



Australia
Diakrisis

A Ministry of Teaching

***But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age...to discern (diakrisis) both good and evil (Heb. 5:14)
Whom shall He teach knowledge? and whom shall He make to understand doctrine?... (Is.28:9)***

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TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry, *teaching, informing and equipping* the church.

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Editors Comments

We have been doing not a little soul searching just lately. When watching the horrifying and deepening apostasy within the Church and the dissolving of Biblical Truth throughout Christendom it's plain to see that the battle for orthodoxy is raging and intensifying. To be honest, this does at times overwhelm and weaken our resolve to continue exposing error and doing our best to replace it with Truth. But our passion to continue earnestly contending for the Faith remains firm. When we are weak, He is strong!

Controversy is never a comfort zone, and we would much rather be writing of 'the love of God' (as many 'renewal' churches are presently engaged in) instead of continually pointing out aberrant theology. Yet as servants of God we must endeavour to maintain all the truths scripture has provided us, and which have been attested to by historic Christianity.

The heat of the battle certainly drives one to continually retreat to scripture and the writings of the Church's great divines to again check our foundations and steady the ship, always remembering that '*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall*', (1Cor.10:12).

It is always timely that the Holy Spirit search our hearts and minds to ensure that the doctrines we teach as Truth are indeed accurate. We are aware that our readers come from various affiliations and theological backgrounds. In examining the doctrines being put about nowadays we must first ask the question 'are they Biblical?' To be safe, we must be prepared to have our cherished beliefs, traditions and convictions questioned. If correction proves valid then any pride must be set aside.

An Australian pastor recently said of us that we '*love the Reformation more than our Bibles*'. It may seem to many that we in this ministry speak often of the Reformation. But the Reformation restored Biblical truths - that have now been once again forgotten, diluted and misapplied! In doing this we are not saying that everything held to and taught by the Reformers was correct, for some of Roman dogma and tradition remained with many of them. But we respect the Reformation for it's central tenets - the Sovereignty of God in the doctrines of Grace and the restoration of Sola Scriptura. Anyone denying they bring some 'tradition' to their understanding of scripture is probably deceived already. Affiliations and denominations (independent or not) all carry the risk within them of being unscriptural, unbalanced, and inconsistent.

Today, there is a certain pride surfacing that demands adherence to dogma passed down through successive generations. The Churches have, by and large, allowed their people to continue to filter scripture through these traditions without question, and great ire is brought down on those that dare to question their validity.

One of the most accurate tests of our humility is the manner in which we receive Godly correction. Are we really secure enough to be changing our minds when confronted with truth that contradicts our understandings? Are we ready to submit to, and obey, correct teaching when it is scripturally irrefutable? If so, then we are truly travelling on the road to Biblical discernment.

Terry Arnold & Mike Claydon

'Debating Calvinism- Five Points - Two Views' by Dave Hunt & James White

'...Upon the question of what Calvinism really is: The most infamous allegations have been brought against us, and sometimes I fear, by men who knew them to be utterly untrue; and, to this day, there are many of our opponents, who, when they run short of matter, invent and make for themselves a man of straw, call that John Calvin and shoot all their arrows at it. We are not come here to defend your man of straw - shoot at it or burn it as you will, and, if it suit your convenience, still oppose doctrines which were never taught, and rail at fictions which, save in your own brain, were never in existence. We come here to state what our views really are, and we trust that any who do not agree with us will do us the justice of not misrepresenting us. If they can disprove our doctrines, let them state them fairly and then overthrow them, but why should they first caricature our opinions and then afterwards attempt to put them down.' Spurgeon: 'Exposition of the Doctrines of Grace', Sermon 11th. April, 1861

With these words James White rests his case in the recent book 'Debating Calvinism (Five Points, Two Views)'. It's a long read, 427 pages, during which Dave and James slug it out over the topic of the day *Arminianism vs Calvinism*.

Dave Hunt concludes with 'Calvinists claim that God predestined multitudes He could save to the lake of fire...non-Calvinists can assure all men, 'God loves you; Christ died for your sins. We know that all who believe His promise to 'whosoever will' are saved eternally'.

As the work progresses the frustration of the authors with their opponents rebuttals becomes starkly obvious. James' thoroughly sound exegesis and Greek interpretation bumps up against Dave's strawmen arguments and emotional appeals to the 'Love' of God. Dave said recently 'I know nothing about Greek. It might as well be Chinese. But I can read English'. To which James replies 'that is fine, but why make a statement that is unsubstantiated by any Greek scholarship and then use it to accuse Calvinists of mishandling the text of scripture?' Within those statements lies the problem with this debate. On one side is a thoroughgoing Greek scholar and theologian and on the other a man who has merely brought his traditions and strawmen to the table and endeavours to impose them upon the texts of scripture. When one examines the original or plain language of the New Testament it quickly becomes apparent that this cannot safely be done.

At the end of the debate Dave has learned nothing and is left repeating his misrepresentation of Calvinism just as he does in his book 'What Love is This?' Every scripture or strawman he uses to bolster his argument is thoroughly refuted or denied, yet he doesn't seem able to recognise that and continues to repeat them.

Dave views the God of Calvinism as the author of sin and evil, 'a God who...predestines to eternal doom...to the lake of fire...who could save if he wanted to but chooses to...damn billions to eternal torment' and 'is pleased to do so'... This grotesque, almost blasphemous caricature of historic Calvinism is often repeated several times on one page, in what would appear to be a blatant attempt to stir the emotions of the reader. James calls these 'mantra like phrases' and says: 'It is easier, it seems, to attempt to inflame the emotions than to deal with the Biblical evidence' (P.170).

150 years ago Spurgeon himself refuted these *very same* arguments in sermons such as 'An exposition of the Doctrines of Grace' and 'Human Inability'. Yet elsewhere Dave in seeming contradiction says, and quite correctly, that God would be quite justified in not saving anyone!

Dave appears unable to grasp the doctrine of regeneration and salvation, separating them to build a straw man at which he throws his refutations. He claims Calvinism teaches God imposes Faith upon the elect and that they will not preach to all men on the basis that all are not 'elect' (page 140) This is simply not true as history shows and is the stuff of hypercalvinism.

He repeatedly asserts that scriptural election is never unto salvation but only to the resultant privileges and blessings - yet 2 Thessalonians 2;13 says 'Because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation by the Spirit and faith in the truth'. Neither is this scripture ever mentioned in his book 'What Love is This?' Incredibly, and contrary to all orthodox teaching, he writes 'election is not unto salvation but unto blessing...' and that Ephesians chapter 1 is 'not about salvation'!

In an effort to illustrate his belief that man has a free will to choose or reject Christ, Dave uses texts from Leviticus and Ezra, confusing as he does so, the Calvinist position on the 'will' of man. Calvinism never claims that man has no will!

Dave, by his own admission, has not read the works of the Reformers, and thus has no real notion of their teachings. On page 12 James quotes Dave as saying he is 'very ignorant of the Reformers. I have not had time to read them...so whether the Reformers said this or that, I don't know'.

Although he takes offence at the suggestion, James rightly accuses him of standing shoulder to shoulder with Rome in his writings. Yet Dave can say 'No wonder so much Roman Catholicism remains in Calvinism' (page 229). But it was Arminianism that re-aligned the Church with Roman dogma! - that human effort is required in Justification and that one can fall away and be lost.

Dave says that he once thought of himself as a *one point* Calvinist, in that he held to the doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints...now he confuses this. Calvinism teaches that a believer is secure because of his *election* to salvation, whereas Dave believes that our perseverance is brought about by our clinging to the *promises* of God. If, as Dave says, we have a freewill ability to choose God in salvation by making a 'decision', surely we don't lose that freewill at regeneration? Therefore what is to stop us from falling away from that position? That's not eternal security.

Amazingly, he says 'It is Calvinism that in effect offers salvation by works because it looks to works for assurance of salvation'. A brief glance at any of the Reformers work would dispel that inaccuracy. Calvinism simply looks for evidence! The Bible speaks much of faith - and yet it clearly shows that some have a false faith that does not result in salvation - there are those that 'believe in vain' and anyone not holding to the doctrines of grace position must struggle with this fact. (Matthew 13;1-8, 1 John 2;19) If Christ's work of salvation is dependent upon our cooperation to be effective, there is no reason to believe it is eternally secure *at any point*.

Dave says that those who hold to the doctrines of Grace,

(central to the Reformation itself), are: *'carrying the sovereignty of God too far'*. *'Most of Calvinism's errors are rooted in it's extreme view of God's sovereignty, which allows man no freedom even to sin, much less to accept Christ'* (page 396) In so doing Dave presents a God that has done all He can to save *everyone*, loves the whole world *equally* (denying Him the differing degrees of love that we humans have for others, and directly contradicting Romans 9), and now waits passively for our response. No matter how intense a search one undertakes, a God of that ilk is not found in the Bible.

James has endeavoured throughout the debate to ensure that Dave is at least disagreeing with *genuine* 'Calvinism' - but to no avail. Dave insists *'His conduct (Calvin's) was in line with his rejection of God's love to all and his denial of human choice to believe the Gospel'* (page 236) and *'Calvinists are without compassion for the lost, but how could they have compassion on those for whom God has no compassion and whom He has predestined to eternal torment for His good pleasure?'* But the very thought that Edwards, Whitefield, Spurgeon and Martyn Lloyd Jones had no compassion for the lost is simply staggering! It would be fair to say that these men shed more tears for the lost than has Dave. Such consistent errors, as saying that Calvinism teaches a predestination to eternal torment, denies that man has a will, denies that faith is important in salvation, and again denies the use of the Gospel in calling men to salvation, are all well refuted - yet they *reappear* in Dave's final presentations just as they do in the initial ones!

Dave tells us that Jesus ceases intercession for those who enter hell. Then does it not follow that his sacrifice and constant intercession on their behalf before the Father, failed to accomplish what He desired? Is His Will frustrated at any point? In Dave's theology, yes.

Romans 8 and John 6 are reinterpreted by Dave. He says that Romans has Paul speaking to believers only - when he is actually *comparing* unbelievers with believers.

The text of John 6 says that *'no man is able'* but Dave reads that as *'every man is able'* and states *'Christ's statement here cannot signify inability'* (page 295).

He is not at all happy with the KJV use of the word *'foreordained'*. In 1 Peter 1:20 he labels it's usage as *'aberrant rendering'*. Here he clings to the error made in his book *'What Love is This?'*, and states again that this word as used in Acts 13:48 it is not an eternal decree from God and *'none of the seven other usage's of the word 'Tasso' in the New Testament connotes a divine decree from eternity past'*. This blatant error was refuted by us in the Jan/Feb 2004 edition of *'Diakrisis'* (page 11). Dave writes *'the only reasonable answer is that those God knew from eternity past would believe the Gospel were predestined to blessing'* (page 156).

Hunt writes of Romans 6:23 that it says man can *'accept or reject the 'gift of...eternal life'*. But the text says no such thing!: ***'For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'***

One of the most surprising misuse of Scripture is with Philippians 2:12-13: ***'work out your own salvation...'***. Dave says this is about 'mans responsibility'. But this is serious error since the passage is not about justification or responsibility, but refers to *sanctification* after salvation.

Time and time again Dave uses Scripture for Israel that

have *nothing* to do with the issue at hand. He says the sacrifices were for 'all' and cites Israel (P.186). He seems not to realise that Israel was the 'elect' *out of* all other nations and they were *believers* in God already! An example of this is his denying that unsaved man does not seek God and bombards the reader with Scripture references to do with *Israel* being called upon to seek God (P.76,77). This is in contradiction to New Testament Scriptures that state that the natural man does not choose, or seek God but rather God chooses man, (Rom.3:11; Eph.1:4; Jn.15:16). Dave ignores these and instead cites Joshua 24:15: ***'Choose you this day whom ye will serve'***. But this scripture is for Israel, not unbelievers!

Dave's misquotes are numerous. These, now in both books, are becoming increasingly disturbing. For example, in one of his responses to James White, he says *'White claims that in 'the kind intention of his will', God predestined billions to eternal torment'* (P.102). But nowhere does James state this! Dave also misquotes James as referring to John 6 instead of Romans 9 (P.350).

The misquotes to suggest Spurgeon is speaking against 'Calvinism' are serious. If the reader cares to check, they will find Spurgeon is often misquoted, quoted out of context, or found speaking against *hypercalvinism*, (eg. P.88, 133). As with Dave's first book he is again demonstrably wrong in saying Spurgeon did not teach Particular Redemption (P.196, P.172). Even at the end of the book he yet again misquotes Spurgeon on this issue, when in fact he was speaking of Israel! (P.425)

After 427 pages have been written Dave can still say *'White relies on a few passages of arguable interpretation, yet his interpretation does not fit God's character as so clearly established throughout all of scripture'*. Meaning no doubt, that if God's Will in the salvation of the elect runs counter to Arminian thinking then it requires reinterpretation to better fit the grid? To do this, however, scripture must be turned on it's head. And this Dave does in many instances. 'Calvinism' simply acknowledges the fact that God must free us from the slavery of sin and spiritual death before we can believe!

For those wishing to read an excellent exegetical thesis for the doctrines of Grace, this is the book for you. Those looking for a tenable argumentation for the doctrines of mans free will and co-operation in salvation may find Dave's often shrill and repetitive rhetoric disappointing. Dave strongly objects to being labelled an Arminian but everything he holds to in this debate would actually sit well with Jacob Arminius. Confirming his ignorance of true Calvinism Dave says *'God predestined billions to eternal torment? What love and kindness is this?'* (page 102); he continues this deception to the end with the God of Calvinism depicted as *'predestinating multitudes he could save to damnation'* and *'eternal torment...to the lake of fire'* (page 425,426).

We'll leave the reader with these words from Dr. James White... *'I believe what I believe not because John Calvin taught it but because the consistent exegesis of the text of scripture leads me inevitably to the truths of the doctrines of grace. I believe what I do because of the text of scripture, not because I follow a particular individuals teachings'*.

The book is available from this ministry (\$14.95 + postage).

Mike Claydon

John Newton And Amazing Grace

John Newton was born in 1726 the only child of Captain Newton who was a master in the Mediterranean merchant trade. While John feared his father who was a harsh and hardened seaman, his Christian mother was gentle and devoted to her son and his religious upbringing. John learned Scripture and hymns as a child until age seven when his mother died. His father on returning from a sea voyage soon married again. John was sent to a harsh boarding school and drifted away from religious thought.

At age eleven he went to sea with his father and shared the captain's cabin but lived in constant fear and dread of his father's wrath. (1) He lived in an environment full of curses and blasphemies and became sullen and introspective. At twelve and again at fifteen he had two near death experiences and his conscience pricked him as to the awful consequence of facing God at death. He wrote: '*I saw the necessity of religion as a means of escaping Hell, but I loved sin and was unwilling to forsake it*' (2)

His father found him an apprenticeship with another captain but his rebellious spirit lost him the job and he was soon back with his father. He became a recluse and passed the time at sea reading the Scriptures, praying, fasting and setting penances for past sins. His father despaired of his sons attitude and behaviour.

At age sixteen John read '*Characteristics*' by Lord Shaftesbury. This poisoned his mind to the necessity of saving faith. Shaftesbury's philosophy was that religion was based on nature, man was naturally good and religion was a false view of God. John now saw himself as a 'free thinker' and gave up any religious thoughts and like the rest of the sailors '*learned to curse and blaspheme*'. (3)

At age seventeen his father arranged for John to manage a Jamaican plantation. Before sailing, he was invited to Chatham to stay with the Cartletts, old friends of his mother. There he met their fourteen year old daughter, Mary. He was instantly infatuated with her and was often struck dumb when she entered the same room. He stayed longer than expected and missed his ship to Jamaica. His father was furious and dispatched him on a ship *Dolphin* to Venice with no special privileges but to be as one of the sailors. The ship was like a prison and John wrote: '*I soon...lost all sense of religion...but my regard for her [Mary] was always the same...none of the scenes of misery and wickedness I afterwards experienced ever banished her a single hour together from my waking thoughts for the seven years following.*' (4) When women were smuggled on board for the crew's pleasure, he would escape to the laughter of everyone. (5)

After one year the ship briefly returned to England and he went to see Mary. His father had meantime found another job for John but yet again John delayed and missed the ship. His father was furious and threatened to disown him. (6)

In those days, if required, men were rounded up and impelled to serve in the Navy. Life on Navy ships was far worse than on Merchant vessels. John Newton at this time found himself in the wrong place at the wrong time and was rounded up to serve on *HMS Harwich* with a crew of 350. He found himself amongst hardened condemned criminals who had been given the choice of hanging or serving in the Navy. He suffered the violence of sailors and ill treatment by officers. When his father heard of his son's plight he convinced the captain of *Harwich* to promote John to the quarter deck

as a midshipman. (7) England then declared war on France. John had just one taste of war when they crossed a French *Man of War*. He experienced the guns thundering, the timbers shaking and splintering as the shots crashed into decking. (8)

In 1744 he managed a day's leave and rode to see Mary who was now age fifteen. Her parents were alarmed at the romantic interest shown by Newton. They later banned him from ever seeing or corresponding with her again. (9) When John received news of this, in a state of shock and near madness, he jumped ship and deserted. He was recaptured and returned as a prisoner in irons below deck to await punishment. (10) He developed a hatred for everyone on board. (11)

His punishment was to be flogged before all 350 crew. One young marine fainted as eight dozen strokes with the cat o' nine tails ripped into Newton's body. He held his cries and tried to show no pain but was near unconscious at the last stroke. (12) No one on board was allowed to communicate with him. (13) Newton despaired of ever seeing Mary again: '*My breast was filled with the most excruciating passions; eager desire, bitter rage and black despair...inward or outward I could perceive nothing but darkness and misery...*' (14)

Nineteen days later they encountered a Guinea merchant ship. The *Harwich* captain requested an exchange of two of his least men for two experienced seaman from the merchant ship. Newton pleaded to be exchanged to escape five hard years on the Navy ship. The captain agreed and John felt a newfound freedom amidst a new crew who did not know his past. He soon became known as a foul mouthed insubordinate and irreligious person. He wrote: '*I made it my study to tempt and seduce others upon every occasion.*' (15)

This new ship was engaged in a slave trade between Africa and the West Indies. Newton made the friendship of, and was impressed by, an Amos Clow, a wealthy self made slave trader. John followed him and his black mistress to an island off the coast of Guinea and Clow set Newton to work without pay building a house.

While Clow was away collecting slaves Newton contracted a fever and Clow's mistress left him to die. (16) Newton went hungry and sometimes crawled outside to eat grass roots. (17) Had the nearby chained slaves not given him some food he would have died.

More trouble was to come. A rival trader told Clow that Newton was stealing from him. Newton was then chained whenever Clow left camp. For days on end Newton endured the harsh elements and had little water. (18) Newton would have again starved had he not been able to catch a few fish. (19) The isolation nearly broke him. He now worked for Clow more as a slave than as a co-worker. He became very depressed to '*a degree beyond common wretchedness*'. (20) Clow finally released Newton to a new master.

During this time Newton had become interested in African superstitions. He saw himself as being in Satan's service and when he survived an attack by a lioness and an Adder coiled in his pallet he considered this as superstitious 'luck'. (21) By age 22 he had taken on many pagan elements of the culture with its fetishes, taboos, charms and divinations.

In 1747 his father sent men from a ship ashore to look for John. On finding him the men told him the lie that a relative had left him 400 pounds per year. Newton believed them and left with them on the ship '*Greyhound*' for a twelve month

voyage back to England via Brazil and Newfoundland. John had no work on the boat and so engaged in drinking orgies with the crew. He nearly died once when he jumped overboard to rescue his hat. (22) He invented new forms of blasphemy against God. *'My whole life, when awake, was a course of most horrid impiety and profaneness. I know not that I have ever since met so daring a blasphemmer...I invented new ones.'* (23)

After nine days at sea Newton picked up a copy of Thomas Kempis *'The Imitation of Christ'*. The book made mention of giving an account on death and this caused Newton to question: *'What if these things be true'*. (24)

On 10th March 1748 the ship was suddenly jolted awake by a violent storm. Waves smashed the sides, tore the rigging and filled the hold with water beyond that which the pumps could handle. Newton and the crew bailed for their lives. All the livestock, much of the cargo and some of the crew were washed overboard. At dawn the wind somewhat abated but the ship seemed to be foundering. At nine o'clock Newton stopped, and exhausted from labour and cold, he spoke these words: *'If this will not do, the Lord have mercy on us...'* (25) Newton was struck with his own words and questioned why he said them. His memory began recalling Scriptures from childhood. (26) He tentatively began to pray and search for evidence of God and faith. (27)

Miraculously the ship remained afloat but badly battered and with only seven days food left. On the sixth day they thought they sighted land and broke out the food and drinks and celebrated. But it turned out to be a sighting of clouds. Then another gale hit...

The crew were reduced to thoughts of starving or feeding on one another. (28) They believed Newton was as a Jonah and that this blasphemer had caused their terrible luck. Some demanded he be thrown overboard. Even Newton himself began to believe he was the cause. Little did they realise that from the moment Newton had prayed in the storm he had stopped swearing. (29)

After a month of drifting they made landfall at Northern Ireland. Two hours later a violent storm arose and the crew knew that they would not have survived any longer. Newton reflected long and hard. He could see no reason why God had singled him out to see the hand of God and his mercy. (30) *'I stood in need of an almighty Saviour...the Lord had wrought a marvellous thing: I was no longer an infidel. I heartily renounced my former profanity...I was so sorry for my past misspent life, and purposed an immediate reformation. I was freed from the habit of swearing...I was a new man...I sensed my more enormous sins...I no more questioned the truth of Scripture...but I cannot consider myself to have been a believer in the full sense of the word till a considerable time afterward.'* (31)

He wrote to his father about his experiences and also about his love for Mary. His father thought he had been lost and was so moved that he went to Mary's parents to petition on John's behalf. (32)

Newton met Mary but again was so shy and tongue tied that he could not speak or hardly look at Mary to propose marriage. Mary was disappointed. John left for Liverpool and a new ship, distressed by his performance. He wrote to her expressing his inabilities and feelings. Mary only wrote back once but stated she was willing to wait for him. (33)

Except for the profanities, Newton fell back into his old lusts and ways. (34) But after going down with fever he cast

himself upon the Lord as never before. As he lay prostrate he began to think on Calvary and his sin that necessitated Christ's death. (35) Newton suddenly realised he could not appease God by his methods and legalistic efforts. A peace and health was restored to him over the next few days and he wrote: *'I mark that day as the turning point...I came to the good of being delivered from the power and domination of sin...'* (36) In the days to come Newton was aware of the hand of God when he escaped death several times. Once he was leaving on a long boat to get ashore to get water when the captain called him back and replaced him. The boat sank in the river and all hands were lost except one. Newton had never learned to swim. (37)

Newton returned to Mary and again attempted to propose marriage but was hard pressed to utter the necessary words. When he fumbled the words, Mary answered no, mentioning that he was too good for her. Subsequently, three times he attempted to propose and finally Newton felt a release to speak of his passionate love for her. She gave her consent. A fortnight later they were married in February 1750. Six months later he set sail as the Captain of the *Duke of Argyle*.

Newton had been used to gambling but ceased it on this trip when he realised the money he was losing to support Mary. (38) Although mail was very unreliable, He wrote to Mary every day and every letter arrived.

He began to write against the 'free thinkers'. He prayed that God might give him a better occupation than Slave trading, although it was then considered a respectable trade.

When Newton arrived back in London in November 1751 half of his crew had died. He was given the captaincy of the *African* in 1752 and had a troublesome voyage with mutinies and much death amongst slaves. When he did not hear from Mary he feared she had died and his health deteriorated badly.

He sailed one more voyage and on board was a young man he had sailed with before and who he had turned into an ardent infidel. He set about to see his conversion, but the man was so depraved Newton had him transferred to another ship and the man died a dreadful death soon after. But on one layover in the West Indies he met another Christian, Captain Clunie. Until then Newton had been self taught and was confused in some areas. *'For nearly a month we spent every evening together on board each other's ship alternatively, and often prolonged our visits till towards daybreak...his teaching warmed my heart...I began to understand the...covenant of grace, and to expect to be preserved...'* (39)

When he suffered a mysterious seizure he resigned his commission and never went to sea again. He began attending church but was often disappointed by what he heard. He resolved to sleep no more than seven hours and have devotions for at least one hour before breakfast. (40) He heard George Whitefield preach several days in a row. But when Newton attempted to speak publicly or privately with others he was tongue tied.

In August 1755 Newton got a job as a Tide Surveyor in Liverpool. For some of the time he was involved in the common practise of smuggling until he confessed the sin of the love of money.

Newton once had to leave Mary for five months when she became sick. During this time away from Mary his letters showed the deep love he had for his wife. Newton once confessed to God his 'idolatry' of her. Later, after 25 years of marriage, he wrote to Mary (who was away): *'My love was grown pretty tall when I married you, and it has been*

growing every day since. It was once an acorn but has now spreading branches and a deep root like an old oak.' (41)

He wrote to her every day when away. His letters were later published as *'Letters To a Wife'* and they show his passionate love affair with his wife till death.

In 1755 Newton heard George Whitefield preach again at a 5am meeting to 4,000 people. He managed to talk with George for two hours and Whitefield had him for supper.

Newton was busy teaching himself Greek and Hebrew but he stopped after a time and began writing tracts and short essays on the need for men and woman to face their need of the Saviour. England too was in the grip of the 'Great Awakening'.

Newton first preached in a congregational church but it was deemed a 'disaster'. But he still maintained the idea of the ordained ministry. He approached the Church of England but no one would vouch for him and he had no formal training. After many knockbacks he was eventually offered a Curacy in Buckinghamshire. At age 39 he was ordained. He was not a profound thinker; his sermons were down to earth expositions of favourite passages.

Newton was famous for his prolific letter writing on nearly ever topic. On election and perseverance he wrote: *'As the doctrines of election and perseverance are comfortable, so they cut off all pretence of boasting and self dependance when they are truly received in the heart, and therefore tend to exalt the Saviour. Of course they stain the pride of all human glory, and leave us nothing to glory in but the Lord. The more we are convinced of our utter depravity and inability from first to last, the more excellent Jesus will appear...'* (45) Like most of the leaders of his day, Newton was an 'avowed Calvinist'. But he accepted many others of differing persuasions. He corresponded equally with Whitefield and Wesley alike.

He ministered to the poor people in Olney where the congregation numbered about 2,000. He became famous for his tales of the sea and his ministry to children. Newton also teamed with a William Cowper in song writing.

In 1776 Newton developed a large tumour in his thigh which caused him considerable pain. No sooner did he recover the year after, a fire broke out and destroyed much of Olney. Newton raised large sums of money for the victims.

Opposition to Newton began to grow in Olney and his popularity began to wane. In 1779 he left Olney at age 54 and moved to St Mary's Woolnoth London. This church was a mixed congregation of various doctrines and walks of life. But he gave glory to God *'That one of the most ignorant, the most miserable, and the most abandoned of slaves should be plucked from his forlorn state of exile on the coast of Africa and eventually be appointed minister of the parish of the first magistrate of the first city of the world...this is a fact that I marvel in...'* (42)

People came to see him from everywhere. He once said *'a knock on my study door is a message from God'* (43) The parliamentarian William Wilberforce requested a meeting with Newton and John shared the Scriptures with him. Wilberforce was greatly impressed and began to look to God and became convinced that the Slave Trade must be stopped. In May 1787 twelve men formed a society for the *'Abolition of Slavery'*. Wilberforce championed the cause and Newton put pen to paper confessing the part he had played in this *'so iniquitous, so cruel, so oppressive, so destructive African slave trade'*. (44) Finally in 1804 parliament banned slavery.

Newton was also a member of the *Church Missionary Society* and became greatly concerned for the welfare of the natives in other lands.

In the Autumn of 1788 Mary developed breast cancer. The tumour grew to the size of a melon. (46) For 12 months she lay in bed and Newton agonised over her constant pain. He admitted he had an *'inordinate affection'* for her over 46 years and again, Newton handed over his 'idol' to God. She died on 15th Dec. 1790. Newton was devastated but continued in preaching saying, *'Dr. Pulpit is my best physician'* (47) *'I, as a sinner, had no rights, and I, as a believer, could have no reason to complain. He had loaned her to me, and He who loaned her had a right to take her back when He chose...'* (48)

In 1799 Newton received an honorary doctorate but refused to accept the title of DD after his name.

Earlier in Olney, the Newtons had adopted the daughter of a brother in law, Betsy, who became precious to John. In 1801 Betsy suffered a breakdown and was consigned to an asylum. Newton accepted the will of the Lord and thanked him for her ten years with him. Betsy later recovered and happily married.

Newton preached into his eighties and became mostly blind. In 1806 he mounted the pulpit for the last time and forgot what he was to preach on. He died on 21st December 1807 at the age of 82.

His famous hymn describes his life: *'Amazing Grace!'*

Terry Arnold

(1) *'The Works of John Newton'*, Banner of Truth Trust, Vol.1,P.2 1985 (2) *'John Newton: Letters of a Slave Trader Freed by God's Grace'* by Dick Bohrer, P.10, Moody Pr. 1983 (3) *'Out of the Depths'* by John Newton, P.18, Moody Pr. (4) *'The Works of John Newton'*, Banner of Truth Trust, Vol.1,P.6, 1985 (5) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.7, Oliphants, 1965 (6) *'The Works of John Newton'*, Banner of Truth Trust Vol.1, P.8, 1985 (7) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.54, Oliphants, 1965 (8) Ibid P.59 (9) *'An Ancient Mariner'* by Bernard Martin, P.32, Wyvern Books, 1960 (10) Ibid P.34 (11) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.84-85, Oliphants, 1965 (12) Ibid P.88 (13) Ibid P.90 (14) *'The Works of John Newton'*, Banner of Truth Trust Vol.1, P.11, 1985 (15) Ibid P.13 (16) *'An Ancient Mariner'* by Bernard Martin, P.43, Wyvern Books, 1960 (17) *'John Newton: Letters of a Slave Trader Freed by God's Grace'* by Dick Bohrer, P.34, Moody Pr. 1983 (18) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.136, Oliphants, 1965 (19) *'John Newton: Letters of a Slave Trader Freed by God's Grace'* by Dick Bohrer, P.35, Moody Pr. 1983 (20) *'An Ancient Mariner'* by Bernard Martin, P.45, Wyvern Books, 1960 (21) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.147, Oliphants, 1965 (22) Ibid P.159; also *'The Works of John Newton'*, Banner of Truth Trust Vol.1, P.23, 1985 (23) Ibid P.22 (24) Ibid P.25 (25) *'Out of the Depths'* by John Newton, P.169, Moody Pr. (26) Ibid P.73 (27) Ibid P.74 (28) Ibid P.78 (29) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.183, Oliphants, 1965 (30) *'Out of the Depths'* by John Newton, P.80, Moody Pr. (31) Ibid P.82-83 (32) *'An Ancient Mariner'* by Bernard Martin, P.60, Wyvern Books, 1960 (33) *'John Newton: Letters of a Slave Trader Freed by God's Grace'* by Dick Bohrer, P.68, Moody Pr. 1983 (34) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.217, Oliphants, 1965 (35) Ibid P.220 (36) *'John Newton: Letters of a Slave Trader Freed by God's Grace'* by Dick Bohrer, P.73-74, Moody Pr. 1983 (37) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.224, Oliphants, 1965 (38) Ibid P.241 (39) *'Out of the Depths'* by John Newton, P.114, Moody Pr. (40) *'An Ancient Mariner'* by Bernard Martin, P.104, Wyvern Books, 1960 (41) Ibid P.168 (42) *'John Newton: Letters of a Slave Trader Freed by God's Grace'* by Dick Bohrer, P.107, Moody Pr. (43) *'Servant of Slaves'* by Grace Irwin, P.366, Oliphants, 1965 (44) *'An Ancient Mariner'* by Bernard Martin, P.210, Wyvern Books, 1960 (45) *'The Works of John Newton'*, Banner of Truth Trust Vol.1, P.194, 1985 (46) *'Out of the Depths'* by John Newton, P.137, Moody Pr. (47) *'An Ancient Mariner'* by Bernard Martin, P.220, Wyvern Books, 1960 (48) *'John Newton: Letters of a Slave Trader Freed by God's Grace'* by

Philip Powell/Jacob Prasch...Debate Us?

Both Philip Powell of *Christian Witness Ministries* (CWM) of Queensland and Jacob Prasch of *Moriel Ministries* in the U.K. have challenged us to a public debate, (presumably to deal with the subjects of the origins of Pentecostalism and the unBiblical practice of speaking in unknown tongues?), in Brisbane later this year.

After serious thought it was decided that it would not be correct or prudent to meet with men who between them have written describing us as 'jerks, insignificant jerks, liars, infantile, doomed, jealous, dishonourable, theological buffoons, Ruckmanites, radical cessationists, and at one point likening our writings to that of the 'Neo-Nazis'.

Hectoring e-mails were sent to us and copied into an e-mail list of supposedly 3-4 thousand people. Other ministries have suffered similar treatment in the past few years. When the challenge was declined further e-mails followed accusing us of 'running scared'. Nothing could be further from the truth - both of us are either interstate or overseas at the time nominated anyway!

CWM e-mailed two articles around to their list stating our recent writings on Pentecostalism were 'hypocritical' and 'misleading'. Philip accuses us of 'misquoting' him - however, it actually turns out to be a minor typographical error. Our knowledge of the Greek language is also questioned - but no incidences of incorrect translation are given. Philip enlists a Reverend Ed Barclay who writes attempting to show the founder of Pentecostalism, Charles

Parham, was not as morally degenerate as we (and Charles himself) claimed. Ed writes '*concerning Parham's court case...all charges were dropped...no formal indictment was ever filed...*' '*Diakrisis* did not mention these facts in their article'. But we did, in our article on P.11 of the March/April 2004 edition of '*Diakrisis*'! Philip, Jacob and Ed are being less than truthful with their readers.

At the same time they have accused us of incorrectly describing the events surrounding the reprinting of Dave Hunt's book '*What Love is This?*'. The information given to us by a source in Christian publishing in the U.S. state of Oregon was that the original publisher '*Loyal Publishing*' was subsequently taken over by *Multnomah Publishers* who refused to reprint the book because of errors within it that Dave refused to change. There now appears to be some dispute over just what argumentation took place between Dave and the editorial committee of *Multnomah*, but the fact remains that *they would not agree to the reprint*, and the book contains many errors as we have documented elsewhere.

Philip's e-mails have continued, but due to time restraints we have left them unopened and filed away for future reading. They have been quite rude and abusive and can be quite draining to read.

If any readers would like copies of our articles on the errors of Pentecostalism or further documentation they are available upon application.

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editors)

Dear Terry, I agree with sovereign election and the doctrines of grace and do not accept Dave Hunt's misrepresentation of 'Calvinism'. However, the response to Hunt's book in the Jan-Feb 'Diakrisis' page 11 where you said 'Hunt should not be messing with Greek' seemed harsh. It did not sound like you and came across as a personal attack. This is disappointing even though I realise the frustration you must have at times with people misusing Greek and Scripture. May God grant you patience in your ministry, God bless (Name withheld by request)

Editors reply: Dear...I appreciate how this piece of refutation could have been seen as a bit 'personal'. I have been somewhat frustrated at times in reading Dave's misquotes. I do apologise if this came across as offensive or harsh. Please do continue to pray for us!

Dear Terry, Many thanks for the March/April 'Diakrisis', especially enjoyed the article on George Whitefield as we have recently read his journal and other books about him.
(R&A F. Nth. Qld)

Dear sir, thank you for 'Diakrisis' over the years...a most informational and educational newsletter...Thank you for your good stewardship over the years, (G.& H. W., Qld)

Salvation

'...in order to pardon by deed, there must something be paid to God as a price, as well as something prepared to cover us withal. Sin has delivered us up to the just curse of a righteous law; Now from this curse we must be justified by way of redemption, a price being paid for the harms we have done; and this is by the blood of your Lord, who came and stood in your place and stead, and died your death for your transgressions, by blood, and covered your polluted and deformed soul with righteousness: For the sake of which, God passeth by you, and will not hurt you, when he comes to judge the world.'

(*'Pilgrims Progress'* Rom.4:24; Gal.3:13 by John Bunyan)

To All Preachers

'I pray that those of us that do preach the Gospel may preach each sermon as if that one discourse were worth a lifetime, worth the putting forth of every faculty that we possess, that, if we never preached again, we might nevertheless have done a life work in a single sermon. What an opportunity is mine tonight! What an opportunity you also will have, my brother, when you confront your congregation next Lord's day, an opportunity which angels might envy you!...'

(Spurgeon: '*This Thing Is From Me*', Sermon No.2476 August 2nd, 1896)

'Passion' Movie Article

We wish to inform our readers that we have published a review of the movie '*The Passion of The Christ*'. This has been sent to our e-mail list only, and is now available in hardcopy to any readers who request it.

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor or advisory panel)

Dear Terry, Both my wife and I want to say just how much we appreciated your last issue of 'Diakrisis'. From cover to cover, the contents were so relevant...Mike's Sub-Editors comments will spur us on to pray more for your needful ministry. Any faithful exposure of heresy and heretical and ungodly religious practices has always throughout history brought down the wrath and hatred of man upon the heads of the messenger. The old well worn phrase - 'Don't like the message, then kill the messenger' is alive and well today, as it was in the times of the Prophets.

Your page on 'Hillsong' is so needful and timely. This type of so called 'Christian Music' is so deceiving. Your following quote is accurate: 'Godly music is predominately melody with minimal beat- this feeds the spirit. But Hillsong emphasizes the rhythmic beat - this feeds the flesh.' How true! I venture to say that having seen and heard recently only a small sample of that type of music even in a non charismatic gathering, I can well understand how such music can easily promote sensuality.

I was most concerned to learn recently that a number of our own church young people attended 'Hillsong' with the consent of our pastor, to... 'see how they do things'. Thankfully, most of them were disgusted by the 'show' they witnessed. A 'church' which is founded upon such terrible doctrinal error can only produce ungodly practice and should be avoided like the plague...

May our Lord continue to make your ministry very fruitful, to His glory, and for the good of His Elect. Yours in Christ alone, (Name withheld at editors discretion)

'It's great to see that you are upholding the True Tenets of the Doctrines of Grace (March/April 'Diakrisis'). Rome and the Jesuits detest these with a passion and have sought to destroy them through the Counter-Reformation Movement from the 16th century up to this present day. Continue to expose the wicked, evil erroneous doctrine of Arminianism which has thoroughly infiltrated the Apostate Protestant-Rome embracing churches of today, with their humanist co-redemptive salvation altar calls and their man generated faith systems...God Bless, keep and preserve you to life eternal, until the Lord Jesus Christ returns in Glory.

(P.N., Sth.Aust.)

Praise Points

- Praise the Lord for encouraging letters that are pouring into this ministry. Thank Him for abundant provision.

Prayer Points

- Please pray for the New Zealand and Sydney itineraries. Pray the Lord will draw unbelievers and equip believers.

****Faulty Videos****

Readers who have purchased 'Does The Truth Matter Any More' by John Macarthur (2 videos) may need to have the No.1 video replaced. We have become aware that one session of about 1 hour is missing, (there should be two sessions of about one hour each). If you are missing a session on your video or DVD, please request a replacement.

Thankyou for the latest 'Diakrisis' that I receive via e-mail. I look forward to reading them...thankyou for a great job that you and your team do. Thankyou for the info on the 'Passion of The Christ'. I went to see it and the next day I read your article on it...I see many good strong Christians who are getting sucked in just like me. I have photocopied some of the latest 'Diakrisis' and taken them to work. I work at a Christian aged care hostel and all the staff are Christian and so I thought I would take the article in and show them. I thought as I was watching the movie that there really was no Gospel presentation...if a non believer watched it they wouldn't know what it was all about anyway... (R.S., E-mail)

Terry's Itinerary Sydney Itinerary

May 15th (Sat) 7.30pm Church for Everybody, Marrickville Ph.(02)95534818.

May 16th (Sun) 10am Port Kembla Baptist Ph (02)42741663.

May 16th (Sun) 7pm Soul Salvation Youth, Strathfield Ph.0415950206

May 19th (Wed) 8pm Kingsgrove Gospel Youth 0415950206

May 21st (Fri) 8pm Kingsgrove Gospel Youth 0415950206

May 23rd (Sun) 10am & 6pm Oak Flats Christian Centre, Woolongong, Ph.42963736

May 24th (Mon) 7.30pm Cootamundra Assembly Ph.69423541 or 69421857

May 25th (Tues) 7.30pm Cootamundra Baptist Home Fellowship Ph.69422582

May 28th (Fri) 7pm Combined Guildford Christian Assembly Ph.88077725 & Wentworthville Arabic Baptist Ph.96799442

May 29th (Sat) 7.30pm Church For Everybody, Marrickville Ph.95534818

May 30th (Sun) 10am Picton Bible Church (02)46810227

May 31st-4th June (Mon-Frid) New Tribes Mission, Laurieton, NSW Ph (02)65598766

June 5th (Sat) 11am Werrington Group Ph.88077725

June 5th (Sat) 7.30pm Church for Everbody, Marrickville Ph.95534818

June 6th (Sun) 12pm Combined Wentworthville Arabic Baptist & Guildford Christian Assembly Ph.96799442 & Ph.88077725

June 13th 6.30pm Hervey Bay Church of Christ Ph.41240631

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