

rather than a new creation. A new earth and heavens means a 'renewal'. It refers to New as opposed to old or former and hence also implying better because it is different. The same context is shown in the idea of the 'New Testament' which is 'better' than the Old (Heb.7:22 8:6); and metaphorically speaking of Christians who are renewed and changed by the Spirit of God into a 'new creation' (2Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15; Eph.4:24); with a new heart, a transformed, saved heart (Sept.: Ezek. 18:31; 36:26). Thus the 'New heavens and a new earth' refers to heaven and earth which have been renewed, and, therefore, in a glorious state.

Secondly, there are different Greek words used for the same English word 'new'. 'Neo' is used to describe something that is new in time. A house restored to its original condition could never be 'neo' because it is not new in time. But the word used in 'new heavens and new earth' is 'kainós' describing something qualitatively new or renewed. This is the same word used for the Christian being a 'new ('kainós') creation'.

The new heaven and the new earth are not duplicates of the heaven and earth that now exist. Some have suggested that the new heaven and earth will be as this heaven and earth were at their creation. But God reveals that the universe will ultimately be transformed into a place that is free from the curse of the Fall (Rom. 8:21, 22). Peter (2Pet.3:13) and John (Rev.21:1-4) further explained God's revelation to Jeremiah when they described the new world that God will fashion after the Millennium.

Prayer / Praise Points

- Please pray for a mission team from Hervey Bay Bible Church as they spend time in Fiji. Pray they will be impacted by the need for the Gospel to the lost.

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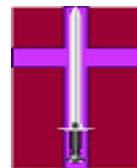
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Diakrisis (Australia)

'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry,
teaching, informing and equipping the church.
Editor: Terry Arnold (Dr.Th; MABS; Dip.Bib.&Min.)

The editor may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by subscribers in this newsletter.

We welcome comments or items contributed by readers. Unless otherwise requested, these may be included in following newsletters at the discretion of the editor.

Articles in this newsletter may be copied or reproduced provided it is in context and proper credit and references are given. We encourage distribution of this newsletter that others might be *taught, informed and equipped*.

This newsletter is distributed bi-monthly *free* of charge. The cost to this ministry is approximately \$20.00 per subscriber annually. Any donation to help with these

Dr. Deane Woods Weekend

Recently Hervey Bay Bible Church hosted international speaker Dr. Deane Woods from 'Friends of Israel'. The complete audio messages (with notes) are available for \$10 (postage included)

The topics: *Why is Israel important to Christians? Why God has not finished with Israel.* Included was a lecture session on: Interpretation methods in, and history of, Premillennialism & Amillennialism; The '70 weeks' of Daniel...and more.

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Editor's Comment

This newsletter is heading into its 22nd year of publication. I recently reviewed nearly 22 years of editorials and articles to gauge where the ministry began and where it has gone. The newsletter began in March 1996 with a few dozen subscribers and has grown to thousands in Australia and overseas who read it in hardcopy, by e-mail or by some who distribute it. Many of the early subjects we wrote about we still write about. In the first issue (March/96) we wrote: *'This is the first newsletter of what we hope...will inform and equip Christians with knowledge, literature and resources...We should all know what we believe and perhaps more importantly - why. We should be ready always to give an answer to every man (1Pet.3:15), and even know how to answer every person (Col.4:6). It is hoped that many of our articles will encourage readers to test what they believe and why. It is my conviction many Christians today blindly believe what they are taught without being able to prove it by scripture or test the spirits (1Jn.4:1,2). We need to encourage each other to test all things (1Thess.5:21) by the Word of God (the Bible). Scripture alone must test doctrine and practice, for all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ... (2Tim.3:16)'*

The apostasy we wrote of in 1996 has only deepened to levels that we could not at that time imagine. Our intent was then and now to *inform, teach and equip*.

In 1996 we began by exposing the infamous *'Toronto Blessing'* which in 1994-5 had swept through many churches in Australia. The motivation for this newsletter came partly from seeing countless numbers of Christians being *'Tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine'* (Eph.4:14). We wrote: *'Some of these teachings and practices that were once extremes are now the norm!'* We were here referring to manifestations to do with this *'Toronto Blessing'* and other supposed spirit phenomena. We wrote: *'This shift is placing less emphasis on testing things by the scriptures and more subjective reliance on experiences and signs and wonders'*. These new movements devastated and divided many churches it touched. Hence we wrote the booklet *'Toronto Blessing - a Critique'* which addressed the work of the Holy Spirit as in scripture, in contrast to the bizarre extra biblical teachings at the time.

In June 1996 we changed the name of the newsletter to *'Diakrisis'* - the Greek word for *'discernment'*. We felt the magazine was a call to discern and come back to the *'faith once delivered'* (Jude 3).

After some years of publications the author was increasingly engaged in teaching and seminar events around Australia. The experience gained was invaluable to an insight into the state of the church at large. I was meeting first hand people who had been damaged and polarised by the Charismatic/Pentecostal waves of new teachings. We wrote: *'There has been a massive further shift into that which is worldly, ecumenical, experiential, sensational, mystical, and essentially beyond the bounds of the Bible (Nu.22:18)'*.

At the same time we saw a need for more teaching on *'rightly dividing the*

a lot of *'Chilliasm'* in the early Fathers. Quotes from Papias (60-130), Clement of Rome (90-100), The Shepherd of Hermas (96-150), Ignatius of Antioch (98-117), Barnabas (100), The Didache (100-160), Justin Martyr (110-165), The Epistle of Barnabas (117-138), Irenaeus (120-202), Tertullian (145-220), Hippolytus (185-236), Cyprian (200-250), Lactantius (260-330) and more show clearly a literal view of the Millenium. However, I have yet to ascertain just what *'percentage'* of the fathers were *'pre-mill'* or *'Chilliaists'* but certainly many if not most had a more *literal* approach to hermeneutics. My main point could be refined to this - there was an early literal approach to the *'1000 years'* (*'chillia'*) which faded quickly after the end of the 2nd century. That point does not necessarily state there was a predominance of other pre-mill doctrines in the church fathers but at least that the hermeneutic style was literal rather than figurative.

The problem with such discussions concerning the early Fathers is that quotes can be isolated and used for one's theology depending on which Father and what quotes are read (I have seen this done with the *'Calvinist'/ 'Arminian'* debate).

Following the article in question (July/Aug/2017) I have recently been accused by one A-mill author of taking my eschatology theology from the church Fathers instead of scripture, which I refute strongly. But I admit that is a perceived danger of such an article. However, *our theology for Pre-mill or A-mill must be based on scripture alone*. The article in *'Diakrisis'* was simply to refute a *'fallacy'* I have heard - that the early church Fathers were *'A-mill'*. This I believe is untenable. Dr. Deane Woods in a recent seminar in Qld. scholarly addressed many of these issues (see P.1).

New Heavens - New or Renewed?

Terry, I recently heard David Jeremiah state that the 'new heavens and new earth' were refurbished, not entirely 'new'?

Sub Editor's reply (Mike Claydon):

The phrase is mentioned in Is.65:17; 66:22; 2Pet.3:13; Rev.21:1. The meaning of the word *'new'* can be obtained by *context* and by *word study*.

From the words of the prophets in the Old Testament leading up to, and culminating in, the teachings of Jesus, through the writings to the early Church, there is the sense that God would renew and restore the entire created order, rather than destroying it completely.

In Romans ch.8 we find a creation suffering, groaning under the weight of sin and death. It's a creation that will be saved, renewed, restored. In 2Peter 3;12-13 the elements of the universe will burn and melt with fire. We are to look for new heavens, a new earth in which righteousness abides.

The wording in scripture on this matter appears to speak of a restoration

‘That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by [in] the gospel’. The KJV, NKJV and perhaps one or two others would translate it similarly - literally. The NIV and some others insert ‘Israel’ to show that both Jews and Gentiles are now ‘one body’ as believers. I can understand why translators might want to have ‘Israel’ inserted to show that Jews and Gentiles (after Acts 10) are indeed ‘one body’. Yes, it does make sense in that respect...

However, there are two reasons why I would prefer the word ‘Israel’ *not* be inserted.

1. The word ‘Israel’ is not in any Greek. I don’t believe in ‘loosening’ the original to get a sense. The Holy Spirit is well capable of showing the person by context that Jews and Gentiles here are ‘one body’. The problem is a hermeneutical one for me - translations are increasingly becoming more ‘Dynamic Equivalent’ instead of the old more literal ‘Formal Equivalent’. The translation you were reading in the devotion probably was NIV which is simply not a very literal translation in my view.

2. Also, arguably it is not ‘Israel’ now in one body, but believing Jews. The word ‘Israel’ could be confused with the nation of Israel. That could open the door for teaching which sees Israel as now the church and so does not distinguish between the two (the church and Israel).

Nevertheless, the passage is speaking about the ‘*mystery*’ given to Paul - which is the Gentiles being grafted into the branch of Israel or believing Jews. I guess either translation would bring that out, but the KJV, KJV2000 and the NKJV are more literal with this verse and in my opinion more accurate.

The Church Fathers and Millennialism

Dear Terry, Thanks for the most recent ‘Diakrisis’ magazine and all previous ones. I was very interested to read the article ‘Eschatological Fallacies’ and it prompted a little bit of discussion here... What sources have you used for your list of church fathers who tended to be pre-millennial, besides the ones listed for the article itself...

(D.M., NSW)

Editor’s reply:

My research came from firstly reading these apostolic fathers and isolating sections and collecting quotes. I also collected several articles in ‘*Apostasy Alert*’ and ‘*Israel Report*’ by Mike Claydon who is a Bower Bird for quotes on such. I also read articles by Thomas Ice, Benaware and others where quotes were again referenced which I checked in context with the writings of the Fathers. Then in a College degree I came across quotes by A-mill authors which actually agreed with what I was seeing - that there was

word’ of God (hermeneutics) and stressing the all sufficiency of Scripture. The Bible College (*Pacific Bible Institute*) later developed from this desire.

By 1998 the newsletter was doubling in subscriptions each year. We continue to this day to operate the ministry ‘by faith’ and the funds have always been supplied to publish a newsletter despite increasing costs. The logistics of folding, posting the newsletter and book orders necessitated a team of voluntary helpers who to this day faithfully help out, some even on a day to day basis.

By this time more ‘moves of the spirit’ (eg. the ‘Pensacola revival’) were impacting churches. Exaggerated reports were eventually exposed and many separated from these movements. The flavour of the day in many churches was to simply cease judgement and thus thousands lacking discernment were caught up in false movements. Yet the very meaning of ‘discernment’ is to ‘judge’. And so we wrote a series of articles on what the Bible teaches about that in an effort to have people realise that we all need to ‘*judge righteous judgement*’ (Jn.7:24).

By the year 2000 the ministry was sending out large amounts of free literature on various topics. Many pastors were thankful to have research done on various issues of the day. Literature has always been of great importance in this ministry.

Along the way there were some landmark articles which gained attention - such as ‘*The Other Side of Azusa St*’ and ‘*The History and Foundations of the Pentecostal Movement*’. Much of this history is still barely known by most church leaders. Articles and fact sheets on the theology of, and statements by, Billy Graham, and mentions of Mother Theresa, also raised the ire of some. In an issue of 2000 we began to plead with readers to continue to evangelise Roman Catholics as we began to see the mainline churches and bookshops retreat from this in the midst of a strong ecumenical movement where Catholics were now ‘christians’. Our book ‘*To Catholics Whom I Love*’ diminished greatly in distribution as churches and bookshops became more ecumenical.

As the ministry grew the author was also increasingly involved in pastoring stints which brought a fresh perspective to the ministry. More and more the ministry was a teaching ministry yet still exposing error where necessary. Our co-editor, Mike Claydon, also continued to write some pointed articles which were received and published widely.

In 2013 the author’s church was suddenly evicted from a denomination, and full time pastoring began afresh with *Hervy Bay Bible Church* which has since flourished and grown significantly. At the same time there was also a Bible college under way and a Masters course was conducted with about 15 students being trained in various areas of scripture and preaching.

In 22 years we have seen the need for *informing teaching and equipping* only grow. The ecumenical movement has enslaved most denominational churches and Bible teaching and exposition is certainly at an all time low. How long this ministry can continue will depend on the Lord’s leading and his soon coming. We value the readers prayers, encouragements and support as we ‘*exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*’ (Jude 3).

Terry Arnold & Mike Claydon

Pope Shows True Colours Again



Pope Francis recently told an adoring crowd of 33,000 Roman Catholics in Rome: *‘Sometimes you may hear someone say: ‘I believe in God, Jesus, but the church...I don’t care’.* How many times have we heard this. This is wrong. There are those who believe you can have personal, direct and immediate relationship with Jesus Christ outside of the communion and the mediation of the church..

These temptations are dangerous and harmful. They are in the words of the great Pope VI ‘absurd dichotomies’...Being a Christian means belonging to the church...first name christian; last name church member’.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGH20H8AV2U&feature=youtu.be>

Editor’s comment:

It should not surprise Christians to hear this. The language also needs to be understood. The *‘church’* here is the *Roman church*. This church teaches *‘ecclesium nallu salus’* (no salvation outside the Catholic religion), although that is not always what the Pope might speak in public or in ecumenical addresses. The *‘communion’* and the *‘mediation’* of the church is referring to Roman traditions which include the communion of the *‘saints’* within the Catholic church. The *‘mediation’* refers to the church being custodians of God’s Word (and the priest as mediator of sacraments).

The words in this clip clearly go against scripture but also show that when in defence of its teachings Rome then reverts from its chameleon *‘double speak’* to reveal what the true colours of this church are.

The Bible in both Old and New Testaments clearly has numerous passages which teach we can *‘know’* God. (This word *‘know’* often expresses an idea of intimacy and used in the sense of a man *‘knowing’* a woman). Daniel expresses the idea of a people *‘knowing their God’* (Dan.11:32). God says he will put laws into peoples minds and write it on their hearts and that they will *‘know me’* (Heb.8:10,11); *‘that we may know him that is true’* (1Jn.5:20); *‘that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection’* (Phil.3:10). The word *‘fellowship’* also often expresses the idea of a personal relationship with the Lord, our fellowship being *‘with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ...’* (1Jn.1:3,4). The means by which this is achieved is by the giving of the indwelling Holy Spirit: *‘...you know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you’* (Jn.14:17). Did Paul not express something very personal with His Lord *‘That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God’* (Eph.3:17-19)? The scriptures on a personal relationship are too numerous to mention. It is obvious that Satan and religions do not want this born again regeneration experience which brings a new relationship with the Godhead!

God’s perfection and the more we see our sin and hence the battle thickens. This is the testimony of all the divines too. But the peace/security must not come from any victory in *‘holiness’* but from Justification (Rom.5;1 *‘Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ’*). This is where the holiness movements (19th C) went wrong and morphed into the Pentecostal movements (1901)...with new *‘baptisms’* of holiness...levels of Sanctification...entire Sanctification heresies...arguably similar to Roman *‘Sanctification’* through works/sacraments...]

...It is through Christ we have achieved peace with God. [Yes. Rom.5:1] ...If I were to be accused of being a Christian, in a court of law, would there be enough evidence in my life to be convicted and sentenced based on the findings? [Based on our practical personal holiness, no! Based on Sanctification alone, no. The ‘blameless’ in the courts of Heaven is only through the imputed righteousness...and that is where the Reformation shone the light on the Gospel...]

...There are two distinct ways to set an exam. It is either to test for what students do not know and mark them that way which I associate with ‘Do I live my life in a sufficiently holy way to get to heaven’ OR the exam is set to test what the students have learnt and do know. That is the question of whether there is enough evidence to convict me in the aforementioned court. [Many do think they are saved in some way through holiness which is a serious deception as you show] Do you have materials dealing with this tension...I have learnt...a Christian is in a constant state of tension. Tension between what he can achieve and he knows to be true what should be achieved.

[Most certainly true...We have books, articles (and some deeper lectures done at college). The problem with a sermon is that I make the mistake of mentioning something and then for lack of time not explaining it enough...]

Translating Ephesians 3:6

Hi Terry, our reading in our ‘Daily Bread’ devotions was Eph.2:19-3:11. The following translation was used for ch.3 vs.6. ‘This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus’. In the Old and New King James version the word ‘Israel’ is not used. Is this a correct translation? In study of this I could not come up with what has been quoted, however it does make sense.

(R.O., Qld)

Editor’s reply:

The literal translation word for word from Greek does not have *‘Israel’* in it. An interlinear would read: *‘that [should] to be the Gentiles fellowheirs and of the same body and sharing [fellowshipping/communion] together of promise in Christ by the gospel’*. That can be then literally translated into

Your Comments and Questions

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

A Good Question

[Editor's replies in bold and brackets]

Hi Terry,

In a recent sermon [on 'separation'] of yours which was a thought provoker and 'stiffened the sinews...I was a bit shocked at the end when you slipped in 'no holiness, no heaven'...[Apologies, I should have given the scripture I had in mind and which was not in my notes - Heb.12:14 '...holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord'. However, it is speaking there of a 'positional holiness' rather than the progressive sanctification mentioned in that sermon]

What hope do we have if there is none righteous (holy) but Christ Himself? [Righteousness' and 'holiness' are two different doctrines. Righteousness is the result of Justification (Rom.4) which is imputed (credited) once for all and it is that which makes you 'right' with God in the 'courts of Heaven'. Progressive Sanctification which follows is never perfect in this life and does not give the 'righteousness' to enter faultless into Heaven...Some early articles in 'Diakrisis' explain the two separate doctrines, though they are linked in salvation. One is instant, in the past, imputed (credited) by God to the spirit; the other is progressive by the Spirit and to the soul]

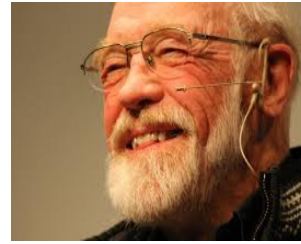
A holy life is impossible and anyway it sounds like trying to please God based on works...are we to be marked on a curve with only the top 10% getting into heaven? I could miss out by 0.001% because I was not quite holy enough?

[All are saved by grace alone with imputed righteousness given to enter heaven and to cover sin with God's righteousness; the holiness is the 'working out' of that Justification by the Spirit (Phil.2:12,13). That holiness is never complete until Glorification. Justification is wholly done by God ('active voice'); Sanctification (holiness) is both 'active' and 'passive' - God and man being involved (some say like co-workers). But it is not the holiness on man's part that gets us to Heaven; it's only the imputed righteousness that satisfies (propitiates) God. When I say 'no holiness no heaven' I mean that positional holiness given by God through imputed righteousness (God's holiness). My mistake was to mention that without explanation, sorry]

On the other hand, if there are no standards and anyone can do anything (the heresy of lets sin so grace may abound) and we do that which is right in our own sight, then we are a contemptible fools and I would want no fellowship with such as those. I understand the concern you pointed to that scripture deals with...'turn away from such things'...[Yes, holiness is essentially separation by the Word (Jn.17:17)]...The call to live holy lives (the process of sanctification?)...is a state of progressive but permanent failure but also of achievement, we raise the bar as we strive.

[In progressive holiness we always miss the mark (sin - 'harmatia' - to miss the mark) of God's perfection...The more we go on the more we see

Liberal Bible Translator?



Eugene Peterson, the creator of the 2002 'Message Bible' modern paraphrase, stated that he has changed his mind on the issue of homosexuality and would be willing to officiate a same-sex ceremony if he were pastoring a church today.

'I wouldn't have said this 20 years ago, but now I know a lot of people who are gay and lesbian and they seem to have as good a spiritual life as I do. I think that kind of debate about lesbians and gays might be over' he told Jonathan Merritt of Religion News Service, who published an interview with Peterson...

Peterson, who led Christ Our King Presbyterian Church in Maryland for nearly 30 years before his retirement in 1991, explained that he never made 'a big deal' about homosexuality in his congregation, and that he was pleased at how his members never questioned the allowance of an openly homosexual man to serve as music director.

...Now, however, Peterson has penned an article in the Washington Post retracting his stance and clarifying his viewpoint. 'When put on the spot by this particular interviewer, I said yes in the moment. But on further reflection and prayer, I would like to retract that', he wrote.

(Apostasy Alert July 12, 2017)

Editor's Comment:

This sounds like the same confusion and slippery slope as is apparent in his Bible translation of 1993 which has to be one of the worst translations, even though it is touted as a 'paraphrase'. The 'Message Bible' has words added to and words deleted from the original language. Jn.1:14 has 'The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, Generous inside and out, true from start to finish'. The original is more literally: 'And the Word was made [became] flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of [with] the Father,) full of grace and truth'. Jn.14:28 is translated 'The Father is the goal and purpose of my life' instead of 'My father is greater than I'; 1Cor.6:18-20 the word 'fornication' is deleted and replaced with the words 'avoids commitment and intimacy'. The latter arguably changes the boundaries of sexual activity before marriage. In Romans 1:26,27 the words 'God gave them over' are deleted, providing possible loopholes for homosexuality. Hundreds of other examples exist...

Billy Graham, J. I. Packer and many other leaders supported this 'translation'.

It is not hard therefore to see here the translator's vacillation on this issue of homosexuality when questioned or 'put on the spot'.

The New Tolerance of 'Dialogue'

What is Modern (Ecclesiastical) 'Dialogue'?

There is an increasing emphasis on 'dialogue' today and the idea of 'lets have a conversation'. Dialogue and conversations in and of themselves are amoral. But when it comes to scripture and what God the creator and judge of the universe says, what kind of 'dialogue' and 'conversation' should we be having between varying faiths and denominations?

It has been said that '*debate is a conflict which clarifies a position*'; a '*dialogue is a conversation which compromises a position*' (John Ashbrook, *The New Neutralism II*, 1992, P.7). While this may not always be true in secular thought, it has tended to be the reality of the modern ecumenical church movement. The problem with modern day 'dialogue' is that a third person is often not consulted - God! It should be His Word we are 'dialoging' about and with a motivation to agree and satisfy him, rather than 'unity' with humans?

Dialogue That Restates Biblical ideas

...*The divide between say and do*

An example of where scripture has been minimised or neglected is seen in the dialogues between Evangelicals and Catholics over many years. The popular '*Evangelicals and Catholic Together*' (ECT) document (1994) highlighted the problem of *restating biblical ideas* to gain 'unity'. The problem with such documents is *not what they say but what they do in practice*. The Catholic religion by practice (in statements and catechisms) clearly teaches the sacraments are necessary for grace and salvation. This salvation by added works is often not addressed against the opposing doctrine of being saved by grace alone.

Then there are the traditions of baptismal regeneration, Mary as co-mediator and intercessor, indulgences, confession of sins to a priest as mediator, Purgatory to purge sins, the sacrifice of the Mass as a continuing sacrifice with powers to change bread and wine into the real body and blood of Jesus by the words of a priest ('Transubstantiation')...All these are put aside for 'further discussion', yet they do have a bearing on how one understands 'grace alone' and are opposed to salvation by grace alone through faith alone and not of sacraments and works. Biblical ideas are *restated* and such 'additions' are *forgotten* in dialogue.

Similarly, words such as 'baptism' are understood completely differently by both sides. Yet in at least one it clearly affects salvation. In the ECT dialogues and documents, this and 'communion' were shockingly confused. The ECT mentioned both a '*Eucharistic sacrifice*' and a '*memorial meal*'. But which is it? The two doctrines are diametrically opposed both in content and practice. This issue cannot be restated or compromised considering it was important enough for thousands to have lost their lives at the hands of the Roman church! Between 1555-1558 no less than 288 English 'Protestants' were burned, most because they refused the Roman Catholic communion of 'Transubstantiation' and the 'Mass'

Your Comments and Questions

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

Indigenous 'Reconciliation' gospel

Dear Terry, we have in our church a lot of information about 'Reconciliation' with Aborigines. We enclose a 'Partners' magazine of the Anglican Board of Missions [Autumn 2017 Vol.35 No.1]. Something does not seem right with this. What do you think? This is a growing agenda in many churches...

(NSW, Name withheld at editor's discretion)

Editor's reply (extracts): In this '*Partners*' magazine...I believe this issue has become '*another gospel*'...

There are lots of quotes from Aboriginal '*dreamtime*' which can in no way be '*Christian*' or Gospel centred. On P.6 the '*Reverend Victor Joseph*' speaks of a '*creator spirit*', but which spirit exactly is this? Is it the Trinity or the aboriginal dream time spirit sometimes called by that name?

To run the issue of God's '*reconciliation*' alongside the '*reconciliation*' of the aborigines is arguably taking scripture out of context. The Matthew 5 scripture quoted is about '*brothers*' and '*sisters*', not the aboriginal community who are mostly unsaved like any other group would be.

The mention of '*Lent*' is also pagan to the core and a Roman tradition.

The so called '*injustice*' done towards the aborigines has already been set out by much history and some is debatable to say the least. (Whether the aborigines were the first peoples is also debated). But to use the scripture John 8:32 is simply out of context when that scripture is about the truth of Christ and his Gospel, not what was '*done*' to the Aborigines!

The Anglican bishops who adorn this issue themselves mostly do not preach the Gospel. They have made this issue a political football with terms describing white folk as '*invaders*' in an '*invasion*', which does nothing for '*reconciliation*'? The message in the magazine is to '*reconnect our God given traditions*'. But those traditions need to be subservient to the apostolic tradition of the Gospel! The magazine speaks of reconnecting to that which '*God gave us before the western missionaries came*'. But what is that tradition exactly but paganism and steeped in *other spirits*?

On P.8 there is the '*Reverend Dianne Langham*'. But since when do we have women elders rather than a '*husband of one wife*' (1Tim.3:2; Tit.1:6)?

The magazine also details political and social agendas with issues of '*offending young people*', '*housing*', '*mental health*', '*cultural programmes*', '*sanitation*', '*hygiene*', etc. On P.14 there is mention of a '*Gender programme*'. What exactly is that? The magazine simply lacks the true Gospel which the aborigines and any other group need to have to be '*one in Christ Jesus*' (Gal.3:28)

I may well now be called a '*racist*' and accused of '*discrimination*' for despairing of the lack of Gospel focus in such political/social agendas?

Your Comments and Questions

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

Missional?

To the editor:

I was invited to a 'Day For Girls' morning tea and went along because the lady who invited me explained that their mission is to raise funds to provide sanitary hygiene kits to girls in need in different countries...The group had chosen to direct their support to Nepal.

When I arrived, a lady, not even asking, tried to put a red dot on my forehead. There were well over 100 ladies there and I believe that nearly all of them are Christians...I was astounded when they all readily accepted the red spot. I just said 'No thanks' and the lady looked really offended...Then another lady came over and draped a silk scarf around each of our necks...There were also (prayer) flags everywhere...I didn't realize what it represented until I read the card [explained below]...It looks like...wearing the scarf is supporting Buddhism?...Why couldn't the money that it would have cost to purchase the scarves be used to provide the sanitary hygiene kits? ...Not once did they mention Jesus or Christianity but they showed us hundreds of slides of temples etc in Nepal and were told what beautiful people the Nepalese are.

I started to feel suffocated...I left...as the others appeared to be loving every minute of the whole presentation...Churches in the past here have had whole walls devoted to Buddha...

Editor's comment:

The following were copied from the 'cards' given out at this event: 'Red dot - Tika: The Sindoor (vermilion) powder is a symbol of purity in Nepali culture...People offer this powder to honour gods and apply that in turn in their forehead as a red dot after visiting the temples. After any rituals, people apply red powder in the forehead as symbol of good luck and mark of celebration. As Guests are regarded as gods in Nepal, the visitors are often welcomed in the house by putting a red dot in the forehead...'

'The khata is a traditional ceremonial scarf in Tibetan Buddhism...Symbolising purity and compassion and are worn and presented with incense at many ceremonial occasions...symbolising the pure heart of the giver...'

This event sounds like another example of a 'missional' gospel as mentioned in the last *Diakrisis* (July/Aug). But the Gospel to the lost must surely be the focus of missionary work? No doubt the Nepalis are in need of material things but God sees their sinful souls as first priority? It sounds like, and appears, that this was not the focus of this ecumenical event?

as a 'continuing sacrifice'. The divide here is simply too serious that such divisions be restated. The doctrines need to be openly stated as they really are.

...What is Not Said

Thus the problem also with such documents to make 'unity' is *not what they do say but what they do not say*. This is also the problem with many '*Statements of Faith*' issued today by various churches and ministries. Many such statements are so bare and weak that people who have beliefs that are blatantly cultish and heretical could well be accepted as 'members' into the church. (I have personally seen people who did not believe in such doctrines as the *eternity* of Hell admitted as members to a Baptist church because the 'statement of faith' barely mentioned Hell, let alone its *eternity*).

So it was with the ECT document and then the ECT2 document, '*The Gift of Salvation*'. These documents may accept and agree with the slogans of the Reformation, (such as '*grace alone*' and even '*faith alone*'), but the *content* and real biblical *meaning* of such are not spelt out to show the differences which caused the Reformation in the first place!

The real issue at the core of the Reformation and the divide between Catholics and Evangelicals was, and is, '*how is a man made right with God?*' This must deal with the *imputation* of God's righteousness to the believer. Is it the imputed (credited) righteousness of Christ that saves us, apart from ourselves? Or is it an infused righteousness gained by sacraments? The Bible has this righteousness not *inside* us by the work of the Spirit or through sacraments, but by an *outside legal and forensic declaration* (imputation) of the righteousness of God (Rom.4:11,22,23,24) based on faith alone and 'without works'. God imputed to Jesus our sin and imputed to us His righteousness. The truth of the Gospel which includes this crucial imputation, is that Christ has *already done a finished work for us and removed the debt of our sin by paying to our sinful account, legally declaring us justified by faith*. If such imputation is not addressed and defended in these documents and 'dialogues' then a hypocritical and false unity results. The Reformation was fought, and won or lost, over this issue of imputation in the doctrine of Justification. Yet this issue is not addressed in such 'dialogues' between the two different faiths. Rather the search is made for what both sides will agree on, rather than what divides in *crucial doctrines of salvation*. The additions mentioned earlier also make a mockery of this doctrine of imputation.

The *Cambridge Declaration*, rather than attempting to restate ideas so that two sides can agree, sums the position up the same as the Reformers did: '*We reaffirm that justification is by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone. In justification Christ's righteousness is imputed to us as the only possible satisfaction of God's perfect justice. We deny that justification rests on any merit to be found in us, or upon the grounds of an infusion of Christ's righteousness in us, or that an institution claiming to be a church that denies or condemns Sola Fida can be recognised as a legitimate church*'.

Note how this statement above affirms but also *refutes* - something many of the world's Christian leaders no longer do. Biblical ideas have not been restated,

added to, or minimised. The position is made clear as it is in scripture. Romans chapter 4 and many other passages clearly teach grace alone through faith and ‘not of ourselves’ or ‘of works’ (Rom.4:5; Eph.2:8,9) or of any ‘law’ (Rom.3:21). The imputation of righteousness is given to sinners *by belief only* (Rom.4:3-8), not via sacraments or works.

Theses ‘dialogues’ and documents also restate terms such as ‘faith’, ‘baptism’ ‘the Gospel’, etc into a melting pot of ecumenical sewage which should taste foul to true Evangelicals, yet has become sweet to the ecumenical neo-Evangelicals.

Other areas restated or confused in such dialogues as ECT are issues such as the ‘scriptures’. Phrases such as ‘the *divinely inspired scriptures*’ and the ‘*infallible Word of God*’ are frequently discussed in dialogue and documents without addressing the fact that both sides have differing views of what this ‘scripture’ actually is. The Catholic religion does not see 66 books as ‘scripture’ but adds extra books and also oral traditions as ‘the word of God’. In the Roman Catholic faith it is the Catholic religion which defines what the ‘word of God’ is, not what is apostolic and has been ‘*once delivered to the saints*’ (Jude 3). However, in ‘dialogues’ the differences are ignored or glossed over when statements such as the ‘word of God’ and ‘scripture’ are mentioned.

...Forgetting what has been said

Finally, ecumenical dialogue has not, and does not, include the ‘anathemas’ (curses - damnations to Hell) that the Catholic religion has issued against Protestant, Biblical and much of what was once ‘evangelical’ doctrine. Such ‘Anathemas’ are still in Catholic doctrine: ‘*If anyone says that by the said sacraments...grace is not conferred through the work worked but that faith alone...is sufficient for obtaining the grace, let him be anathema*’ (Trent Sess.7, canon 8). ‘*If anyone says that the sacraments...are not necessary for salvation but...men obtain from God through faith alone the grace of Justification...let him be anathema.*’ (Canon 4, Session7). Many more ‘anathemas’ can be cited, many which specifically also speak against the doctrines of Justification and Imputation. Can there be dialogue and unity when these are not addressed? Has the Catholic religion changed any of these issues or changed any of their doctrines? The answer is a dogmatic ‘no’ as seen clearly in their official catechisms and books.

...What do the Scriptures Say?

Logically, one must judge that both sides in such ‘dialogues’ cannot be true and accurate to scripture. For example, both sides of the Catholic/Protestant debate at the Reformation believed the other side was heretical. That’s how important the doctrines were! Today the doctrines of the Roman religion have not changed. So, how can there be ‘unity’ if one side does not change its stance on ‘how a man is made right with God’? Were the Reformers and hundreds of church leaders, theologians and commentators all in error in their opposition to ‘another gospel’ as they saw it?

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The charges were first read out to the Council while Huss was elsewhere confined. Wycliffe’s teachings were condemned, his remains ordered to be dug up and burned. The leaders of Bohemia and Poland strongly denounced these actions. Finally Huss was brought before the council and about 40 charges were read against him, plus many statements being extracted from his writings. John Huss answered: ‘*I did appeal unto the Pope; who being dead, and the cause of my matter remaining undetermined, I appealed likewise unto his successor John XXIII: before whom when, by the space of two years, I could not be admitted by my advocates to defend my cause, I appealed unto the high judge Christ*’. The Council then demanded of Huss whether he had received any ‘absolution’ from the Pope. Huss answered ‘*no*’. They then questioned him as to why he could then appeal to Christ. Huss answered ‘*Verily I do affirm here before you all, that there is no more just or effectual appeal, than that appeal which is made unto Christ, forasmuch as the law doth determine, that to appeal is no other thing than in a cause of grief or wrong done by an inferior judge, to implore and require aid at a higher Judge’s hand. Who is then a higher Judge than Christ? Who, I say, can know or judge the matter more justly, or with more equity? when in Him there is found no deceit, neither can He be deceived; or, who can better help the miserable and oppressed than He?*’ During this answer he was mocked by many in the Council who were greatly angered by his words. They then stripped him of his priestly clothes and put a mock paper mitre on his head which had devils drawn on it and with the inscription ‘*A ringleader of heretics*’. When Huss saw this he replied ‘*My Lord Jesus Christ, for my sake, did wear a crown of thorns; why should not I then, for His sake, again wear this light crown, be it ever so ignominious? Truly I will do it, and that willingly*’. The bishop who put the mitre on Huss’s head then said ‘*Now we commit thy soul unto the devil*’. Huss, lifting his eyes to Heaven, replied ‘*But I do commend into Thy hands, O Lord Jesus Christ my spirit which Thou has redeemed!*’.

On the 6th July, 1415 Huss was taken to the stake to be burned like many other ‘heretics’ to follow. When the chain was put about his neck Huss smiled and said ‘*My Lord Jesus Christ was bound with a harder chain than this for my sake, and why then should I be ashamed of this rusty one?*’ The faggots were piled up to his neck. A duke tried to get Huss to recant his testimony but Huss stated ‘*No, I never preached any doctrine of an evil tendency; and what I taught with my lips I now seal with my blood*’. Huss then turned to the executioner: ‘*You are now going to burn a goose, but in a century you will have a swan which you can neither roast nor boil*’ (‘Huss’ in English means ‘goose’. Little did Huss know that 100 years later Martin Luther would rock the Roman church with more Biblical doctrines). The faggots were lit up and Huss began to sing a hymn so loud that he could be heard above the flames and the noise of the crowd. So died one of the earliest Reformers. Later, they collected his ashes and cast them into the river Rhine.

Lest we forget the great sacrifice of men like John Huss endured so that we could have a free bible and the message of free grace.

Terry Arnold

The Martyrdom of John Huss

John Huss was born at Hussenitz, a village in Bohemia, in 1380. He received a basic education which was furthered at the university of Prague. He showed an intellect and discipline in study for the priesthood that was recognised by many. In 1398 he began a Bachelor of Divinity and afterwards was made Dean and Rector of the university and was requested to pastor the Church of Bethlehem in Prague (which held about 3,000 people). He was at some stage influenced by the writings of John Wycliffe who had previously ignited a reformation of Bible doctrine. Huss's preaching and teaching against the Roman Catholic doctrines such as 'Transubstantiation' in the Mass, 'indulgences' and the corruption of the Papacy became increasingly known by Catholics in the area. Huss began to trust the Scriptures more and more '*desiring to hold, believe, and assert whatever is contained in them as long as I have breath in me*'.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Prague became alarmed at the strength and the conversions to the Reformer's doctrines. He issued a decree to stop any spread of Wycliffe writings. The plan backfired, as it caused many to spread the writings with more zeal. Although the university was politically divided, many in the university supported Huss. The Archbishop then obtained permission from the Pope to condemn and ban the publishing of Wycliffe's writings. Huss protested the ban and was summoned by the Pope to appear at Rome to answer accusations of heresy. Many in the university as well as King Wincelaud of Bohemia came out in support of Huss and petitioned the Pope to dispense with the proceedings.

Huss was to appear at Rome before Cardinal Colonn, who was commissioned by the Pope. Their supporters appeared instead of Huss on his behalf but the cardinal refused them and promptly excommunicated Huss. The three supporters then appealed to the Pope who appointed four more cardinals to examine the charges. Three of these cardinals confirmed the excommunication and then extended it to the three supporters and followers of Huss. Huss appealed again to another council without success.

Huss then retired to live again in Hussenitz. However, he could not be silent and continued to teach his Reformed views in writing and sermons wherever he could. He defended Wycliffe's writings and openly taught against Roman teachings and corruptions.

At the time, the Roman church had been busy settling a dispute between three people all claiming to have the right to be the Pope. At a Roman Catholic council in Constance, Germany, in 1414, that issue and a new agenda was in play - to stamp out the new Reformation doctrines.

John Huss was summoned to appear at this Council. He was given a 'safe conduct' by the Roman Emperor Sigismund. Huss was surprised by the many people on the way who wanted to meet him and show gratitude. However, soon after arriving Huss was arrested. Despite this being an unlawful act at the time, the Pope stated he never gave Huss any 'safe conduct' and that Huss was only bound by the emperor who gave it.

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The Bible repeatedly warns of the nature and practices of heresy and heretics. It warns of the subtlety and deceit of false teachers. It warns that heresy clothes itself in sheeps clothing (Matt.7:15). Paul warned of 'deceitful workers' (2Cor.11:13), 'false brethren' (Gal.2:4) with 'cunning craftiness' (Eph.4:14).

Paul also taught much about separation rather than a unity with those who differ on salvation doctrines. '*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners*' (1Cor.15:33). Close association with sin and error corrupts doctrine, Godly thinking and living, just as leaven leavens the whole lump (1Cor.5:6-8). Jesus warned of the leaven of religious leaders (Matt.16:6,11,12). Good fruit cannot raise the standard of bad fruit. It must be separate. It is a fallacy that a true Christian can raise the standard of an apostate or heretical church. The opposite actually occurs as attested to by history and the results of modern 'dialogue'.

A classic modern example of this is the dialogue had over decades within the Uniting church and with the issues of women in ministry and homosexuality. Unions were formed, negotiations were had, but the result was a lowering of the moral standards of many churches, including increased divisions and strifes. One cannot negotiate issues on which the Bible is objective and clear on unless you lower the view of scripture as the word of God.

The Effect on the Gospel and Evangelism

Increasingly the idea of separation from the apostasy of churches is no longer in vogue. The idea of winning Roman Catholics is now almost defunct. They are now 'christian'. *The 'dialogue' has worked well to that end.* This is despite the Roman theology not having changed one iota in the last century. So, what did the dialogue achieve? It brought together two faiths which are entirely and diametrically opposed as to 'how a person is made right with God'! But does this not make God divided? How can two distinctly different doctrines on salvation, one Biblical, the other from traditions over many centuries, be brought together? How can one of salvation by a sacramental system be married with one 'without works'? If the two are now 'christian' then why the need to evangelise and see people saved from a lost eternity? Thus evangelism is no longer necessary. Reaching such faiths is no longer needed if there is unity and all are 'christian'! This is all despite the shocking corruption that first instigated the Reformers to act and that same corruption continues unabated today.

The Problem is in the Basement

The Reformation brought many churches back to 'sola scriptura' - Scripture alone for doctrine and the spiritual life. Biblical salvation and the Gospel of grace was restored to a Christ and a Gospel based on the Word only. This is very much the foundation of the doctrines of inspiration and inerrancy of scripture as the bedrock of doctrine. *It is this which dialogue must address.*

Such a high view of Scripture has been eroded over many decades with new gospels of healing, prosperity and emphasis on the felt needs of man. In the mid

20th century the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement subtly took the denominational churches away from the *'more sure word'* - the *'prophecy of the scripture'* (2Pet.1:19,20) - to new extra biblical prophecies by tongues, dreams, visions, personal and extra biblical revelations. The Anglican church and some theological seminaries were major players in this, engaging in much 'dialogue', fostered by books by renowned leaders. But little did they realise that this new method of revelation ultimately is no different to the many new revelations found in Roman Catholic traditions - *the oral word being added to the written word of God* - which benchmark was once the *'prophecy of the scripture...as holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'* (vs.21).

The Catholic church, in chameleon fashion, assimilated the charismatic movement and more 'dialogue' ensued, even the Pope recommending dialogue following 'with our brothers' as shown in a 'Decree of Ecumenism'. But in this dialogue there was always a turning of a blind eye to fundamental doctrines of the faith such as inspiration, baptism, sacraments, the Holy Spirit, etc. The Catholic church with the Charismatic movement pragmatically made it appear that many were being saved within the movement, and so endorsed a Catholic arm of the Charismatic movement. This author was a member of the charismatic Catholic movement in the eighties, praying, holding hands and worshipping with a Catholic group and sometimes with 'protestant' Charismatic groups. When contact was made with Protestants, the issues of doctrine was avoided. 'Dialogue centred on 'what we agree'. (And there was agreement on moral issues such as abortion). But again, the question of 'how is a man made right with God' remained as two differing views. I testify I was not born again and regenerated while in this movement, yet I was moved by, and spoke in unknown 'tongues' and enjoyed the emotion and perceived 'presence' of God in many meetings!

When I exited the Catholic Charismatic movement having understood the separation needed with a salvation experience that looked to Scripture, I wrote the book *'To Catholics Whom I love'* in an attempt to bring the Gospel to Catholics. It initially had acceptance with many Protestant churches, including many Pentecostal churches who were genuinely reaching out to Catholics in evangelism. However, as the years went on and more 'dialogue' ensued and the ecumenical movement gathered pace, the book began to be rejected by most churches. The tide turned dramatically in the nineties with 'dialogues'. How such a religious system can produce a child of God as much as an opposite system of grace seemed to have been forgotten!

In the late nineties books were being written by Charismatic Catholic priests and sold in many 'evangelical' bookshops. But with the rise of this ecumenical dialogue came sudden reversals in what major leaders believed *about the Bible*. 'Evangelical' leaders were failing to expose and even were excusing liberals who were denying fundamental doctrines such as the fall of man and even the resurrection - doctrines that were fundamental to the Gospel. Men such as Billy Graham with all the dialogue and cooperation with the Catholic church, quickly weakened in conviction. Stunning statements were being made by these men in favour of Catholicism and against the absolutes of scripture.

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Put simply, when 'dialogue' has occurred with Catholicism and other doctrines it is the 'Protestant' members who end up agreeing with the Roman Catholics and other gospels. Roman Catholicism and other gospels remain the same and now supposedly become biblical or 'christian'?

Ministers Fraternal?

Some of the hottest criticism I have received is from the stance I, and the churches I have ministered in, have taken in regards to 'Ministers Fraternal'. These are groups of church pastors who gather together to pray, dialogue, support each other and do works in the societies around them. But I have never been convinced that fellowshiping with the local Roman Catholic priest, Seventh day Adventist pastor, or liberal ministers preaching another gospel, is scriptural. It is rather the opposite of Paul's command to separate. It also ends up in religious hypocrisy which is a stench in the nostril of God. Would I meet with the Catholic priest or the other ministers? Yes. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss how they view scripture and 'how is a man made right with God?' and challenge them to tackle the thorny issues of salvation that differ amongst us but which they ignore. But invariably that is not the agenda they would want *or allow*. Hence where is the 'unity'? And where in the Bible does it state we are to make such a 'unity'?

Where in the Bible does it state to 'dialogue' with error? The call is for separation, not unity. *'Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them'* (Rom.16:17). *'A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject'* (Titus 3:10). The reply to these injunctions by many is that it is 'unloving'. But by what definition is it 'unloving' - by human standards or scripture? Is it unloving to leave a person with 'another gospel' and with 'another Jesus' (2Cor.11:4) to the eternity of Hell? The New Testament only has either separation or ministry to such! Did Paul 'dialogue' with false teachers? In the apostles' ministry it is teaching, discipling, correcting, rebuking, contending. *'I charge you therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine'* (2 Tim. 4:1-2). The command is not to 'dialogue' but to minister to, and if necessary to correct, expose and *'earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints'* (Jude 3).

The modern ecumenical tolerance in 'dialogue' is not strengthening the church or the true Gospel, but has by history weakened it and divided it towards a lukewarm church. Denominations that have engaged in this show the fruit of that today. They are simply in apostasy to what they once taught. The Gospel is less a focus than ever against the political and social agendas of most church leaders. We need to continue to preach the Gospel, edify and equip any who will listen in the ministry of protection of God's people - His church - which is already unified!

Terry Arnold