



Essentials

Autumn 2011

Promoting Christ-centred
Biblical ministry.

Essentials is the journal of
the Evangelical Fellowship in
the Anglican Communion.



Special Cape Town Edition

Cape crusaders

Wei-Han Kuan introduces this Special Lausanne Edition of Essentials.

God is on the move

Stephen Hale presents his package of Cape Town highlights.

Holistic mission?

David Williams reflects on the debate around the nature of mission at Cape Town

Contrasting flavours

Gordon Preece teases out some of the tensions in the Lausanne Movement.

The shifting centres of world Christianity

David Williams wonders what God is doing in the worldwide Church.

Your world is too small

Julie-Anne Laird and **Eric Cheung** offer us their first-timers' impressions.

Good night Cape Town

Glenn Davies describes Cape Town's closing session.

10 DIOCESE

Deep sea fishing

Andrew Curnow introduces the Diocese of Bendigo.

11 RESOURCE

Can you prove that God exists?

Phillip Brown offers us a new resource to help answer atheists.

12 MINISTRY

Let's hear it for mass evangelism

Peter Adam reports on lessons learned from Don Carson's mission in Melbourne.

13 REVIEW

Mid-life crisis

Rhys Bezzant reviews Tom Frame's latest on the Anglican Church.

14 PROVOCATEUR

Gentle, meek and wild

Bob Collie invites us to consider the extreme Jesus.

15 REST

Relax!

Jill Firth peels back the layers of the fourth commandment.



Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion

"Growing Gospel Ministry Amongst Anglicans in Australia"

- Home
- About
- Membership
- Support Us
- Branches
- Essentials
- News
- Links
- Networks
- Events
- NEAC 2012

Search

Home

Welcome to the EFAC Website



Latest News

- ["Tragedy in Haiti - Why does suffering and evil exist in a world created by a good God?"](#)

Coming Events

Welcome to the EFAC Australia Website. We are hoping this website will be used to connect members around Australia and keep everyone up to date with what's happening in their state. We have branches in each state plus the ACT and NT, so by clicking on your branch under the tab above, you can find out what is happening in your state. The site will be updated weekly with news and events.

If you have any suggestions for the site please forward them to [our admin officer](#) or [Chris Appleby](#) who are managing the site.

Did you know that EFAC has a web site? Visits have more than doubled in the past year.

Log onto www.efac.org.au now to see what you have been missing.

Or, as a poor substitute, read on.

At www.efac.org.au you can:

- Access the new blog
- Read thought provoking articles
- Download a sermon
- Check out upcoming events
- Pray over a prayer point
- Watch a conference video
- Enjoy an amusing insight
- Find a church
- Peruse the photo gallery
- Renew your subscription
- Give a gift subscription
- Become a member
- Renew your membership
- Donate to EFAC

Do it all now at www.efac.org.au

EFAC 24 HOUR RETREAT TASTING SABBATH TIME

3 pm Sunday 20 March to
3 pm Monday 21 March 2011
Upper Plenty
Conference Centre



Explore what it means to be made in God's image, redeemed by Christ and destined for the new heavens and the new earth.



24 hours in a quiet bushland setting.

Guided Scripture reflection, silence, walking bush trails, gazing at the stars, feasting and resting.



\$80 includes shared accommodation and meals.
Register at:
www.efac.org.au
Enquiries to:
efacquietdays@gmail.com



Cape crusaders

Wei-Han Kuan introduces this Special Edition of Essentials.



All photos of the Third Congress on World Evangelisation, Cape Town, courtesy of the Lausanne Movement.

You can't go to Lausanne and not have your ministry changed.

Or so I was told by one of its leaders. This edition of Essentials carries several reflections from EFAC members who attended the Third Congress on World Evangelisation, or Lausanne III, in Cape Town, South Africa. It is my hope that you will be encouraged to engage with the Lausanne Movement and appreciate the major role it plays in world evangelicalism.


Stephen Hale gives us his highlights package and pithy overview of what it might mean for evangelism in Australia.

David Williams brings his interest in holistic mission and missionary training to bear on his two reflections: one deals with the persistently vexed relationship between evangelism and social action, and the other with the notion of the shifting centre of global Christianity.

I asked two evangelists, **Julie-Anne Laird** and **Eric Cheung**, to respond to their Cape Town experience for us. So we have two perspectives: from a woman and a man, a lay person and a cleric, a university student worker and a parish minister.

Gordon Preece focuses on the 'evangelism–social action' chestnut, bringing his passion for workplace ministry to the fore.

Our national chairman, **Glenn Davies**, blogged during the congress. We carry an edited version of his final day's reflection. You might be interested to read the entire blog at: www.sydneyanglicans.net

Congress sessions, testimonies, documents, plenary sessions, Bible studies, dramas—the whole lot!—are all available at the Lausanne Movement's web site: www.lausanne.org 



Wei-Han Kuan pastors young adults at St Alfred's, North Blackburn, and is the editor of Essentials.

God is on the move

Stephen Hale presents his package of Cape Town highlights.

The Lausanne Movement had a stunning beginning in 1974, followed by a difficult mid-life around the time of the Manila Congress in 1989. The Movement seems to have re-invigorated itself to play a key role in being a catalyst for world evangelisation. Cape Town 2010 was a remarkable gathering with 4000 delegates from 198 countries.

Cape Town didn't just talk about the big shifts in global Christianity, it captured and represented them. There was a strong and continuing presence upfront of speakers and presenters from the majority church. The big shift from North to South, West to East was visible and obvious. When people talked of mission being 'from everywhere to everywhere' you could really sense that God is at work in all sorts of remarkable and surprising ways.

The genius of Cape Town 2010 was the decision to share the study of the Word and major themes in Table Groups.

Over four thousand people met each morning in more than 800 table groups of five or six people. I had the privilege of leading one of these groups. In my English-speaking group were two from Europe, two from North America and one charming young Indian evangelist. It meant that a significant chunk of time was set aside for interaction and consequently there was a pervasive sense of community.

One of the surprising sub-presentations was on the Anglican Communion. I went along mainly to meet people, but I was deeply moved to hear Archbishop Robert Duncan—Anglican Church in North America—talk of how God was greatly blessing an amazing new church planting movement coming out of the wreckage of the dispute within the Episcopal church. His four themes were:

1. Standing in God's truth raises God's allies.
2. Humility builds God's partnerships.
3. God does lift up the lowly.
4. Personal conversion deepens Gospel suffering and sacrifice.

His overall thrust is that God is scattering the proud and lifting up the lowly.



Discipleship should be our number one priority. This is just as big a challenge in Australia as it is in Africa, South America and Asia.

There were too many strands and ideas at the Congress to capture here, but some highlights for me were:

We live in an ABC culture, 'Anything But Christianity' (Oz Guinness).

To hear God speak we need to share the Word of God together. It needs to be read, taught and shared together.

Mission energy and initiative now lies in the global South and East.

God seems to be raising up a new generation of evangelists in Australia. They are mainly young and mainly Asian.


Discipleship should be our number one priority. This is just as big a challenge in Australia as it is in Africa, South America and Asia.

The evangelism and social concern debate is no longer the major issue. We need to be involved in both, with evangelism as our major priority.

Worship is more pervasively charismatic seemingly everywhere. At the same time there is a re-discovery of liturgy, the arts and drama.

If we are going to reach Australia for Christ we will need to partner with people of other nations to help us to connect cross-culturally.

Leadership development is still critical and has re-invigorated my commitment to Arrow Leadership Australia and the Arrow Alliance.

Overall it was a great blessing to be at Cape Town. God is at work in our world and we have much to be thankful for and to be challenged by. 



Stephen Hale is Senior Minister of St Hilary's and St Silas' Anglican Church, Kew. He was previously the Bishop of the Eastern Region of the Diocese of Melbourne. Stephen is also Chair of the Australian Board of Arrow Leadership.

Holistic mission?

Have Evangelicals made any progress since Manila? **David Williams** investigates.

The first Lausanne congress in 1974 has been described as the place where evangelicals re-discovered their social conscience. The relationship between evangelism and social action was hotly debated, particularly as a result of the input of majority world theologians like Rene Padilla and Samuel Escobar. Article Five of the covenant stated:

We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression. Because men and women are made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, colour, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he or she should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with other people is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty.¹

Alongside this commitment to social responsibility, the Lausanne covenant also affirmed in Article Six that 'in the Church's mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary.'² Article Five and Article Six beautifully encapsulate the tension behind the conversation at Lausanne 1974.

In the years following the first Lausanne conference, holistic or integral mission has become accepted orthodoxy for many evangelicals. Chris Wright, convenor of the Theology Working Group for Lausanne 2010, endorses the following quote in his book *The Mission of God*:

There is no longer a need to qualify mission as 'holistic', nor to distinguish between 'mission' and 'holistic mission'. Mission is, by definition, 'holistic' and therefore 'holistic mission' is, de facto, mission.³

Despite this assertion, it was clear at Cape Town that the debate over holistic mission is still alive and kicking. This was most evident in John Piper's bible study on Ephesians 3.⁴ Piper expounded the cosmic purpose of God, who makes known his wisdom to the demonic powers of the universe through the mystery of the gospel. Jews and Gentiles together are objects of God's wrath. God's abundant, overflowing love puts the Lord Jesus Christ between us and God's wrath. This reality confronts us with two truths: first, when the gospel takes root in our souls, it compels us to share Christ's love. Second, when the gospel takes root in our souls, it awakens us to the horror of eternal perishing

and impels us to proclaim 'flee the wrath to come.' Piper sought to recapture the language of the primacy of evangelism from Article Six of the Lausanne covenant with the following proposition: 'For Christ's sake, Christians care about all suffering, especially eternal suffering.'

This emphasis was also apparent in Ajith Fernando's exposition of Ephesians 1 and Vaughan Roberts' exposition of Ephesians 4. Fernando stressed the vital importance of proclamation of God's word, stating that 'evangelism has never been popular, but people without Christ are lost for eternity.' Roberts pointed to a famine of the Word of God today, arguing that there is no greater mission need than those who will minister God's Word in the church and the world. Strikingly, the same theme was heard in a series of testimonies from majority world missionaries operating from contexts of poverty who have prioritised proclamation and disciple-making.

The Cape Town Commitment

The main output of the third Lausanne Congress is called the *Cape Town Commitment*.⁵ Part One of the document was released on the last day of the conference. Part Two will be completed in December and will be a call to action arising out of the listening process of the conference. However, since Part One of the *Cape Town Commitment* was written before the conference started, the debate about the nature of mission that took place at the conference is not captured in this document.

This is especially significant because of the kind of document that the *Cape Town Commitment* purports to be. At the conference the document was introduced to us as expressing the 'core elements of our Biblical faith.' This is a huge statement. If the document had been written as 'a conversation about evangelical missiology' it could provide a reference point for discussion and debate. But to present it in such creedal terms as a 'declaration of belief' means that it must bear very close scrutiny.

The *Cape Town Commitment* is framed in the language of love, structured around ten statements each beginning 'We love ...'. There is much that is good within these ten statements and a number of contemporary missiological issues are given attention. These include the fraudulent nature of prosperity teaching, the significance of Bible translation and the need to critique secular worldviews, to give just three examples. Creation care and environmental advocacy also feature at several points. However, the focus on God's wrath and the reality of hell so powerfully articulated by Fernando and Piper is largely absent from the document.

However, it is not only conservatives who are unhappy. Blogging after the conference, Rene Padilla has written of his frustration that the pre-written [continued on page 5]

Contrasting flavours

Gordon Preece teases out some of the tensions inherent in the Lausanne Movement.

Lausanne III in Cape Town was a fabulous smorgasbord of global Evangelicalism. But like any smorgasbord there were some dishes or flavours in tension with each other—you can have a bit too much of too many good things.

These tensions go back to the origins of the Lausanne movement and Covenant in 1974, especially Articles Five and Six and their wrestling with the relationship between evangelism and social concern which I'll quickly trace into the contemporary context.

Different flavours of the Lausanne Covenant and global and local evangelicalism

Article Five robustly affirms God as creator of all, in his image. It is concerned not to confuse political liberation with salvation but also not to lose sight of the totally transformative, reconciling effects of the Gospel on individuals and society against all forms of oppression. This synthesised much evangelical thinking on mission since the 1960s and represented 'a big step forward'.¹

However, 'the tension already present in the Lausanne Covenant between the above balanced statement from Article Five and the prioritized statement of Article Six that 'in the church's mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary' remained unresolved. This was despite several consultations of the Lausanne Theology Group and the eirenic efforts of its chair John Stott to encourage biblical balance and global understanding.

The conflict over various relative prioritisations of proclamation and social concern was evident in the Australian context in the infamously divisive Melbourne EFAC meeting in 1982. My then Sydney Anglican Rector returned from exile to tell his disbelieving humble curate (me) that John Stott was 'a dangerous man'. Stott had spoken from Luke 4 about Jesus' message of holistic, integral salvation for individuals and societies, arousing much reaction. This was reinforced by Melbourne Evangelicals affirming women's ordination, over against the oppression of women in society and church. Stott did not return to these shores for 20 years.

Soon after, Lausanne's Grand Rapids Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Concern saw Stott seek to judiciously reconcile Articles Five and Six of the Lausanne Covenant. It describes three views of social action in relation to evangelism.

1. Christian social action is a *consequence* of evangelism since those involved in it are Christians ... saved 'for good works' ... one of the purposes of evangelism.
2. Social action is a *bridge* to evangelism since it expresses God's love and ... eliminates prejudices and opens the way for the proclamation of the gospel.

3. Social action is a *partner* of evangelism and is related to it in Christian mission like a husband and a wife in a marriage, two blades of a pair of scissors or the two wings of a bird.

However, the document still saw evangelism as having 'limited', 'conceptual' primacy: logically (or is it chronologically?) because it is by Christians who have been evangelised and disciplined; and theologically since 'evangelism relates to people's eternal destiny and in bringing them good news of salvation Christians are doing what nobody else can do'.² Although allegedly theoretical, this still implied a subordinationist marriage between 'male' evangelism and 'female' social concern.

There was dissatisfaction with Grand Rapids' albeit limited prioritisation of evangelism from missiologists from the Global South like Andrew Kirk and David Bosch (South America and Africa respectively) and the World Evangelical Fellowship's Wheaton 1983 statement 'Transformation: The Church in Response to Human Need'. The latter recognises that evangelism is essential: 'only by spreading the gospel can the most basic need of human beings be met: to have fellowship with God'.³ Seeing God's Kingdom as 'the goal of transformation', this document provides in Rene Padilla's view, 'the strongest affirmation of commitment to integral mission in the last quarter of the twentieth century. It clearly affirms that 'evil is not only in the human heart but also in social structures. The mission of the church includes *proclamation* of the gospel and its *demonstration* [or to use Sydney Anglican, John Dickson's helpful phrase, *Promoting the Gospel*]. We must therefore evangelize, respond to immediate human needs, and press for social transformation'.⁴

Sadly, the latter emphasis was not sufficiently incorporated into Lausanne II in Manila which stressed the isolation of evangelism from social responsibility, but gave social justice a belated guernsey for a ten minute plenary at the end, although the Manila Manifesto still ratified the Lausanne Covenant commitment to socio-political involvement as an essential aspect of mission.

Evangelicalism's constant quibbling over evangelism versus social concern can only be solved by going back to the trinitarian creeds beyond the modern Enlightenment and its Evangelical child's internalisation of the Kingdom.


Application to workplace mission

Let's see how this tension played out in practice in my own speciality, workplace mission. Lausanne II affirmed the role of the laity in the workplace, as part of the Great Commandment and its overflow into social concern, but only as a means to evangelism. There was no articulation of the intrinsic worthwhileness of what most Christians do with most of their lives as an expression of the creation commission to rule over the earth in Genesis 1:26–28 or as an act of holistic sacrificial worship with body and mind (Romans 12:1–2). This gospel utilitarianism leads to a sacred, clericalised view of Christian mission and ministry as a privatised, residential and recreational activity. It devalues the secular and public arenas of work and life and restricts the reach of the Gospel. The latter has empirical verification in Mark Russell's *The Missional Entrepreneur*, a study of businesses set up by Christians in Thailand. Those set up as an excuse to evangelise, not only failed as businesses, in one case going bankrupt, but also evangelistically. The businesses that had an integrated approach with integrity, seeking to reflect the rule of God's kingdom in their practices, were five times more effective in making disciples.

This *Sacred-Secular Divide* is addressed by Mark Greene in his latest booklet. Greene's London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, set up by Stott, is a leading advocate for workplace ministry as crucial to churches expressing integral mission. It has had profound effects on the church in England through its re-imagining of church life in terms of whole-life discipleship.

In our workplace multiplex for about 800 delegates in Capetown I reaffirmed the creedal trinitarian framework of three Commissions or mandates I'd stressed as theologian for the Marketplace Ministry stream in Pattaya in 2004. I asked: 'If Lausanne I gave us the Great Commission (of the Son) and Lausanne II gave us the Great Commandment (of the Spirit), would Lausanne III give us the Creation Commission (Genesis 1:26–28) of the Father and Creator?' (though all three cooperate in each other's leading work). Another way of putting this is to ask if the 10/40 window⁵ of Lausanne II will be complemented by equal emphasis on the 9 to 5 window of workplaces of all types.

Evangelicalism's constant quibbling over evangelism versus social concern can only be solved by going back to the trinitarian creeds beyond the modern Enlightenment and its Evangelical child's internalisation of the Kingdom to the soul, not the body,⁶ and privatisation of religion to bedroom but not also boardroom and ballot-box ethics. We need to have a balanced view of Christian and human life and work in the light of the divine Trinity's life and work. The upside down pyramid that sees the laity serving the clergy or professional priestly and missional class needs to be turned right side up, for the clergy's sake as much as the laity's. Clergy, or better, paid church workers (representing Sunday or church gathered) serve or equip the laity (Ephesians 4:12 ff) (the people of God scattered on Monday) in the world—of work(s) (paid or unpaid) that we have been predestined and saved for (Ephesians 2:10). These ideas were incorporated in the Lausanne Draft Commitments

taken down by Chris Wright, Stott's successor as chair of the Lausanne Theology group. They will be released in December. Lindsay Brown, the director of Lausanne summed it up well: "Lausanne III seeks to reach all people groups and all spheres of society, for as Abraham Kuyper said—'there is not one square inch of the universe over which Jesus does not say 'This is mine.'" 



Gordon Preece is Director of Ethos: Evangelical Alliance Centre for Christianity and Society and Senior Minister at Yarraville Anglican Church. A complete version of this article appears in EA's *Faith and Life*.

1. Rene Padilla, 'From Lausanne I to Lausanne III', *Journal of Latin American Theology*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2010, pages 19–20.

2. John Stott, *Making Christ Known* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996), 182–3.


3. Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, *The Church in Response to Human Need* (Oxford: Regnum, 1987), page 260.

4. *Ibid*, page 254.

5. The 10/40 window is a term coined by missionary strategist Luis Bush for those regions of the eastern hemisphere located between 10 and 40 longitudes, particularly Islamic, Hindu and Chinese groups.

6. Padilla (pages 40, 30) critiques the NIV Study Bible's commentary on its poor translation of Luke 17:12 'the kingdom of God is within you' [as opposed to 'amongst you' i.e. in Jesus] probably indicating that the kingdom is spiritual and internal (Matthew 23:26) rather than physical and external (cf John 18:36). But how could Jesus say the kingdom of God was within the Pharisees? N. T. Wright elsewhere describes such translations and comments as 'retrojections into the first century of a 19th century Romantic ideal of religion in which outward things are bad and inward things good' (*Jesus and the Victory of God* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996], page 290).

[continued from page 3] conference statement was not debated and that there was no opportunity to change or develop the document. His particular concern, as in 1974, is that the language of primacy remains evident, when in his opinion it should be completely removed. So he argues that the distinction between '*strengthening, inspiring and equipping the Church for the evangelisation of the world in our generation*', but only '*exhorting Christians about their responsibility to participate in matters of public and social interest*' reflects an unhelpful and non-holistic balance.⁶ He would prefer the language about social action to be as strong as the language about evangelism.

1974, 2010. What has changed? 



David Williams is Director of Training and Equipping, CMS Australia, and leads the team at the CMS Australia Federal Training College, St Andrew's Hall, Melbourne.

1. <http://www.lausanne.org/covenant>

2. *Ibid*.

3. Wright, C. J. H. *The Mission of God*, IVP, 2007:323, quoting Jean-Paul Heldt, "Revisiting the Whole Gospel: Towards a Biblical Model of Holistic Mission in the 21st Century" *Missiology* 32 (2004): page 157.

4. <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/10970>

5. <http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/conversations/detail/11544>

6. <http://www.kairos.org.ar/blog/?p=469>. Thanks to Peter Blowes, CMS Australia, for explaining this Spanish-language blog.

The shifting centres of world Christianity

David Williams wonders what God is doing amidst the changing nature of the worldwide Church.

Many commentators and bloggers have noted that the third Lausanne Congress reflected the changing centre of world Christianity. With representation from 198 countries, Lausanne was one of the most diverse gatherings of Christians in history. The organisers of the congress made a genuine attempt to ensure that the delegates represented the new centre of Christianity around the world. The centre of Christianity has moved from the West to the 'Global South'—to Africa, Asia and Latin America. As an example of this, there were at least as many delegates from Uganda as from Australia.

However, Lausanne went a step further and worked hard to ensure that leadership at the conference also reflected the changing nature of the world church. It was a common experience to go to a plenary session or a major conference seminar and to find that all those presenting from the platform were African, Asia and Latin America. Anglo males were a reasonably rare sight.

However, it is too simplistic to say that the centre of the world church has moved from the West to the Global South. The reality is that world Christianity is polycentric—it has many centres.¹ Instead of saying that the centre of global Christianity has moved, we do better to think that the centres of world Christianity are moving. This reality was clearly evident at Lausanne. It was very clear that the demographic, cultural and spiritual centres of Christianity have moved from the West to the Global South. However, there was also plenty of evidence that the intellectual, organisational and financial centres remain in the West, predominantly in the United States. For example, while many countries made generous and sacrificial contribu-




While the cultural, demographic and spiritual centres of Christianity have moved from the West to the Global South, the intellectual, organisational and financial centres remain in the West.

tions towards Lausanne 2010, the conference could not have happened without American money. And although there was wide diversity of leadership on the conference platform, there remained a strong sense that those who put them there came from the West.

It was also evident that the dominant worldview controlling the conference agenda was Western. This was most obvious in a plenary session where delegates were exhorted to reach the remaining unreached people groups of our world. An extensive survey had been conducted in the lead up to the conference identifying those people groups that are larger than 50,000 people who currently have no real gospel witness. These people groups were listed out in a glossy brochure and delegates were asked to commit their churches or organisations to reach these unreached groups.

The business of counting, categorising and systematising is a peculiarly Western enterprise, reflecting a predominantly rationalistic and scientific worldview. However, there was a sub-theme at Lausanne that told a story that is much harder to measure and impossible to categorise. Movements of migrant people, displaced by war or searching for better economic opportunities, are carrying the gospel to places that are otherwise impossible to reach.

Lausanne told two stories of world evangelisation. The official story mapped out a strategic plan that would mobilise the rich to take the gospel to the poor. The unofficial story narrated the movement of the poor, spread around the world by circumstances beyond their control, carrying the gospel with them. God is using both stories, because both stories belong to Him. 



David Williams is Director of Training and Equipping, CMS Australia, and leads the team at the CMS Australia Federal Training College, St Andrew's Hall, Melbourne.

1. See for example Jehu Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom* (Orbis, 2008).

Your world is too small

Julie-Anne Laird and **Eric Cheung** offer us their first-timers' impressions of a global evangelical gathering.

An eighteen-year-old girl got up the front to tell us all that her father had decided to go back to North Korea to tell all his friends and family about Jesus. She hadn't heard from him for four years. She presumes that he is dead. She has that same burden for her country knowing it could cost her life. There was not a dry eye in the place.

A woman spoke of how her husband, a doctor, had been killed when trying to help the Afghani people with medical aid. Instead of being bitter or angry, she did nothing but praise Jesus.

A guy on my table had been imprisoned for his faith in a country I can't mention. He had been separated from his family for four years, had lost his home and all his money, and was desperate to be united with his wife and four children. At the end of the week we discovered that while he was in prison all fifteen in the jail cell came to know Jesus through him!

A Muslim guy became a Christian and was a humiliation to his family. He kept on trying to love them and show them what God was like. His father, at this death bed, said to him 'I love the God you love, because he is a kind and generous God. But I cannot believe in your religion.' And then he died.

You could not sit at Lausanne and not change. To see 4000 from all over the world, living for Jesus and worshipping Him together was just amazing. All week I kept on thinking about how if this was what heaven was like, then I cannot wait to get there! But more importantly I long for *everyone* to be there!


Being at Lausanne was an encouragement as well as a challenge. I felt more and more dissatisfied with where the Church is at in Australia and the West in general and wondered if fear has totally consumed us when it comes to talking about our faith to those around us. Admittedly it is socially not the right thing to talk about Jesus and people will slowly back away if you're too enthusiastic (I've discovered!) but we do have the freedom to share the gospel. So the question for me was: Why are we so afraid



Lausanne was an encouragement as well as a challenge. I felt more and more dissatisfied with the Church in Australia and the West in general and wondered if fear has totally consumed us.

to talk about our faith when we really don't have anything to lose? Where has our passion and zeal gone for Jesus? Have we lost our first love or are we focused on other things or distracted by life? Have we given over to apathy and don't have perseverance for the relationships around us? Or are we just so discouraged and have tried and tried to talk about our faith that we end up thinking that God doesn't really work in people's lives and have given up praying?

So for me, I came back from Lausanne with a renewed passion for prayer, a renewed passion to talk about my faith with everyone, and a passion to train up evangelists.

If you want an impressive evaluation of Lausanne have a read of Ian Langham's blog.¹ 



Julie-Anne Laird is an evangelist extraordinaire with the Melbourne University Christian Union.

In late October 2010, I had the privilege of attending the Third Lausanne Congress for World Evangelisation. Set in picturesque Cape Town and held in an ultra-modern, state-of-the-art conference facility, there were high expectations that this congress would achieve something great in Christian history. However, to be completely honest, before being selected to participate, I did not know much about the Lausanne Movement. The inaugural Lausanne Congress was held before I was born and the last congress took place whilst I was in high school. Moreover, as a Sydney Anglican clergyman, I am naturally deeply suspicious of everything.

Despite all this, Lausanne possesses something strangely attractive. The Lausanne Movement, shaped by John Stott and Billy Graham, has become a global phenomenon that evangelical leaders all over the world embrace. Those committed to the Lausanne Covenant have dedicated themselves to collaborate in the work of world evangelisation. As the rallying point of this movement, the Lausanne congress has the ultimate aim of changing the world by providing a valuable forum for evangelicals to connect, share and learn from some of the most creative and influential leaders including John Piper, Tim Keller and Os Guinness.

The congress projected high expectations for what we would achieve. From the outset, Doug Birdsall (Lausanne III Chairman) described the congress as 'the most representative and diverse gathering of Christian leaders in the nearly two thousand year history of the Christian movement'.² The opening ceremony saw some not-too-subtle historical

references to the Council of Nicaea. There were over 4000 leaders from 198 countries, representing nearly every stream of global Christianity. Birdsall reiterated that the congress represented 'the demographic, theological and cultural reality of the church of Jesus Christ'.³

At the very least, the congress confronted participants with the enormity and reality of the task of world evangelization and spurred us onto action. We were forced to work very hard as we thought through various issues and were given every opportunity to develop strong Christian fellowship. The first thing that struck me as I entered the main auditorium was the hundreds of tables filling the hall. The set-up was a stroke of genius. Rather than being lost in a sea of seats and remaining anonymous in a cavernous hall, each participant was placed on a table of people who shared similar passions and gifts. Together, we studied the Bible inductively, discussed issues raised by the speakers, and developed deep friendships and fellowship.

My table hosted a UK clergyman who was about to become a bishop, two denominational leaders from different parts of Africa, a Finnish lady who had a significant broadcasting ministry, and myself. Throughout these morning Bible studies and plenary sessions, we worked hard at engaging with one another in productive and occasionally heated discussions. This was brilliant!

In the afternoons, participants were given the opportunity to choose from a myriad of 'multiplexes' and 'dialogue sessions' to help us think through and enact the practical ideas flowing out of the morning teaching sessions. The busy schedule continued into the night. In the evening sessions, we were given reports of how God has been working in different areas of the world. On top of all these sessions, there were more networking opportunities over meal times. We spent much of the lunches, dinners and suppers developing friendships and discussing the ministries within our different networks and contexts—the congress was a haven for extroverts!


The Third Lausanne Congress for World Evangelisation was in many ways a success, but it was not flawless. Although we were united with the purpose of world evangelisation, there were palpable tensions between factions with differing passions, emphases and even theological nuances. I discovered this uncomfortable reality even from my first few discussions. I was surrounded with people who are completely foreign to me: people from entirely different cultural backgrounds, theological understandings and ministries. It was easy to offend and it made the task at hand much more difficult.

With a gathering of over 4000 leaders with a cacophony of ideas and egos, the congress was under the constant

John Piper issued a most profound challenge during one of his talks: 'For Christ's sake, we Christians care about all suffering; especially eternal suffering. Christ is calling us to pull these together.'

threat of being rendered ineffective and in danger of fracturing. One example of such tension which existed between leaders is the opposing views regarding the place of social justice in world evangelisation. Some believed that social justice is a necessary part of the gospel so that, practically speaking, alleviating poverty may be understood as an integral part of evangelism. Others, however, maintained that whilst social justice is important, it acts to demonstrate the message and the power of the gospel rather than being part of the gospel itself. It was in this context that John Piper issued a most profound challenge during one of his talks: 'For Christ's sake, we Christians care about all suffering; especially eternal suffering. Christ is calling us to pull these together.'⁴

Grappled with this central question was a highlight for me. It demanded clarity on what is the message that saves souls for eternity and served to refocus our thoughts on evangelism. There were other issues that plagued the congress, but significantly, they highlighted for me that Lausanne was and is a great example of working through differences for the sake of unity in the gospel and Christ. However, I must iterate that it was not so much ecumenism, rather it was evangelicals seeking to work together for the purpose of evangelism.

The congress has positively marked my thinking and will change my future ministry. Sometimes God takes us way out of our routines and comfort zones and opens our eyes to things we would never have normally considered. Lausanne III was that for me. Lausanne has challenged me to view global Christianity and global mission in a different light. I now have a newfound understanding that as Sydney Anglicans we truly are a small fish in need of participating in God's global mission. I was reminded that whilst we are to continue to work hard in our local church evangelising our local community, we must not lose sight of the fact that we are part of the global church. As a result of my experience, I have a renewed commitment to participate, engage and minister in collaboration with the global evangelical church. The practical outworking of this commitment is still a work-in-progress. I was confronted by the enormity and reality of the task of world evangelization at the Third Lausanne Congress, but it has also filled me with thankfulness that God has blessed us with so many dear brothers and sisters all over the world with whom we have the privilege of bringing others into his kingdom. 



Eric Cheung is the Associate Minister (for evangelism!) at St Paul's Castle Hill, Sydney.

1. <http://ianlangham.wordpress.com/2010/10/26/15-things-worth-taking-home/>

2. Doug Birdsall, 'Opening Celebration, October 17', Lausanne III

3. Ibid.

4. John Piper, 'Bible Exposition: Ephesians 3, Part 2', Lausanne III

Good night Cape Town

Glenn Davies describes Cape Town's closing session.

Technology was a major feature of Cape Town 2010. Technology was employed to facilitate preparation for the Congress as well as to enhance the experience of the Congress for participants with prepared videos, impromptu videos and vox pops, highlighting the many facets of Congress.

Free wireless internet usage was available to participants, including access to on-line feedback forms and bar-coded name tags for easy electronic identification.

However, the technology was not just limited to those who came to Cape Town. Seven hundred GlobalLink sites across 95 countries have been relaying the platform addresses to audiences scattered across the globe.

Unfortunately there were a few hiccups with the internet and GlobalLink relays, which were difficult to identify and we were asked to pray for those investigating the problems.

Our prayers were answered by a volunteer steward, who happened to be a highly qualified IT problem solver. Within an hour he had identified the problem and within three hours he had fixed it.

However, once these matters were remedied and the internet systems were working well, we were told that there has been more internet traffic during Lausanne III than during the World Cup held in South Africa three months ago!

Bible exposition

The Bible exposition from Ephesians 6:10–24 gave Ramez Atallah (Bible Society in Egypt) the opportunity to remind the participants that our war is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities and powers. He cited the internet hacking as the work of the Evil One and the power of prayer as one of our weapons.

Although the exposition was not as strongly exegetical as other studies during the week, Atallah spoke passionately about our responsibility to put on the armour of God which contains the essential values, beliefs and resources that God has supplied.

He was complemented by his wife, Rebecca, who shared a story of the evangelisation and regeneration of the Mokattam Garbage Village in Cairo, where the poorest of


the poor live in appalling conditions recycling garbage to eke out a living. Here a layman shared the gospel with his garbage man, who became a believer, and this began a chain reaction of gospel conversations with many nominal Christians becoming active in their faith, so much so that the Coptic Church decided to ordain the layman and establish a church building for them in their village.

The final closing session

It was a treat of music, dance, video and inspirational addresses! Lindsay Brown, the International Director of the Lausanne Movement gave a stirring address on 2 Corinthians 4:1–7 in the light of what we had heard and learned during the week, stressing integrity and privilege of preaching the glory of God through Christ, so that we do not lose heart.

Archbishop Henry Orombi presided over the gathering, but since he had lost his voice, Doug Birdsall, the Executive Chair of Lausanne, administered the sacrament—so effectively we had lay administration, but no one seemed to mind! The 250 voice choir and the 30 member orchestra lifted out spirits with songs of praise and adoration, which became a fitting closing ceremony for such a significant Congress, finishing as we began by singing 'Crown him with many crowns'.

As we said our farewells, we recognised that we may never see again the members of our table groups and others we had met. We were reminded that some may lose their lives for the sake of Christ, as did one young man shortly after attending Lausanne II. While the joy of a heavenly reunion awaits us, there remains the challenge of finishing the task of reaching all people groups with the gospel of God's grace with its offer of forgiveness and gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

It has been a rare privilege to gather with so many believers from so many countries and cultures, and diverse denominations, all united in our allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ. While one can always quibble over some elements of the Congress (and I have), my assessment is that it will be seen as another landmark in world missions for reigniting, re-energising and recommitting Evangelicals to the Great Commission in the power of God's Holy Spirit. 



Glenn Davies is the Chairman of EFAC Australia. His Cape Town blog can found at: www.sydneyanglicans.net/ministry/evangelism/lausanne_the_final_day/



While the joy of a heavenly reunion awaits us, there remains the challenge of finishing the task of reaching all people groups with the gospel.

Deep sea fishing

Andrew Curnow introduces the Diocese of Bendigo.

When Jesus had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.'

This very evocative quote from our Lord comes from Luke 5 where Jesus calls the first disciples and lays down before them what was to become the mission of the Church. Two thousand years later it is the mission of the Diocese of Bendigo and just as it was for Jesus disciples, so it is for us who fish in the Diocese of Bendigo. We are called to 'put out into deep water'.

What this has meant for me as Bishop in my leadership is that I have brought to the Diocese a deep passion for mission. I was deeply inspired some years ago by the work of missionary Bishop, Lesslie Newbigin, and the missiologist, David Bosch. In *Transforming Mission* (page 10) Bosch writes:

The missionary task is deep and broad.

The whole church bringing the whole gospel to the whole world.

The Diocese of Bendigo covers about a third of Victoria. In Australian terms it is geographically manageable; being about seven hours long and five hours across. The Diocese begins about half-an-hour north of Melbourne at Mt Macedon. Bendigo is an hour-and-a-half from Melbourne. Eighty per cent of the Diocese is within an hour-and-a-half of Bendigo; the remaining twenty per cent is in the Mallee. Bendigo is a city of 100,000 people and the next biggest city is Mildura, five hours away to the north west.

There are 35 parishes and two affiliated congregations: the View Hill Fellowship and a Chinese Church, the House of True Light. The Parish of South East Bendigo is the largest Anglican parish in rural Victoria. The

Diocese is diverse in terms of Anglican culture with every expression of Anglicanism to be found in the Diocese.

Enough of the geography! How is the Diocese being intentional about mission? The most significant strategy has been to get every parish and affiliated congregation to adopt a Mission Action Plan. The MAPS are based on the four Gospel values: Give, Grow, Teach and Serve.

For almost five years I have been encouraging parishes to work on one or two goals under each value and across the Diocese I believe we are beginning to bear fruit. In some

parishes we are seeing the numbers of people attending Church grow.

Two other strategies I mention are the work of our Diocesan Board of Ministry. It has endorsed three forms of ordained ministry for deacons and priests:


Stipendiary Ministry (those in charge of parishes)

Ordained Local Ministry (supporting stipendiary ministry)

Ordained Pioneer Ministry (This is a more explicit 'fishing' or evangelistic ministry.)

The Ordained Pioneer Ministry focuses on work in the wider community, outside traditional church structures. We currently have five OPMs: three involved in community ministry, one in indigenous ministry, and one to Bendigo's cycling community. This is a new and exciting initiative, but very early in its development.

The other strategy is Back to Church Sunday. Again this initiative is in its infancy, but based on experience in the UK I am deeply committed to embedding it in the life of the Diocese.

Lastly, as Bishop I see myself as a missionary. I am out there to encourage and equip our ministers, and at the same time, in any way I can, proclaim the Gospel of the Good News of Jesus! 

We are committed as a Church at Mission to praise God, grow the Church, strengthen and extend our ministry and engage with and serve our local communities.



Right Reverend Andrew Curnow

Bishop of Bendigo

bishop@bendigoanglican.org.au

Anglican Diocese of Bendigo

4 Myers Street, PO Box 2, Bendigo Victoria 3552

www.bendigoanglican.org.au

Can you prove that God exists?

Phillip Brown offers us a new resource to help answer atheists.



Christians Answering Atheists: 7 possible answers to 7 common questions posed by Atheists

Reverend Phillip Brown in collaboration with the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne Christianity and Atheism Committee, The Anglican Centre, 209 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, 3000.

The most common objection raised by the New Atheists is that there is no sufficient proof that God exists and therefore no need to believe in Him. Behind this objection lies a problem relating to the nature of proof. The problem concerns the kind of proof that New Atheists are looking to find. For example, the Bible describes Jesus as the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). What form of proof might Christians offer in support of this claim? Asking a Christian to provide proof of this would be like asking a person in the street to provide empirical evidence that yesterday exists. Even though both parties to the conversation would accept that yesterday exists, neither could prove it because it is the wrong type of proof that has been requested. The type of proof that a person might be willing to accept may not necessarily be the type that is available, because this will necessarily depend upon the nature of the thing being investigated. Excellent grounds for believing the truth of Christianity's claims can be found in history, morality and its rich cultural heritage. None of these things amount to proof in a scientific sense,

but science is inadequate to establish the claim of the truth of the claim of Jesus Christ to be God.


Since the events of 11 September 2001, religious adherence has had an increasing vocal opponent labelled the 'New Atheism'.¹ Whilst atheism in the past focused on abstract philosophical arguments, particularly those of a metaphysical discourse, the attacks of the New Atheism rely on metaphysics combined with philosophical ethics, pragmatic morality and scientific rationality, right up to anthropogenic extinction.² But are these rhetorically turbo-charged opinions actually logically viable? And, how should a Christian respond?

Early in 2010 the Melbourne Anglican Diocese established a committee to address this debate. Their research led them to seven common questions posed by the New Atheists and a brochure was produced to answer them.

1. Can you prove God exists?
2. Was the world created or did it evolve?
3. Doesn't Christianity cause violence and wars?

4. Isn't science the only reliable knowledge?
5. Doesn't Christianity endorse slavery?
6. Is the God of the Bible a monster?
7. How can you believe in a God that allows evil and suffering?

This article begins with the brochure's answer to the first question: Can you prove God exists?

The brochure is available on line at the General Synod web site and the Melbourne Anglican Diocese web site: www.melbourne.anglican.com.au 



Phillip Brown was once a graduate student in philosophy, and is now the pastor in charge of St John Chrysostom, Brunswick West, Melbourne.

1. Victor J. Stenger, *The New Atheism: Taking a stand for science and reason* (Prometheus Books, 2009) pages 11–12. See also Tina Beattie, *The New Atheists* (Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd, 2007).
2. *Ibid*, page 17.

Let's hear it for mass evangelism

Peter Adam reports on lessons learned from Don Carson's mission in Melbourne.

Ridley Melbourne was founded in 1910. As one of our Centenary Celebrations, we decided to run an evangelistic mission to Melbourne from 23–27 August.

We booked Don Carson four years ago. We brought together a loose coalition of churches and ministries to support the mission, to be run over five week night evenings, in one central city location, close to public transport and easy parking.

Each night Don spoke, and expounded a passage from John's Gospel. Each talk stood alone, but the five talks also progressed through the Gospel.

Each evening we began with live music at 7:00 pm. People were welcomed at 7:30. Don was briefly interviewed, then we presented a pre-recorded interview with a believer. The musos sang, then there was a dramatised performance reading of the Bible passage.

Don spoke for 45 minutes, with the Bible passage on the screen behind him. People texted in questions during the talk, which were answered by Don afterwards.

Then we explained the response process and people filled in their cards. There was a final, familiar hymn like Amazing Grace, and the evening ended with advisors ready to talk with enquirers at 9:00 pm.

People from many churches—not just Anglican—came and brought friends. Here are the numbers from each night:

	Attendance	Decisions recorded	Instruction requested
Monday	560	12	21
Tuesday	680	13	12
Wednesday	710	6	22
Thursday	650	6	9
Friday	720	11	21
Total	3320	48	85

This was a remarkable event, and will have a long-term impact in Melbourne, not least because Don reckons that most people converted through his missions come to faith in Christ in the six months after the mission.

It is worth reflecting on the Mission's significance:

Don provided a remarkable model of using the Bible to do evangelism in a way that clearly communicated with people, and resulted in conversions.

The reinvention of the public meeting style of evangelism in the age of Alpha provides a useful alternative which I hope will be picked up by others.

A number of Christians at Christ-expo commented on the fact that he used the exposition of the Bible to do evangelism: a model that they felt they could copy.

Many commented that Don engaged well with the audience, that he did not speak down to non-Christians or people of other religions, and in fact addressed their concerns respectfully, and that his evangelism was theological, Biblical, personal, emotional, and practical.

The evenings were well run, the hall was full, and there was a great atmosphere. The great majority of those who came to Christ-expo were aged between 20 and 35.

Christ-expo was a great example of the value of cooperation in evangelism. I hope that others will pick up this idea, and plan cooperative public evangelism events elsewhere in Australia.

One Muslim woman came reluctantly and was converted on the night. One student came one night, and was led to Christ by the person who brought her two days later. We have heard of several people converted since coming to the mission.

Please pray:

That those who made decisions will be followed up and integrated into a fellowship.

That those who asked for more information and follow-up will be effectively followed up; that they will come to saving faith in Christ.

That both groups will be quick to change the way they live, quick to witness to family and friends about their new faith in Christ, and will remain faithful to Christ till the end.

That those who heard and have not yet responded will do so over the next few months, and that those who have already spoken with them and prayed for them will continue to do so.

That Christians will see the possibilities for a variety of styles of evangelism, and cooperate with others in preaching the gospel of Christ across Victoria.

And please praise God for all who helped and all who heard, and for Don's faithful ministry.

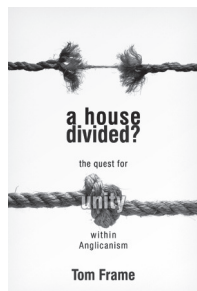
Praise God! 



Peter Adam
is Principal of Ridley Melbourne.

Mid-life crisis

Rhys Bezzant reviews Tom Frame's latest on the Anglican Church.



A House Divided?
The Quest for Unity
within Anglicanism
 Tom Frame
 Acorn 2010
 ISBN 9780908284924

I loved this book, or should I say books. Tom Frame's interests range so widely. He guides us through discussions of ecclesiastical party politics, structural impediments to mission in Australia, contemporary forms of Christian mysticism, and the modernist atheist reaction to theologically anaemic expressions of faith. Each of the first three sections could have become a book in itself, and sometimes I was left hoping for more. Bringing these themes together sometimes felt a little contrived, especially the chapters on the Lucas-Tooth Scholars and the Moorhouse Lectures, with their appendices as lists of nominees,

but two things made the book coherent: the thoughtful ecclesiology undergirding it, and the author's life-story which framed the telling.

The book begins with an outline of positions held by evangelicals, Anglo-Catholics and liberal Anglicans within the Australian church, and the resulting tensions which can be seen not only in our country but across the Anglican Communion as well. Frame works hard at affirming what he can in each of these traditions, while pointing out their weaknesses and the ways in which they are culturally coloured. The section on evangelicalism was for me most stimulating. Frame takes as his launching pad the published views of Dean Phillip Jensen and his defence of Reformed Anglicanism. In response, Frame argues that Anglicanism has never seen itself as a confessional church, that the evangelical movement itself is more diverse than Jensen acknowledges, and that the wider church needs the contributions that evangelicals can provide.

I am not persuaded that Frame is entirely successful in his critique. We may not name the 39 Articles as a Confession, but approved by Convocations and Parliaments, they are indeed in Frame's own words 'Anglican formularies' which prescribe 'convictions and customs' (page 26), and were subscribed not just by clergy but anyone wanting to graduate from a university (see also page 82). The idea that Evangelicals ought to remain within the Anglican church can also appear patronising: our tradition is seen as something valuable not on its own terms, but when it is used to slow down the church's drift towards the 'Liberal Protestant churches whose demise is only a matter of time' (page 30). Of course the Evangelical movement is impacted by the culture in which it is housed, as missiologically committed movements get close to the ideas and practices of their neighbours, becoming like them to win some for Christ. We have often had our fingers burned by getting too

close to the fire. Frame's warning is timely, though naming evangelicals as a faction rather than a renewal movement, which its eighteenth century origins reflect and which is almost entirely neglected here, readies us for the model of 'consensus Anglicanism' which Frame himself espouses.

I agree with Frame that evangelicals need to work harder on ecclesiology. We resort with too much haste to pragmatic strategies and a revivalist mindset. We too quickly denigrate the nurturing value of sacraments, and conduct services without 'any sense of reverence and awe' (page 28) for the sake of contemporary connections. We take our model of leadership from worldly examples, and are strangely hesitant to map out consistently a theological vision for leaders, though the chapter on the

episcopate suggests that it is not only evangelicals who are wedded to models which have little theological underpinning (page 156). We must reflect on the fact that our Gospel convictions are sometimes rejected because we have not lived lives worthy of the Gospel which we preach. However I am just not sure that the Lambeth Conference of 1930, for which Frame makes his 'fulsome apology,' adequately encapsulates my understanding of the heartbeat of Anglican life and witness: 'an open Bible, a pastoral priesthood, a common worship, a standard of conduct consistent with that worship and a fearless love of truth' (pages 104–105). Where is justification? Where are hearts strangely warmed? Where is anticipation of the joy of glory?

Frame's chapters on synods, episcopacy, and diocese should be compulsory reading for anyone responsible for the institutional features of our corporate life. They breathe an imaginative air and give concrete expression to new ways of organising our ministry. Abolishing electoral synods and replacing them with diocesan-national Episcopal selection panels may sound crazy, but we need ideas like this to cast new visions of what could be (page 123). Frame's own desire to relinquish his title as bishop, now that he works at St Mark's Theological Centre in Canberra and not in episcopal ministry, gives his reflections on episcopacy a sharpness which is bracing: he argues that 'the powers and discretion of the bishops must be devolved' (page 141). Frame also argues for a radical redrawing of diocesan boundaries, and an openness to 'cultural episcopacy,' or the development of targeted ministries in government, business, or ethnic groups (page 156). In all this, he does not despise the institution, nor imagine that the church [continued on page 16]

Our enslavement to money and status is almost as alarming as the growing intolerance towards the Christian vision of human flourishing.

Gentle, meek and wild

Bob Collie invites us to consider the extreme Jesus.

Moderation in all things is wise advice in everything we do. Moderation in what we eat and drink. Moderation in our use of time, in working hours, recreation and sleep. Moderation in the use of our money and possessions. But not with God.

God is an extremist

Extreme means 'going to great lengths; the opposite of moderate'.

An extremist is 'one who goes to extremes, or who holds extreme opinions or advocates extreme measures' (*The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*).

God loves us so much that he gave his only Son to come and live among us on this planet in his vast created universe. That is extreme.

Jesus Christ loves us so much that he gave himself for us by dying in our place to pay for our sin. God brought his Son back to life again to be our living Lord. That is extreme.

The Holy Spirit loves us so much that he is willing to take over our life by living with us and in us to make us holy like Jesus. That is extreme.

If the remedy is extreme, then the problem of our sin, our hating God, rebelling against God and disobeying God must be extreme in his eyes.

Finally, the Lord Jesus Christ's challenge to us is extreme, radical and revolutionary.

'Follow me'

Jesus Christ loves us and gave himself for us. He calls us to love him and give ourselves for him. We must give back to him complete control of the whole of our life with all of our heart. That is extreme.

When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer


We experience God by totally abandoning ourselves to whatever he, through his Spirit, wants to do in us and through us. There is a passionate love for God that he creates in us when we surrender to him.

Tony Campolo

I lost control of my life to Jesus Christ.

Kanishka Raffel, Rector of St Matthew's Shenton Park, Perth, on becoming a Christian

When we follow Jesus our sins are completely forgiven, we are accepted by the Father, we are taken over by the Holy Spirit and we will live in love with God forever.

If we are not willing to follow Jesus, we are not forgiven, we are not accepted by the Father, we do not have the Holy Spirit, and we will not live with God forever. 



Bob Collie lives and ministers in retirement in Somers, Victoria.

Relax!

Jill Firth peels back the layers of the fourth commandment.

Do you treat yourself like a 24/7 sweatshop worker? Many of us live as if we have no need of relief and refreshment, as prescribed for everyone including slaves, strangers and even donkeys in the sabbath rules given to Israel (Exodus 23.12). According to the Christian psychiatrist, Arch Hart, failing to rest leads to stress-related diseases and burnout. Hart advocates taking a day every 7 days, as well as some relaxation time every day, as essential to physical and mental well being.

The Hebrew word for sabbath, *shabbat*, literally means 'ceasing' or 'resting', as God ceased or rested on the seventh day of creation (Genesis 2.3). On the first Sabbath, before the Fall, the man and the woman rested with God in the garden of Eden. Outside Eden, Israel was called to imitate God who rested on the first sabbath (Exodus 20.10–11). On the way to the Promised Land, the sabbath reminded God's people to live in trustful dependence on God the provider (Exodus 16.22–33). The sabbath was a time for giving rest to others in the community and caring for the needy (Deuteronomy 5.12–14; Isaiah 58). The 'sabbath year' reminded Israel not to overwork the planet (Leviticus 25.1–7). The year of Jubilee, a 'sabbath of sabbaths', called them to a just and redemptive lifestyle (Leviticus 25.8–12). In the New Testament, the promise of sabbath rest is fulfilled in salvation in Christ (Hebrews 4.1–11). The sabbath looks forward to the eternal reign of Christ and the creation's release from decay and death (Romans 8.18–25, Revelation 21.1–4).

Some Christians consider the sabbath to be a part of the moral law, binding on all. Others believe that Jesus' claim to be Lord of the sabbath signals that a day of rest is no longer required for Christians (Matthew 12.8). A study group chaired by the Biblical scholar, Don Carson, concludes that while neither Saturday nor Sunday is obligatory as a day of rest, one day of rest and refreshment each week is appropriate for human functioning.

A sabbath is not just a day without work. Eugene Peterson critiques the 'secularized' or 'bastard' sabbath—a day off for resting only so as to work more efficiently on the other six days. Peterson, a busy pastor, takes a Monday sabbath with his wife, Janice. After reading a psalm together, they walk in silence in the woods for several hours, revelling in God's creation. On the way back they share their thoughts and experiences. A true sabbath is a day for praying and for playing, says Peterson, 'a time to quit our work and contemplate his'.

Ceasing, resting, embracing and feasting are four aspects of the sabbath experience, according to theologian Marva Dawn. Dawn chooses Sunday as her sabbath. She sets aside her weekly work and completes her preparations on Saturday evening, then begins her sabbath in the

literal physical rest of sleep. Even in the final stages of her doctoral thesis and on the day before final exams, Dawn ceased from work on Sundays. On her sabbath, she teaches the Scriptures and offers hospitality, but she completes all her preparations on Saturday. For Dawn, sabbath is a time of reflecting on our values in the light of Scripture so that we can embrace God's values 'to the hilt', delighting in God, not pursuing our own affairs apart from him (Isaiah 58.13–14). Feasting in worship, music, beauty, food and the company of others becomes a weekly 'eschatological party' as we look forward to the marriage feast of the Lamb in the eternal sabbath rest of God. On Sunday, Dawn eats different food, makes time for creativity and friendship, celebrates and worships in community.

To mark the beginning and end of her sabbath, she lights candles and uses traditional prayers drawn from Jewish practice. Dawn delights in her sabbath, eagerly looking forward to it through the week and looking back with joy when it is over.

I was intrigued by the unfolding dynamic of ceasing, resting, embracing and feasting.

I had a few days' break coming up, which seemed like a good opportunity to road test these ideas. Driving up to the beach house, I switched off all technology, aiming to cease not only from active work but also from mental preoccupation with work and daily issues. After a long walk on the beach, I took a nap then enjoyed some Scripture reading. Hours just watching the waves helped me find a place of resting in God. Eventually, I felt ready to 'embrace', reflecting on God's providence in Psalm 104 and his loving care in Psalm 139. I spent a morning walking, journaling and praying, reviewing the past year. In the afternoon, I offered the coming year to God, and prayerfully considered changes to my lifestyle which would allow more time for the activities and relationships that God was bringing to my attention. On the final glorious sunny day, I clambered in rock pools and enjoyed a special meal, feasting on the love of God in creation.

Recent leadership theory emphasises the connection between who we are and how we lead. 'Leadership has little to do with making lots of decisions, with getting a great



Ceasing, resting, embracing and feasting help us to move from living like sweatshop workers, or unredeemed donkeys, to finding sabbath rest as the beloved children of God.

deal done. It is about getting the right things done,' says Simon Walker who teaches leadership at Oxford University. 'As leaders, the crucial quality we need is the courage to stop. The courage to wait and be still.' He continues, 'While everyone around us is clamouring for a decision, the leader waits until she is confident and clear'. Robert Fryling is a senior IVP publisher who developed new weekly patterns after reflecting on the sabbath. He benefits from a complete break from his weekday thoughts and activities by taking a technology-free day without his computer, mobile phone or even television. His sabbath includes Sunday worship, small group, walking, resting, praying, reflecting and journaling.

Sabbath time is a gift from God. We can joyfully set aside our daily work, putting our trust in God the provider. We can rest in God's presence as we look back to Eden, and as we look forward to the new heavens and the new earth. We can embrace God's Kingdom values, reaching out with the gospel and with justice, and caring for his creation. We can taste the eschatological feast as we worship God, rejoice in salvation, and have fellowship with his people. Ceasing, resting, embracing and feasting help us to move from living like sweatshop workers, or unredeemed donkeys, to finding sabbath rest as the beloved children of God. ☞



Jill Firth is an ordained Anglican minister, a trained spiritual director and an Adjunct Lecturer at Ridley Melbourne. Jill is part of an EFAC Victoria planning group for quiet days and retreats. A 24 hour retreat in March 2011 on Tasting Sabbath Time will be offered in the Melbourne area.

Don Carson (ed), *From Sabbath Day to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation* (Zondervan, 1982).

Eugene Peterson, *Working the Angles: the Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Eerdmans, 1987).

Marva Dawn, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting* (Eerdmans, 1989).

Archibald Hart, *The Anxiety Cure: You Can Find Tranquillity and Wholeness* (Word, 1999).

Simon P Walker, *Leading out of Who You Are: Discovering the Secret of Undefended Leadership* (Piquant, 2007), page 125.

Robert A Fryling, *The Leadership Ellipse: Shaping how we lead by who we are* (IVP, 2010)

Glenn Davies, 'Sabbath and Ecology', *St Mark's Review* 212, May 2010, pages 25–38.

[continued from page 13] and the Kingdom are synonymous (page 171). He does however want the church to be 'recklessly selfless when mission demands it' (page 174)—a clarion call.

The section entitled 'Then and Now' is the least coherent. While there is much here to learn from, and the individual chapters give personal insights into Frame's own formation, I kept asking myself what this particular tree had to contribute to the forest of the book. I found myself nodding when Frame spoke of Anglican captivity to political correctness and its promotion of 'liberal democratic statism' (page 192), and shouting 'Amen' when he described how pitifully we support and finance the theological training of our leaders, and so often in Australia mock intellectual leadership more generally (page 232). The chapter on William Ralph Inge's contribution to Christian mysticism seemed to me to be out of place. Frame praised Inge's commitment to experiential faith, and appreciation of the immediacy of knowledge of God (page 248), without giving due place to these very values amongst Anglican evangelicals, for whom they are nevertheless Christologically defined.

The final chapters of the book, functioning as one part mid-life crisis and two parts appeal for courage to learn again what it means to be the church in an aggressively secular culture, were reassuring. Frame's encouragement to get on with the work of evangelism and apologetics and disciple-making was heartening, for he is searingly honest about the critical state in which the Anglican church in Australia finds itself. Our enslavement to money and status is almost as alarming as the growing intolerance towards the Christian vision of human flourishing. Though I suspect Frame is a little naïve in assuming that Anglicans will be able to develop a 'coherent doctrine of the Church that can attract the conviction and allegiance of all theological traditions' (page 268), I agree with him that mid-life is a time for 'taking stock, reassessing and reviewing one's life' (page 256). We are as a church a middle aged institution, grown just a little too flabby and suddenly aware that we have to become more intentional in maintaining the vigour which once seemed so effortless. This book is a great health check, and a timely word.

And by the way, I wonder why the photo on the back cover has Frame wearing episcopal purple and a pectoral cross? After all his appeal to change our thinking about ministry structures and visions, this picture seemed an odd choice. We have so far to go. ☞



Rhys Bezzant is Dean of Missional Leadership and a lecturer in Christian Thought at Ridley Melbourne.



Essentials is published by EFAC Australia. The current issue and archives can

be read at: www.efac.org.au
Material is copyright and may not be reproduced without permission. Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of EFAC Australia nor of the editor.

Essentials correspondence

Jonathan Wei-Han Kuan
Editor, Essentials
PO Box 1076
Blackburn Victoria 3130
Mobile 0421 114 249
jwhkuan@bigpond.com

Panel of reference

Graeme Goldsworthy
Robert Forsyth
Peter Corney

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

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

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 co-ordinate and encourage EFAC branches/groups in provinces or dioceses of the Anglican Church in Australia.

EFAC correspondence

Richard Trist
Secretary, EFAC Australia
170 The Avenue
Parkville Victoria 3052
Telephone (03) 9207 4800
Mobile 0407 113 158.
richard.trist@bigpond.com

EFAC membership

(includes *Essentials*) \$40 per year (\$25 students, missionaries and retired persons). Renew your membership at: www.efac.org.au
Essentials subscription only \$25 for 4 issues a year.

EFAC Australia

ISSN 1328-5858

www.efac.org.au

President

Peter Jensen

Vice-presidents

Peter Brain
Trevor Edwards
David Mulready
John Harrower

Chairman

Glenn Davies

Deputy Chairman

Stephen Hale

Secretary

Richard Trist

Treasurer

Chris Appleby

Northern Territory Chair

Steven Tong

Queensland Chair

Alan Moore

NSW Chair

Peter Brain

Canberra–Goulburn Chair

Nick Speyer

Victoria Chair

Phil Meulman

South Australia Chair

Paul Hunt

Tasmania Coordinator

Luke Isham

Western Australia Chair

Peter Smith

Help Wanted

I have a friend with a hobby of collecting pew leaflets, annual reports, church histories and old year books. You may be able to help him.

Please send material to me for forwarding to Malcolm. This plan may prevent you from receiving letters and phone calls distracting you from your ministry.

Further questions may be asked of me, Ken Rogers, or Michael Collie (SPCKA).

Project Malcolm
C/o Ken Rogers
2 Esk Court
Forest Hill Victoria 3131
kensu@wn.com.au

**Renew your subscription.
Give a gift subscription.
Become a member of EFAC.
Renew your membership.
Donate to EFAC.
Do it all now at: www.efac.org.au**



Essentials Newsletter
Evangelical Fellowship in the
Anglican Communion Australia
Print Post Approved PP337834/00017
ISSN 1328-5858
May be opened for inspection.
If undeliverable return to:
EFAC Australia
170 The Avenue
Parkville Victoria 3052
Australia

SURFACE
MAIL

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA