

From Death to Life

The Official Magazine of the Conditional Immortality Association of New Zealand

Issue 16, March 2000

Inside:

President's Desk 2

Intermediate State 3

Reflections 6

Missions 8

Carey Park 10

Tragedy at Ozamis 12

How Orthodox? 14

Editorial 17

The Puritan Divine, John Owen, once wrote a work entitled “On The Mortification Of Sin In The Believer”. The foundation of his teaching is laid in Rom. 8:13 where the Apostle Paul says, “For if you live according to the sinful nature you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body you will live”. I have been inspired by reading Owen’s work and have been reflecting upon it from my own Anabaptist / Conditionalist perspective.

The Apostles Words Opened

From the Apostles words concerning “putting to death the misdeeds of the body” (Rom. 8:13), we can derive five propositions:

1. That a duty is prescribed: We are to “put to death the deeds of the body.”
2. That that duty is prescribed to you: That is, to “you” who are believers.
3. That a promise is attached to the performance of this duty: If you do it “you shall live.”
4. That the God - given means by which we perform this duty are of the Spirit: That is, we are to do it “by the Spirit.”
5. That the attainment of the promise is conditional: It is only “If” we perform this duty that we shall live.

To fully understand this duty being urged upon us we must answer 5 questions:

The Duty Explained

The answers to the first three questions are generally agreed upon by all Christians.

- What is meant by the body?
- What is meant by the misdeeds of the body? and
- What is meant by their being “put to death”?

Paul is not a “dualist”. He does not believe we have a good and perfect immaterial and spiritual “soul”, trapped in an evil material body. By the body here, Paul means the “flesh”. Indwelling sin. The corruption and depravity of our whole nature (not our physical nature as such) of which the body is the seat and instrument (Rom. 6:19). The “misdeeds of the body” are those tangible expressions of this corrupt nature, both outward actions and inner thoughts (Gal. 5:19). Metaphorically the indwelling law of sin which is at work in our members is compared to a beast which must be put to death before it destroys us.

Consequences Examined

There is perhaps more controversy when we ask the question

- What is meant by life? and
- What is meant by death?

The life promised here is the opposite of the death threatened in the first clause. Death is not a trip to the spirit-world. Life is not a “promotion to glory”. Life - this life and the next - is the gift of God in Christ (John 1:4, 3:36). Death is the loss or the absence of life. The body returns to dust (Gen. 3:19) while the “breath of life” or spirit returns to God who gave it (Psa. 31:5, Ecc.12:7, Luke 23:46, Acts 7:59). The breath of life (Gen. 2:7) is simply the life force, not a person or entity. The “intermediate state” is one of unconscious sleep (Psa. 6:5, 13:3, 146:4, Dan 12:2, John 11:11, Acts 7:60, 1Cor. 15:20, 51, 1Thess. 4:13-18). The gospel issue is not, Where will you spend eternity?, but, How will you spend it? Alive or dead? Paul says, “The one who sows to please the sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life” (Gal. 6:8).

FORGIVENESS

The Intermediate State



In the last two issues we began this series adapted from my Master's Thesis. The first chapter was on Paul's anthropology – what he understood each human was made of. Our conclusion was that, as in the Old Testament, Paul understood each one of us to be a single unit, a living soul, not made up of two or three separable parts (body/ soul/ spirit). The outcome of this basis is that for Paul there was no thought of an immortal soul.

Part Three: Pauline Dualism

We concluded in Parts One and Two that Paul will have no part of an anthropological dualism (body and soul/spirit). However, he does firmly adhere to another form of dualism - an eschatological one, a division of this age and the age to come.¹ J.C. Beker ably argues in his study of Paul that eschatology ("final things"²) is a foundation stone of Paul's theology.³ Thus to begin to understand how Paul viewed time and history is vital to understanding his letters.

Paul's understanding of 'final things' is thoroughly Jewish and "the attempt to describe him as fundamentally Hellenistic (Greek) has long been discredited."⁴ Paul's understanding of resurrection as an end time event, bringing about the redemption not only of humanity but also of the whole of creation, was a common understanding in Jewish apocalyptic thinking⁵ which contrasted this age with the age to come. Indeed, as Ben Witherington III observes, not only the resurrection but also the coming of the

Messiah was "not supposed to happen until the end times."⁶

But Paul's understanding was radically altered by his Damascus experience. If Jesus had been raised, of which Paul was now in no doubt, then not only had he been shown to be Son of God (Rom. 1:4)⁷ but just as

For Paul the resurrection of Jesus marks the tum of the ages

importantly this was proof to him that the new age had begun.⁸ God's righteousness and his wrath are revealed **now** in the Christ event (Rom. 1:17-18)⁹.

Much of Paul's thinking can be understood against this very important apocalyptic background (which often comes to the fore) in which the new age was begun at the resurrection and revealed to Paul near Damascus. This understanding is

clearly centred in Christ. In line with this W.D. Davies argues that although Paul's terminology is that of current apocalyptic speculation, its character was determined by the "significance that Paul had been led to give to Jesus".¹⁰

So the key to Paul's thinking here, as indeed to much of his theology, is the resurrection. "The resurrection of Jesus Christ stands as the central motif in Paul's eschatology insofar as it inaugurates the age to come and provides the basis for future hope."¹¹ Witherington further notes that Paul "clearly does not see Christ's resurrection as an isolated historical anomaly but as an eschatological event that is the harbinger and in some sense the trigger or at least the prerequisite of future eschatological events."¹² In fact, "Christ's resurrection makes possible, believable and in Paul's mind certain that believers will one day rise."¹³ Hays goes even further, suggesting that to Paul and the early church "the resurrection of the dead cannot be something that happens in isolation."¹⁴

This is why Paul speaks of Christ's resurrection as the 'first fruits' of those who have died (literally 'fallen asleep', 1 Cor 15:20).

So for Paul the resurrection of Jesus is not just an indicator of what will happen in the future, it is also the beginning of the future, the presence of the future, here and now. Or, in de Boer's words, it is an event "that marks the turn of the ages."¹⁵

This is evidenced by the presence of the Spirit in believers. Paul recognizes that the presence of the Spirit as promised in Joel 2:28-29¹⁶ and Ezekiel 39:29¹⁷ means 'the day of the Lord' has come.¹⁸ The Spirit is not only the 'guarantee' of the future (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5) but also the 'first fruits' of the Spirit (Rom. 8:23), another sign of the realization of the Kingdom now.

Clearly for Paul the new age beginning did not yet entail the ultimate end of the 'old' one,¹⁹ although the outcome was now certain. Keck suggests that "the first consequence of believing that Jesus had been resurrected was not an argument over the possibility of immortality but a revolution in the way one regarded the present."²⁰

What follows from this position is at times an almost contradictory tension for believers living in the two ages²¹ - our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20) but with purpose and need "to remain in the flesh" (Phil. 1:24). Thus Paul is able to speak of believers having died (Rom. 6:2,8) yet also still

subject to death (2 Cor. 11:23) which is 'at work in us' (2 Cor 4:12); or of salvation as something received in the past ('we were saved' - Rom. 8:24), as an on-going process ('we are being saved' - 1 Cor. 1:18; 15:2; 2 Cor 2:15), and as something yet future ('we will be saved' - Rom. 5:9,10). If we step slightly outside the core Pauline letters to Ephesians 2:4-6²² we are "confronted by the intriguing fact that the resurrection of believers is presented as a two-stage event. From one viewpoint it has yet to take place; from another, it has already occurred."²³

The paradoxical nature of living in the two ages is also present in the concept of resurrection as transformation. 1 Corinthians 15:51 presents transformation as a future event (we shall be changed), but 2 Corinthians 3:18 (are being changed) and Romans 12:2 (be transformed) emphasize the

An almost contradictory tension for believers living in the two ages

present process, while in 2 Corinthians 5:17 it is already accomplished - anyone in Christ is "a new creation, the old has passed away, the new has come!"

C.F.D. Moule writes of "a gradual 'becoming' what we already 'are' in Christ", referring to Romans 7:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18.²⁴ This same idea is present in Romans 8:30 where Paul "speaks of our future glorification as already achieved in principle in what God has done in Christ."²⁵

Further evidence of Paul's thinking is his description of Jesus as the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45-49).²⁶ Believers are described as being like "the man from heaven" (v48) but also with the yet future promise - " we shall bear the likeness of the man from heaven" (v49). This latter verse also implies the 'in-between' state Paul understood we now lived in - 'we **bore** the image of the earthly man' (aorist), and, 'we **shall bear** the image of the heavenly man' (future). Whose image do we bear now? De Boer notes that this passage also indicates a further distinguishing characteristic of the two ages - "This age as the all-embracing sphere of death ... contrasted with the coming age of life."²⁷ So Jesus having overcome death (1 Cor. 15:54)²⁸ is a clear indication of the end of the old age, even if the final victory, the destruction of the last enemy, death (1 Cor 15:26),²⁹ is yet future. De Boer points to "destroyed" being in the present tense (as also in 1 Cor 2:6) as suggesting "that the destruction of death is certain and ... (because of the resurrection) ... has in fact begun."³⁰

Oscar Cullman puts it bluntly: The whole thought of the New Testament remains for us a book sealed with seven seals if we do not read behind every sentence there this other sentence: Death has already been overcome (death, be it noted, not the body); there is already a new creation (a new creation, be it noted, not an immortality which the soul has always possessed) the resurrection age is already inaugurated.³¹

We have previously noted that Paul spoke of believers as having already died as well as still being subject to death, now we note that he also speaks of the other side of that 'coin' - the new life as both a present possession (Rom 7:6; 2 Cor 4:10)³² and something yet future (Rom 2:7; 4:17).³³

Conclusion.

There is enough support for eschatological dualism being a significant key to interpreting Paul that we feel confident in seeking to apply it, rather than anthropological dualism, to the key passages concerning the "intermediate state." This we will do in the final chapters of the thesis.

FOOTNOTES:

¹ This chapter forms part of the background to the main emphasis of the thesis and draws heavily on other writers. It is included primarily as a necessary part of the background rather than as something 'new' that this thesis is establishing.

² Eschatology includes topics such as the future of the world, the return of Jesus Christ, the coming kingdom of God, the last judgment, the resurrection, heaven and hell, and the new creation.

³ J.C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980)

⁴ B. Lindars, "The Sound of the Trumpet: Paul and Eschatology" *Bulletin: John Ryland's Library* 67:2 (1985) 766-782, at 767.

Also Martinus de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*. *Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series* 22 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988) 132, speaks of "Paul's considerable indebtedness to Jewish cosmological apocalyptic eschatology."

⁵ So Ben Witherington III., *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994, 171-2.

⁶ Witherington, 170

⁷ Romans 1:4 "was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord".

⁸ So Richard Hays, *1 Corinthians*, Interpretation. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1997) 263.

⁹ Romans 1:17-18 "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'The one who is righteous will live by faith.' For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth".

¹⁰ W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*. London: S.P.C.K., 1955, 290

¹¹ L.J. Kreitzer, "Resurrection" in G.F. Hawthorne & R.P. Martin (eds) *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, (Downers Grove & Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1993) 805-812 at 806.

¹² Witherington, 172-3. See also J.D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids & Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 1998., 240.

¹³ Witherington, 176.

¹⁴ Hays, 263.

¹⁵ Martinus de Boer, *The Defeat of Death*. *Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series* 22. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988., 112. Cf. Stephen H. Travis, *I Believe in the Second Coming of Jesus* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1982) 96. Also Dunn, 240.

¹⁶ Joel 2:28-29 - Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh...

¹⁷ Ezek. 39:29 - And I will never again

hide my face from them, when I pour out my spirit upon the house of Israel ...

¹⁸ So Travis, 97.

¹⁹ So Murray Harris, *Raised Immortal: Resurrection and Immortality in the New Testament* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1983), 95, "The new Age dawned with the Resurrection, but is yet to be consummated, just as 'the present evil age' (Gal. 1:4) has yet to be terminated."

²⁰ Keck, 45.

²¹ de Boer writes of "an almost unbearable tension ... (that) ... is rooted, one may surmise, in the ... divergence between christological claim and soteriological reality." 123

²² Ephesians 2:4-6 - "But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

²³ Harris, *Raised Immortal*, 98, referring to 1 Cor 6:14 and Eph 2:4-6.

²⁴ Moule, 109

²⁵ Lindars, 779

²⁶ So de Boer, 110-11, writes "By means of the Adam-Christ typology Paul adapts the two- @ speculation of the Corinthian deniers and brings it into the service of another type of dualism, the eschatological dualism of the two ages."

²⁷ de Boer, 111

²⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:54 - "Death has been swallowed up in victory".

²⁹ 1 Corinthians 15:26 - "The last enemy to be destroyed is death".

De Boer, 121, investigates the meaning of the *katargei/tai* in v26 and concludes it "ought to be translated 'destroy' (or even 'annihilate')." So "Christ is to destroy, i.e., render eschatologically and thus permanently powerless, the inimical cosmological powers of the age."

³⁰ de Boer, 122

³¹ Cullman, 31.

³² Rom. 7:6 - "so that we are slaves not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit."

2 Cor. 4:10 - "So that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies."

³³ Rom. 2:7 - "he will give eternal life."

Rom. 4:17- "who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not

A
 C
 T
 I
 V
 E
 S
 F
 O
 R
 M
 S
 A
 N
 D
 S
 E
 R
 V
 I
 C
 E
 S

This was my first overseas mission trip and I have many reflections and thoughts from the trip. There were so many that it's hard to choose one to describe. One of the many experiences that stood out to me, was the time that some of us from the team went to Tagoloan for a church service. What really humbled me was being invited to the Pastor's House after the service and being served with a meal. You may ask what's so humbling about that, well the meal was the sort of meal that they would never eat and they had gone to great effort and expense to prepare this meal. There was meat, veggies, fruit salad, rice, bread and soft drinks. This would be a feast for them as meat is a luxury which they may have only once or twice a week. Personally, I couldn't thank them enough for the meal. Also seeing the place he lived in, which was a 2 level one room building with a dirt floor and his kitchen was basically just a double gas burner. All these points and more spoke to me about how much we take for granted here in New Zealand. As a finishing point, it really takes a trip to a completely different culture to see how much we really have and also don't really need to live. So if you are thinking about missions, give it a go. The three weeks in the Philippines was a short time but showed us so much. You'll be so much different afterwards.

Richard Jobb

Is home where the heart is?

In that case I have either two hearts and two homes, or half a heart in each.

Each time I go to the Philippines I feel more and more as if that is where I could easily belong, particularly at Oro Bible College in Cagayan de Oro City.

The students, staff and church folk amongst whom we mix are so full of their faith and love for Jesus Christ our Saviour that it effervesces from them. The materialism of the western society appears to have no place and the daily chores of living are accepted uncomplainingly. How we could learn from them!

Strong, lasting friendships were formed and we were given an insight into the Filipino way of life as we bonded together.

As an older team member the lesson which I learned was that God is able to use unexpected people and situations to teach us what He wants us to understand. Secondly, that even though we may consider that we are approaching our use by date that this is not God's view. God has no retirement age and I must be available if He should wish to choose to use me.

I am thankful to Almighty God that He gave me yet another opportunity to serve Him in this way.

Grant Aldridge

O
 R
 O
 B
 I
 B
 L
 E
 C
 O
 L
 L
 E
 G
 E
 I
 N
 C
 A
 G
 A
 Y
 A
 N
 D
 S
 E
 R
 V
 I
 C
 E
 S

Reflections on the trip to the Philippines. By Joe Ayres

Around the middle of 1999, Grant Aldridge told our church about the Oro Bible College building project. The Advent Christian Mission Society was planning to send a team to the Bible College for a 3-week mission. They planned to assist in the construction of a residential block for the faculty staff, and they were looking for some volunteers to assist in the project. Proverbs 3:27 says "do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act" and it seemed to me that the Lord was telling me that this could be one of those occasions.

So it was that I joined the group going to the Oro Bible College in Cagayan de Oro, on the Philippine Island of Mindanao. There were 14 of us in the group, 10 men and 4 ladies, ranging in age from 18 to 68! Some were seasoned travelers, some had been on the mission field several times before, and some were completely "green", so we made up a very interesting mix of age, talent and experience. I considered with some apprehension, just how I was going to fit in with this group, and whether I would be physically up to the task.

The trip went via Singapore (overnight stop in an up-market hotel) Singapore was ablaze with magnificent Christmas decorations. Although a predominantly Buddhist culture, the City is very happy to make the most of any Festive Season, then on to Manila where we again had to stop overnight to make our flight connection. This time we stayed in the Missions hostel. Simple but comfortable. The contrast between the opulent and clinically clean Singapore and the noisy, dirty decrepit Manila, was a severe shock to some of the party! Then on to Cagayan de Oro where we were picked up by Jojo and David (the retiring Admin manager). The college van and a pick-up took the lot of us and our luggage back to the campus. The short trip from the airport to the city took us down from the relatively clean and green hills, into the noise, hustle and bustle of Cagayan.

The campus was an interesting sight! Grey concrete-block structures, some plaster-finished, some not, seemed to be in a half-finished state. Odd bits of crude wooden scaffolding still clung to some structures making the whole place look as if it was still under construction. Which, in a way it was. The Filipinos have a philosophy that as soon as a building can be occupied and put into use... it will be! The finishing touches will be applied as and when finance is available. It looked as if, when finance was available, some more urgent need had arisen to deflect it away from the finishing off jobs! I suspect that some buildings just never get properly finished, in the Western sense. This is a poor country, and meagre resources are rationed out carefully!

Our project was sitting at the rear of the campus site: concrete columns, a first floor and a colour-steel roof already in place. Our job was to lay the concrete block walls for the ground and first floors (ready for plastering) and to erect wooden partitioning for all the rooms. Since none of us had any real experience in block-laying, this presented quite a challenge! We had two experienced "chippies": Alan Raney who was our Project boss, and Grant Cameron. Volunteer block-layers quickly emerged from the group and soon developed skills equal to the task in hand. Others less adventurous became "gofers": hauling buckets of mortar to the first floor and distributing them to the laying teams, fetching timber, sweeping up and generally helping to keep the 'real' workers going. It was very hot, dirty, dusty, sweaty work. The temperature was around 35c: even higher under the steel roof! We were kept going by the ladies, who plied us with gallons of cold, filtered water and piles of fresh fruit. We ate huge quantities of Mangoes and Pineapples on the job and with most meals.

Each day (early in the morning) the ladies would go into Carmen market to purchase the day's requirements. They quickly sorted out where to buy the best fruit, bread, veggies, meat etc. and often returned with their purchases riding in a bicycle-powered tri-shaw.

The mosque on the boundary fence woke us each morning at a quarter to 5 so it was not too difficult to find time for our private morning devotions, have a wash etc and be down for a quick bite of fruit at 6 am, then off to work. We came back in at about 8 am for breakfast, during which time we each took turns to lead the group in devotions. This turned out to be a precious time in our daily schedule, as each of us shared the things on our hearts and encouraged each other in our daily walk with the Lord. Back to work until 12 o'clock when we thankfully took a 2-hr break for lunch and a little 'siesta' (the more energetic guys scuttled off to Carmen to do a bit of quick shopping). Back to work at 2.00 PM – how those muscles protested at having to get back into work-mode! So we carried on until knock-off and clean-up time at 5.00 PM. Now that was a test of self-discipline... to stop and clean up the tools and the work-place at the end of a hard day!

At the end of it all, the question would be asked. Was it worth it? And I suppose the answer to that depends on the criteria you apply. Did we enjoy ourselves? Yes! Did we achieve our objectives? Yes! Could we have achieved more? Yes, if we had had more finance available. How did it benefit team members? By giving us hands-on experience in a Mission situation; by drawing us closer to our Christian brothers and sisters and showing us that race, colour, language and custom are no barrier to those that put their trust in the Lord. Living on that campus and sharing time with faculty staff and students was such a blessing to each one of us. How did Oro B C benefit? Well, we did give a great impetus to the progress on the Accommodation block, so materially we left something very tangible behind us. But I dare to think that the impact of our presence was more than that. We demonstrated by our presence that we wanted to share in their vision, that we believed in its significance, that we were prepared to 'suffer' alongside our brothers and sisters, for the Lord's sake. We made good friends; we had happy times with them; and as they now grieve over the tragic death of one of the students (in a terrorist bomb attack) they know that we grieve with them too. For me, that was the most important aspect of our time at Oro.

The best memories? Morning devotions with the team. Getting 'ribbed' unmercifully by my team-mates, 'Dunkin Donuts' in an air-conditioned café, morning worship at Maranatha Church... awesome!

ADVENT CHRISTIAN MISSIONS NEW ZEALAND



There are several matters to report on, and for which we can give thanks to the Lord:

Seventh Work Team.

A great Team of 14 (10 men and 4 ladies) left NZ on December 27 1999 and returned on January 18 2000, having assisted Oro Bible College with the construction of a four unit, two storied apartment block for faculty members.



The Accommodation Block the Team worked on.

The Lord's hand of guidance and blessing was evident in all the arrangements for the trip, in the personnel and leadership of the Team, and in the fellowship that the Team members enjoyed with one another, and with our Filipino brothers and sisters while they were there. The personnel of the Team were drawn from Titirangi, Sunnynook and Glenfield Baptist churches, and Massey and Titirangi Presbyterian churches. For the first

time since we have been sending Teams away, the majority of the Team were "new" - both to each other and to Advent Christian Mission activities, but it was evident that the Lord had indeed led every member to serve Him, and the Filipinos, through the activities of our

Team. There was a wonderful spirit of love and fellowship, and much was achieved both practically and spiritually. Many team members have expressed their appreciation to the Lord for the experience and for what they had experienced spiritually.

We acknowledge the service of Grant Aldridge as Team Leader, Grant Cameron as Team Chaplain, and Alan Raney as Project

Leader - their ready acceptance of the responsibilities of leadership is much appreciated.

During the year we forwarded a total of \$23,077 to OBC for preparatory work, materials used while the Team were there, and to continue construction

after the Team's departure. The Lord's people here in New Zealand have been very generous in their support of this very important project.

When the Team left OBC the engineer in charge of the project estimated that the project was 88%

completed practically, and that on completion it would be approximately 35% under budget - this latter is largely due to the substantial contribution of "free" labour by the Team. We will keep in touch with OBC in respect to completion of the project, and will ensure that it is completed as soon as possible.

cont'd over

OBC Faculty Scholarship Assistance

We forwarded funds to cover the total costs of the studies for the second semester for three OBC faculty members, as they seek to improve their qualifications, and we have received notes of appreciation from two of these folk.

Other News from the Philippines.

David Vignali, who was back in the Philippines for a few months, including the time that the Team was there, has returned to the United States and is looking to eventually use his Spanish speaking skills in the activities of the Mission in Honduras. Dave's present health is a wonderful example of God's answers to the prayers of His people.

Jeff and Penny Vann and their three daughters continue to serve at OBC - under considerable pressure from their workload. They too need our prayers.

India

Earl and Martha Wright continue to serve in Chennai and will be leaving India at the end of March for a six month furlough in the US. The work will be continued by an Advisory



Taken from the Maranatha church at the front of the Oro property

Committee of nationals, working under guidelines and with input from George Teshera if necessary. We need to continue to pray for Christian work as a whole in India, and especially for Advent Christian work. Pressure from militant Hindu groups continues, and reached Tamil Nadu and in fact an Advent Christian church, just before Christmas.

Other News

Leaving the "best" to last, it is a joy to report that there are several folk who are presently considering work with Advent Christian Missions, either on

a short term or full time basis. It is a little early to give specific details, but we need to pray that the Lord's leading and guidance and peace will be very evident to those people, and also to those on our Trust Board here in New Zealand and those in the United States, who will have re-

sponsibility for decision making, and arrangements in respect to the stewardship of the Lord's resources.

Revs Hal Patterson and George Teshera will be

here in New Zealand in late March, and we will be having discussions with them concerning how the Mission can use the talents of those who have felt the Lord's call to service. A public meeting of these two brothers is being arranged by the Advent Christian Conference of New Zealand for March 25, at Takanini Church - this will be a time for fellowship and for hearing up to date information on the growing work of Advent Christian Missions throughout the world.

- o -

Carey Park Report

What's Happening at Carey Park?

Where do we start?

We've got two new staff:

- Cameron Dick, he's on maintenance and programming and will be leading our next 'Teen' camp. Cam's married to Sandy and has 2 1/2 children. His background is in the central heating business and he has just completed 3 years at BCNZ.

- Jarrod Seaton, he's doing the Education job and even though he's not a teacher, is doing a good job on facilitating this programme. He's also on programming, taking part in the night programmes to school and also our 'Kids' camp. Jarrod's wife, Geraldine, is not on the staff but they live on site in their 'ducky' little flat.

God has been so good in giving us good staff again and we look forward to Cam and Jarrod becoming strong members of our team.

We have also been blessed again with a large grant from the ASB Trust. This money can only be used for projects, not for general running, and only for materials. It's great to have this financial support but what comes with it is a lot of hard work and when you're trying to

fit it into an already busy maintenance schedule it becomes difficult. So here's a plea - If you find yourself at a loose end and would like to help, we need people who can build, paint (you don't need to be a Picasso), do gardening, etc. Anything and every bit of help helps, so please give us a ring (09) 837 0494.



"Sound leaders?!"

Our Christmas camps were great with a good number of about 25 plus leaders coming to our 'Teen' camp at Puhoi. We had a chance to climb frightening walls, go abseiling, canoeing, swimming with the fish, sleep outside and cook our dinner in a forest - all sorts of out-

door things. From a spiritual side, the studies were based around choices and how these affect the rest of our lives. At the end of the week there were many tired teens - challenged physically and spiritually with some very good positive decisions made. The 'Kids' camp was equally as good - stacks of fun for the kids and leaders, but beyond all that Kim Beale, the speaker, as usual shared the gospel positively and with results.

We are in the middle of our very busy season and bookings look good, but we struggle financially with groups being smaller - which immediately drops our income. There's also the problem, and it's growing, of the perception that camps are dangerous places where people get hurt. And that is true of course, it can be dangerous, but not quite as some see it. After all it's potentially dangerous anywhere. Camp is such a wonderful, challenging, growing place. Schools come and children discover that they can overcome fears - like height, water and the dark. They discover they can succeed in a number of areas that help them to be positive in their approach to schooling, home, etc. And from our point of view they discover that being a Christian can be fun, and, through the signs we have around the place, that

God is someone who cares about them. They also find out that the creation we live in is exciting because God made it that way for His children.

We would ask you to pray for us please in a number of areas:

- For our Kids & Teens camps April 10-14th
- For our camp leaders meeting together before the camps April 7-10th.
- For the Christian



“Boxed in” campers.

camping NZ conference in June that we are hosting - a wonderful time.

- For the planning of our ‘Soccer’ and ‘Leadership’ camps in July.
- For our new staff.
- For our finances.

- For assistance so desperately needed to do the extra development programme on site.
- For the growing ‘fear’ syndrome that is flooding society, that we will be able to allay the fears of anxious parents when they send their children to camp.

• To help us all to live in an attitude of thankfulness for all that God has, is and will do as we serve and trust Him.



Carey Park
Christian Camp

397 Henderson Valley Rd Henderson
Auckland New Zealand

Don't forget the range of products and services available from us:

Books:	<i>Life, Death and Destiny</i> by Warren Prestidge	\$15.00
	<i>Life and Immortality</i> by Basil Atkinson	\$8.00
	<i>Daring to Differ</i> by Sidney Hatch	\$27.50
	<i>Why I Believe in Conditional Immortality</i> by Sidney Hatch	\$4.00
	<i>Heaven, Hell and Hades</i> by Freeman Barton	\$25.00
	<i>Four Views on Hell</i> ed. William Crockett	\$30.00
On Order:	<i>The Fire That Consumes</i> by Edward Fudge	?
Thesis:	<i>The Intermediate State in Paul</i> by Carl Josephson	\$15.00
Pamphlets:	<i>What Happens When We Die</i> by David Burge	.50
	<i>Is God a Monster?</i> by Carl Josephson	.50
	<i>What is Conditional Immortality?</i> by Carl Josephson	Free
	<i>Invitation to a Feast</i> by Carl Josephson	.50
Videos:	<i>Life, Death and the Resurrection</i> by Warren Prestidge (6 parts on two videos)	\$50.00
Website:	http://www.afterlife.co.nz	

If one member suffers, all suffer together

1 Corinthians 12:26

Tragedy at Ozamis

We were saddened to learn, on February 26th, of the death of one of the students from Oro Bible College, Cagayan de Oro, in the Philippines, in very sad circumstances.

Oro Bible College's courses include training in practical ministry skills, and this often involves groups of students visiting various Advent Christian churches to assist with Sunday services and other activities of the churches.

On Friday February 25, two ministry skills teams left the College soon after morning chapel to travel to the city of Ozamis, approximately 130 kilometres south east of Cagayan de Oro. One team of eight students, accompanied by one of the faculty members, Rev Rustom Marquino, travelled by public transport, whilst the other team of nine travelled with Rev Jeff Vann in the mission vehicle. The teams met and together boarded a barge which was to ferry them, and many other Filipinos and vehicles across a narrow strip of water to the city of Ozamis.

The trip takes only approximately fifteen minutes, and as the barge approached the dock there was an explosion in a bus parked ahead of the mission van on the vehicle deck. The explosion was from a firebomb and the front of the barge was soon engulfed in flames. Jeff Vann instructed the students to go to the rear of the barge, away from the flames, and at that point another bomb exploded, and it became clear that those on board would have to jump into the water to save their lives. Once all the students had jumped, Jeff Vann also jumped into the water and endeavoured to assist all the students to reach the safety of the pier.

Jeff noticed that one of the students was having trouble, and he tried to obtain a wooden pallet from another survivor who had reached the dock, so that he could assist this young man. Difficulties with making himself understood meant that by the time Jeff got back to the area where the student had last been seen, there was no sign of the one who had been in difficulty. The rest of the students and their leaders spent the next hours waiting in a nearby church, and about 11.30pm they received the sad news that the body of the student - Bernald Andales - had been recovered. He was a poor swimmer and had drowned before he could be rescued. It was Jeff's sad responsibility to identify the body and make arrangements for its transportation back to Cagayan de Oro. The students and their leaders accompanied the body back to Oro Bible College the next day on what must have been a very long nine hour ride in the undertaker's vehicle.

As is the custom in the Philippines, services and vigils were held at the College for the next several days, and the funeral service for Bernald was held at Maranatha Advent Christian Church in Cagayan de Oro on Wednesday March 1st. One who had known Bernald referred to him as "a very fine, promising Christian young man" - he was one who had committed himself to train to serve his Lord, and he died while serving the Lord !

Whilst there was of course great sadness at the College, there was also a feeling of gratitude to God that the rest of the College's personnel were kept safe. There were over 145 people on the ferry, and more than 40 were killed, some of them burned beyond recognition. None of the students was injured in the bomb blasts, and although some of the students could not swim, God provided for their rescue in good time. Aside from Bernald, the College only lost "things" - the mission van and students' belongings, which can be replaced.

Please pray for the faculty and students at Oro Bible College as they continue to deal with the death, and of course Bernald's family, as they grieve at their loss. Pray that our Lord will comfort them all and guide them into life with Him as they cope with the aftermath of this tragedy.

Advent Christian Missions New Zealand has forwarded a sum of money to the College to assist with funeral costs and any ongoing medical expenses for the survivors, and we have suggested that we will assist with the cost of a suitable memorial plaque to be erected in the College in the near future. There will also be the need to replace the mission vehicle which was completely destroyed by the fire, and which was not covered by insurance as the damage was deemed to have been caused by terrorists! We would be pleased to forward on any contributions which readers may feel led to make to either of these causes.

Jeff Vann, who in the view of many of us here in New Zealand, acted in a very brave and professional manner, has indicated that " [he and his family] *want to assure you that the ordeal I recently went through has not changed our confidence that we are where God wants us to be.*" He asks especially for prayer that they "*may be a resource for healing for the others here during this time*". Please pray that this may be the case.

Conditional Immortality Assn

Membership and Subscription

As with last year there are now two options:

Membership of the Conditional Immortality Assn (including Newsletters)

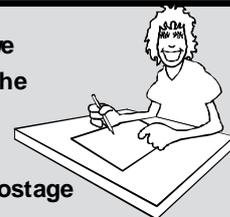
Or: Subscription to the Newsletter only

We have done this so that if you don't fully agree with the statement of faith (see back of response form) you can still subscribe to the Newsletter.

Please note - the subs are exactly the same for either option, only \$10! (Or \$5 for non-earners, students and superannuitants). Overseas NZ\$15.

PS. If you can't afford to pay but would still like to receive the Newsletter that's OK!

If you have not considered paying a subscription before, can we encourage you to do so now. We are reaching people all over the world and would love you to be on board with us!



As you can imagine, these subs will not cover all the costs of postage and printing etc. So if you are able and willing to make a further donation to help we would be very grateful.

Please use the response form enclosed for your reply

How Orthodox Are We?

One objection raised against Conditional Immortality is that it is not “orthodox”. But, one person’s “orthodoxy” is often another’s “heresy”. What is “orthodoxy”? Is there an objective standard to which we can turn?

The Bible is our only infallible rule of faith and practice, but the Creeds (From the Latin, *credo*, “I believe”) of ancient Christianity are acknowledged by the Greek, Roman and Evangelical Protestant churches as good summaries of basic Christian doctrine and are taken by many as touchstones of Christian orthodoxy.

These are three such creeds:

- The Apostle’s Creed, The Nicene Creed, and The Athanasian Creed (which is ecumenical in a limited sense).

To these may be added the Christological statement of the Council of Chalcedon (451).

Does Conditional Immortality mean we must reject these time honoured statements of Christian belief? I believe the answer is definitely not!

The Apostles’ Creed

The Apostles’ Creed is so named because of the tradition that it was actually composed by the apostles in Jerusalem. Each apostle supposedly contributed one article, hence the division in to twelve articles.

In reality, unlike the Nicene Creed and the Calcedonian Definition, the Apostles’ Creed was not written or approved by a single Church council at any one time. Rather, it gradually took shape between AD 200 to 750. It never had any general currency in the East, where the Nicene Creed took pride of place.

The OLD ROMAN form of the creed, used in Rome, the rest of Italy and Africa, is found in the writings of Rufinus, toward the end of the fourth century (c. AD 390). It is as follows:

**“I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
Lord;**

By Past or David Burge

**Who was born of the Holy Spirit,
and the Virgin Mary;**

**was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
and was buried;**

**The third day He rose from the dead;
He ascended into heaven; and sits at the
right hand of the Father;**

**From thence He shall come to judge the
living and the dead.**

And in the Holy Spirit;

The holy church;

The forgiveness of sins;

the resurrection of the body.”

There is nothing in this Creed to which a “Conditionalist” could not give whole hearted support.

What is called the RECEIVED FORM of the Apostle’s Creed did not come into general use until the 7th or 8th century. It has a number of additions to the Roman form of the Creed which require explanation. The text is given with changes in italics.

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
*Maker of heaven and earth.***

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our
Lord:**

**Who was *conceived* of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,**

***suffered* under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, *dead*, and buried.**

He descended into hell (hades).

The third day He rose from the dead.

**He ascended into heaven; and sits at the
right hand of *God* the Father *Almighty*,**

**From thence He shall come to judge the
living and the dead.**

***I believe* in the Holy Spirit;**

The holy *catholic* church;

the communion of saints;

the forgiveness of sins;

the resurrection of the body;

and the life everlasting.

The Nicene Creed

The phrase “Maker of heaven and earth” appears in many early creeds in opposition to the Gnostics who made a false distinction between the true God and the maker of this world.

The emphasis upon the fact that Christ “suffered” and was truly “dead” is in opposition to those who falsely taught that Christ only seemed to suffer and die.

The word “catholic” does not refer to the Roman Catholic Church, but to the universal church of Jesus Christ of which all true believers are a part.

None of these additions make the Creed any less acceptable as a summary of biblical truth.

“THE DESCENT INTO HELL”

The clause “he descended into hell” was unknown in the older creeds. It first appears in one of two versions by Rufinus (AD 390). It is not included in any other version of the Creed until AD 650.

Rufinus (the only one who included it before 650) thought it meant nothing more or less than “he was buried”. Only later did it come to be interpreted as a reference to a supposed mission by Christ to preach the gospel to the spirits of the departed some time between his death and resurrection.

“THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS”

Likewise the article on “the communion of saints” is a relatively late addition, being first found around the seventh century AD. Commentators understand it to refer to the communion with the saints in heaven. It has since taken on a wider meaning: the fellowship of all true believers, living and departed.

These last two clauses could not be accepted by a conditionalist (at least in the sense which they are now commonly understood), but they are late intruders. On historical and Scriptural grounds they might justly be removed from the Apostles Creed.

WHERE IS ETERNAL TORMENT?

It is note worthy that the Apostle’s Creed, though it speaks of Christ’s coming to judge the living and the dead, says nothing about the eternal torment of the wicked.

The Nicene creed was the first creed to obtain universal acceptance. The original Creed dates from the Council of Nicaea, AD 325, which met for the settlement of the Arian controversy. The Nicaeno - Constantinopolitan Creed of 381 is substantially the same. The Nicene Creed is more explicitly Trinitarian than the Apostles’ Creed, but it contains nothing that the Conditionalist can not agree with.

**We believe in one God, the Father, Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth ,
And of all things, visible and invisible.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only begotten Son of God,
Begotten of the Father,
God of God, Light of Light,
Very God of Very God,
Begotten, not made,
Being of one substance with the Father;
By whom all things were made;
Who for us men and for our salvation,
came down from heaven:
And was incarnate by the Holy Spirit
of the Virgin Mary,
And was made man;
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
And suffered and was buried.
And the third day he rose again,
according to the Scriptures;
And ascended into heaven
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
And he will come again in glory to judge the
living and the dead,
Whose kingdom will have no end.
And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
and Giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father *and the
Son*.
Who with the Father and the Son together is
worshipped and glorified;
Who has spoken by the Prophets.
And we believe in one holy catholic and
apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the for-
giveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

The words “and the Son” are not found in the original Greek versions of the Creed. Neither the Western nor Eastern versions of this most widely accepted Creed contain any reference to the “descent into hell” or the communion of saints”. There is no mention of eternal torment as the fate of the wicked.

A Conditionalist can agree whole heartedly with the Nicene Creed!

Chalcedon And The Athanasian Creed

The Creed of Chalcedon (c. 451) embraced all that had gone before. While the previous creeds spoke of the divinity of Christ, the Chalcedonian Definition focused on the relationship of that divinity to his humanity, all of which the Conditionalist may accept.

“Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognised in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets from earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the fathers has handed down to us.”

Those who made the Chalcedon Definition declared the Creed of Nicaea “sufficient for the full

acknowledgement and confirmation of the true religion; for it teaches completely the perfect doctrine concerning the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and fully explains the Incarnation of the Lord to those who receive it faithfully.”

The Athanasian Creed is a summary of the doctrinal decisions of the first four ecumenical councils from AD 325 to 451 and Augustinian speculation on the Trinity. .

Conclusion

There is nothing in the Old Roman form of the Apostle’s Creed to which a “Conditionalist” can not give whole hearted support. The older forms contain no mention of the disputable “descent into hell” or “the communion of saints”. The Apostle’s Creed, speaks of Christ’s coming to judge the living and the dead, but says nothing of the eternal torment of the wicked. The Nicene Creed does not refer to the “descent into hell” or the communion of saints”. There is no mention of eternal torment as the fate of the wicked. A Conditionalist can agree whole heartedly with the Nicene Creed. The Athanasian Creed and Chalcedonian Definition only expand our understanding of the person and work of the Godhead. In the end what matters is the Word of God, not the word of human Creeds and Council. But, as a matter of historical record, if this is “orthodoxy” then Conditionalism can be orthodox!



Pastor David Burge
President of the Conditional Immortality Assn
and Pastor of Takanini Church of Christ and
Randwick Park Advent Church

I don't have all the answers! In fact I don't know all the questions. But I do keep seeking and searching, asking and examining, probing and prodding, trying to understand more and more of the Christian faith. I don't like just accepting teaching, doctrines and beliefs at face value (Although I tend to do that with people - sometimes I'm accused of being a bit naïve or gullible). But when I am exposed to anything that falls under the broad term "Christian", I like to try and see how it fits in with my overall world-view, which I endeavour to make a Biblical one. If it doesn't fit I ask "Why?" Is it my world-view that is wrong, or is there something flawed in the teaching or presumptions behind the teaching. Although we will never have all the answers, nor complete understanding, it is reasonable to believe that God is consistent and therefore our faith should also be logical and consistent, certainly not self-contradictory. So I ask questions. One area that I have been asking questions of for a number of years concerns music and the Holy Spirit.

What is the relationship between music and moves of the Holy Spirit?

What does the New Testament say concerning this relationship? (Virtually nothing!!)

Why is the New Testament, and in particular Jesus, all but silent about music?

Why do we have to resort to pre-Pentecost times, particularly the Psalms, to justify the claims about the relationship which are made (or assumed) today between music and the Spirit?

What is the relationship between the power of music and the power of the Holy Spirit?

Does the Holy Spirit more effectively use one type of music, e.g. Hillsong, over another, e.g. hymns?

Did/ does the Holy Spirit ever use hymns?

A number of years ago I was overseas speaking at a church service and afterwards one of the women in the congregation asked me, "Does your church (sic) sing hymns or do they worship God?"

That triggered a whole host of questions from me, although I refrained from asking most of them at the time.

What do you mean by worship?

Have we lost sight of the real meaning of worship?

Has worship got more to do with an attitude of heart/ mind/ life or the type of music we sing?

Has worship got more to do with an attitude of heart/ mind/ life or the feeling we get when we sing?

I can't answer all the questions. I'm not going to try here anyway. But I do know that in seeking answers to questions such as these there is a dangerous move away from objective, biblical truth towards subjective, 'spiritual' 'truth'. All too frequently I hear people say "God told me" How did He tell them? By the still, small voice of God (the Holy Spirit speaking in their heart). Sounds biblical doesn't it? Yet when I look to the one and only occurrence of that phrase, "the still small voice" (of God) in 1 Kings 19:12 I find more questions than answers. Apart from all the unfulfilled promises often given in God's name by such people what really got me questioning was the NRSV's radically different translation of that phrase as 'the sound of sheer silence'. Going to the commentaries I find that all who do ask about the meaning acknowledge it is a difficult phrase in the Hebrew with uncertain meaning. In context the NRSV's suggestion does seem to fit better - because it is after the silence that Elijah steps out of the cave and then God speaks audibly to him. Whatever the case, how much weight should we put on one verse, of uncertain meaning, written long before Pentecost?

What's this got to do with Conditional Immortality? Well sometimes we are accused of basing our beliefs on what we feel God ought, or ought not, be like, rather than on objective, biblical truth. But surely the picture of God as an eternal tormentor ought to make us feel uneasy. That should be enough to want us to ask questions; to seek consistency in our understanding of a God who loves the world so much that He sends His one and only Son to die for us, yet apparently also is capable of the most inhuman torture imaginable (no human can torture for more than a life time). But our conclusions, our beliefs and doctrines concerning judgment and annihilation go beyond how we feel, to the very heart of Scripture which reveals God as just, and human beings as mortal beings of dust. I believe in Conditional Immortality not because of my feelings, but because prompted by my unease, I sought truth in the Scripture. And that, of course, is the only reliable source of truth.

Carl Josephson

Two Important Events in 2000

Annual Dinner

Speaker: Pastor Carl Josephson
(Recently appointed to Owairaka Baptist Church
and editor of this magazine)

Date: Saturday June 24, 2000

Venue: Carey Park Camp
Henderson Valley Road
Auckland

Time: From 3.30pm to 9.00pm

The business and reports of the Association,
including election of officers,
will be presented during the first part
of the evening.

RSVP June 17th

Visit of Dr Edward Fudge

Author of a number of books including *The Fire That Consumes*, Dr Fudge has a Doctorate of jurisprudence and a masters in biblical languages. He has lectured or spoken at numerous universities and seminaries in the U.S. and on radio and television.



Dr Fudge will be here from August 11-24, 2000 and will be speaking at a number of churches, colleges, and a dinner, etc. More details will be given later.

This will be a significant event for us so please begin to plan to be around for this.

This Newsletter was produced,
printed and published by:
Resurrection Publishing
PO Box 100-010
North Shore Mail Centre
Auckland
New Zealand
(Editor: Carl Josephson)
Email - respub@world-net.co.nz
Website - www.afterlife.co.nz