christ is our peace", "let us live in his love". Personally, I find these set formulae somewhat stilted and unnatural, and prefer to encourage people to greet one another in the way and with the words that seem appropriate to them - whether it be a handshake or an embrace, a simple word of greeting or a more enthusiastic word of love.

BEM links with the peace "**reconciliation**". In ideal terms this time of greeting should be the occasion when those who have been out of fellowship with one another, reaffirm their relationship in Christ. However, ideals are not always practicable. Relationships cannot normally be restored within a matter of minutes. Far better for people to abstain from communion on occasion rather than indulge in cheap reconciliation.

## 6. The Words of Institution

Before reading the “**words of Christ’s institution**” themselves, it is normally helpful to include a selection of other Scriptures, what PPCW calls “Gospel words”. Clearly flexibility is the order of the day. Scriptures may well be chosen with the preceding sermon in mind. Scriptures that are often used include Psalm 116:12-14, 17; Isaiah 53; Matt 5:6; John 3:16; 6:35; 1 Tim 1:15; 1 John 4: 9, 10.

## 7. The Great Eucharistic Prayer

Under this heading we group three elements from BEM: first, the **thanksgiving to the Father for the marvels of creation, redemption and sanctification**; secondly, the **‘anamnesis or memorial of the great acts of redemption**; and thirdly, the **invocation of the Holy Spirit (‘epiklesis’)**.

It is interesting to see the way in which PPCW 70n1 picks up most of these elements in its note on the Prayer of Thanksgiving: “The Prayer of Thanksgiving centres on those mighty acts of God whereby our redemption was accomplished. It is a recalling of the Passion story when our Lord was lifted up in suffering and glory, and a looking forward in hope to the final victory of love. It is an act of thanksgiving for the bread and wine which are symbols of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. This prayer calls upon the Holy Spirit, that by his presence in their hearts the people may enter into the meaning of the bread and wine, draw near to the risen Christ, and receive him afresh. It concludes with a fitting response of love, gratitude and re-consecration”.

Rightly in my view, this note in PPCW omits all reference to “creation” and “sanctification” (though PPCW Pattern 2 does suggest that prayer should include “thanksgiving for all that God has done in creation and redemption”). BEM, on the other hand, assumes that the prayer of thanksgiving will be patterned on the Jewish ‘berakah’ used at the Passover: “Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, who bringest forth fruit from the earth. Blessed art thou who hast sanctified us with thy commandment, and enjoined us to eat unleavened cakes”. However, to believe that such a prayer belongs of the essence to the great prayer of thanksgiving seems to be a strange form of liturgical fundamentalism. The focus should surely be on Jesus.

Rightly, too, PPCW relates the invocation of the Holy Spirit to the worshippers alone, and not also - as BEM would suggest - to the elements of bread and wine. The former position is in line with New Testament practice; the latter position is what has given rise to such distorted doctrines as transubstantiation. Thus CFD Moule *Worship in the New Testament* 42,43 makes the point: “An ‘epiklesis’ or invocation of the Holy Spirit **upon non-personal objects** is alien to the New Testament doctrine of the Holy Spirit and of persons, and is a retrograde step. Non-personal objects may be consecrated, i.e. dedicated for a special purpose in the service of God, but not inspired (2 Timothy 3:16 is exceptional)”.

## 8. The breaking of Bread - and Pouring of Wine

The **breaking of bread** has always been regarded as a key element in the eucharistic liturgy. British Baptists have tended to reduce the symbolism present in this action with their introduction of small cubes of bread. In some churches if there is bread to break at all, then it is a miserable piece of thin sliced white bread! Fortunately, in an increasing number of churches, the symbolism of the one loaf is being restored, with the result that the symbolism of the oneness that we have in



Christ is restored too ( see 1 Cor 10:17). Symbolism, however, is also present in the actual breaking of bread: "it may be seen as the necessary preparation for sharing, a sign of the violent cost of our salvation, or the completeness of Christ's self-offering, and the complete self-offering to which we are called" (PPCW 68).

According to PPCW, as also much present Baptist practice, the "lifting of the cup" in full view of the congregation is the action which corresponds to the breaking of the bread. However, in view of the Lord's own reference to his blood being poured out for the forgiveness of sins, one might wonder whether the symbolism of pouring the wine into the cup might be more appropriate. Bring back the old Baptist pitchers!

## 9. Eating and Drinking

A host of minor questions have been raised by Baptists with regard to the "**eating and drinking in communion with Christ and with each member of the Church**". The most significant difference between us and the main liturgical churches lies in our traditional refusal to go forward to the Table to be served by the minister and deacons: we have preferred to remain in our seats, serving one another, and in this way emphasise the priesthood of all believers (although whether in fact that custom is at all meaningful today, is a moot point!). PPCW does not enter into that debate.

## Dedication

If the Lord's Supper is to be at all meaningful, then it must end in renewed dedication - it must spur us onwards in our service of Christ. Presumably this is what BEM has in mind with the **sending** as also possibly by its reference to the "**consecration of the faithful to God**". Such recommitment to the Lord finds expression in the adoption by PPCW Pattern 2 of the ASB prayer:

Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out  
in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory".

BEM links the **sending** with the blessing. Although this is quite acceptable, in some ways there seems greater force if the worshippers themselves respond to God's love in Christ - rather than to a ministerial injunction - to go out and serve the Lord.

## 11. Final Act of Praise

With the **final act of praise** the service should come to a tremendous climax. Alas, this has not always been the case in Baptist circles, not least because most hymns in the "Communion" section of the old hymnbook tended to be so mournful. Surely, however, a hymn of triumph is needed (so also PPCW Pattern 3) - a hymn where the risen, ascended and reigning Lord Jesus is to the fore. Jesus is Lord - not of the church, but of the world, Lord of history, Lord of time, Lord before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess.

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**To the Readers of the Baptist Ministers' Journal**

As I mentioned in my first article, I have been dealing with all claims personally. This has been an excellent means of establishing contact with many Churches frequently at the time when help is most needed i.e. when there has been a fire, break-in or accident. I trust my response has been prompt, fair and helpful - you will of course be the judge of this.

One observation that causes me concern is the adequacy (or often the inadequacy) of sums insured. Frequently I have been faced with a claim for expensive audio equipment, electronic instruments, computers and other contents where such items have been purchased over the last two or three years but the sums insured have not been amended to reflect these increased values. In some instances the sum insured has been insufficient to cover the value of the items damaged or stolen with the unfortunate consequence that there is a shortfall in the amount of claims money that can be paid.

Now is a good time of year for you to ask your Diaconate to review your insurance needs, including the Manse, against the cover actually in force. I will be more than happy to provide quotations for revised costings prior to any firm instructions being given.

Yours in His Service

T. E. Mattholie

## 12. Blessing

BEM would appear to presume that the service comes to an end with a priestly **blessing**. A similar understanding is to be found in PPCW Pattern 2. Far more suitable on an occasion when the high-priestly action of the Lord Jesus has been to the fore is surely the saying together of the Grace, by which the congregation is enabled to bless one another. (So also PPCW Pattern 3). Even more meaningful is when the congregation are asked to bind hands together, reinforcing that oneness which is ours in the Crucified and Risen Lord.

Paul Beasley-Murray

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# A Black Perspective on Church Life

## For Such a Time As This

Most black Christians who arrived in the UK in the 1950's and 1960's came for economic reasons with short term programmes. They all expected to return 'home' within five years. Within a short period of time, the emerging black Christian community began to re-interpret its mission in England. "Who knows", they began to preach, "but that God has brought us to the kingdom for such a time as this".

Pre-renewal Christianity in Britain, ravaged by liberal theology and relativity, earned the UK the description 'graveyard'. Even as a young boy in the Caribbean I recall the warning voices for any Christian planning to go to Britain: "Don't go to England, you will backslide!" At that time church attendance in the Caribbean was 79 per cent compared to some three per cent in the UK.

Black Christians were not all Pentecostals. The majority were ardent members of historical traditions who received a 'cool' reception when they arrived. Many experienced blatant racism. But the growth element in the black community and even within the English churches was black Christianity. Most black Christians came from the Caribbean and were typified by their holiness-pentecostal distinctives: exuberant worship, ethical imperatives, prayer, fasting, tithing, sacrificial giving, and a sense of anticipation in worship and commitment to the fundamentals of the faith. Although this description fits the Caribbean Christianity of the 1950's to 1980's, it is worth pointing out that over the last ten years the black church must now be understood to represent thriving African groups, some of which syncretise African traditions and world views with biblical concepts and which would not sit comfortably within the Evangelical-Pentecostal framework.

## Striving for Partnership

It is historically inaccurate to conclude that the black church arose out of racial hostility from 'white churches'. Historic churches of the pre-renewal era were totally unsuited to nurturing the faith or lives of black Christians in the early years. Many genuine attempts to reach out to black Christians have resulted in durable personal relationships, but the quest for meaningful partnerships continues.

Black churches have never been exclusive or preclusive of white people. Someone asked me for guidelines to get into the black church. My response was quite simple: push the door and walk in! Over the years many white Christians have

done just that to find salvation, hope, healing and fellowship. Many have moved on ; some have stayed. Undoubtedly, the cultural bias of the black church, as well as incipient white superiority and domestic tensions, have always presented barriers to white Christians who have sought spiritual shelter in the black church. But we have come a long way in identifying many of these issues in more recent years. The number of church initiatives which came about during the 1970's and 1980's show that the commitment to partnership has been an integral part of black Christianity.

It was the recognition of social realities which took the black church into a new dimension of ministry in the 1970's. Matters of injustice and empowerment provided an access point into ecumenism, where the black church community found affirmation and empowerment. Ecumenism has been a Good Samaritan to black church leaders offering help with no pre-condition. I suspect that any Samaritan helping a Jew in need is bound to be non-dogmatic and theologically flexible. This has certainly been the main pulling force of ecumenism on the black church, which remains committed to its holiness distinctives. Sadly, until more recent years, evangelicalism has been caught up with a citadel Christianity which has produced a slow response to justice issues previously regarded as the province of liberal Christianity.

### **Surveying the Land**

After 40 years, the black church finds itself better equipped to survey the land. Black church leaders have a vested interest for a number of reasons. We recognise the growing needs of British-born black Christians committed to the faith, but whose world view differs from that of their parents. It is also important to note the growing number of large multi-racial 'white-led' churches in our inner cities. Ronald Nathan, General Secretary of the African Caribbean Evangelical Alliance, has drawn our attention to the important distinction between multi-racial churches and the multi-cultural church. It's worth recognising that the latter is probably very rare. In any event there is a growing relationship between black churches and multi-racial churches who often face the same issues.

### **The Blowing of the Wind**

The rising tide of charismatic and renewal Christianity has curiously coincided with the growth of black Pentecostalism. However, it is strange how little conscious relationships there have been between these streams and black churches. Even the renewed vigour of 'white pentecostalism' has been a separate development. One thing is certain: pockets of English church life which once found black spontaneity a strange oddity, now make some black churches look tame! It may be that these things have simply happened simultaneously in the province of God or that a measure of 'spiritual osmosis' has taken place between the black experience of British Christianity! On the whole, black churches welcome the blowing of the wind. Even the current 'Toronto phenomenon', little known about in black churches, would not be entirely unwelcome by black Christians who have long experienced a greater degree of emotional liberation than their European counterpart.

What black churches find difficult, however, is a level of freedom which many charismatics exercise at the apparent expense of transcendence. The 'holiness factor' is still important for the holiness tradition which runs like a main artery through classical pentecostalism. In a word, Christian liberty, as exposed by charismatics, still looks too easy. For a pietistic community with an inherent commitment to the dogmatism of the 'thou-shalt-not' ethic, we are still uneasy about easy-go-lucky relationships in church and the quick pint after the final Graham

Kendrick song. But we are happy about this talk about 'signs and wonders'. In fact the black church wonders what all the fuss is about. Few black Christians would have an argument with Morris Cerullo on **that** particular issue, although many church leaders still find his fund-raising approach unacceptable.

## **Body Life**

The 'priesthood of all believers' would be a foreign language in many black churches although the practice has been prevalent for years. Make no mistakes about it, the pastor runs the show and the concept of 'team ministry' is virtually unknown, but 'crowd participation', now being experimented with in many churches, has long been the normal for black churches. I will never forget the shock I had when I experienced my first Anglican, Methodist and Baptist services in the 1970's when everyone had to endure the one-man show each week. Even my first experience of an Elim church came as a surprise.

That's not to say that black church services are ideal. Freedom has its own price-tag! Similarly, we wrestle with the implications of full participation for women. Black churches have some affinity with Anglicans in that women rarely get to the top of the ladder, and until recently were prevented from applying for anything but the bottom rung of ministerial credentials in some of the leading denominations. Technically, it is impossible for a woman to be an executive or national leader in at least three of the five major black groups in the UK. Consequently, there is no smugness as we look at the ecclesiastical traumas in the Church of England.

Disestablishment is another matter though. Black churches - having seen it at a distance for many years - can understand prestige; but a state church has only made sense in the context of access to power. The idea that a church can owe allegiance to any other powerbase outside of heaven is a strange notion. Even the impending financial crisis which raises questions about membership participation at a greater level - tithing and giving - seems long overdue!

In case these may appear to be harsh observations, I do want to emphasise that black Christianity has a deep respect for the Anglican community which comes out of many years of affinity with the Caribbean and Commonwealth ties. Usually there is a note of disappointment about Anglicanism, and anguish for Anglicans with whom many black church leaders have strong relationships. In fact, it is probably true to say that on the whole black church leaders have better relationships with Anglican vicars and bishops than they do with indigenous Pentecostal leaders.

## **Searching for Truth**

It is hard to find any section of the Christian community not engaged in a rediscovery or redefining of biblical truth. In the cultural swamp of rampant relativity, plurality claims for biblical truth expressed with intellectual credibility is one of the greatest challenges facing the church.

The black church community in the UK has not been typified by its articulation of classical theology lived out in the harsh realities of urban deprivation. This means that black Christianity has majored in the 'hermeneutic of experience', verified by the Word. This should not be confused with a Liberation Theology, which is invariably understood only within academia and which the black church would probably reject out of hand. It describes the value of living faith in the Word of God.

This means that while black Christianity is experientially holiness-pentecostal in the main, it is also - with some exceptions - evangelical in creed. There is a basic

belief in the basis of faith laid out in the Apostles' Creed. Consequently, the black church finds the concept of 'mixed denominations' incomprehensible. By definition a vicar who does not accept the virgin birth is not a vicar. Involvement in ecumenism is therefore largely a matter of perceptions about empowerment, affirmation and friendships; it usually has nothing to do with theological mutuality.

### Looking Ahead

Enlightened black church leaders realise that there is no future in isolationism. The UK is too small, the agenda is too great and the Christian workforce too limited.

The potential for partnership is significant but, equally, there is ample scope for more serious fragmentation. The wider Christian community may find itself debating the vexed issues of ecumenism, women's leadership, the nature of hell or the impact of charismatic Christianity. However, few of these subjects are likely to alienate black Christians or seriously undermine black/white relationships.

What may turn the tide one way or the other will be the extent to which the majority Christian community affirms black Christians by providing an environment of mutual respect in which the black church community may continue its self-exploration and affirmation in the years ahead. This needs to be done within a thoroughly biblical framework. It is a tenuous journey which black Christians have only recently begun in a significant way in the UK and which must be allowed to run its course if the black church community is to continue its unique contribution to British Christianity. In a real sense that not-yet multi-cultural choir John wrote about in Revelation is well and truly in its practice run in the here and now.

Joel Edwards

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# The UK and the Social Chapter: Kicking Justice into Touch?

## The Church's Concern?

Ever since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the signing of the single European Act there has been talk of a New Europe. Indeed, the change of pace in Europe during the last three years certainly makes one think about a new, or at least a different, Europe. In a short period of time we have seen both the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the European Union (EU) making a commitment to a Single European Market (SEM) by the end of 1992. Economic and monetary union by the turn of the century for the EU has become a realistic goal.

The Christian faith has a good deal to say about making things new again, for the Christian gospel is all about the renewal of life. It is therefore important for us to engage with all the changes taking place in Europe in a fairly critical manner. In some ways we may discern what seems to be a renewal of life as new community between nations is sought. But in other ways we can discern not so much renewal but rather the extension of old ways that may be liberating for a few, but not for many.

The creation of the SEM will create greater personal freedom within the EC in terms of freedom of movement and economic freedom. The purpose of this article is to look briefly at "freedom" and then ask what structures are necessary in society to not only create greater freedom in Europe, but also a more just, participating and sustainable society.

## Freedom

One of the marks of the new Europe (both EU and the wider Europe) is freedom. John MacQuarrie observes that:

"...if freedom is as we are assuming essential to becoming a human person, then in protecting and enhancing freedom one is at the same time, protecting and enhancing humanity"<sup>1</sup>

The implications of such a statement are that where freedom is extended then human life is improved. If people are to live creative lives, growing to their full potential as human beings, then they must be free. This freedom may be in terms of freedom from something. People need to be free from poverty, disease and squalor if they are to live fulfilled lives. Freedom may also be in terms of freedom to do something. For example, people need to be free to choose how to spend their resources, have freedom of movement and freedom of expression.

Human freedom, however, is not only about life being enriched, for human freedom is also related to sin. Without checks and balances in society one person's freedom may be another person's determination. So it is that John MacQuarrie goes on to state that "Freedom needs the protection of law because as Luther made clear the human will is subject to sin, and in any sinful society there are constant attempts by some members to take away the freedom of others".<sup>2</sup> This being true means that is insufficient to simply embrace the economic implications of SEM with its extension of economic freedom. For it may be argued that the SEM will work mainly to the advantage of those with most economic power, ie multi-national companies and

those who are already fairly privileged in society: well trained, prosperous and mobile people.

We need to be concerned not only with creating a New European Union that enjoys greater economic freedom, but also with the creating of a more just, participatory and sustainable society. The European Commission is committed to the social dimension of the SEM and has expressed this in its Social Charter. The Maastricht Treaty contained a Social Chapter and eleven of the twelve member states agreed to implement the Social Charter (Denmark later failed to ratify the treaty). The UK excluded itself from the 1989 Social Charter and opted out of the Social Chapter at Maastricht.

The Social Charter provisions could have a dual effect. Firstly, it would provide the necessary checks and balances that greater economic freedom makes necessary. Secondly, it could make some contribution to the creation of a more just, participatory and sustainable society. The UK position could have serious implications for UK workers. We are embracing the greater economic freedom of the SEM but paying insufficient attention to its social dimension. Some examples from the Charter under the heading of justice and participation illustrate the disadvantage of UK workers compared with other Europeans.

## **Justice**

The Social Charter is a minimum set of human rights mainly for people at work. Where the Charter is implemented it will give some protection to people from some of the harsher effects of an extended economic free market. Two examples serve to illustrate this point.

Firstly, the Charter speaks of all employment being fairly remunerated (Clause 9). It is, of course, difficult to decide what is fair, but at the moment ten million people in employment in Britain earn less than the Council of Europe's 'decency threshold', a position unrivalled throughout the EU. Britain's refusal to move towards a national minimum wage may leave British people as the cheap labour of the EC.

Secondly, the Charter speaks of the right to vocational training throughout an EC worker's life (Clause 19). All too often training is seen as a cost that can be cut. The interests of short-term profit leaves training budgets trimmed. A cry that is constantly heard in Britain is that other European workers enjoy better training. This situation is hardly likely to be rectified by Britain opting out of the Social Charter and the Social Chapter.

## **Participation**

Building a participatory society is but a short step from building a just society, for being able to participate in society is implicit in the idea of justice. People participate in society in a variety of ways: voting, lobbying their MP, paid work, voluntary work and bringing up families.

The Christian faith has a good deal to say about people in society. The Bible affirms that despite the fall, our humanity in Christ is remade (2 Cor 5:17), and that all humanity has self worth before God (John 3:16). Having said that, the biblical view of people is not individualistic, but is essentially about people in community. The Bible affirms that each person has a part to play in community life (Romans 12:4ff). To a considerable extent these ideals can be expressed in terms of a participatory society.



It is important that people are able to participate in decisions that affect their lives. A major area of life is the work place, but this is an area where many people have very little or no influence in the decision-making process, so that their lives are determined by others. The Social Charter seeks to develop greater industrial democracy: providing the right to information, consultation and participation for employees, particularly in conditions of technological change, restructuring, redundancies and for trans-frontier workers (Clauses 22 and 23). A variety of models are being considered to enable such participation. These include employees' representatives being appointed to a supervisory board or to a one tier board, or the creation of a separate board with specified rights to consultation.

Some of the EU member states already have some form of industrial democracy and remain economically strong, eg France and Germany. Ronald Preston argues that where people are not allowed to participate in decision-making then: "...the proper respect for each person as made in God's image and remade in Christ is not expressed in the structures of human life".<sup>3</sup> It may well be that UK workers will be the only workers in the EU without such structures and respect. They will be denied the enabling freedom that such participation will give.

### **A Sustainable Society**

The British position on the social dimension of the SEM clearly raises issues about justice and participation in society. The issues are not confined to those cited above for the Charter has equally important clauses to do with equal rights for men and women, the provision of decent pensions, and the integration of disabled people into society.

The phrase a 'sustainable society' in ecumenical ethics is usually associated with talk about limits on economic growth and the conservation of non-renewable resources. Such issues are clearly important but in the context of the debate about the Social Charter I want to use the term in a different sense. That is, is the British position on the social dimension of the SEM morally sustainable, firstly in relation to our EU partners and, secondly, for British workers?

A term often heard in European debate is that Britain wants to see a level playing field. But in reality the British government seems to want the playing field tilted in our favour. Where social policy is concerned we hide behind the principle of subsidiarity, which seems to be a cover for an unwillingness to incur the social costs of the Social Charter. If all other EU members implement the Charter that seems to give an unfair advantage to the British on the so called level playing field, which does not seem morally sustainable.

But, secondly, as we neglect the social implications of the SEM, are we building a morally sustainable society in Britain? The SEM extends economic freedom as the barriers to trade are removed, so creating the environment for economic growth. This will clearly benefit the economically strong, the well able and large multi-national companies. The British Government's vision of Europe is summed up as "...a community nurturing individual freedom and opportunity".<sup>4</sup> The New Right offer the argument that individual freedom and opportunity are the most important values upon which to build society. Such a society, in their view, is a moral one.

However, an alternative view of a moral society is one that is less individualistic. While wanting to preserve the personal freedom of its members, it holds this in

tension with some measure of equality. This demands social structures that protect the weaker members of society, such as the poor, elderly and disadvantaged, who have little opportunity to take advantage of greater economic freedom. One viewpoint is that the Social Charter is an unwarranted intrusion into British social policy. An alternative point of view is that the Social Charter is a challenge to build a less individualistic society with a greater attempt to hold freedom and equality in tension.

## Conclusion

What is clear is that the British government welcomes the extension of economic freedom in the EU. Such a development fits well with its ideology of individualism and personal freedom. Their view of the SEM is not compatible, however, with our EU partners as the following quotation illustrates:

“The European Council considered that in the course of construction of the Single European Market social aspects should be given the same importance as economic aspects and should accordingly be developed in a balanced fashion”. (*Communique of the European Council, Madrid, 1989*)<sup>5</sup>

The future of society is an important Christian concern, and if we believe that God is active in his world we must discern where that activity is leading. Most Christians would want to affirm that God calls people to find new community and reconciliation. Seen in that light the development of a new Europe can be seen as the prophetic God at work in the world. But the challenge to find new community and reconciliation means more than associating together for economic gain. A Christian vision of Europe must mean more than some great economic market. Values such as justice and participation do not naturally emerge from the operation of the free market. The challenge of 1992 is to build such values into our society so that we make a society in which there is freedom for all and not simply a free for all.

**Paul Allen**

<sup>1</sup> Macquarrie John: *In Search of Humanity* SCM 1982, p10

<sup>2</sup> MacQuarrie John: *Ibid*, p22

<sup>3</sup> Preston Ronald H: *The Future of Christian Ethics* SCM 1987, p62

<sup>4</sup> Hughes John: *The Social Charter and the Single European Market* Spokesman 1991, p11

<sup>5</sup> Hugh John: *Ibid*, p3

# Dispatch from the New South Africa

## Why we are cautiously optimistic. The silver lining on the horizon.

We have spoken about that big and awesome 'Day' for more than four years. Now it's history! The first Democratic Elections (since 1652!) from 25-29 April took place in a relatively fair and trouble free manner. The churches speak of a 'Divine Miracle', the secular press writes of a 'modern fairytale' and Archbishop Tutu calls us the 'Rainbow Children' who, of all colours, races and religions, will try to live together in peace and harmony. The Africans are full of exaggerated expectations (a black woman came to the shop to fetch her new washing machine because Nelson Mandela had promised all black people their own houses with electricity and appliances IF they voted for him!) Many Whites, however, fear that tribal warfare, violence and civil unrest will increase and that the hitherto disadvantaged masses will repay evil with greater evil. The extreme Left is threatening: "We are very angry and will take from you everything you got". The extreme Right shouts: "We will not allow the 'Kaffirs' to rule over us!" Fortunately they have less than two per cent support.

Both assumptions are wrong: **FIRSTLY:** these hopes and fears are wrongly based: we are not just another African country where upon independence everything went wrong, mainly because the former white ruling classes withdrew voluntarily or were forcefully removed. Normally the "colonial foreigners" amounted to between two and four per cent. South Africa is different: our Whites will remain because this has been their home for over 300 years. The "Third World" in our country will not be left in the lurch like Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Angola and other emerging nations on the "dark" continent. Here, in the new South Africa, about 40 per cent of the population (and not only whites!) live already in "First World" comfort and luxury!

**SECONDLY:** Almost all African States have military dictatorship and one-party rule. We have a Government of 'National Unity' because our new President, Nelson Mandela, and his ANC (African National Congress) fortunately do not have the required two thirds majority to do as they like. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and his Zulu tribes are, with 20 per cent, the strongest ethnic group. Furthermore, we dare not ignore F.W. de Klerk because our economy, military strength, security police, social welfare and legal systems were under his control. He abolished Apartheid through patient negotiations and compromises. For the next five years at least these three main players will no longer pursue party politics but pledge to build a new united South Africa - a superhuman task. De Klerk and Buthelezi say they will do it "in the name and by the strength of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost" (this was de Klerk's verbatim response at the inauguration swearing-in ceremony as Vice-President under Mandela). Buthelezi testifies that he has been greatly helped by the Prayer Breakfasts in Kwazulu-Natal and through his friendship with Michael Cassidy of "African Enterprise", a deeply committed Christian missionary movement in our Country..

**THIRDLY AND LASTLY:** we see a silver lining on the Horizon and are cautiously optimistic because, as engaged Baptists, we know that the young African Christian Church is on the brink of revival. Millions of Blacks join hands with us to offer forgiveness and peace. They deplore the reign of terror, violence and faction-fighting in the townships. They come to us, because we can no longer go to them: the townships, locations and squatter camps are too dangerous. In other

words: The “JESUS” factor is stronger than anarchy and chaos; here at home revival is replacing revolution. The African Church is far stronger and livelier than we old traditional Europeans. This is most encouraging.

Thank you for allowing me to share our new South African perspective with you “at home”. I have seen the rise and fall of Communism (my parents were refugees from Eastern Europe after the First World War). I have lived under Hitler’s Third Reich and witnessed the building and collapse of the Iron Curtain and Berlin Wall. Now I can marvel at what God is doing in South Africa, where we have lived as pastor/missionary since 1950. Our God of miracles is great and worthy to be praised; His ways are wonderful! Our fondest greetings to the Baptist Ministers’ Fellowship in the U.K., Commonwealth and elsewhere.

Your fellow servant, Fritz Haus.

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## Book Reviews

***Christian Liberty: A New Testament Perspective* by James D.G. Dunn  
(Paternoster Press, 1993, 128pp, £6.99)**

This is a small book in size and it is a paperback; but do not let that lead you to imagine this is a slight volume of easy and simplistic theology. On the contrary, it is a solid, deep, exegetical and expositional work dealing with the massive question of Christian freedom and authority, and on the journey offers us some first rate exegetical excursions on key passages in St Paul’s letter to the Romans.

James Dunn is no mean scholar and New Testament exegete, and in this short work he does not lower his high standards. Chapter one deals with Liberty (as he prefers to call it) in general, looking at liberty in relation to authority, the self, and then in connection with the community or social relations. In this introductory chapter we note many aspects of human liberty, touching briefly on the thinking of eminent people down the centuries from the early Greeks to the famous J.S. Mill and his seminal book on liberty, which he analyses at greater length.

This leads to the next three chapters, to his looking first at the attitude of Jesus to liberty and religious and secular authority, and concludes, on biblical grounds, that although Jesus was critical of authority he was no simple revolutionary: he respected genuine authority, including the Mosaic law, and urged liberty only when its rightful place was usurped. The final two chapters look at claims on our freedom as regards our personal liberty in relation to the self and the demands of God and, as our freedom has to cope with the challenge of others, especially that within the Christian community. In the course of this discussion we are treated to two excellent examinations of the meaning and contemporary relevance of Romans 8 and 14: two chapters concerned, first, with how the Christian needs to relate to the Law and then, in chapter 14, with the strong and the weak in faith. These exegetical efforts offer some fine fresh insights into two perennial problems for the Christian on how to cope with law and liberty, and how to live in Christian community when we are all so different.

As one would expect from James Dunn, a first rate piece of work; but you need to be prepared to use your mind and engage with some challenging new insights.

**George Neal**

***Loving Against The Odds* by Rob Parsons (Hodder & Stoughton, 1994, 224pp, £5.99)**

This is an expansion of the Rob Parson's material presented in the widely circulated Marriage Matters seminars, sponsored by CARE Trust. He promises in the foreword that he will try to be as honest and realistic as possible. He is certainly honest and the book is enriched by contributions and perspectives from his wife, Dianne.

The book outlines the potential difficulties in marriage in a lively way, full of personal illustrations and anecdotes. There is a concern to be practical and each section offers conversation starters, suggestions or projects. There are chapters on communication, conflict, sex, the affair, forgiveness and finance, and Rob Parsons has the ability to combine humour with an earnestness that will enable the reader both to identify with the subjects and to risk the vulnerability of discussing the issues.

The book is ideal resource material for those involved in marriage preparation, and would be of great encouragement to couples who want to strengthen a good marriage. It is not intended to be a textbook for marriage counselling, nor does it offer a Biblical or theological discussion on Christian Marriage. Indeed, one of the weaknesses of the book is that it makes assumptions that we all mean the same things when we use language about love and it is quite late in the book before there is any discussion about the real nature of agapé.

Couples who are experiencing the real difficulties in relationships would only be able to face the issues with the help of someone skilled in listening and caring. The note of optimism that runs through the book might seem simplistic or naïve to some, and in the interest of honesty there might have been some recognition that irretrievable breakdown does exist.

In short, the book is better seen as preventative medicine rather than treatment for the sick. However, many would argue that preventative medicine is the greatest need in the churches and Rob Parsons is to be thanked for producing such an open and honest look at matters that often remain hidden from view.

**David Richardson**

***New Testament Concept of Atonement* by H.D. McDonald (Lutterworth, 1994, 144pp, £9.99)**

When Dermot McDonald joined the staff of the London Bible College in 1949 he had already pastored three of our Baptist churches. Since he retired from being Vice-Principal of LBC in 1975, he has continued an extensive lecturing and writing programme, still going strong well into his eighties.

This, his most recent book, is about the biblical teaching on the cross. For McDonald, the cross is central to the gospel and Christology; to speak of Christ is to speak of his cross. After a useful exploration of six terms used in the NT (Cross, Tree, Cup, Death, Blood, Body), he works through the concepts of the Lamb of God, the Passover, the New Covenant, Sacrifice, Ransom, Propitiation and Reconciliation. Two closing chapters explore the implications of the NT teaching for the individual believer and for Christology. There is a bibliography of over one hundred works, and an index of biblical references, though no general index.

The book is pitched at a slightly more technical level than Stott's *The Cross of Christ*; it is exegetical and conservative in tone: James Denney is McDonald's most frequent author quoted, followed by Emil Brunner and P.T. Forsyth; some Fathers and Reformers are cited; among more recent writers are Bonhoeffer, Hartshorne and Jungel, though I didn't spot Moltmann. The book is packed with biblical

references and useful discussion of the interpretation of biblical passages.

If you are thinking of preaching a series of expository sermons on the meaning of the cross this book will be a useful resource. And if you want to know the secret of long and effective ministry, nip down to Sussex and have a chat with Derry Mac.

**Peter Hicks**

***Silence in Heaven - A Book of Women's Preaching* Co-edited by Heather Walton and Susan Durber (SCM, 1994, 218pp, £9.95)**

This first major published collection of sermons by women preachers is to be welcomed, not least because both co-editors are tutors at the Northern Baptist Collegé. As they point out in their introduction, 'The fact that the "word of God" has been heard for centuries from the mouths of men means that many women are especially conscious of both the difficulties and the opportunities that fall to them as preachers and have begun to reflect upon them'.

The Introduction goes on to give the criteria for selection of the sermons: that women should be visible in the text, that they should make reference to issues which concern women, that they should reflect new ways of reading the Bible drawing on feminist theory and insights, and that they should experiment with new ways of constructing a sermon. The thirty-five sermons are then arranged in sections, each with a helpful introduction. Like any other collection, the sermons are uneven in quality but I found several of them both powerful and moving, notably *Standing In The Stable* by Mary Cotes and Angela Tilby's profound meditation on Good Friday. There is much to admire and to gain new insights from, but also for this male reviewer much to disturb and question.

At the end of the book I am left wondering about the definition of 'sermon'. Several times we are told that the distinction between 'exegesis' and 'eisegesis' is part of the dominance of 'male' categories of thought in preaching and needs to be questioned. The result is that many of the sermons, whilst powerfully expressing the cry of women to be heard, do not seem to complete the prophetic task by then submitting those concerns to the Word of God to speak into them. I appreciate the use of imagination in preaching, but in some cases Scripture is radically re-interpreted or even re-written, using very subjective criteria. It is a pity that none of the fine current examples of woman preachers in the conservative evangelical tradition is included.

This is not a comfortable book but nevertheless one which should help us all to understand and be challenged by the contribution of women preachers to the church today.

**Tony Peck**