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essentials

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Difficult times require real leadership.

However, without meaning to tread on any political toes, I do not think it is unreasonable to suggest that in wider society ours is an age not overly blessed with courageous and capable leadership. We continue to lift up our hands in prayer for our political leaders, at the same time as we often find ourselves throwing those same hands up in despair and frustration.

What then of leadership in the church?

One of the aims of EFAC is “to function as a resource group to develop and encourage biblically faithful leadership in all spheres of life.”. Many of the elements of this edition of Essentials touch on that issue of leadership. We hear from the new Archbishop of Sydney, Kanishka Raffel, as he begins his new responsibility in leading that diocese forward. Andrew Katay and Simon Manchester both reflect on the nature of preaching as a means by which Christians are led to real gospel transformation. Mike Flynn wrestles with the paradox that church leaders matter both more and less than we think.

Alongside these contributions we attend to the sobering reality of failure in church leadership. Such failure may or may not be more frequent in the present moment, but it is certainly being played out in a more public and seemingly disturbing way than at any time in recent memory. Peter Brain faithfully and calmly guides us through answering that difficult question, ‘what can we say in response to sexual sin in Christian leaders?’. Similarly, Chris Porter draws our attention to a recent book guiding churches in their healing from emotional and spiritual abuse.

In all of this we turn continually to one who cleanses, defends, and preserves his church, praying the Collect for the 16th Sunday after Trinity: “O Lord, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church; and because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

GAVIN PERKINS, EDITOR

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Editor for this Issue: Gavin Perkins

Sub-editing, printing and distribution:
Chris Appleby

Panel of reference:
Graeme Goldsworthy, Robert Forsyth, Peter Corney

Journal design: Clare Potts

Issue layout: Doug Rolfe

Editorial correspondence
essentialsd@gmail.com

To notify of a change of address,
contact Rev Chris Appleby

20 Gordon St Fairfield VIC 3078

cappleby@cappleby.net.au

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What is EFAC?

EFAC is a group of Anglican clergy and lay people who value the evangelical heritage of the Anglican Church, and who endeavour to make a positive, constructive contribution at local, diocesan and national levels. EFAC Australia is part of the world-wide Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion.

The purpose of EFAC is to maintain and promote a strong biblical witness in and through the Anglican Church so as to advance the cause of the gospel in Australia.

The aims of EFAC are:

1. To promote the ultimate authority, the teaching and the use of God's written word in matters of both faith and conduct.
2. To promote this biblical obedience particularly in the areas of Christian discipleship, servant leadership, church renewal, and mission in the world.
3. To foster support and collaboration among evangelical Anglicans throughout Australia.
4. To function as a resource group to develop and encourage biblically faithful leadership in all spheres of life.
5. To provide a forum, where appropriate: a) for taking counsel together to develop policies and strategies in matters of common concern b) for articulating gospel distinctives in the area of faith, order, life and mission by consultations and publications.
6. To promote evangelism through the local church and planting new congregations.

7. To coordinate and encourage EFAC branches/groups in provinces or dioceses of the Anglican Church in Australia.

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Leader: Kanishka Raffel

ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY KANISHKA RAFFEL
INTERVIEWED BY GAVIN PERKINS

1. CAN YOU TELL OUR READERS A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL JOURNEY? WHAT DID YOU FIND COMPELLING ABOUT JESUS WHEN YOU FIRST ENCOUNTERED HIM IN JOHN'S GOSPEL?

I was saved by the Lord after reading John's Gospel when I was a University student. I was surprised by the transparent historicity of the Gospel. As I encountered Jesus in its pages, I was struck by the vibrancy and vitality of his humanity. He was not a disembodied 'voice' of religious wisdom – he was a real person engaged in relationships with friends, enemies, the needy, the powerful and the powerless. John uses the expression 'at this, the people were divided..' on more than one occasion and in the Lord's kindness, he challenged me with this phrase. I began to ask myself a simple question – 'Why was I opposed to Jesus?' When I could offer no good reason, I yielded my life to the Lord.

2. AS YOU LOOK OUT ON THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH, PARTICULARLY THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION, WHAT SIGNS OF LIFE AND PROGRESS FILL YOU WITH HOPE FOR THE FUTURE?

I am deeply humbled by the courageous and joyful commitment to church planting and evangelism that is evident in the Anglican Churches of the Global South - in Africa, Asia and South America. I'm struck that in Anglican churches in the majority world there is a great confidence in the gospel, a great submission to the Lordship of Jesus that produces glad obedience and creative and ambitious ministry, and a deep reliance on prayer. All this, often in contexts of poverty, poor infrastructure and corrupt government, or where Christianity is a minority religion.

3. AND AS YOU LOOK OUT, WHAT GIVES YOU CAUSE FOR CONCERN?

In the majority world, there is the challenge of avoiding moralism on the one hand and prosperity teaching on the other. In the West, the challenges are arguably greater. Western churches are collapsing as they reject the authority, sufficiency and trustworthiness of God's Word in a misguided attempt to accommodate themselves to the dominant Western secular paradigm. This is a fatal error because it mistakenly treats late modern Western



Kanishka Raffel

pictured

secularism as a benign host when in fact, our cultural moment is shaped by agendas that are anti-empirical (prioritising the subjective over the objective), anti-social (prioritising the individual at the expense of social groups including the family) and absolutist (brooking no opposition or diversity of opinion or practice).

4. THE DIOCESE OF SYDNEY HAS MORE THAN ITS FAIR SHARE OF CRITICS. AS SOMEONE WHO HAS SPENT A GOOD PART OF YOUR MINISTRY OUTSIDE OF SYDNEY, WHAT DO YOU VALUE ABOUT THAT PARTICULAR HERITAGE?

I was nurtured in the faith in Sydney. I learnt to treasure Scripture – to be thoughtful, prayerful, humble and obedient in attending to the living God who speaks in the Bible. I learnt to pray for the salvation of souls and the growth of the gospel as people who are strangers to God's love and under his judgement come to hear of his Cross and join with us in repentance from sin and faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour. I learnt that the Lord who saves us by grace, graciously enables us to serve him in works that he has prepared in advance for us to do. I learnt that God displays his glory, wisdom and power in the weakness and foolishness of the Cross, and that those who follow Jesus must take up their cross to do so. I value that Sydney seeks to honour the Lord and his Cross in obeying his Word, proclaiming his love and serving the world for which he died.

5. MANY ARE SAYING THAT THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA IS FACING A GREAT CRISIS IN THE COMING YEARS. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ARE THE KEY ISSUES THAT WE NEED TO GET RIGHT AS A FELLOWSHIP OF EVANGELICAL ANGLICANS WITHIN THAT WIDER CHURCH?

As a fellowship of evangelical Anglicans we need to keep before us the utter truthfulness, goodness and primacy of Scripture for the life and ministry of the church and individual Christians. Contemporary debates about identity, sexuality, gender and marriage are the particular lenses through which our cultural moment requires us to assert and uphold Scriptural truth.

If we abandon Scripture, we have nothing to offer the world. We must eschew making Jesus in our own image or moulding him to reflect a culture that rejects him. We need to distinguish between issues that are primary and those that are secondary. It's interesting that when the Jerusalem apostles meet to discuss what will be required of the Gentiles (Acts 15) they do not impose on them religious obligations like circumcision, but require that they abstain from idolatry and sexual immorality.

6. WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN READING IN THE SCRIPTURES LATELY, AND HOW HAS GOD BEEN APPLYING THAT WORD TO YOUR OWN LIFE AND MINISTRY?

I've been reading the post-resurrection episodes in chapter 21 of John's Gospel! (They're among the readings prescribed by the Ordinal for an ordination). A few things have stood out to me. There is the clarity of the mission that Jesus entrusts to Peter – 'feed my lambs' (Jn 21:15-17). Then there is Jesus' kindness in serving his servants. Though the disciples have returned to fishing for fish instead of people, Jesus not only fills their nets (again) but he's gets breakfast ready for them as well. Jesus by no means fails to care for his servants whom he enlists in his mission (Jn 21:6-14). And finally there is the poignancy of Jesus words to Peter about his future. It is true to say that Jesus has his plans and that we are not privy to them – we must trust him for ourselves and we must trust him for others (Jn 21:18-22).





Preaching to the Heart

ANDREW KATAY
SENIOR MINISTER
CHRIST CHURCH INNER WEST

I'll admit it. I have something of a love / hate relationship with preaching.

On the one hand, of course, I love it.

To serve the Lord by opening the Word of God to people, a word which drips with the truth and goodness and beauty of Christ, demands our highest gifts, strongest energies and most insightful thought. It drives us to prayer, for the simple reason that we long for God to use our words for His glory. Specifically, as congregations, including both believers as well as seekers, hear the Scriptures read and taught, we hope that the Spirit will convict unbelievers of sin and righteousness and judgment (Jn 16.8), bringing them to repentance and faith; and at the same time, that the Spirit will deepen believers in their repentance and faith, so that they more and more put to death the desires of the flesh and cultivate the fruit of the Spirit.

At the same time, it would be fair to say that there are times when I hate preaching. It is too much, it is too hard, it is too demanding. My limited insight, my limited time and capacity, and my very limited actual putting into practice what it is that I am preaching about assail me. I stare at a blank computer screen, a sparsely scribbled hand written sermon outline, with open Bible and commentaries strewn around, and wonder when the words will flow. Which of course is part of the dynamic of all ministry and which keeps pastors and preachers humble and prayerful.

I have found a greater freedom in preaching in the last few years, in part by getting clearer on some key questions. It was Rudyard Kipling who wrote: "I keep six honest serving-men / (They taught me all I knew); / Their names are What and Why and When / And How and Where and Who". And it is in that spirit of inquiry and curiosity that I want to ask only three questions of preaching - why do we preach? To whom do we preach? And How do we preach?

1. WHY DO WE PREACH?

So first, why do we preach?



Andrew Katay

pictured

When I ask why, I don't mean what causes us to preach. There are all sorts of answers to that question, which cover ground from personal conviction of gift and call, to financial necessity. Rather, I mean for what purpose do we preach? What is - or at least, what ought to be - the goal of preaching? To what do I aim, or in the language of management-speak, how do I define the win?

Preaching, is, of course, just one form of ministry, and so its goal takes its place in the overall goal of ministry in general. And so here is a fundamental fork in the road regarding conviction about the goal of ministry. It is the same as God's goal for ministry, for his work in people, which is their transformation and growth into greater and greater conformity to the character of Christ.

It is true of course that the ultimate goal of God is his own glory.¹ Around that goal lies a cluster of other statements and metaphors that express God's purposes in Christ - for example, the renewal of all things, summed up in unity under the headship of Christ (Eph 1.10) is one expression of this; similarly, it could also be said that gathering a people to himself as his children, with Jesus "the firstborn within a large family" (Rom 8.29), is a foundational way to express God's purposes.

At the same time, transformation as a central goal of God for his people pervades Scripture. For example, Jesus' Great Commission in Matt 28.16-20 is to make disciples of all nations, which consists not only in baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, but also teaching them to obey everything that Jesus has commanded; in other words, transformation. Perhaps even more directly connected to preaching as such, the Apostle Paul writes of "God's commission which was given" to him to proclaim Christ, "warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ" (Col

1.25, 28). Or simply, as we see “the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, [we] are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another” (2 Cor 3.18). The goal of preaching is transformation of people. We are in the human changing business, because God is in the human changing business.

Two immediate clarifications spring to mind.

First, I’m sure that as you read this, the question of the sovereignty of God and its relationship to our responsibility as ministers of the Word is sparked. In other language, it is the question of faithfulness vis-a-vis fruitfulness, and the respective roles of the Holy Spirit and human agency in this. There is a great deal to say about this, and it touches on significant theological issues, especially the way the transcendent agency of God is understood not to be one cause among others, but the cause of all causes, so that divine sovereignty and human responsibility are not zero sum.² Suffice to say here that what is clear is that the Apostle Paul is quite clear in his ministry that his goal is not only faithfulness, but actual impact in people’s lives - presenting them mature in Christ.

The second thing is that clarity on the ‘why’ question enables us not to confuse means and ends. Faithful and accurate exegesis and exposition of Scripture is an absolutely necessary means in preaching. Without accuracy in these areas, we have literally nothing of substance to preach, just our own thoughts. But accurate exegesis and exposition are not sufficient for preaching. There must not be less, but there has to be more. Our job as preachers is not to ‘teach the Bible’, at least not as our actual telos for preaching. It is to ‘teach the Bible in order to see lives transformed’.

And if what comes next to your mind is, ‘Yep, I teach the Bible, that’s my bit; and the Holy Spirit transforms lives, that’s his bit’ - then you need to re-read the first clarification. If I can put it in a slightly pointy way - I call this move the intermittent fault of appeal to the sovereignty of God. Like the way that a washing machine has an intermittent fault, and somehow always manages to start working again just when the repair-guy makes a visit; so we are perfectly comfortable with human agency within divine sovereignty most of the time, but make intermittent appeal to God’s sovereignty to limit human agency on occasion.

In sum, the work that the first of our honest serving-men (thanks Kipling) does for us is to give clarity to our goal. God is in the human changing business, and that means his ministers are too, and that’s the telos of preaching.

Having worked extremely hard on the text, and having accurately explained it is absolutely necessary for preaching, but it is also sadly insufficient. There must be more.

And it’s the next two honest serving-men who help us tease out what that ‘more’ is. The next one is who - to whom are we preaching?

2. TO WHOM ARE WE PREACHING?

The question of “who” leads us into very important territory, but territory which is often under-explored. It is the realm of a Biblically rich theological anthropology. So often this is left at the level of the motif of the image of God, and the consequent inherent dignity and value of all human beings. And of course, the image of God is a crucial aspect of Biblical anthropology.

But there is a great deal more.

Again, much could be said here, but I want to focus on the Biblical centrality of the heart. There is, no doubt, more to human experience and transformation than the heart. It is crucial that behaviour shifts, habits are cultivated, character is developed and choices change, to become more aligned with Christ. It is equally crucial that the mind is renewed, so that the truth is more deeply understood, believed and reinforced. Nonetheless, from a Biblical perspective, it is ‘the renovation of the heart’, to use Dallas Willard’s memorable book title (2002), that is of fundamental concern for transformation, for three reasons.

First, and most obviously, it is possible to have ethical behaviour (orthopraxis) and theologically correct beliefs (orthodoxy) without a changed heart (orthokardia), and yet “the sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise” (Ps 51.17).³

Second, and more positively, Jesus is clear that the greatest commandment is to love God with all we are (Mk 12.30), which cannot be reduced to right belief and right behaviour.⁴ In other words, a heart which loves God is primarily what constitutes Christlikeness of character.

Third, it is from the heart that our behaviour proceeds, both negatively and positively; on the one hand, negatively, as Jesus puts it, “it is from within, from the human heart, the evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery etc.” (Mk 7.21-23). On the other hand, positively, one way to conceive of the underlying process of transformation and growth is for the heart to

increasingly and more and more decisively be set upon God, rather than on some other created reality, leading to greater and greater obedience. That is to say, a renovated heart is both centrally what Spirit-created transformation consists in, and at the same time, is one of the essential changes that will lead to other changes in behaviour, conduct, character and habit.⁵

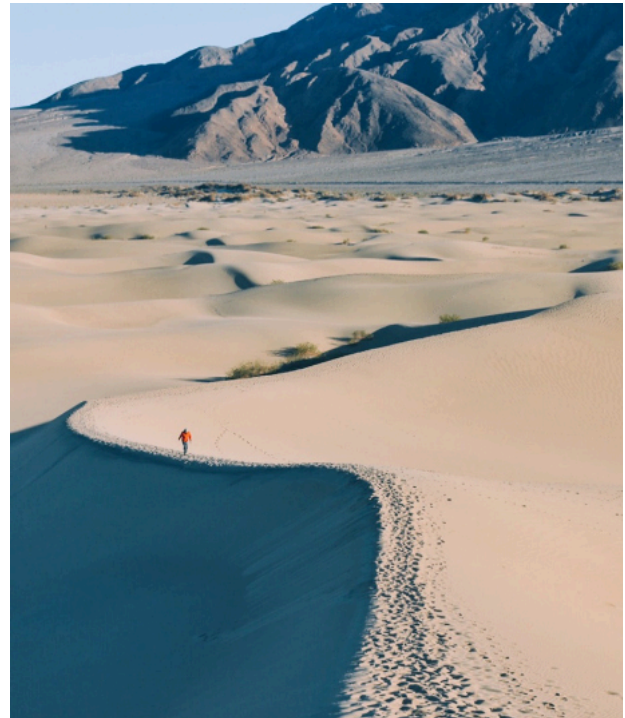
Crucial in this context is not to leave the concept of the heart as a vague, ‘we-all-know-what-we-are-talking-about’ kind of thing. Rather, it is essential to specify what the heart does. Of the many texts that speak explicitly of the heart - over 1000 times in the Bible - one key text in this regard is Rom 1.24, where Paul lays out the inner spiritual dynamic of idolatry - which, recall, is his fundamental analysis of sin - as the “lusts / desires of the heart” (*epithumiais tōn kardion autōn*).

Three things are worthy of comment here.

First, consistent with what we find in the Old Testament use of the concept of ‘heart’, and likewise in the teaching of Jesus, sin is fundamentally a matter of the heart; and correspondingly, we would expect that godliness is also.

Second, the characteristic operation of the heart is *thumias*, that is, the having of desires. In other words, what hearts do is love, or desire, or worship, that which they find beautiful or excellent or life-giving. It is crucial to note on the one hand, that the heart’s characteristic operations are not separate from thinking and willing, in that the mind and will are integrally linked to the heart. But at the same time, it is equally true and important to highlight that the operations of the heart are distinct from willing and thinking. It is not the will that loves, or desires, or worships; and it is not the mind that does these things either. It is distinctly and specifically the heart. As we will see, this distinction-but-not-separation has important consequences for preaching that really is to the heart, and not only the mind or will, for the simple reason that it must include in its appeal the distant operations of the heart, not just those of the mind and the will.

Third, the essence of sin is the desires - *epithumiais*- of the heart;⁶ that is, the heart’s desires wrongly directed toward that which is not God. The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis notes this link between the heart and its desires, and the manner in which they come to dominate and enslave as follows: “Desires can find their expression in every direction: sexual lust, material enjoyment, coveting another person’s possessions. By directing our attention, they can bring us completely under their domination ... Desires are deceitful and can enslave us ... When that happens, the ‘heart’ ie.



the centre of one’s whole personality, comes under their control (cf. Rom 1.24). As a result, all decisions of the will, and even the best and highest impulses and powers of a person, are determined by those desires” (Silva, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis* 2014, p. 243).

In other words, the inner reality of sinful idolatry is to find some aspect of the created order (wrongly) life giving, excellent or beautiful, and then setting the desires of the heart on those things rather than on the creator, who is truly glorious and life giving and blessed for ever, and rightly to be the object of the heart’s ultimate desire.⁷

If this analysis is correct, then the implications for preaching are significant. To the degree that preaching is overwhelmingly aimed at transformation of people into Christlikeness of character and away from sin, and that transformation is grounded in the heart, then preaching that is aimed at the heart must go beyond informing the mind with truths, crucial as this will be⁸; and it must likewise go beyond stirring the will with exhortation, again, crucial as this will be. It must get to the heart.

Which brings us to our third question - how? How do we preach to the heart?

3. HOW TO PREACH TO THE HEART?

Where we’ve come so far leads to the recognition that sin, like all human action, is always produced by some love of the heart, which is insufficiently ordered to an ultimate love for God; and correspondingly, godliness is always

produced by a particular love of the heart - love for God - which orders all other loves by its greater intensity. The consequence of this is that in preaching for godliness - to put off the works of the flesh and to put on the character of Christ - it will always be necessary to do two things.

The first is to understand what could be called the psycho-spiritual dynamics of the sin - by act or omission - that is to be put off. Sometimes this is called the 'sin beneath the sin', although perhaps it could more accurately be called 'the love beneath the sin'. What this is seeking to highlight is that it will be inadequate simply to identify the behaviour to be stopped and started; rather it will need to deal with the motivational structure of that behaviour, at the heart level. At best an appeal to simply stop / start, even out of gratitude, will be a kind of appeal to the will that is likely to be ineffective; at worst, it will evolve into a mere moralism.

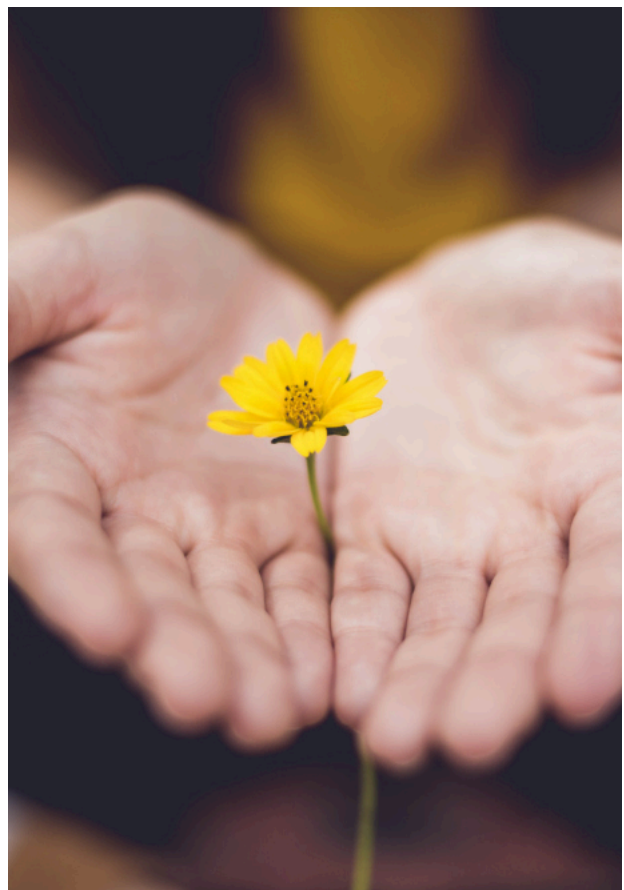
The second is to show positively how Christ is an object for the heart's love that is greater, more beautiful, excellent and glorious than the competing (over) desire which is driving the sin, and at the same time, to demonstrate how this love for Christ will give people the spiritual power to live in a godly manner in the particular issue that is in view.

In other words, **the basic art and craft of preaching to the heart is to lay before people the excellence (or beauty or glory) of the grace of God in the cross of Christ, bringing it into connection with the *epithumia* of the listeners' hearts, so that the affection of their hearts are lifted from (over) desires and placed instead on Christ.** Note that it is particularly the grace of God in Jesus Christ that is to be the content of preaching to the heart. Although it is abundantly true to say that Christ's holiness is beautiful and excellent and glorious, as is his risen power and majesty and authority, it is particularly the grace of God in Christ that is powerful to captivate the heart and so reorder its loves.⁹

This is Paul's point in Romans 6.14: "For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace". What is particularly important to note here is the context of v. 12, where Paul outlines the character of the dominion which sin is not to exercise - "therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey its passions (*epithumia*)". In other words, in a context where the dominion of sin is characterised in terms of *epithumiais*, Paul says that it is specifically because we are under grace that sin is robbed of its dominion. I suggest that this is very close to what is being suggested here; namely, that it is particularly the grace of God in the

cross of Christ (see Rom 6.1-3) that constitute the dynamics of transformation.

When the grace of God in Jesus Christ is preached with precision to the heart, then what takes place by the power of the Holy Spirit is the 'expulsive power of a new affection', to use the phrase of Thomas Chalmers. In a sermon on 1 Jn 2.15, Chalmers begins by saying: "There are two ways in which a practical moralist may attempt to displace from the human heart its love of the world - either by a demonstration of the world's vanity, so as that the heart shall be prevailed upon simply to withdraw its regards from an object that is not worthy of it; or, by setting forth another object, even God, as more worthy of its attachment, so as that the heart shall be prevailed upon not to resign an old affection, which shall have nothing to succeed it, but to exchange an old affection for a new one. My purpose is to show, that from the constitution of our nature, the former method is altogether incompetent and ineffectual and that the latter method will alone suffice for the rescue and recovery of the heart from the wrong affection that domineers over it."



His conclusion from this analysis is therefore, "the only way to dispossess [the heart] of an old affection, is by the expulsive power of a new one".¹⁰ What we have seen is that the beauty and excellence and glory of the grace of God in the cross of Jesus Christ is that which alone will captivate the heart, when brought into sufficiently precise connection with its otherwise operating (over) desires, and therefore expel those desires from their ruling place in that area of life and behaviour.

One final point to note: the fact that it is specifically the grace of God which serves to evoke the 'expulsive power of a new affection' forms the proper theological link between justification and transformation. It is clear that justification is by grace through faith - grace being the ground of justification and faith being the instrument through which grace is taken hold of (Rom 3.24, Tit 3.7, Rom 5.1). At the same time, we can also now see that transformation is correspondingly by grace through faith; that is, the ground, or power of transformation is the very same grace as that which justifies, and the instrument by which it is apprehended is that operation of the heart which is to rest in or rejoice in the grace of God in the cross of Christ.

CONCLUSION

Fellow preachers - how is your love/hate relationship with preaching going? Can I suggest that putting your honest serving-men to work will help greatly, and finding Biblically rich clarity on the why, the who and the how of preaching will make a significant difference. And where that will lead you, I believe, is to a commitment to preaching to the heart - to holding up to the hearts of our hearers the beauty and excellence and life-giving reality of God, and his Son Jesus Christ, in the power of the Spirit, in such a way that desires of the heart are removed from their current object(s) and transferred to God. And since there is an inevitable correspondence between a person's heart and their behaviour, decisions, and volitions, such a renovated heart will predictably lead more and more to that transformation of life which is God's purpose for his people.

NOTES

1. See, for example, the climactic moment of Phil 2.6-11 - "to the glory of God the Father."
2. This is obviously an overly compressed statement! The key text on this question has always seemed to me to be Phil 2.12-14, where Paul understands the sovereign work of God, not only not to limit his agency, but to empower it! See also David Bentley Hart's bracing treatment of this theme in his "The experience of God".
3. The prophets repeatedly condemn Israel for her hard heartedness, regardless of her obedience in offering sacrifice - for example, Isa 1.12-15, 29.13-14. Similarly, Jesus condemns the Phar-

isees for their attention to the details of the Torah, including the praise of God, and at the same time, quoting Isa 29.13-14, says that their hearts are far from God.

4. It would be overly precise to attempt to make strong distinctions between 'heart,' 'soul,' 'mind' and 'strength.' At the same time, it does not perhaps stretch too far to note that 'mind' and 'strength' seem more or less to correspond with belief and behaviour. That Jesus - endorsing the precedent of Deut 6.4-5 - adds 'heart' and 'soul' indicates that the greatest commandment, while necessarily including right belief and right behaviour, cannot be reduced to right belief and right behaviour.

5. In other words, it is a dual claim that is being made here. First, that the transformation which is one of God's goals for his people includes transformation of mind ("to be renewed in the spirit of your minds" [Eph 4.23]), and transformation of behaviour and character ("to put away your former way of life, your old self" [Eph 4.22]), along with transformation of heart, and that these different modes of human experience are never to be played off against one another. And second, at the same time, that the heart plays a particular and key role in both the content and the process (or dynamic) of that transformation.

6. Note that there are three uses of the noun ἐπιθυμία positively in the New Testament - Luke 22.15 (where Jesus says that it is with "eager desire" that he has longed to eat this Passover with his disciples before he suffers; Phil 1.23, where Paul indicates that his "desire is to depart and be with Christ"; and 1 Thess 2.17, where Paul writes that he "longed in great eagerness" to be reunited with the Thessalonians. In these cases, the meaning is more like 'strong desire' than 'over desire'. The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis notes: "Where the terms [noun and verb forms] are used in a neutral or good sense, they seem to express a particularly strong desire (Silva, 2014, p. 242). Apart from these, the remaining 35 uses are all in connection with sinful desire. A similar pattern of occasional neutral usage, but majority negative usage, is observable in relation to the verb form.

7. Note that it is important to recognise that the ideal of Christian discipleship is not that we love only God. On the contrary, Christians are called to love their spouse, love their neighbour, and even love their enemies. In other words, Christlikeness is constituted by loving all things in the right way, and to the right proportion. Consequently, disordered desire of the heart - that is, desires that are ἐπιθυμία, and not just θυμία - can take the form both of desire for an evil thing (which is by nature an over desire), or an overly intense desire for a good thing. In either case, 'over-desire' could be used as a reasonable translation of ἐπιθυμία.

8. Of course, it is true to say that the beauty and excellence of the grace of God in the cross of Christ includes a cognitive dimension. However, whilst this cognition is necessary, it is not sufficient, and does not yet reach the heart. Jonathan Edwards' concept of 'the sense of the heart' is aimed at exactly this distinction. He writes "Thus there is a difference between having an opinion, that God is holy and gracious, and having a sense of the loveliness and beauty of that holiness and grace. There is a difference between having a rational judgment that honey is sweet and having a sense of its sweetness. A man may have the former that knows not how honey tastes; but a man cannot have the latter unless he has an idea of the taste of honey in his mind" (Edwards, 1834 (Vol 2) loc. 945).

9. Prior to the entrance of sin, I suggest, holiness and glory would have had the same - melting - effect on the heart. However, as those who remain in a battle with sin until the Lord returns, and whose hearts remain to one degree or another divided in their loyalties and hardened, the holiness and glory of God apart from his grace may have the effect of overwhelming us. It is for this reason that it is particularly the grace of God, enacted most wonderfully in the cross of Christ, which is foregrounded as a key focal point for preaching to the heart.

10. The sermon can be found here: <https://www.theologynet-work.org/christian-beliefs/the-holy-spirit-and-christian-living/the-expulsive-power-of-a-new-affection.htm>. Accessed December 2018.



By the Grace of God – the preacher is not a coach at halftime

SIMON MANCHESTER
ACTING SENIOR MINISTER
ALL SAINTS WOOLLAHRA

When I was Chaplain to the North Sydney Bears Rugby League team (and you may know that my prayers for their humility were powerfully answered), I once went to the ‘post-mortem’ meeting on Monday and was told ‘it was probably not a good time for me to be there’.

The coach was obviously giving an expletive-laden barrage to the players (after a terrible loss) and either felt that my saintly presence would curb his freedom of speech or that he would have to explain his terms to me as he went... probably the former.

But picture the football coach at half-time as his team has shown no energy or courage or cleverness or skill (or warrant for big pay-packets) and the score is now 38-0 to the other side (if he’s a soccer coach this is serious). He will be angry – quietly or loudly.

What can he do but berate his players and tell them that they are a disgrace to the fans, to the sponsors, to themselves – and especially to him? [The flip-side to this is a fantastic first half where they are belting the opposition and congratulating themselves... but I digress].

It seems to me that too much preaching falls into the ‘coach at half-time’ category. Not that the preacher is angry but he has little to say beyond personal motivation. Think for example of a sermon in the second half of an epistle.

We know that there is more indicative (what God has done) in the first half of the letter and more imperative (what we should do) in the second half – although we should not push the general principle too far as there is something of both in both halves.

But how often the preacher loses his moorings in the second half and fails to show that the engine of godliness lies in what God has done (and continues to do) so that our part in the life of godliness is not just the ‘football player’ getting a motivational speech.



Simon Manchester

pictured

A subtle example of this is in the letter of James which – in unwise hands – could easily become a series of ‘do better’ sermons. But a careful reading of James will show that he regards his readers as having the “implanted word... which can save you” (1:21).

Or even an Old Testament sermon in Deuteronomy will easily become a ‘do better’ sermon unless the preacher makes clear that from the very beginning this book is addressed to people who are being “carried as a father carries his son” (1:31).

We who preach the Word of God must preach the gospel-driven (meaning grace-driven) life to our people so that they never leave the gathering like football players (did I mention netball players as well?) feeling everything is up to them.

We must remind our people (now I’m confusing all my categories) that we are not lonely rowers in rowing boats nor lazy cruisers in power boats but active sailors in sailing boats – hard at work but supernaturally helped by the Wind of the Spirit – thanks to Jesus.





Leadership

MIKE FLYNN

At Swinburne University in Melbourne, the School of Business is teaching servant leadership because evidence for the effectiveness of Jesus' teaching on leadership has been building for decades. Harvard Business Review famously called it 'Level five leadership'—a humble, eclectic, teachable and even wise form of leading that puts the goals of the corporation above the personality of the leader. There is nothing sentimental or ideologically skewed towards championing introversion here. This is business: this form of leadership is justified by the superior results it achieves.

But leadership is complex for us in Melbourne. We know that our city is obsessed with critiquing leaders; with looking for leaders and removing them. It is one of the ordinary goods we have anxiously made into an ultimate purpose as we seek the keys to a meaningful life on our own terms. We deeply believe that if we just get leadership right, all will be well.

But this is Australia where we practice a brutal form of egalitarianism. We cut down without mercy even the most beautiful and deserving of our tall poppies. We knock down those who might have excelled, given time, grace and opportunity. Then we complain wise people steer away from leadership in public, corporate, and church life—leaving weeds behind.

Paul's letters to the Corinthians show us that these wrangles over leadership are not new. Different leaders had accumulated different factions within the church. People were lining up behind Paul, Cephas (Peter) and Apollos—and, by 2 Corinthians, possibly Titus. There were the *Super Apostles* who were abusing and misleading the young church.

Paul wonders if the Corinthians are crazy. Why make idols out of leaders? "Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptised in the name of Paul?" (1 Corinthians 1:13). His point is that leaders in the church are not saviours, they are farmers.

I planted [did mission] and Apollos watered [taught and pastored] but it is God who gives the growth.

(1 Corinthians 3:6)

As Paul unpacks the teaching of Jesus on servant leadership for the churches in Corinth, we learn that church leaders, ministers and pastors are both more important and less important than we think.



Mike Flynn

pictured

CHURCH LEADERS, MINISTERS AND PASTORS MATTER MORE THAN WE THINK.

Some contemporary Christians think that churches don't need leaders: We know better than our pastors. We are educated (professionals with our own standing in the community beyond the church). We exercise our own brands of leadership every working day. We can do a better job—and doesn't the Bible itself teach that the church is a kingdom of priests (1 Peter 2:9)?

But for Paul, a church saying that it doesn't need leaders would be like a city saying it doesn't need farmers.

At the end of 1 Corinthians 12 Paul notes that some gifts are fundamental to establishing the church and enabling the other gifts of the church:

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues...

(1 Corinthians 12: 27)

This is consistent with what Paul writes in Ephesians 4:

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

(Ephesians 4:11, 12)

In other words, the task of people in *the ministry* is to build up and equip the rest of the church to do *the ministry of the church* wherever and however they find themselves.

Our church leaders, our ministers and pastors do not have all the gifts a church will need but they are more important than we think and are vital in the way they help other people to exercise their own gifts.

CHURCH LEADERS, MINISTERS AND PASTORS MATTER LESS THAN WE THINK.

If some Christians undervalue leadership, others overvalue it—believing that a good leader is essential to the success and growth of the church. Typically ‘good’ here means a charismatic and extroverted personality with winsome teaching gifts. ‘Success’ means attracting people into our churches and putting us on the map. We note that large and successful churches have big ‘L’ leaders and we want to train people going into ministry to be those sorts of people. That is how we want to be led. But again, Paul says, ‘no’:

What we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake... for God who said “Let light shine out of darkness” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory... displayed in the face of Jesus Christ ... but we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that the surpassing power is from God and not from us.

(2 Corinthians 4:5-7)

How odd that one of the most successful authors of history, the co-founder of the largest volunteer movement in the world—one of the church’s most influential and successful missionaries—should have the view that it is the weakness of our leaders, their lack that allows others to see the grace of God at work in them, rather than their competence and brilliance. Writing again about leadership, he says:

Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord. For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

(2 Corinthians 10:17-18)

Why do we need to be reminded of these things?

Because, as Paul says, it is too easy to lead a church by the appearance of success (or what our culture defines as successful) rather than substance—which, as Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 10:7, is belonging to Jesus Christ.

APPLYING PAUL’S TEACHING...

The future of the church does not depend on how well-crafted and presented our strategic plans are. They will not give life or growth or resurrect the dead. The future belongs to Jesus Christ. He is the one who was raised from the dead. (for example, on planning see 2 Corinthians 1:12-22)

The truth of the church is not assured by our academic qualifications or publications, or by clever apologetics or learned sermons. It is in Jesus Christ because he is the truth about God. (for example, on truth see 1 Corinthians 1:20-31)

The life of the church is not to be found in our community social gatherings or friendship networks or small groups. The power to live well, love well, forgive well is in Jesus Christ. (for example, on community see 1 Corinthians 11:17-34)

The mission of the church is not captive to our programs. Its success depends wholly on Jesus Christ and what he is already doing in people’s lives which we need to discover and participate in. (for example, on cross cultural mission, see 1 Corinthians 8:1-13)

Of course our planning, teaching, community and mission efforts matter, but only in the way that farming matters. They are essential to do but they do not achieve growth on their own. They do not produce salvation or purpose because it is God who gives the growth. Our effort is the appearance but Jesus is the substance. What we and our leaders do is to point people away from ourselves to Jesus Christ. We are the jars of clay containing the treasure of the good news about Jesus, so that—through our faults and weakness, rather than our accomplishments and strength—people can see God’s grace and gift in us (and then want to seek it for themselves).

Insofar as our ministry does this, it will be a success.

Insofar as it points to ourselves or builds likes and followers or influence for our leaders and church brands, it is a sadness.

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1 that ‘All the promises of God find their yes in him.’ It is Jesus whom our servant-leaders are to serve. To put it in pragmatic terms, that is the ministry that will work.

Mike Flynn has degrees in Science, theology and pastoral ministry. Before his ordination, he worked as an industrial analyst. He has been an Anglican minister for 26 years and was Vicar of St. Columb’s Hawthorn for 14 years.





What Can We Say? A Response to Sexual Sin in Christian Leaders

PETER BRAIN
PERTH

I will never forget the opening lines of the veteran missionary Bishop Alfred Stanway; ‘the two biggest temptations for missionaries and ministers are sex and money’. It was 1965 at the CMS Summer School in Katoomba. I was 18, a Christian of 15 months and it was the day after my first Beach Mission. I was stunned by the opening line but greatly helped by his talk. Some 10 years later a different speaker on the same platform, Michael Griffiths, said the same thing as he expounded the 8 reasons for sexual purity from 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. I was not stunned this time, but once again greatly helped and challenged to be faithful to God, my wife, our new family, God’s people and to my calling as a newly ordained pastor.

It took me a couple of weeks to get over the sadness and grief of Ravi Zachariah’s infidelity. I still find it painful to learn of the accusations and supporting reports from the investigations commissioned by RZIM. What do I do with his books which I have devoured and profited from? How do I pray for my Hindu dentist who so gladly accepted the copy of his last book, intrigued by its title, ‘The Logic of God’? How do I keep my anger from causing me to be self-righteous or, conversely, unfazed by his, and others, both high-profile and ordinary leaders’, duplicity? How do I help younger brothers and sisters who are deeply hurt, very much confused, even despairing? What do I, a happily married retired pastor, need to learn from this sad situation? Perhaps this article will help me and others who have similar feelings.

We must thank God for the godly examples he has given us who continue faithful in the sexual and other aspects of their lives and ministries. Whilst we want to avoid the sin of some, we take heart from the faithfulness of countless faithful ones whom God has granted to us [Philippians 3:17]. This will temper our despair and remind us of the need for constant vigilance in our own walk with the Lord [1 Timothy 4:16], the ease with which we can be tempted [1 Corinthians 10:11-13] and the wisdom of constant self-examination [2 Corinthians 13:5]. The truth: *there but for the grace of God go I* must be heeded, keeping us from pride and complacency. Richard Baxter’s warning: *A holy calling will not save an unholy man,*



Name

pictured

should likewise ring in our ears to keep us from presuming upon God’s grace.

There are many hazards of ministry; one is a foolish mollicoddling born out of preciousness. We can feel sorry for ourselves because we work hard, are not always appreciated and have given up other higher paid or higher-profile occupations. If we allow these any toehold, we open ourselves to sexual temptation and worse. How keen we are to grow up and leave these follies behind depends entirely on the kinds of habits we develop. Dependence on God’s approval rather than that of our peers is vital. Jesus mandates the grounding of our worth, to be found in God and His promises, not our ministerial success (or for that matter failure), in His sobering but liberating: *do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven* (Luke 10:20). If we are to win this battle we are wise to see worship as more important than fellowship for two reasons. Worship helps us to expect more of God than we do of each other, whereas fellowship leads us to expect too much of each other and not enough from God. The Prayer of Preparation at the beginning of our Holy Communion services, with its compelling *Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden...* (reflecting Hebrews 4:12-13), serves as a model, *for a devotional pattern that places us starkly in awe before a fearsome God. A God-angled view of sin and its consequences. A habit of escaping the pressures of Christian work for relaxation and renewal-activities that don’t violate the holiness of God. Easy? Not at all, but necessary.* (Bill Halstead, *Perils of the Professionally Holy in Leadership*, Winter Quarter, 1984).

A tragic pattern has emerged between money and the opportunities for sexual sin in Ravi Zachariah’s demise. Commenting on our Lord’s ‘*the labourer deserves his wages*’ (Luke 10:7) two older writers offer wise advice. ‘*If the labourer is worth his wages he is not worth more*’, wrote Leon

Morris, with William Barclay adding: ‘...*the labourer is worthy of his hire, but a servant of the crucified Master cannot be a seeker for luxury.*’ The questions must be asked, ‘Why was he paid so much and why did he have such unaccountable use of so much money?’ Given the warning of 1 Timothy 6:9-10, the promises of Matthew 6:28-34 and wisdom of Proverbs 30:7-9, why was he so badly served by his board in these matters? The temptation to sexual sin is open to all – high-profile and over-remunerated, unknown and adequately paid – alike. But the temptation must be *acknowledged* by us all, especially by the leader who is not held to account, nor allows him/herself to be accountable.

There is an established pattern in both secular and Christian leadership known as the ‘4 A’s’. *Arrogance* – the attitude that assumes we make the rules – can easily morph into an excited, adrenalin-fuelled *addiction* which consumes us at the expense (most often) of relationship with family and friends. This leads inevitably into an *aloneness*, where, because of our being cut off from others, depression inevitably sets in. Once this happens the leader is vulnerable to *adultery* as the seemingly best way to overcome the loss of friendship and stimulation. Sexual sin usually has its origins outside of sexual attraction. We all do well to value accountability to others, even where it seems tedious, since it keeps us earthed and accustomed to being responsible to others. The effects of adrenalin must be understood, with rest times being allowed and built into our routines. This will mean refreshment in life’s simple, ‘smelling the roses’ pleasures, with our primary supportive relationships with friends, spouses and children being nurtured and valued, even above our work. The snares of riches include feeling that our value is defined by the amount we are paid and by the way riches make it easier to engage in illicit and unhelpful pastimes. The remedy includes contentment and sacrificial giving, both of which are birthed and nurtured by thankfulness to God for what we have, which alone can rescue us from envy, preciousness, greed, lust and a dissatisfaction fuelled by the law of diminishing returns (1 Timothy 6:6-20a, Hebrews 13:4-8).

Anglicans are very fortunate to have the healthy reminder of *our* sin before us in our public liturgies. I highlight *our* since it is too easy, in my own experience, to see and focus on the sins of others rather than our own. This is especially so when we are called to a public defence of Christian ethics and beliefs, and is an occupational hazard of pastors. The Prayer of Preparation, the General Confession, the declaration of pardon in Morning Prayer, the opening texts in Morning and Evening prayer should all keep us from taking *our* sin lightly. This is entirely consistent with passages like

Galatians 5:16-18, Romans 7:7-25, 1 Timothy 1:15-16, 1 John 1:5-10, Mark 7:20-23 and John 8:7-11. John Murray’s words, ‘*There is a total difference between surviving sin and reigning sin, the regenerate in conflict with sin and the unregenerate complacent to sin. It is one thing for sin to live in us; it is another for us to live in sin*’ remind us that one mark of the disciple is the willingness to battle sin by attending to the well-proven means of grace and the desire to preach first to ourselves so we place no stumbling block before those we seek to win for Christ. We are to *watch ourselves closely* (1 Timothy 4:16), since others watch us (Philippians 4:9), and we do not want any to stumble on our account (Luke 17:1-3).

All in leadership have the dual responsibility of giving a godly example and receiving godly admonition. This is implied by our Lord in Luke 17:1-4, and involves much grace and forgiveness. But forgiveness requires contrition and true repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10). This is true for every sin and especially so for sexual sins. Whilst there is no doubt about forgiveness from God for the repentant sinner, there are differing views in regard to ongoing ministerial suitability of those who are repentant. In this we are wise to consider the seriousness of sexual sin by Christian leaders. All sin is serious, but this sin has wider consequences than most others. It is an abrogation of the trust afforded those in leadership; a trust that, if lost, undermines the credibility of both leaders and the gospel. There is a biblical truth enshrined in the observation *the medium is the message*. There is no doubt that our message is more than the medium, but it is not less than the messenger. The fruits of repentance require time to be proven genuine, and the pastor and their family need years to work through the hurt, betrayal, shame and sadness. It is wise for the repentant pastor not to expect restoration to public office and for the church leadership, although forgiving, not to be seen to be condoning the sin, which not only confuses the community nor takes the pastoral office or the repentant seriously enough.

This is why our example is so important. It is also why it is so unwise, and unhelpful for the Christian community, to idolise our leadership heroes. Every hero, and God gives them to us to imitate and draw courage from (Hebrews 11:39-40, Philippians 2:29), has feet of clay. Like Paul, they must never forget what they were before the grace of God (remember that 1 Timothy 1:16 was



written at the end of his life). And even if they do not sin openly and bring offence to the gospel and the church, as most don't, they are not helped by adulation, even if it is well-meant. Words of encouragement can be given which neither flatter nor put leaders on an unhealthy pedestal. The respect (Hebrews 13:7) and honour (1 Timothy 5:17) due to faithful leaders when demonstrated in simple ways such as desiring to learn and support biblical teaching, turning up for church with a serving heart and praying regularly will work wonders in encouraging pastors and leaders. John Stott said that *'the pulpit is a dangerous place for any child of Adam to occupy.'* Since it is such a heady privilege, we are wise to frame our words so that they do not cause our leaders to develop a big head, but rather an encouraged heart, so necessary for what can be a lonely, discouraging, and demanding ministry. Such ministry to pastors is suggested by Ephesians 4:25-32, Hebrews 10:25; 13:17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-25. Here is a ministry we can all exercise to each other, whether paid or unpaid. Leaders are wise to encourage and to heed. Well-thought-out words and support are vital, making admonition much less likely to be required, and when it is needed, more likely to be heeded.

What can we do to guard God's glory, our own integrity, enhance our witness and bring ongoing joy to God's people? Here are 10 ways of thinking about God, ourselves and our calling that are worth pondering prayerfully, regularly and in concert with those who stand with us. I will not spell out the implications of each passage as that will be best done by each of us.

[1] ***Remember how treasured*** God's people are to each person of the Godhead (Acts 20:28). They, like us belong to Him. Do we treasure them as He so clearly does?

[2] ***Read carefully*** to discern the 8 reasons for sexual purity set out by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. What added incentive for faithfulness do you discern in 4:9-10 and 4:11-12?

[3] ***Given the temptations*** of our own culture, not to mention our sinfulness and Satan's designs to bring us down, are there warnings you must heed from Ephesians 5:1-14?

[4] ***Are you investing*** quality time, remembering that quality time requires quantity time, in nurturing your marriage, and (or, if single), accountable, non-sexual friendships? What encouragements and warnings do you find in 1 Timothy 5:1-2, 1 Thess 4:9-10 & Hebrews 13:1-7?

[5] ***Consider praying*** the Prayer of Preparation along with the versicles and responses from MP: ***Clothe your ministers with righteousness-and make your chosen people joyful*** (Psalm 132:9) and ***Create in us clean hearts, O God-and renew us by your Holy Spirit*** (Psalm 51:10) regularly.

[6] ***Be prepared to rid yourself*** of all known temptations. How might our Lord's words in Matthew 5:27-30, and Paul's in Ephesians 5:3 and 11, help you to fulfil the petition *'and lead us not into temptation'*? (A thought/promise: ministry can be done very faithfully without the internet, if our devices cause temptation).

[7] ***Practise thankfulness*** every morning (1 Thess 5:16-18, Phil 1:3, 1 Cor 1:4) for (i) who you are in Christ (ii) for your spouse and friends (iii) for the congregation/position you are in now (iv) for those over you on the Lord (v) for the house and goods you have. This is the only sure way to deliver contentment, commitment and cheerfulness and keep us from envy, greed, grumbling and daydreaming with the misplaced hope that it would be better, bigger, happier, and our work more noticed, if we were elsewhere.

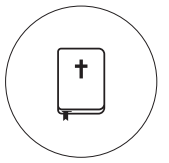
[8] ***Remember that we play to an audience of One.*** The God we serve not only knows where we are, but cares deeply for us. Unlike others to whom we can be tempted to look for affirmation, God is neither fickle nor into flattery. He is, however mindful of us as His children (Psalm 103:13-14) and servants (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24). Perhaps Hebrews 4:14-16 will help you?

[9] ***Pay special attention*** to those who know and love you the most. It is not easy for those who love us to correct or warn us. But they are to be listened to (Proverbs 12:18b, 24:26, 27:5-6). Your spouse is your greatest ally. Listen to her/him if she/he suggests that someone has an unhealthy interest in you. They are not being neurotic or jealous (only jealous *for* you, *for* our Lord, *for* the church and *for* the gospel). It is a great foolishness to disregard loving counsel.

[10] ***Do not be so unwise or proud as to think it could never happen to you.*** Remember, 1 Corinthians 10:11-13 was written and is in the canon for a purpose. Ponder afresh Psalm 119 in its fullness, but if not, at least 119:9-10 and 176. Consider the realism expressed by righteous Job in 31:1-4.

This last passage should alert us to the importance of examining our ways, with a view to strengthening our resolve, by all proper means, to remain and continue faithful before God, the world and the people we serve. It is not ours to condemn, nor is it ours to fail to take stock and to learn. I hope these thoughts may be of help to us *grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ* (2 Peter 3:18) by making *our calling and election sure* (2 Peter 1:10-11) through the intentional growth expected of us all (1:3-11).

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen



The One Who Guards the Gospel

2 TIMOTHY 1:9-14

The letter of 2 Timothy, regarded by many as the last of Paul's letters, functions as a farewell letter to his son in the faith, Timothy, engaged at that time in leading the church of Ephesus.

It is a realistic letter about the challenges of ministry, and at times the realism might seem to convey sometime more like pessimism. However, as I have read this letter several times over the last season of ministry I have been struck by Paul's optimism – an optimism that is striking considering his own location (prison), his expectation about his own death (imminent), and his consciousness of the threats (inevitable and plentiful).

The source of Paul's ministry optimism can be found, I believe, in six verses in the middle of 2 Timothy 1.

In verses 9-10 we see the first source of Paul's optimism – the significance of the gospel within all of history and eternity. The saving grace of God predates the history of the universe, as it is given before the beginning of time (verse 9). The saving grace of God then appears within human time and history through the life and ministry of Christ Jesus (verse 10). And that saving grace then connects believers to an eternal future as death is destroyed and immortality brought to light. The grace that existed in Christ before history, enters history, and transforms history into eternity. What greater cause of optimism could a gospel herald and teacher have than to know this history of the gospel! It means that suffering for the gospel leads not to shame but to humble confidence (verse 12).

The second source of Paul's optimism is his knowledge of God as the one who will guard the gospel. The phrase in verse 12 requires a little work to unpack – "I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day." The day that Paul has in mind is clearly the day of judgment and Christ's appearing (see 1:18 and 4:8), so what is it that Paul has entrusted, and God is able to guard? Suggestions are many, but the key to understanding is to notice that Paul uses the same two words ('guard' and 'entrusted') in verse 14, where that which is to be guarded is the gospel itself. Paul entrusts the heralding and teaching of the gospel for the next generation to Timothy (verse 14), but he has already entrusted that transmission of gospel proclamation to God, and God is able to guard it. Even as he exhorts Timothy to "guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you" Paul is optimistic because he

knows that God is the one who will himself guard that gospel until the day of Christ's return.

What a comfort this must have been for Paul at the end of his life and ministry, in chains and witnessing some of his co-workers abandoning him and the gospel (verse 15). God guards his gospel, and he will do so until the day Christ returns.

This is a good encouragement for those of us who might be inclined to worry that faithful gospel ministry is in grave danger beyond our own generation. Are we not prone to believe that we are more central to God's plans for the gospel than we actually are? We certainly must play our part, but God himself is deeply committed to guarding the gospel and ensuring that it is passed on from one generation to the next. We guard the gospel, just as Timothy was called upon to guard the gospel, but we know that behind it all the God of history and eternity is working his purposes out and guarding that which Paul had entrusted to him.

We must not feel the pressure to add or subtract. We guard what has been handed down to us from the apostles, and because God is the guardian in chief of his own gospel, we are guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us (verse 14).

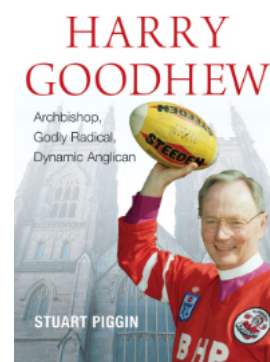
Of course, being a steward and guardian of the received truth might sometimes feel less exciting and prestigious than being an innovator. There is creative work to be done for sure, but it is not the work of reinventing the gospel, but rather of thinking through how the unchanging gospel applies to our ever-changing world. As Jonathan Griffiths has written in his excellent short commentary on 2 Timothy, "As we seek to be fresh and even prophetic in our application of the word to our new day, we must be those who stick faithfully to believing and proclaiming the never-changing Word entrusted to us."

GAVIN PERKINS, BOWRAL



Harry Goodhew: Archbishop, Godly Radical, Dynamic Anglican

STUART PIGGIN
MORNING STAR PUBLISHING, 2021



Apparently, Marcus Loane thought that biographies ought not be written of the living, though he attended the launch of John Reid's biography of him. Is this biography of Harry Goodhew, Archbishop of Sydney, premature therefore? Stuart Piggin argues that twenty years in retirement provides sufficient time for a good perspective. Is he correct? Piggin concedes that many would regard him as being too close to Goodhew, but Piggin then argues that he did not know Goodhew as well as he himself thought he did, thus implying more objectivity than might otherwise be anticipated. Is he right?

The closeness of Piggin to Goodhew certainly adds a personal dimension to this biography. Goodhew is not portrayed in any remote way. His warm personality and personal piety are always evident. Harry appears to be widely known as gentle, gracious, humble and godly in character. While Piggin's depiction of Harry is always full of praise – too hagiographic? – the main point of commending Goodhew's godly character is indisputable.

Character is undervalued in our world, even in Christian circles, where achievement and ability are rated so highly. We excuse people's poor character in politics, sport, business and church because of their track record of getting things done. Secular leadership manuals often frame Christian leadership expectations, usually again devaluing character. This biography's constant reference to Goodhew's prayerfulness, humility, graciousness and spiritual fruit is as refreshing as it is important. Character matters, godly character above all.

This point lay at the heart of Piggin's own speech moving the election of Goodhew as Archbishop. "The fruit of the spirit has ripened closer to perfection in this man than in any man or woman I know." (p13) That is a striking claim and after around thirty years, one assumes Piggin does not resile from it.

The prologue of Piggin's biography recounts Harry Goodhew's election as Archbishop of Sydney. That is the key event and it is placed front and centre. Harry's life pre-Archbishop is told succinctly, across 100 pages. Each year of his archiepiscopate commands a chapter and covers over 200 pages. The biography is readable,

interesting, though at times more detailed than a foreigner like me cares for.

Piggin depicts a consistent undermining of Goodhew's leadership by Standing Committee and several individuals, in particular. The reader is roused to sympathy for Goodhew time and again and to marvel at his resilience and gentleness. Of course, this is not the only perspective of those years. A couple of years ago I happened to read Bruce Ballantyne-Jones' self-published *Inside Sydney*, his thesis which Piggin (his supervisor) refers to early on. No doubt, to my mind, Piggin's biography seeks at least in part to combat Ballantyne-Jones' take on these events. I am ignorant of the detailed history and issues, however Piggin's appears to be a more nuanced, and is certainly a more eloquent, account of events.

I am neither a Sydney Anglican, nor the son of one, and, from afar, Sydney Anglican politics carries a ferocious reputation. Piggin does not challenge that caricature. To an extent, he seems to regard Goodhew's archiepiscopacy as an aberration from the so-called hardline Sydney view. Over the years, I have heard voices that Sydney is right and others, at best, suspicious. However, I have also heard plenty of warm, welcoming voices to non-Sydney people like me too.

But Piggin's biography raises important issues regarding orthodoxy and character, as well as perception and reputation. Harry's winsome and gracious personality within the Australian Anglican church, as well as overseas, is praised by Piggin. Goodhew was a peacemaker, it seems, and no less orthodox for being so. Piggin is concerned to champion this sort of generous evangelicalism, modelled by Goodhew. I resonate with that. In an increasingly fractious society and church, what will commend Jesus the most?

What stands out clearest about Harry Goodhew is, regardless of his position, he loved and loves Jesus above all. That commends this book above all to be read by many.

BISHOP PAUL BARKER, DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

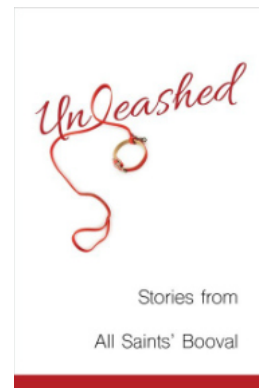
Unleashed: Stories from All Saints' Booval

JOHN ARNOLD & HEATHER WOOD
JF ARNOLD PUBLICATIONS, 2021.

John Arnold and Heather Wood have done us a great service by collecting and publishing these twenty-one testimonies from parishioners at All Saints' Booval, in celebration of the parish's 125th anniversary. The faith journeys of the contributors had their origin in the period between 1955 and 1965, during the incumbencies of the Rev Colin Ware and his wife Judith and the Rev Don Douglass and his wife Margaret.

Booval is a working class suburb near Ipswich on the western fringes of Brisbane. Members of the parish were employed at the nearby railway workshops, woollen mills and underground coal mines. In many ways these are the stories of ordinary Australians at an ordinary Anglican parish in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Yet this was no ordinary parish, as is evidenced by the extraordinary number of children in the Sunday School and Youth Group, and the extraordinary number of parishioners who went into full time vocational ministry, including service with the Church Missionary Society and Bush Church Aid (seven ordained priests and eleven missionaries). Many lives were extraordinarily transformed. Nor was the parish wealthy or educated. Yet God in His mercy delighted to make "something out of nothing", enabling vibrant congregational life, evangelism and discipleship, substantial property improvements and even the establishment of a half-way house for residents discharged from the nearby Goodna Mental Hospital, where the parish maintained a long-standing ministry of visitation.

Very few parishes have such a record of sending so many into ministry. Furthermore, there have been few large and dynamic Anglican parishes in working class contexts. It is therefore illuminative and helpful to discern some of the common threads woven through this tapestry: A strong commitment to corporate worship and prayer – and not just on Sundays; a commitment to expository preaching; the promotion and training in daily Bible reading and prayer, using Scripture Union resources; a massive commitment to relational children's, youth and family ministry; a commitment to systematic gospel outreach, including parish missions; together with a commitment to global mission, evidenced in a strong local Church Missionary Society League of Youth group.



Yet this was not just busyness, even if Margaret Douglass had to call her husband from a public phone once to make an appointment to see him about Mothers Union matters! Rather, it was a transformative work of the Spirit of God through the hospitable faithfulness of humble servants who prayed and placed themselves at His disposal, unleashing and training others to similarly do so. Don Douglass, in fact, was notoriously "limited" by a stutter, especially in his preaching. Jim Stonier, onetime curate and later long-term Chaplain at The Southport School commented to the compiler, "The spirit of prayer went through everything."

The collection makes enjoyable, interesting and encouraging reading. In one sense, the contributions could come from a number of parishes scattered across the nation, although few are as considered as this, and even fewer are published for the public good. Even so, it would be easy to dismiss them as a slice of life from a time in our Australian Anglican history when a number of individual, sociological and demographic factors came together under the work of the Spirit of God so vibrantly and so fruitfully. It is at least that, for which we can give God great thanks and praise. Yet as our Western world speeds so quickly into another Dark Age we would do well to ask the difficult "So what for us?" question. Even in the 1950's and 1960's Booval was a standout, and is only more so as we review it historically. It didn't necessarily happen. Perhaps we need to prune radically the time we are being managed by our devices, so that we too can give ourselves to the ministry of prayer and the word – two very hard tasks when my emails and texts are so pressing.

ADRIAN LANE SERVES AS THE VICTORIAN REGIONAL OFFICER FOR THE BUSH CHURCH AID SOCIETY AND HAS PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS THE WARDEN FOR THE MATHEW HALE PUBLIC LIBRARY IN BRISBANE.

Arnold, John & Heather Wood (compilers) Unleashed: Stories from All Saints' Booval. JF Arnold Publications, 2021. Available from jdarnold2@bigpond.com \$20 + \$6 postage.

When narcissism comes to church

CHUCK DEGROAT
IVP: DOWNER'S GROVE, IL., 2020

"Many pastors get fired,
but Driscoll got fired for being an a**hole"

So goes the tag line of the recent long form journalistic podcast investigating the *Rise and Fall of Mars Hill* and its pastor Mark Driscoll. However, as emotive as this assertion is, it subtly misses the mark. While Driscoll may embody that trait, the more troubling problem was tied up in a personality trait that our culture slavishly fêtes: narcissism. Often we are too cavalier as we toss this term around and use it for informal diagnoses of all kinds. Nevertheless, narcissism—in its pathological and popular types—is profoundly damaging in personal and social relationships. Yet as the church elevates the humility espoused in Philippians 2 as a model for Christian discipleship it correspondingly seems to ignore the presence of narcissism within its bounds.

Chuck DeGroat's new book *When Narcissism Comes to Church* speaks into this difficult space. From a wealth of knowledge from twenty years of both practical and academic pastoral and counselling experience, he builds a solid and sobering picture of narcissism within the church, and how the church often fosters such traits within those who minister. It is this experience that also tempers the detached approach and sees narcissism as built upon power, desire, fear, and shame wrapped up in the 'compelling package' (19). Musing 'Could it be that the very men and women who are called to be shepherds of the flock struggle most with narcissism?' (19)

While many books have been written on the good, the bad, and the indifferent of narcissism, this work takes a different tack to many. After a helpful examining of the clinical basics of narcissism, DeGroat casts a wider net by highlighting other forms of narcissism than the traditional 'grandiose' incarnation. By including vulnerable narcissism a richer picture of overt and covert narcissism is built. Helpfully leading to an extended discussion on the spectrum of narcissism and its interaction with other clusters of personality traits, addictions, and psychopathologies (39).

Building upon this psychological foundation DeGroat turns to the Enneagram as a heuristic framework to broadly encompass all of humanity and uses it to examine

narcissistic traits as expressed through the 'nine faces.' While the Enneagram would not be this reviewer's first choice of scaffolding to explore aspects of narcissism, in this case the nine faces are used to good effect. Dividing up the Enneagram into its larger typologies of heart, head, and gut, DeGroat offers a rich series of personalised descriptions drawn from clinical experience, cultural observation, and theological reflection. These descriptions are incredibly helpful at not only describing narcissism but profoundly humanising those who suffer with narcissistic traits and/or pathology. It is this section that puts practical flesh on the theoretical bones of narcissism and being able to see what narcissism looks like in different personality types is likely to be the most helpful for the non-academic reader.

From these rich descriptions DeGroat then looks at how narcissism impacts directly on church leadership. Significant insight is found from the patterns of behaviour that often underlie narcissistic interactions within the pastorate enabled by sympathetic systems. Like the warnings on a map, these are the signs and signals that should ring alarm bells. Accompanying these external descriptions is a picture of the internal life of a narcissist that calls on pastors to examine their own heart, and for those who train ministry workers to carefully examine those who will watch over the flock. Adding to this focus on the structures of the church is another chapter examining the systems that enable narcissism and that narcissists build to support themselves.

Finally, the book is rounded out with discussions pertinent to the church broadly, examining how narcissism perpetrates and perpetuates abuse within the pews. However, DeGroat does not leave the reader in the pit of despair but addresses mechanisms for healing within the church as well as transformation for narcissists themselves.

Overall, this volume is profoundly challenging, especially as it highlights the narcissistic tendencies beneath the surface of non-grandiose types of narcissists. The landscape isn't pretty. However, in this age of abuse scandals it is a picture that is sorely needed and should be required reading for all in ministry training and broadly within the church. Nevertheless, it is ultimately a book of hope in transformation through the humility of the cross and possibilities of redemption that come from it. In this age of condemnation and *damnatio memoriae* DeGroat points the church back to the continual offering of grace to broken people of all types—yes, even narcissists.

DR. CHRIS PORTER, TRINITY COLLEGE, MELBOURNE

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