

- (1) THAYER J.H.(GRIMM) 'A Greek/English Lexicon of the New Testament' Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1896 sub. KERUX, p346
  - (2) MOUNCE R.H. 'The Essential Nature of New Testament Preaching', Eerdmans, 1960 p84
  - (3) MOUNCE R.H. Op. cit. p42
  - (4) MOUNCE R.H. Op. cit. pp42,43
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**SHOULD A CHRISTIAN MARRY A NON-CHRISTIAN -  
AND SHOULD THE CEREMONY TAKE PLACE IN  
AN EVANGELICAL CHURCH?**

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The aim of this article is to SUGGEST a biblical approach to a common, pastoral problem. Mr Jones thanks those who have discussed the subject with him and encouraged him to publish his thoughts. Readers' comments are invited but they will be published only if they contribute to a careful, biblical evaluation of the argument in this article.

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This problem is an intensely personal one for all concerned. Obviously it has an acute effect on the engaged couple, the parents of the believer who is engaged, the non-believer and his or her parents. It has, however, a wider effect. It bears upon the minister and officers of the church where it is requested that the wedding should take place, and where, perhaps, the believer may be a member of long standing and usefulness, and also upon the members and adherents of the church, particularly upon those who are as yet unmarried. Clearly, it is a matter fraught with the keenest emotions and therefore with the most far-reaching repercussions.

In our unprincipled and undisciplined age, problems like this are

likely to arise in the life of the church. The almost instinctive reaction, therefore, is to refuse the request on the grounds that it is symptomatic of the spirit of anarchy which is abroad these days. Should not marriage be given a high and honoured place in the church's life and witness? Do we not stand for reformation according to the Word of God? Does not Scripture say, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"? (2 Cor.6:14). Are not widowed Christians free to remarry "only in the Lord"? (1 Cor.7:39). To all these questions an affirmative reply must be given. However, can too high a place be given to marriage by the church? Should it appear to be ranked with Baptism and the Lord's Supper and be made part of the exercise of discipline in the Church?

The purpose of this article is to suggest an approach to this vexatious matter. It is presented in the belief that it is both biblically justifiable and pastorally responsible. But is it? That is for each reader to judge.

The approach presented here is related to two fixed points of biblical teaching. In this lies its capacity to admit the non-straight-forward, non-black and white situations of which pastoral life is full. As both fixed points are scriptural this approach cannot be dismissed out of hand as smacking of compromise. These points are:

1. Marriage is human and religious
2. Marriage is human and sacred

1. Marriage - Human and Religious

Marriage is human, not just Christian, and religious, not just secular. It is so because it is a divine provision for all mankind. It was instituted at Creation by the kindly understanding and yet firm authority of God. In kindness God said "It is not good for man to be alone". In firmness God said, "I will make him a help meet for him". Marriage is therefore the result of God's understanding of man's personal and physical needs, and it is God's best and finest provision for him. Further to this, marriage was intended by God to be monogamous and permanent, and the context for procreation, as in this way God's good purposes for children, families, nations and the world would best be realised. (The current chaos as a result of the breakdown of the family unit, its relationships of love and authority, aided by humanistic propaganda underlines the truth of this).

From this it follows that marriage is not only for Christians and it is not only a "redemptive-spiritual" union. It was introduced before the Fall and therefore before Redemption was first announced and applied. But this does not mean that it is only earthly, social or, at worst, physical. It was and is a gift of God and it should never be regarded by unbelievers as a social convention (with the trimmings if conducted in a church) or as having merely a physical or earthly dimension. Instituted by God, it must be basically and essentially religious. In other words, there is a depth or a height (the two words are synonymous here) to the marriage-relationship which transcends the merely human and natural. Marriage bears the fingerprint of its author - God. What He has ordained, namely that "the two shall become one flesh", occurs in every consummated marriage. And this involves more than just a physical union! It is this other but associated inter-personal dimension which makes sexual infidelity and immorality such a dreadful thing. Marriage is therefore fraught with varying degrees of enrichment in the case of unbelievers as well as believers. (It is also fraught with varying degrees of distress and havoc as a result of the Fall, the progress of sin, as Satan in various ways corrupts God's good gifts).

Now with regard to the recognition of marriage i.e. by the state or the church (or by a mixture of both in the case of a minister being a registered person) it must be remembered that marriages in a Registry Office are as valid in the eyes of God, when in accord with the law of the land, as those solemnised in a building set apart for religious worship. The law given at Creation (Gen.2:18-25) is providentially still recognised, though in varying degrees, by most cultures.

While unbelievers are free to marry in a Registry Office, may they not be married in a church? Indeed should some of them not be? Cannot a case be made of even encouraging some unbelievers to be married in an evangelical church rather than deterring them on the basis that marriage is essentially religious? If the couple have a sense of the reality of God, and of the religious nature of marriage and a desire for God's blessing, surely they should be so allowed. On what grounds could they possibly be refused? They are neither being regarded as Christians nor are they being required to profess to be such, nor are they being given a sacrament by being married in a church. (Devotees of non-Christian religions would be excluded though the likelihood of their applying to be married in

church would be minimal to say the least). Otherwise would not a favourable response from an evangelical church be in line with our conviction and belief that unbelievers are still in the image of the God who made them, though that image is marred beyond human repair? It is not inconceivable that at such a time they may not only turn to God for a blessing on their marriage but in repentance and faith in Christ for salvation.

It will be doubtless thought that we are straying from the point. But are we? It needs to be remembered that the unbeliever who is engaged to a believer is a creature in God's image and is an object of His love, and, other things being equal, has a perfect right to be married. All the foregoing is not irrelevant as we shall try to show.

## 2. Marriage - Human and Sacred

Like other creation ordinances e.g. work, marriage becomes enhanced for Christians for the gospel and the salvation it brings is not to be regarded as erasing what was introduced at Creation. It rather endorses, re-actualises and exalts it, while erasing gradually and eventually totally what was introduced by the Fall.

What therefore was originally expressive of God's kindness and authority becomes more than that by the revelation of His grace to sinners in Christ. Marriage between believers becomes a context for the mutual reception and expression of God's grace, compassion, wisdom and strength. It exhibits and promotes a union deeper than the richest union between the kindest, happiest and wisest unbelievers. It serves as an illustration of the deepest inter-personal union of all, namely that between Christ and the Church (Eph.5:22-33). So, in the consequent family unit, not only is God's kindness and authority revealed but also His grace.

Obviously, when two believers desire to marry, the best place for them to do this is the church. There they have the opportunity of demonstrating clearly their belief that marriage is not only human and religious, but also sacred. They proclaim by this means their grateful recognition of God as their Creator, Provider and Father; their united resolve to serve Jesus Christ their Saviour and Lord, as man and wife, and their confessed dependence on the aid of the Holy Spirit for every aspect of their life together. They become

"heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Pet.3:7). But in being married in church even they do not partake of a sacrament. The Lord Jesus Christ has not appointed marriage for all His people (Matt. 19:10-12; 1 Cor.7:7). If a law were to be passed prohibiting church marriages there would be nothing inherently sinful in believers complying with it, nor would such marriages be any the less valid in the sight of God or sacred in the estimation of the believers.

Now it is in the light of all this that the question of a believer marrying an unbeliever - and in church- is to be faced. We have seen that an unbeliever has a right to be married and, if religiously aware, to be married in a church. The heart of the problem which we are facing lies, of course, in the right of the believer to marry an unbeliever. And in church? We shall consider each matter in turn.

#### I. Should a believer marry an unbeliever?

The answer to this question must be "No". The unbeliever may marry a believer because he or she is only under the law given at Creation, but the believer may not marry an unbeliever because he or she is "in law" to Christ (1 Cor.9:21).

2 Corinthians 6:14 is the text which springs to the minds of many as foreclosing any further consideration of this matter. It may, however, be doubted that when Paul wrote, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers", he had a mixed marriage of the kind under consideration explicitly, let alone exclusively, in mind. The chapter which deals with problems associated with marriage, viz 1 Cor.7, does not mention such a situation. Verses 12-16 reflect on the consequence of an already married unbeliever having come to faith in Christ, as does 1 Pet.3:1,2.

Yet, in spite of all this, it is impossible to evade the applicability of the principle of 2 Cor.6:14 to marriage. A yoke joined animals for ploughing purposes. The prohibition in Deuteronomy 22:10 "Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together", lies behind 2 Corinthians 6:14. A Christian's desire should be to serve the Lord first in everything. How can he or she seriously consider doing this when married to an unbeliever? The believer should be prevented from thinking that this is possible. Partners in marriage should please each other (1 Cor.7:33). God and mammon cannot be served together (Matt.6:24).

Another reference which makes this explicit is 1 Corinthians 7:39. Paul indicates here that a widow (presumably a widower as well) is "at liberty to be married to whom (she) will, only in the Lord". This restriction must be appreciated in all its force. The widow/er has a wide but not unlimited choice of a further partner. The marriage must be in the Lord, i.e. the marriage must be to a Christian. It is inescapable that this injunction should be applied to all first marriages of Christians.

The Old Testament material which bears on this matter is interesting and relevant, for it is there that explicit prohibitions of such mixed marriages are found (cf. Ex.34:16; Deut.7:3; Josh.23:12-13; Ezra 9:1,2 & 10:2,3, and Nehemiah 13:23-27). It is important to evaluate these references carefully. This is done by considering them in relation to their place in Biblical revelation. They are all located in the period of the theocracy which has come to an end with the inauguration of the New Covenant. There is therefore no specific prohibition in Scripture against a Christian marrying a non-Christian.

But there is other material in the Old Testament which is very forceful. It comes from the Patriarchal period and, being linked with the Abrahamic covenant, is valid for New Testament Christians, cf. Gen.24:3, 28:1 and 26:34. It should be noted, however, that this is a deduction from the covenant rather than an expressed stipulation of it. In exactly the same way a Christian should not marry a non-Christian because of the nature of the gospel and its purpose.

The Christian is someone who has given himself or herself to the Lord in faith, love and obedience for ever. A marriage with an unbeliever is evidence of a recalling of that solemn commitment, yet not in such a way that the person ceases to be a Christian, but rather that he or she ceases to walk obediently with the Lord. On this evidence no Christian should marry a non-Christian, or to take the matter further back, become engaged to a non-Christian, or further back still, which is where the matter can be resolved, put himself or herself in a position where that could happen.

II. May they, nevertheless, under certain circumstances be married in an evangelical church? If so, on what grounds?

The answer here proposed to this question is "Yes". It is recognised

that this will not be acceptable to all. It is, however, respectfully asked of all who disagree with this reply that they realise that an indiscriminate response in the affirmative is not what is being proposed. Certain conditions have to be fulfilled so that the marriage ceremony may be engaged in with a good conscience before God and the church. What are these conditions? They arise out of what has been said already and they are:

a) That the unbeliever acknowledges the religious dimension of marriage

b) That the believer acknowledges that he or she is being disobedient to the Lord and does not display an arrogant will.

We shall consider these in turn.

a) Regarding the unbeliever

To require that an unbeliever makes a credible profession of faith so that the marriage ceremony may take place in a church is unprincipled. No one needs to profess to be a Christian to get married - not even in an evangelical church. However, no unbeliever who is an atheist, or an agnostic, or plainly irreverent in relation to a church service, the solemnity of vows, and the name of God, ought to be allowed to do so for his or her own sake. The religious nature of marriage must be recognised by the unbeliever. Further, if the unbeliever has given no real indication of being helpful to the believer in the practice of his or her faith, the ceremony should not take place. This is an attempt to save the believer, if possible, from trouble.

In marrying such a couple in church, on these conditions being fulfilled, it is to be noted that the unbeliever is not being declared a Christian, nor being made a member of the church, nor being given a sacrament. Nothing is being said by him or her which compromises the gospel, for the service can be re-drafted in large measure. (The expression, "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life", is much more open to objection in a funeral service of an unbeliever).

b) Regarding the believer

It must be stated to the believer in the presence of the unbeliever

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that such a marriage as is being envisaged dishonours God, is likely to cause spiritual loss and trouble to the believer and to any children of the union, and real offence in the church, and ought not to take place anywhere. (If time is available before the planned date the couple should be sent away to consider this. They could even be asked to postpone the planned date of the wedding). However, if the believer is emotionally unable to draw back, what should happen regarding the marriage ceremony? Should it take place in the church?

Why should it not? On what grounds could the request be refused? The following suggest themselves.

1. Such a marriage is an act of disobedience

While this is not being contested the question does need to be asked whether its nature is any different from other acts of disobedience committed by Christians and on account of which no disciplinary action is taken. If it is not different and as marriage is not a sacrament, on what ground could the request be refused? It would have to be granted with sorrow and the service conducted with a heavy heart if no other argument can be brought against it.

Even if, however, it is regarded as being in a different category of disobedience because it is an act as good as done against biblical teaching and pastoral advice previously given, is refusal to conduct the ceremony the appropriate response? Surely what should be considered after every attempt to dissuade the would-be partner of an unbeliever from going forward has been made, is not a refusal which drives them elsewhere to the very thing desired to avoid but an act of church discipline, e.g. public rebuke, temporary suspension from the Lord's Table. This under God's hand may bring the believer to a better mind. To refuse to marry resembles the use of a sword and not the power of a key.

The human element in all this must not be forgotten. The relationships between courting partners can proceed to a point of no-return. The emotional entanglement between two people can produce a situation where a believer can find it impossible to live without the other. The commitment may already have become so intense that a child is expected. To refuse to marry in such circumstances may mean the loss of a family to gospel influences for the rest of their



days.

2. To marry such people is to be involved in a sin of disobedience

The kind of involvement referred to here is of course the sharing of responsibility for the act. This is what the expression "Be not partakers in other men's sins" means, as the words which follow indicate, viz "Keep thyself pure" (1 Tim.5:22). The situation envisaged in the verse is the ordaining of unsuitable men to the ministry who ought to have been previously tested. The sin is the result of a failure in duty. In relation to marriage what we ought to do is to present biblical teaching and by pastoral counsel to seek to prevent such a marriage being contracted. This is to free oneself from that involvement which includes responsibility.

But what one does in a service has to be carefully considered. Can one do it in good conscience? There are two things to be weighed, viz praying for a blessing on the couple and pronouncing them to be man and wife.

a) Praying for the couple

It may be regarded that to do this involves asking God to bless an act of disobedience. A better and more accurate way of phrasing it would be asking God to bless people in spite of disobedience. Does this now constitute a problem? Are we not involved in doing this already? We ought to be both for ourselves and others. Do we not ask for blessing on the basis of the Lord's righteousness, not our own, and ask that He may show us our sins and bring us to repentance and reformation of life?

b) Pronouncing them to be husband and wife

As marriage is not exclusively Christian this declaration does not have to be made "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost". The name of God will suffice. And does not God regard them as husband and wife?

Are they not joined together in His sight? If this is so, and it is difficult to say otherwise, where lies the difficulty in our making such a declaration?

3. To marry such people in the church may cause division and a

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stumbling block to be placed before young Christians in particular.

This is another matter altogether. From theoretical matters like the above we come to the practical. Surely no church's unity and no pastor's continuance in office should be jeopardised over this. But they may be. There is therefore need for full discussion between the church officers, between them and the engaged couple, between them and any relatives of the believer, and very discretely and sensitively in the church.

This problem is best dealt with in the home of the believer concerned. There teaching can be given before ever a friendship with an unbeliever is formed. (This should be reinforced in the church's ministry). If then such a situation should arise it is the believer and his or her family who out of respect for the church and its position solve the problem rather than accentuate it.

However, there is one possibility that needs to be borne in mind. It is that even after such a marriage God may be exceedingly gracious and the unbeliever be converted. Let no one attempt to justify such a marriage on this basis - least of all the disobedient believer. Many have argued like this and come to grief - great grief and lived to rue the day he or she was so intent on seeing. But let no one rule it out altogether either. But, in the light of such a possibility, while not minimising the disobedience and the danger, is it not better for the marriage to take place in the church? Might not God even use the way in which both believer and unbeliever are treated in the light of His truth and in the spirit of His love to humble the believer and to awaken the unbeliever?

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## REVIEW OF THEOLOGICAL JOURNALS 1981 (Part Two)

Dr Eryl Davies

Considerable discussion took place last year, too, on the genuineness and significance of the SHROUD OF TURIN. Besides detailed news coverage of the scientists' conclusions in CHRISTIANITY TODAY (20 Feb, p44 and 6 Nov, p68), the JOURNAL of the EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY included an article in its March issue by Gory R.Habermas

on 'The Shroud of Turin and its Significance for Biblical Studies'. The writer has researched with some of the scientists who investigated the shroud and his chief interest has been the philosophical questions surrounding the shroud and any possible evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The claim, made by some evangelicals, that there is no historical data on the shroud before the thirteenth century is dismissed by Habermas as "nothing short of being absolutely inaccurate". He details a few historical citations of the shroud, "one as early as the second century (Braulio of Seville), a sermon concerning it given by a church official and paintings of Jesus' face that .... were plainly based on it even down to the exact position of numerous bruises. Additionally a detailed and very intriguing early Christian tradition exists that asserts that a mysterious cloth containing the imprint of Jesus' face had been carried by Thaddeus, Jesus' disciple, to Edessa, a small kingdom in what is today Turkey. After a stay of several hundred years it was moved to the city of Constantinople. From here its modern history is well known as it was taken to several cities in France and then to Turin, Italy .... Most important, much attention has turned lately to the coins placed over the eyes of the man buried in the shroud, a practice known to have been used by Jews in the first century. Through the aid of image enhancement, a recent report reveals that the coins on the shroud may be identified most probably from the Greek letters and design as a lepton of Pontius Pilate, minted from AD 29-32 .... After repeated tests", affirms Habermas, "the shroud has shown itself to be an authentic archaeological artifact." (p48)

The Michigan Professor is convinced that the shroud conforms to the New Testament accounts of our Lord's burial. Furthermore, this burial cloth also reveals "a man who was cut throughout the scalp by a number of sharp objects causing him to bleed quite freely. He suffered a number of blows to the face with large bruises on the cheeks and forehead, a twisted nose, one eye swollen half shut and a cut upper lip. Additionally he was beaten severely with an instrument identified as a Roman flagrum. More than 120 whipping wounds are visible on virtually every area of the body except the face, forearms and feet. Further, the man of the shroud was forced to carry a heavy object across his shoulders after his beating, recognizable by the large rub marks on the shoulder blades, which smeared the bloody wounds of the whipping underneath. He must have

stumbled and fallen down because there are contusions on both knees. More important are the five major wounds associated with death by crucifixion." Habermas's conclusion is that "the evidence reveals that the shroud of Turin is probably the actual burial garment of Jesus" and as such provides strong empirical corroboration for the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The HARVARD THEOLOGICAL REVIEW continues to provide stimulating reading, at least for the reviewer. Volume 74:1 (January 1981) included two useful articles. One was by Richard A. Muller of Fuller Theological Seminary entitled, 'Christ in the Eschaton: Calvin and Moltmann on the Duration of the Munus Regium'.

J. Moltmann in his Christological study, 'THE CRUCIFIED GOD', addresses the problem of the ultimate relation of Christ to believers using as the focus of his analysis Calvin's exegesis of 1 Corinthians 15 verses 24-28. He argues that this locus classicus of Pauline subordinationism marks the point in Calvin's Christology at which 'divine rule' is transferred from Christ's humanity to his divinity. Moltmann then infers that, as far as Calvin's system is concerned, the incarnation will become 'superfluous' in the accomplishment of the work of redemption, leading to the ultimate sundering of the natures of Christ one from the other. This argument relies heavily on the work of Heinrich Quistorp and specifically on Quistorp's argument that, in Calvin's view, the humanity of Christ "recedes into the background" following the Judgement (cf 'Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things', Lutterworth, 1955). If valid, then 1 Corinthians 15 verses 24-28 would provide an important key to the understanding of Calvin's Christology in so far as it describes the purpose and end of Christ's mediatorial rule. Consequently, Christ's kingly office must terminate in the eschaton since the office belongs not to the divinity of Christ IN SE but to the divine-human person of the Mediator.

Richard Muller rightly points out the inadequacy of this interpretation and reminds us, for example, of frequent assertions by Calvin that the 1 Corinthians 15 passage does not conflict with those other passages which refer to the eternity of Christ's kingship and this in itself indicates the wrongness of Moltmann's interpretation. The article contains twenty-nine pages of absorbing material involving the updating of basic Christological questions.

The other useful article was by John F. Jamieson, entitled: 'Jonathan Edwards' Change of Position on Stoddardeanism'. As some of our readers will know, when Edwards was made assistant to his grandfather Solomon Stoddard at Northampton in 1727, he assumed the major pastoral responsibility for the largest congregation in Western Massachusetts and, at the same time, became co-administrator of the 'lax' mode of admission to the sacraments that had prevailed at Northampton and throughout the Connecticut River Valley for about thirty years. The 'lax' system allowed baptism and communion to all provided they had historical knowledge of the gospel and were of a "non-sandalous" life on the assumption that these ordinances were capable of 'begetting' faith. Although Stoddard did not introduce the 'lax' approach yet it was usually referred to as 'Stoddardeanism' because Stoddard had been its most regular and influential proponent especially since his dispute with Increase Mather in 1700. For almost twenty years Jonathan Edwards accepted the 'lax' system and the author feels that his apparent, abrupt repudiation of Stoddardeanism, resulting in his dismissal, calls for some explanation. Jamieson draws attention to the following main points. First of all, Edwards had early and persistent misgivings about the 'lax' system and these misgivings came to a crisis in 1748-50. Secondly, his change of position on admission to the Lord's table and subsequent repudiation of Stoddardeanism may be due in part to his strenuous assertion of strict Calvinism in an attempt to thwart the Arminian and crypto-Arminian tendencies of the period. Again, Edwards's view and defence of revival compelled him to concentrate attention on the nature of Christian conversion and of true religious experience which in turn exposed the weakness of the 'lax' system. Finally, by 1746 (eg. his 'Treatise Concerning Religious Affections') he had thought through the implications of Calvinism for Church polity as over against Arminianism in its Stoddardean expression and also experimental piety and profession of faith as over against moralism (p99).

Continuing this historical note, I was pleased to see a brief article by one of our previous contributors - R.W. Oliver of Bradford-on-Avon - in the BAPTIST QUARTERLY (published by the Baptist Historical Society) under the title, 'John Collett Ryland, Daniel Turner and Robert Robinson and the Communion Controversy 1772-1781' (April 1981). A series of tracts published between 1772 and 1781 turned the attention of English Particular Baptist Churches to the question, who should be admitted to the Lord's

Table. Ryland, Turner and Robinson advocated open communion while their most able opponent was Abraham Booth of London. Pastor Oliver shows in his article how unreliable were the later writings of Joseph Ivimey. In the same issue Dr D.W.Bebbington has an interesting article on 'Baptist Members of Parliament 1847-1914'.

In 'THEOLOGY TODAY' (October 1981) Wolfhart Pannenberg espouses the more modern and sociological approach to the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. His article is entitled 'Freedom and the Lutheran Reformation' and in it Pannenberg argues that "the impact of the Reformation on the course of modern culture is far more evident in the perspective opened by the issue of freedom than in entering into the technicalities of the doctrine of justification". Also in this issue appears an interesting 'Symposium on Scripture' undertaken against the background of the Lindsell-Rogers debate in America. While I found the articles disappointing, they are nevertheless essential reading for those who want to keep abreast of this debate. Geralt T.Sheppard wrote on 'Recovering the Natural Sense' and Avery Dulles on 'Scholasticism and The Church'. Jack Rogers in his 'Response' accuses both Sheppard and Dulles of not understanding the context of the debate, namely, American evangelicalism and the deep divisions within church life. Paul S. Minear's article, 'The Bible's Authority in the Congregation' illustrates the destructiveness of the critical approach to Scripture and, at the same time, challenges Evangelicals to obey the Scriptures in daily life. Minear suggests that "the more fully a congregation affirms the authority of the Bible, the more fully does its life contradict that affirmation" (p352). Whereas in 1930 Minear wanted to undermine biblical authority because of its irrelevance "to finding ways of dealing with successive crises", he is now impressed by two things: "(1) the minimal degree to which the Bible exerts its authority and (2) the maximal degree of self-deception involved in most current claims of loyalty to the Bible".

During 1981 the 'BIBLICAL THEOLOGY BULLETIN' carried a series on 'Biblical Theologians and Theologies of Liberation'. Part I, entitled, 'Canon - Supporting Framework' explores "the significance of recent developments in biblical criticism that have created a new theological alliance, an alliance in which the biblical theologian may enthusiastically join common cause with theologians who respond to the contemporary cries for liberation" (April 1981, p35)

I have not previously referred to the 'BULLETIN OF THE JOHN RYLANDS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY OF MANCHESTER' and I want to rectify this omission by referring to the Spring '81 edition of the Bulletin. F.F.Bruce contributed an article on 'The Philippian Correspondence' and another article provided us with a history of the first seventy five years of the Theology faculty in Manchester. Professor Morna D.Hooker wrote on 'New Testament Scholarship; its significance and abiding worth' (p419) but I was disappointed to find that the Cambridge scholar confined the article to a review and assessment of the four men who held the chair of biblical exegesis in Manchester - A.S.Peake who died in 1929 and whom Hooker describes - sadly - as "the greatest biblical scholar of his generation", C.H.Dodd, T.W.Manson and F.F.Bruce. Another new journal to be mentioned in this review is the 'BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGIST' which despite its technical and academic emphasis, provides valuable background information for preachers. The Winter '81 issue included a report on the continuing debate concerning the location of the second wall of Jerusalem and also the site of Paul's conversion at Kankab (four traditional sites are associated with it near Damascus). By contrast, the Summer issue contained some fresh views of some of the controversial Ebla tablets.

The 'BIBLE TRANSLATOR' continues to provide much stimulating material. Eugene A.Nida in 'Translators are born not made' refers to essential qualities in translators such as creative imagination, a capacity both to recognise problems and sense ways of communication. "Perhaps one key to the potential ability of a person to be a translator is his deep-seated dissatisfaction with existing translations and a sense of the creative use of words in wanting to explain to people what these wooden and often misleading translations are really trying to say" (p405). Two other interesting articles were, 'Should a translation of the Bible be ambiguous?' and 'Translation and Interpretation. A few notes on the King James Version' and the latter shows conclusively how free the KJV translators were from a one-word-for-one-word approach to translation. One of the examples used is 2 Samuel 24 verse 1 and 1 Chronicles 21 verse 1 where the KJV translators thought it improper to use the same verb for both the Lord and Satan "so interpretation has determined the translation of these two verses".

Some solid material is again to be found in the 'JOURNAL OF THE EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY' and its December '81 issue, for

example, included the following articles: 'Recent Studies in Old Testament Eschatology and Apocalyptic', 'A Theological Investigation of Motivation in Old Testament Law' and 'God as a Symbolizing God: A Symbolic Hermeneutic', and 'Preacher and Preaching'. The latter article provides some Lexical observations concerning the words 'preacher', 'to preach' and 'proclamation' as they function within the New Testament. The main point of this study is that a preacher who preaches to those ignorant of the gospel, and a minister - namely, one who shepherds the flock - are not one and the same. "It seems", writes the author Craig A. Evans, "that many pastors have confused the distinct activities of 'preaching' and 'overseeing'. If the pastor defines himself as a preacher, then on the basis of what he believes to be faithful adherence to what the NT teaches, emphasis is placed on preaching. Since preaching or heralding is almost always monologic it's no wonder", adds Evans, "that the congregation begins to feel like an audience. Monologue is inherent in heralding - appropriate for gospel proclamation - but it can be detrimental for edifying and the 'equipment of the saints, for the work of the ministry' (Ephesians 4:12). To be sure, occasion may necessitate a strong sermon of exhortation, refutation or teaching, but there are no biblical grounds for a tradition that tends to discourage congregational activity in worship and ministry. In this day of concern over the lagging vitality and ineffectiveness of many churches a re-appraisal is imperative. It may be that one area where fruitful change could take place is in understanding the role of the minister within the context of the assembled congregation" (p322). Such words are familiar to us particularly in the context of contemporary charismatic teaching but we need to do our homework and this article at least challenges us to look again at some of the New Testament words.

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