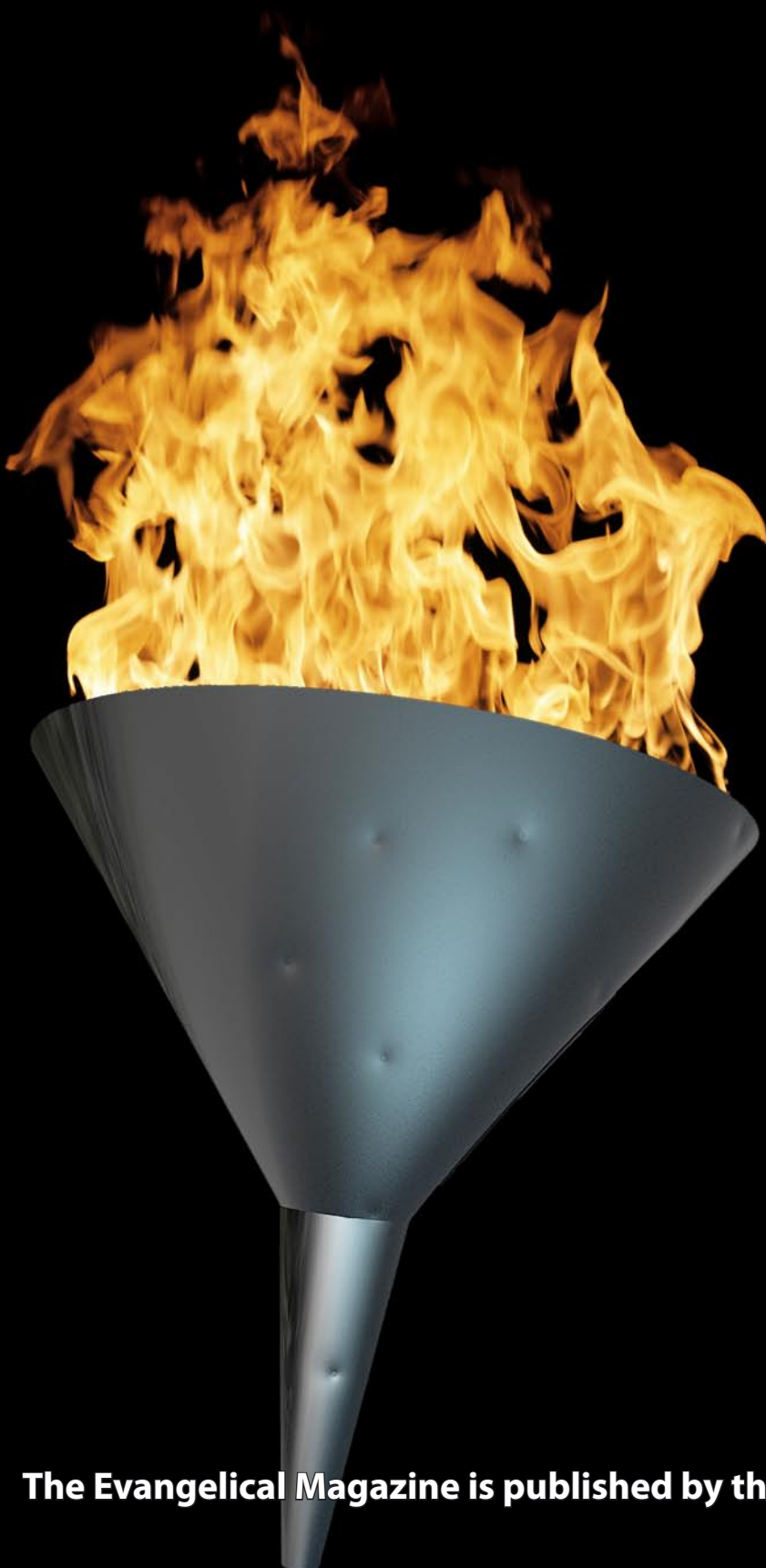


The Evangelical Magazine

September/October 2004 £1.50



Passing on the Torch

**Where have all the
young men gone?**

Nurture and growth

Days of blessing

**Denominations
and secessions**

**The times they
are a-changing**

The way ahead

The great distraction

**Where do new
preachers come from?**

The Evangelical Magazine is published by the Evangelical Movement of Wales

The Evangelical Magazine is published bimonthly and promotes and witnesses to the historic evangelical faith of the Christian Church.

The views expressed by individual contributors to this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Board or of the publishers. Advertisements, while accepted in good faith, do not carry the Board's endorsement.

Publishers

Evangelical Movement of Wales
 Bryntirion
 Bridgend
 CF31 4DX
 Wales, UK
 Tel: 01656 655886
 Fax: 01656 665919
 E-mail: office@emw.org.uk

Editorial Board

Mark Barnes
 Andrew Christofides
 Spencer Cunnah
 Graham Hind
 Chris Jenkins
 Peyton Jones
 Huw Kinsey
 Menna Thomas
 Keith Vine

Consulting Editors

Revd Stephen Clark
 Revd Philip Eveson
 Revd Graham Harrison
 Revd Stuart Olyott

September 2004 Volume 43 No.5

ISSN 1743-4092

© Bryntirion Press 2004

Editorial — Where

This is not the story of every church, but it is the story of one. It could also be the story of many others.

The church was situated on Pleasant Street. It hadn't always been there, but only a few elderly members could remember its early history. In recent years it had enjoyed the ministry of the Rev. E.V.R. Faithful. He was a godly and gifted man who expounded the Word of God systematically. Under his ministry the church had enjoyed quite a period of blessing. The church officers were spiritually minded, the prayer meeting was well attended, an evangelistic spirit ran through the whole fellowship, and the church was characterized by love and unity.

Almost everyone was disappointed, but nobody panicked, when Mr. Faithful announced that he would soon be retiring. The moment came before anyone could dare believe it. The really big difference after his departure was that there was no longer any systematic teaching. Every Sunday saw a different man in the pulpit. This proved to be a blessing, however, because it taught the church that there were many true servants of Christ who were not at all like their retired minister. Men could be Christ-centred preachers of the Word and yet vary enormously in style and emphasis. Inevitably this raised a question in every member's mind: what will our next pastor be like?

Static Place

It was during the pastoral vacancy that the church moved from Pleasant Street to Static Place. After a little while, the work stopped advancing and began marking time. The services were less well attended. A few members left. Others became critical of this preacher or that; and there was also some fault-finding with regard to the leadership. Somehow, the spirit of prayer seemed less evident in the mid-week meeting. Zeal for evangelism declined. New initiatives tended to be shelved. The general feeling, however, was that everything would improve when the new minister came.

But he didn't come. For one reason or another, none of the many visiting preachers seemed right for the pastorate. Theological colleges, various training courses, associations of churches and well-known ministers were all asked to make recommendations, but no suitable names could be suggested. This prompted the church to make the future of the pastorate a matter of earnest prayer. But nothing happened. And so it was, after a couple of years, that the church moved again. It now met each Sunday, and during the week, on Bewildered Hill.

Bewildered Hill

Almost at once, the church realized that it could not stay on Bewildered Hill for more than a few months. Apparently anything built on that hill was in danger of subsidence and imminent collapse. But where could they go? A number of different possibilities were explored. Groups of members went in turn to have lengthy looks at sites and properties in Panic Walk, Despair Close, Tension Crescent, Dispersal Square and Recrimination Lane, to name but a few. By this time the church members could not agree on very much, but they did all manage to agree that none of these places was where a church ought to be. While waiting for a better solution, they decided to move to a forgotten property in a nameless cul-de-sac. After all, there

Inside...

Nurture and Growth (Neville Rees).....	4
Days of Blessing (Geraint Morgan).....	6
Denominations and secessions (Sulwyn Jones) ..	8
The times they are a-changing (Geraint Fielder)	10
The way ahead (David M Green).....	12
The great distraction (D Eryl Davies).....	14
Where do new preachers come from? (Chris Jenkins) .	16
A scandalous attack on the cross (Martin Downes).	18
Kelvin Olsen-Vetland	20
Letters	21
Update	22

re have all the young men gone?

was nowhere else to go. The trouble was that it looked as if they might have to stay there for ever.

That would definitely have been the case if it had not been for something said to them by Mr. Olaf Grace. He was a visiting preacher whom nobody could forget. Most other preachers tended to give messages focusing on what Christians must do, while Mr. Grace beamed with kindness and stressed what God had done and promised. At the end of one of his services he asked the church members whether they might consider moving to a low-lying and rather despised part of town. If they were, he knew of three empty terraced cottages that stood on Repentance Steps. If these cottages were joined together, they would make a very suitable home for a church like theirs.

Repentance Steps

The estate agent had lost interest in these properties. He gave the members half a dozen old keys and told them to show themselves around. None of the keys fitted, except for one—and this one happened to fit each of the three front doors. The members noticed that the useless keys, which they threw away, were all made by a well-known and respected company called Rules and Rules. The useful key had a completely different shape and seemed to be made of precious metal. On it was written a single word: 'Tears'.

No.1 Repentance Steps carried the name 'Little Prayer'. With Tears the church members went inside. There they saw things they had never seen before. They realized that although they were now praying that the Lord would give them a new pastor, in fact this prayer was quite selfish. In all their happy years with Mr Faithful they had hardly ever prayed that the Head of the Church would raise up men for the pastoral ministry. It had simply not been a note sounded in their prayer meetings. In addition, their prayers for pastorless churches had never been more than sporadic. This had been a terrible neglect. And here they were, suddenly expecting the Lord to bring a man to them. Their only reason for their urgent prayer was that it was their church that was now at stake. What selfishness! What guilty selfishness! The whole church knelt together in the first cottage and confessed its sin to the Lord.

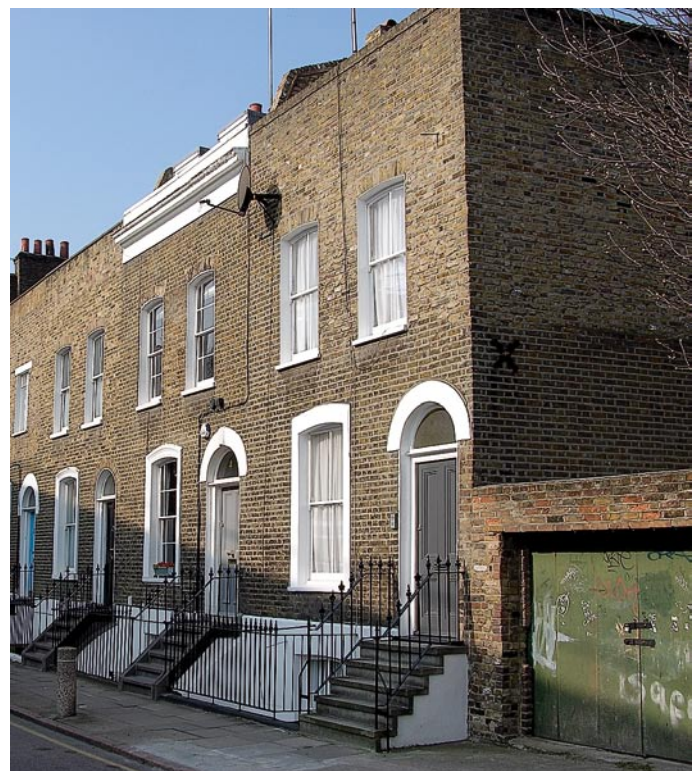
No 2 Repentance Steps carried the name 'Little Support'. With Tears the church members went inside. There also they saw things they had never seen before. They realized that they were probably expecting their new pastor to come to them from an existing college or training course. But what had they done through the years to support and encourage such colleges and courses? They looked through the appropriate minute books and accounts to find out. London Theological Seminary, the Evangelical Theological College of Wales, the EMW's Theological Training Course, Prepared For Service, etc., hardly figured there at all. True, they had prayed for them from time to time. They had also sent them an occasional gift. But there had been no commitment to them, despite their very serious lack of resources. But here they were, expecting one or another of the colleges and courses to be able to help them find a pastor! What hypocrisy! What terrible hypocrisy! The whole church knelt together in the second cottage and confessed its sin to the Lord.

No 3 Repentance Steps carried the name 'Little Flair'. With Tears the church members went inside. There too they saw things they had never seen before. They realized that they were expecting a man to come to them out of the blue, trusting that whatever his training, some like-minded church may have helped him on his way. But what had they done themselves to help young men in this way? What practical steps had they taken to identify and to develop latent gifts of ministry and leadership? They could easily have set up a training class or reading circle for the younger men of the church. They could have given them modest opportunities to minister in public, to see if the root of the matter was in them. They could have exhorted them to prayerfully consider the pastoral ministry at those points when they had decisions to make about their future. But they hadn't. And here they were, trusting that some other church had done it instead! What inconsistency! What shameless inconsistency! The whole church knelt together in the third cottage and confessed its sin to the Lord.

Upward and forward

No-one can express how humbling it was for the church to move in to the three cottages on Repentance Steps. This story has been written to show you that it was the best thing they ever did. The three dwellings were soon joined together to make a meeting place. The room was never particularly comfortable, but it was wonderfully filled with light. Then, one by one, adjoining cottages were added. Over a period of time the church seemed, as it were, to literally climb the steps. At last a door was added at the top end of the terrace. I suppose you have guessed on which street the new entrance was situated. You are right. The church was once again on Pleasant Street!

Stuart Olyott, the guest writer of this editorial, is the Pastoral Director of EMW and a consulting editor of the Evangelical Magazine.



Nurture and growth

Neville Rees



There is a mystery about conversion that causes you to wonder all the time; but perhaps there is a greater mystery attached to being called of God to preach the Gospel and to serve Him and pastor a people—‘Who is sufficient for these things?’

God’s call

I was a teenager when the Lord graciously took hold of my life, but as I sought a career in banking, He began directing me in the way of Gospel preaching until, in a missionary meeting, when we were being challenged to consider serving the Lord overseas, He confirmed in my heart that I was to serve Him at home in Wales. It was as simple, and yet as clear, as that.

Of course, where to serve was the big question. I was directed by a wise and caring father to study at the Congregational Theological College, and later to seek the Lord as to which of the churches that made approaches to me I should serve. It was in July 1962 that I took up the task at Libanus, Morriston. Many commented, ‘You are not going there, are you?’ but I knew clearly that it was where I was to be. For a whole week the Lord gave me His confirmation in my daily reading of the Scriptures—‘Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city’ (Acts 18:9-10).

Fear and trembling

It was in fear and trembling that I applied myself to the task in hand. Libanus was a run-down church. The congregation was elderly and had known unpleasant experiences with the last two pastors. There was one dear, elderly lady, grounded in the Scriptures, who encouraged me each Sunday. Speaking in Welsh, knowing that others around did not understand, she said, ‘Ardderchog! Glanha’r eglwys’ (Excellent! Clean the church.) It was hard, distressing work. Repairs to the building had to be tackled with no money and no workers. Re-establishing the prayer meeting, starting up children’s work, youth work and the young wives meetings had to be faced. God had given me a wonderful, gifted wife, and together we worked and worked and prayed and prayed. With young children, the pressures increased, as did the demands. Again I felt insufficient for the task. In 1968 things began to come to a head, and in 1969, when I was about to give up, God clearly stepped in. I was encouraged

LTS Preparing Preachers & Pastors

Full time - two years
Part-time courses and individual modules available.
Training that is intellectually demanding, spiritually helpful and practically relevant.

25 years of service to the churches

Write for a prospectus to:
The Principal,
London Theological Seminary,
104 Hendon Lane,
London, N3 3SQ.

TELEPHONE: 020 8346 7587
E-MAIL: principal@lts.u-net.com
WEBSITE: www.lts.u-net.com

by my wife, Beryl, not to give up and further encouragement came from the late Revd John Thomas and his wife Eluned, Revd Vernon Higham and his wife Morwen, and a father and mother who were always there. By the grace of God we had seen some conversions. Others came and went. Yet, little by little, year by year, the Lord added such as should be saved. Our burden was that men would emerge to take up positions of leadership in the church, and slowly but surely our prayer was answered. Membership in the church became based on personal experience of the Lord. Office bearers were to accept and believe wholeheartedly in a Declaration of Faith and slowly the work moved forward.

A reaping

All this was a reformation work and was taking the church back to its origins of true biblical congregationalism. It was like Elijah's task of rebuilding the altar after the devastation of the false prophets. We too were seeing a little of the fire falling. Perhaps the greatest encouragement for us, which confirmed our being where the Lord wanted us to be, was in 1973 and 1976 when the late Dr D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones came to preach on the Anniversary of 100 years as an English-speaking church, and then, later, to celebrate the rebuilding of the schoolroom. Conversions took place on both occasions. In addition, there were the regular visits of my late father, Revd Luther Rees. Both men of God encouraged us by saying they had been privileged to be reapers where others had sown.

Providentially, developments within Congregationalism caused us not to join the United Reformed Church in 1972, but to turn for support and fellowship to the Evangelical Fellowship of Congregational Churches and the Evangelical Movement of Wales. The EMW Annual Conference at Aberystwyth was attended regularly by the family and slowly some of the converts began to attend with us. The EMW summer camps began to feature prominently in the life of the church and from time to time the church built missions into its programme. As early as 1971 the late Revd Alan Tovey led a student mission, as did John Williams in 1982. Children's missions with Harvey Challenger and Glenys Nolan of the Bible Club Movement, and Dr David Norbury (then of Wrexham) also featured. In 1992, 1994, 1996 and 1998 we turned to the Association of Evangelists and were assisted by Roger Carswell, Paul Hinton and Jem Hudson. In 2002 Peter Anderson and Derek Cleaves of Christian Ministries led a week's mission.

Evangelism

Evangelism has always been to the fore throughout our ministry. As a church we longed, and still do, for people of all ages to be



saved. There were times when individuals were laid on our hearts in prayer. Others were befriended. Such has been this evangelistic thrust that for five years, from 1995 to 2000, the church called Allan Rees as an evangelist to work in the community, which involved work in schools, youth work, and children's 'Missions in the Park'. In 2000 the church called Jason Carroll to be the full-time youth and community worker. At this time a disused restaurant/pub opposite the church was purchased and refurbished with a youth coffee bar and other rooms for evangelism. Centrepoint is also used by Swansea Pregnancy Crisis Counselling and some of our lady members have attended training courses to assist in this work. In 2003 the church appointed one of its deacons, Haydn Rees, to carry out door-to-door work for two days a week. Our Mothers and Toddlers Group on Tuesday and Friday mornings is generally full of young mothers and children who, initially, have no involvement in the church. The local church, which was at one time in Wales the centre of village and community life, has lost its impact and relevance in recent years. We were convinced that the Lord had brought us to Morryston, and so we longed to see the gospel of our Saviour affecting the whole community.

Days of grace

As we look back over the years, we are amazed and humbled. Many have been the tears, struggles and prayers as we sought under God to fulfil His initial directive and promise, 'I have many people in this city'. Under His goodness and by His grace alone we have seen a true Church of the Lord develop which meets the definition of a Congregational Church: 'a gathered company of the redeemed covenanting together in a locality under the Saviourhood and Lordship of Christ'. We came to a mission-field situation. Yes, there were buildings. Yes, there was a congregation. But, generally, all was run down; hope was nearly gone; the future was bleak. Yet, the Lord is unchanging. The days of grace are still with us. He has promised much and we are to enter into all that He is and has. However, this is only one small locality affected by His salvation. Our longing, our continuing prayer, is that the Lord will do a great work, a new thing, throughout the whole land of Wales. In our days of prayer we call upon God to visit us again, come down among us so that the mountains, whether big or small, may melt and flow at His presence.

Neville Rees is the retired minister of Libanus Evangelical Church, Morryston, Swansea.



Days of blessing

Geraint Morgan

Go... tell... how much the Lord has done for you (Mark 5:19). These words of Jesus remain true throughout the years and the converted person always has a personal tale to tell of the Lord's gracious dealings. But there are times when conversions occur on a wide scale and the 1940s and 1950s in Wales were such a time.

The years 1945-1952, in particular, were a period when the Lord visited Wales in a remarkable way and there are still many people alive who can look back to that time with real thankfulness to the Lord for what He did. Of course, it would be wrong to think that nothing had happened in Wales from an evangelical standpoint in the decades after the 1904 Revival and before the 1940s, but it was nevertheless a period of much confusion.

After the '04 Revival

After the 1904 Revival a plethora of Gospel Halls and Missions arose to add to the Brethren Assemblies that already existed. These were mostly in South Wales. They varied greatly in quality but they did possess an evangelistic zeal, which meant that the truth concerning the necessity of the new birth was not an unknown doctrine to people generally in their areas. Many of these people were forthright and

fearless in their witness to the Saviour and they really believed the Bible to be the Word of God, endorsing their faith by their godly lives. Meanwhile, the mainline denominations were being influenced by liberal theology, the social gospel and cultural activities. The result of this was that the converts of 1904, who had remained within their denominations, were not as well grounded in the truth as they might have been. However, some ministers, who had been blessed in the revival, did continue preaching faithfully but there was often tension in their churches. Expository preaching was very rare in those days though not entirely non-existent. Here and there the Spirit of God moved in blessing in some areas before 1945 but these were localized.

A movement of God's Spirit

So, what did happen in the 1940s? Was there anything new or different? Yes, there was. There was a marked movement of God's Spirit among young people—and I emphasize that. It began among students, but the effects were to be found outside the colleges in the community at large although the two are closely intertwined. Many found forgiveness for their sins in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross and they were filled with a great desire to share the gospel with their families, friends and neighbours. Many of the students who were blessed at this time were from the Llanelli area and met together during their vacations to pray for their town. But this burden of prayer did not originate with them. Already in Llanelli, for some time a number of godly people had been meeting monthly to pray for God to visit the area in blessing and these gave tremendous support to the students when, in the summer of 1945, they arranged an evangelistic campaign in the town.

There are many people in Wales today who can look back with gratitude to God for that campaign during which they experienced a mini-revival—for that is what it undoubtedly was! Remarkable open-air meetings were held when people would come out of the pubs, forgetting their beer, gripped by the message they heard. There was a felt presence of the Lord in those meetings as well as in those conducted in the largest chapel in the town. There were over a hundred converts that week and every effort was afterwards made to establish them in their new-found faith. This was done by means of a solid hour or more of Bible Study on Saturday evenings, meetings that continued for several years and averaged a hundred in attendance. Over 20% of these converts went into full-time Christian ministry.

To celebrate the centenary of the 1904 Welsh Revival

Tabernacle Baptist Church
Hannah Street, Porth
Minister: R N Evans BA MSc

R B Jones Memorial Lecture
Speaker: Dr Noel Gibbard (ETCW)

Friday November 26th 2004
7:30pm

Rev R B Jones, was a former minister of
the church (1919-33) and was involved
in the Welsh Revival of 1904

Evangelistic campaigns

The summer of 1946 was a very busy one for the students as they conducted evangelistic campaigns in several villages around Llanelli. These were greatly owned of God, with some people who had backslidden being restored and many others converted. In the same year, at a campaign in Ammanford, two ordained ministers were converted and that campaign was also characterized by very powerful open-air meetings. The following year a ten-day campaign at Pontarddlais saw older as well as young people converted and once more there were some memorable open-air meetings. Both in Ammanford and in Pontarddlais weekly Bible Study meetings were arranged and these were also attended by others who were converted in succeeding months. The meeting in Pontarddlais continued regularly for about fifteen years. These weekly meetings proved to be a life-line for the converts of these various campaigns for most of them belonged to churches where there was no clear and regular gospel ministry.

North Wales

What was happening in North Wales at this time? One needs to remember that generally there had not been the evangelical witness here as was the case in the south. There were not many Mission Halls and the number of evangelical ministers in the traditional denominations was very small. But here also in the 1940s the Holy Spirit moved in a new way, again initially among students. The gospel became a talking-point at the University of Bangor as one after another of the students, who were already religious chapel-goers, were converted and bore open testimony to this fact. The Holy Spirit was also at work outside the colleges, and in far-flung corners of North Wales people were being converted. One consequence was the establishing of a weekly fellowship meeting in Bala which throughout the winter of 1947-48 spent much time in prayer for an evangelistic campaign that they proposed to conduct in the town in Easter 1948. God worked mightily in the hearts of a large number during that campaign. The whole town seemed to be electrified as it heard the preaching of the gospel in power and endorsed by the many testimonies given in word and song. One significant result of this campaign was the publication of the bi-monthly Welsh magazine: *Y Cylchgrawn Efengylaidd* (The Evangelical Magazine), with the aim of nurturing the converts in the Christian faith and also of presenting a clear gospel message to unbelievers. This was a venture of faith done with no capital or financial backing—and God blessed the venture. Young Christians distributed the magazine up and down the length and breadth of Wales.

The national eisteddfod

Meanwhile evangelistic campaigns had continued to be held in numerous places both in South and North Wales during the summer of 1948 and the spring of 1949. Many were

converted including one ordained minister in North Wales. A new departure was the setting up of a Christian literature tent on the National Eisteddfod field in Dolgellau in August 1949. This was the first occasion for many Christians from North and South Wales to have the opportunity to co-operate in an outreach of this nature, and friendships were formed that week that have spanned the years. Several notable things occurred during this Eisteddfod including the conversion of one person while competing on the stage. A Welsh radio programme and a secular Welsh-language newspaper both drew attention to the evangelistic efforts of that week. Indeed the Evangelical Movement of Wales can trace its origin to the publication of the first issue of the *Cylchgrawn Efengylaidd* at the close of 1948 and the remarkable series of events during the National Eisteddfod in the summer of 1949.

By this time *seiadau* (fellowship meetings) were springing up in many places in Wales and were very influential in the developing of the spiritual lives of young Welsh-speaking Christians, many of whom lived in isolated situations as far as Christian fellowship was concerned. One such *seiat* was held monthly at Chester, outside Wales. It catered for people from as far afield as the Wirral and Liverpool, North-East Wales and North Montgomeryshire and even Shrewsbury. It was a welcome spiritual oasis in what was, generally speaking, a dry and desert land.

Consolidation

1950, 1951 and 1952 witnessed a few more noteworthy campaigns, while the summer of 1952 saw the first of the EMW Annual Welsh Conferences. After 1952 we enter a period of consolidation and it was in the following years that the pattern we know today was formed. The name Evangelical Movement of Wales was adopted, an office opened, the summer camps started, an English magazine published (The Evangelical Magazine of Wales) and the annual English Conference and the Ministers' Conference established. By this time several of the men who had participated in the early campaigns were in the Christian ministry where they saw blessing under their preaching in their chapels and in the rallies they organized in their areas. The work was developing in several parts of Wales—and in some places rapidly.

Yet the initial wave of blessing that had given rise to it all was passing and it would seem that the years 1945-52 are really the years in which we heard 'the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees' (2 Sam. 5:24), and were given grace to 'bestir' ourselves and found the Lord went before us.

May God grant us another day of visitation.

Geraint Morgan is the retired minister of Ebenezer Evangelical Church, Bangor and the former minister of the Welsh Evangelical Church, Colwyn Bay.

Denominations and secessions

Sulwyn Jones

Men entering the ministry in the 50s and early 60s fully intended to live out their ministries within denominations whose foundational truths they had inherited and heartily embraced. However, the churches in the main were departing ever further from their own principles, causing increasing tensions and frustrations for evangelicals. Basic biblical issues were raised and battles fought in church periodicals and on the floor of church assemblies. By the mid-60s evangelicals were giving much thought to the true nature of a New Testament church. The Evangelical Movement of Wales brought out a detailed study on *The Christian Church*—highlighting obvious

practical implications for the time. Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones constantly reminded men that the two supreme issues for our day were not only What is a Christian?, but also What is the Church? It was becoming more and more clear to evangelical men that they and the truths of the gospel they held dear were increasingly sidelined within denominational structures. They began to seriously question the morality of belonging to church bodies that had long departed from basic Christian truth. Moreover, by association with such structures, were they guilty of compromising the gospel itself, and giving out false signals to an unbelieving world?

Severing connections

What happened at Hebron Baptist Church, Dowlais, in this period was typical of a number of situations in Wales and further afield. The tensions noted above came to a head for the minister and church at Hebron in the early seventies. The incoming president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, Dr Michael Taylor, in his presidential address denied the essential deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The church at Dowlais was affiliated to the Welsh Baptist Union, rather than the English, but the church agreed unanimously that the above was our cue to sever our connection with every church body that had succumbed to liberalism. This for us meant withdrawing from the Welsh Baptist Union and the Free Church Council.

This decision and its immediate effects for the church were relatively painless, in contrast to other churches for whom secession was difficult. We were in possession of our trust deeds,



Bryn-y-groes Autumn Break (for older Christians)

11–16 October 2004
Hosted by Revd & Mrs Jim Webber

The break will provide fellowship and ministry as well as opportunities to visit some beautiful locations in North Wales. The week will begin with a three course meal at 6.00pm on Monday and end with breakfast on Saturday.

Contact Dave & Pat Wilmot for more details
01678 520752 conferencecentre@emw.org.uk

and therefore were not to be involved in any bruising legal wrangles. The denomination dealt courteously with our disaffiliation. Our decision was not taken lightly, for we highly valued our Baptist heritage and principles which we had in no way abandoned. It was, of course, inevitable that our action led to the severing of links with individuals and churches with whom we had enjoyed fellowship. The minister was barred from denominational pulpits and Hebron was isolated in terms of fellowship with other churches. We were, however, convinced of the wrongness of being affiliated to a church body that had long since ceased to stand for the supreme authority of the Bible and the fundamental doctrines of the gospel which we held dear.

It is worth noting some lessons and dangers that arise from this early period of secession. Three areas of concern come readily to mind:

1. Isolationism

Men who had seceded, some after considerable hardship, would obviously be suspicious for a long time of anything that was suggestive of an interfering authority outside the local church. The very word 'denomination' was abhorrent. Over the past thirty years, this fear has probably been a very real factor in many men's minds.

Seceding churches came to feel increasingly isolated, and there was a growing awareness that in the New Testament churches, there was not only an awareness of one another's existence, but that they shared fellowship, and had a common faith and discipline. During the seventies and eighties, some ministers and churches throughout Wales came to a conviction that something more church-based was necessary than their affiliation to the Evangelical Movement of Wales, which was a non-church-based body. This led in 1988 to the formation of the Associating Evangelical Churches of Wales (AECW), an association of churches fully committed to the evangelical faith, and engaging together in evangelism, united prayer, and

encouraging mutual support and fellowship, especially at local level.

2. Tensions

It was almost inevitable that tensions would arise between men who had seceded and those who remained in the traditional denominations. Mistakes were made and harsh words spoken and written. Were evangelical men who had separated from non-evangelical bodies to separate also from evangelicals who remained in them (this was called 'secondary separation')? Would such fellowship be to incur 'guilt by association'? These attitudes were obviously very hurtful, and relations between brethren were sometimes strained to breaking point. In the mercy of God, and with the passage of time, harmony was restored. We learnt to respect wholeheartedly the good conscience of men of equally strong evangelical convictions who chose to continue in the denominations.

3. Baptism

It is worth noting a remarkable phenomenon in evangelicalism in Wales from the 60s to the present day. This is in regard to secondary issues, that is, issues not essential to our salvation, such as baptism and church order. Churches who seceded, with differing convictions on such matters, have lived in harmony and fellowship, with mutual respect, and united by our primary commitment to the gospel. We are profoundly grateful to the Lord for such a mark of the unity of the Spirit in our day.

Secession, the establishing of evangelical churches and the reformation of church life have not led directly to the revival we have longed for and prayed for. Churches and ministers who seceded have done so in obedience to the Lord of the Church as He reveals His will in His Word. Our confidence, however, is not in these necessary and continuing acts of reformation, but that He will graciously 'give the increase', and glorify His Name.

*Sulwyn Jones is the retired minister of
Hebron Baptist Church, Dowlais*

on your marks
get set **GO!**

Join over 100 students who are studying God's Word at ETCW, preparing to preach, pastor, teach, evangelise and serve in the UK or overseas.

- Flexible College accredited courses and an attractive correspondence course
- Optional degree and missions courses: BA, MA, MTh, MPhil, PhD
- Distance learning: BA

Degrees validated by Universities of Glamorgan and Wales.

**ETC
W** EVANGELICAL
THEOLOGICAL
COLLEGE OF WALES

Call for a prospectus
on 01656 645411,
e: secretary@etcw.ac.uk
or visit www.etcw.ac.uk



The times they are a-changing

Geraint Fielder

It was in February 1960 that Harold Macmillan, the British Prime Minister, spoke in Capetown of ‘winds of change’ blowing throughout Africa. A month later he was installed as Chancellor of Oxford University. He could well have applied the same image to the future of the universities and society at large in the UK. There were things ‘blowin’ in the wind’ that would change the whole climate of life. There had been straws in the wind from a previous generation. After the First World War a condition of national decline gathered momentum. An atmosphere of grey grimness mixed with frivolity and self-indulgence had certain features which anticipate the problems of the post 60s. In 1922 T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* was written, to be followed by *The Hollow Men* in 1925. Their mood of desolation, emptiness and doubt shows a world of lost people and lowering standards. Freudian psychology, as it related to sex, was interpreted by many as a good justification for abandoning self restraint. D H Lawrence, Aldous Huxley and James Joyce expressed the prevailing trend. ‘Debunking’ and agnosticism were fashionable among the trend-setters. Silent films were the new fascination in entertainment. It was only a matter of time before the new freedoms from restraint already seen in the novel were to be seen in a graphic way on the ‘talkies’ moving screen. Noel Coward’s ‘bright young things’, the attempt to shock through female fashions, jazz, the night clubs and the craze for parties, have a tameness about them from our perspective eighty years on. But they were the shape of things to come, the seeds of a much bigger revolt. The altered intellectual and moral landscape was to leave a bumpy ride for Christians. By the 60s it had arrived.

Changes of mind set

A few reminders of events of the sixties will help us get the feel of the times. They began with highlights of achievements in outer and inner space—Yuri Gagarin orbited the earth and Francis Crick gained the Nobel Peace Prize for cracking the DNA code. These heralded an absorption with the mechanistic view of the Universe and humankind. The Cuban crisis set the world’s nerve on edge, and the Berlin Wall cut it more deeply into two. TV brought us the horror of the assassination of John F. Kennedy and the spectacle of Winston Churchill’s state funeral. The changes of mood and mind-set were even more radical. In 1962 began TWTWTW—That was the week that

was—when BBC television began to preside over the destruction of the taste and discipline that had been its own strong point. In 1963 ‘sound’ became a new phenomenon; the Beatles were among the first to utilize its power to sway multitudes. The pop prophet had arrived. The way the beat generation ‘got across’ its message was to unsettle many Christians’ views on how to ‘get the gospel over’. Communicating Christianity seemed a problem, too, on the academic side. Humanism was assertive, and in 1963 Bishop Robinson’s *Honest to God* seemed to be saying that humanists and Christians were really one and the same ‘man come of age.’ In the Easter weekend of 1964 there was the first incidence of public youth violence when ‘Mods and Rockers’ clashed in Clacton. It was not a racial or unemployment eruption for this was a prosperous period—after all, the youngsters owned motor bikes! It was caused by inarticulated questions about identity and life’s purpose which were being shared across the board by university students. At the cultural end of the scale Peter Hall was holding the ‘theatre of cruelty’ in Stratford and shocking audiences with avant garde continental plays. By the following year, protest on the streets came to stay, with civil rights marches and then anti-war protest rallies. TV brought it all very close to home as television sets were owned by an ever-increasing number of homes.

Counter culture

It was not very long before people were breathing in the air of a new counter-culture with its scent of ‘pot’ and slogans of change. Drug-induced ‘kicks’ and ‘highs’ were part of the search for some transcendent experience that would fill the spiritual vacuum of an increasingly meaningless existence. It was looked on as a trip or ‘route to God’, but the experience was not transcendent at all but a chemically heightened inner consciousness which risked self-destructiveness. ‘I’ll die young but it’s like kissing God,’ said comedian Lenny Bruce about his use of drugs. The drug scene abounded with fatal substitutes for true religious experience. It abounded in hallucinogens and hallucinations. ‘I will lift my eyes to the pills’ was the way Malcolm Muggeridge captured its false attempt to find ‘God’. Formal religion was out, but increasingly large numbers of non-Christians studied religion because they were ‘into’ religious experience, gurus and god. Religious-type questions came flooding in from the pop prophets via the influence of eastern

religions. The influence of the east was not only behind the drug culture, it bathed it in religious light. The Divine Light Mission and the Hari Krishna Movement and variants on transcendental meditation had lots of outposts. This 'nowhere man in a nowhere land who knows not where he's going to' was really asking religious questions, but often in the most unreligious kind of way. The meaning or rather, lack of meaning, of life; authority or rather, the rejection of it; boredom, alienation, parental restrictions—these questions emanating from meaningless lives emerged in the lyrics. With student protest and the sexual revolution and the permissive society and the 'lawless' generation, the swinging sixties left its indelible mark on posterity. By the mid-seventies the counter-culture was so pervasive that it was seen in a milder form in the prevailing youth culture.

When Bob Dylan spotted something happening that the average Mr Jones could not put his finger on, it appears in retrospect to have been a wholesale crumbling of any real base for authority in anything. As foundations crumbled, so meaning shattered. John Lennon soon began to sing :

*Just like Dylan's Mr Jones,
Lonely, wanna die
If I ain't dead already.*

A generation that could coin the phrase, 'Is there a life before death,' was giving away, unawares, its admission that Ecclesiastes was right. Without God no human activity is meaningful. Neither pop, nor pit, nor the Pill could hide it forever.

Freedom

There was an emotional power and immediacy about slogans. If 'Love' and 'Freedom', the current slogans, were the answer, people, especially students, were more free to do their own thing. Freedom now meant it was easier to go to bed with a partner. 'The student "hall" is really just a block of flats with very little community. You meet only the ten others on your staircase. The atmosphere is tough—very vulgar pictures on some staircases and some people only move in there so that they can sleep with their boy/girl friends'. The developing moral situation in these years, first among the minority and then on a wider scale was grim. One university handout hardly reflects the brave hopes for the educational pursuit of excellence: 'Venereal disease must be contained since there have been outbreaks. If you should be unfortunate enough to contract this, again don't hesitate in going to the family planning centre. Don't bother in giving it to someone else—they won't appreciate

it too much'. The change in sexual morality patterns was quite dramatic when it came. Within a few years the rare became the norm and by the early seventies student health services were dispensing the pill to half the women in their third year. The combination of contraceptive machines, the pill, mixed halls of residence and the growing notion that sleeping together – even sleeping around – was normal, created some catastrophic situations which were to influence the increasing demand that abortion should be acceptable and normal rescue route. With the unchurched generation that grew up after the war there was little knowledge of the moral law of God. Noel Coward's 'Twentieth Century Blues' encapsulates the human predicament without God:

In this strange confusion, chaos or illusion


*People seem to lose their way,
Nothing left to strive for,
Love or keep alive for.*

The new culture


In 1975 the Times Educational Supplement analysed the counter-culture we have been sketching. In retrospect, from our standpoint thirty years on, it is evident how what was then the 'counter' has now on so many determinative issues become the culture itself:

It attacked ritual, form, boundaries, roles and certainties in every conceivable sphere. The boundaries most frequently under attack were those between public and private, decent and indecent, tabooed and available, sacred and profane, between art and ordinary life, good taste and vulgarity, between human and inhuman, male and female, man, animal and nature. The rejection of control in all its forms showed itself as a preference for randomness or chance over plan, for excess over balance, for the fantastic over the normal, for emotion over reason, for the ephemeral over the lasting, for immediacy over hard-won comprehension, for the purely personal and topical over the historically rooted image.

Geraint Fielder is a retired minister and the author of a number of books, including Excuse Me, Mr Davies, Hallelujah! and Lord of the Years, from which much of this material is taken.



William Tyndale
c.1494-1536



Trinitarian Bible Society

FOUNDED IN 1831 FOR THE CIRCULATION OF PROTESTANT OR UNCORRUPTED VERSIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD

New Wide Margin Concord Bible for 2004
Wide Margin Centre Reference Bible with concordance
Quality hardback Bible with Black Acrolin Cover

- Translators to the Reader ● Self-pronouncing text
- Glossary of Biblical Usage ● Maps and Index to Maps
- Blank ruled pages for own notes ● Head and Tail Bands

New Scripture Verse Posters for 2004
Our range of 'wayside pulpit' posters has been extended to 52.
Display Frames for outside of churches also available

New Children's Colouring Books for 2004
Set of six new colouring books on Scripture themes. Books contain 14 pages of Scripture texts and illustrations. Also includes Scripture passages for parents to read with the children.

New Greetings Cards for 2004
Two new packs of six cards - blank inside
1) Biblical landscapes - Colour photos of the Holy Land
2) Young People's Cards - Natural photographs with inset picture

New Foreign Language Publication for 2004
Spanish/English (AV) Diglot Gospel of John

The Society's New Catalogue includes:

- 1) Seven ranges of English Bibles published
- 2) Other English Scripture items
- 3) Non-English publications
- 4) Articles on text and translation

Please ask for a free copy of the new catalogue

Trinitarian Bible Society, Tyndale House, Dorset Road, London, SW19 3NN, England Tel.: 020 8543 7857 e-mail: orders@TBS-sales.org Online sales: www.TBS-sales.org

Reg. Charity No.: 233/062

The Way Ahead

David M Green

Men have been entering the ministry each year over the last four decades. In what sense can we speak of one distinct 'generation' of ministers (now approaching retirement) 'handing on the torch' to another poised to serve in their place? The aptness of this metaphor lies not so much in what has happened within the church in the last thirty or forty years as in what has taken place in our society and culture during that time.

Human nature has not changed, nor has the gospel as God's remedy for sinful humankind. Nevertheless, we can speak of different challenges facing men embarking on the ministry today from those which faced ministers a generation ago. Human nature may remain fundamentally the same but society and culture do not. Although the gospel does not change, the presentation of the gospel to people of differing cultures does. The apostle Paul was acutely aware of this, and presented the gospel to his audience in the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:16 ff) quite differently from the way he presented it on the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17:22 ff). In the former case, he was speaking to people who shared his veneration for the Hebrew Scriptures and whose cultural and moral norms were those of Judaism; in the latter, he spoke to people with a keen interest in philosophy, but no particular regard for, or veneration of, his cultural heritage as a Jew. This is somewhat analogous to the situation facing the Christian minister today. Whereas thirty or forty years ago he might have been addressing people who shared his Christian cultural heritage and who paid at least lip-service to the teachings of Christ, now he addresses those who

do not share many of his basic presuppositions about morality, spirituality and faith. The gospel of Christ crucified is no less the answer to their condition, nor is the core of the message to be altered, but in seeking to communicate it effectively, the gospel minister today stands in a

very different relationship to his hearers, whether he is addressing them evangelistically or pastorally.

It is impossible here to describe all the changes in Western culture that have resulted from the upheavals of the 1960s, or to define the shift from 'modernity' to 'post-modernity'. I can only highlight some of the resulting challenges specific (perhaps unique) to the age in which we live.

Sunday

Sunday used to be a day for church-going and Sunday School attendance. It was a day on which no work was done, no money changed hands and the family sat down together to a lunchtime roast. Today, Sunday has no religious significance for the overwhelming majority of people in Britain. For some it is one more working day, while for others it is the slightly more laid-back half of the weekend, a day for shopping, for sport, for clubbing. In such a climate, how are we to do justice to our view of Sabbath or Lord's Day? It is no longer appropriate simply to tell Christian people not to work on a Sunday, or not to take a job which requires them to work on a Sunday. We need to teach why God gave us a day of rest and worship, and how this principle can be put into practice in a non-Christian culture. Christians in many countries of the world have had to face these questions and now so do we.

Christianity and the State

The question of 'sabbath observance' raises the issue of the relationship between church and state. In what sense do people now think of the United Kingdom as a 'Christian' country, and what can we reasonably expect the state to do in promotion of the Christian faith. Can we expect Christianity to be taught in our schools? Should we decry the fact that it is not? What kind of coverage can we expect Christianity to be given in the media? The older generation may still regard the church as part of the fabric of life, but the younger generation does not. It is not their heritage, nor do they feel they have any stake in it. Many





Christians in their twenties and thirties find it embarrassing to have their faith associated with 'the church' in any traditional sense and this explains, in part, the need felt by many to redefine 'church' and even to dispense with the term altogether.

Authority

For the church to be regarded as part of the 'establishment,' is an embarrassment to many Christians of the post-1960 generation. This reflects a shift in attitudes towards authority which can hardly be overstated. Defiance of authority has been one of the defining characteristics of the last forty years and it means that the minister now has to exercise his authority very circumspectly indeed. He cannot expect his position as preacher or minister to command respect: he must earn it in the face of increased expectations and impatience with his limitations.

Family

Family life has never been more precious to people in Britain than it is today, as any wider sense of community dissolves. The family now is not quite what it was forty years ago, however. It has been redefined in the wake of a spiralling divorce rate, and the increase in cohabitation and single-parent families. The minister today treads a perilously thin line between maintaining and promoting a biblical view of marriage on one hand, and accepting and interacting with people whose lifestyle is far from it on the other. He must guide the church through the heart-rending issues of how to support and counsel couples whose marriages break down, whether to re-marry divorced people, how to approach young Christian couples who cohabit. It is inadequate to say that these things should never happen (or be named) among us. We live in a society which talks freely about sex and sexuality. Youngsters today are well-informed about the mechanics of sex, but ill-equipped to understand it within a framework of responsibility, commitment and faithfulness, let alone biblical teaching. Our being shocked will not help them, and to find a healthy and appropriate way to address these matters is as essential as it is painfully difficult.

Image-consciousness

In the austere world of the 1950s, people dressed to fit in; after the cultural upheavals of the 1960s, people dress to stand out. How people appear is so important now, even more than what they are. TV and latterly the internet revolution have flooded our world with visual imagery and the more exacting medium

of the word (printed and spoken) has struggled to compete. People are used to slick presentation and a visually stimulating environment. It may be unpleasant to face, but the way we appear speaks before we ever utter a word, and the teenager who may be regarded as verbally inarticulate is far more visually aware and sophisticated than his forebears ever were. He is receptive to the message of the adverts his parents find incomprehensible. Compared to the image-conscious world he lives in, he may find the atmosphere of the Church Service and Bible Study conceptually demanding, stylistically naive and visually unconvincing. In fact his parents too, who watch their share of TV, are not so tolerant of the preacher as he explains his text and develops his argument. He has less time now, and fewer resources at his disposal, to engage and keep their attention.

Salt and light

None of this should be taken to suggest that success in the ministry today can be achieved by clever strategic planning and careful cultural acclimatisation. The minister's empowerment by the Holy Spirit is crucial now, as it has always been. Nor is it to plead that the minister today faces a more difficult task compared to times past. But he does face a different set of problems in carrying out that task. Ironically, the greatest challenge facing the minister today may be to reconcile the two cultures divided by the cultural revolution of the 1960s: how to accommodate within one church two groups of people with radically different relationships to the Christian cultural heritage of the United Kingdom and equally strong views on the way ahead. The great divide we face in our churches today is not that between Jew and Gentile, but between the two generations separated by the rock and roll years. At the same time, the spiritual bankruptcy of affluence and the general cynicism today give great opportunities for Christians to proclaim a gospel of hope. The increasing rarity of commitment in relationships provides great opportunities for the church to stand out as a genuine community. The increasing artificiality of the life many lead today calls for Christians to demonstrate authentic and consistent Christ-like character. Never in living memory has the church had a greater opportunity to stand out as salt and light in a dark and decadent world.

David Green lectured on the History and Theory of Art & Design in Art Colleges before training for the ministry. He is now the minister of Bishopdown Baptist Church, Salisbury and teaches Hebrew at London Theological Seminary.





The Great Distraction

Looking back at the charismatic movement

D Eryl Davies

Exciting. Radical. Popular. Influential. These are just a few of the words which have been used to describe and applaud the charismatic movement and its impact on Christendom. This article argues that the charismatic movement can be viewed differently and as a great distraction.

However, I emphasize that there are lessons to learn from the movement. The need, for example, for a more intimate, dynamic relationship with the Lord is a vital lesson for us. The gifting and involvement of all believers within the church, an emphasis on prayer and warm, loving relationships amongst believers, concern for the needy and disadvantaged are other lessons which challenge us from within the charismatic movement.

Some people have also been genuinely blessed within the movement. And there are Charismatics, including some leaders, who are godly, zealous and Bible-believing Christians. The latter want nothing less than the glorifying of the Lord and the conversion of sinners.

Why criticize?

Why then criticize it? Despite these positive features, the main features and effects of the charismatic movement as a whole have tended to constitute a major distraction for Christians and churches over the past forty years. Before illustrating the point, we need to retrace our steps and provide a brief overview of the movement.

It emerged initially in the USA, then in England in the early 1960s. During the 1960s and especially the 1970s the movement's message was accepted and consolidated in many church denominations. In addition, it contributed significantly to the emergence of some New Church groupings as well as organizations like the Greenbelt Christian Rock Festival (1974) and Spring Harvest (1979). The latter, in particular, continues to popularize the charismatic movement's message with its distinctive worship style and spirituality.

Along with the Fountain Trust (established in 1964), the Evangelical Alliance gave the movement considerable prominence and respectability. For example, appointed in 1983 as its general secretary, Revd Clive Calver immediately asked his EA Council members to resign! Many of them were non-charismatic from various churches. A charismatic himself, Calver opened up the way for younger evangelicals, mostly charismatic, to be at the heart of the EA resurgence.

In the early years the movement taught, like classic Pentecostalism, post-conversion Spirit-baptism and the

continuity of spiritual gifts beyond the apostolic era, including revelatory and miraculous gifts. By the late 1960s, it had become more theologically diverse, moving away to a considerable extent from the Pentecostal teaching of Spirit-baptism evidenced in tongues-speaking. What further differentiated the charismatic movement from Pentecostalism was the deliberate policy of working within the various denominations, even if liberal and sacramentalist, and encouraging those with experiences of the Spirit and gifts to remain in their denominations rather than joining Pentecostal churches as had previously been the tendency.

How was it then a distraction for evangelicals?

It has tended to distract Christians from the authority and sufficiency of the revealed, written Word of God.

A two-hour continuous 'prophecy'! A group of twelve students told me all about it. Their response to the alleged prophecy was one of acceptance, caution and scepticism. The student who gave the 'prophecy' had recited but misunderstood and misapplied many Bible verses. Claiming to speak directly on behalf of the Lord, she warned there would be dire consequences if CU members refused to speak in tongues, arrange a 'gospel-concert' and open themselves up to further direct messages from the Lord.

Yes, it was a distraction from the Word itself—its sufficiency and supremacy. For several months consequently, these students became absorbed in argument, discussion and strife. They were distracted to some extent from seeking the Lord in his Word and in prayer. In this, and other ways, the charismatic movement has tended to play down the importance of objective, biblical truth.

A local Christian in another church claimed to have received a 'prophecy' and 'vision'. The 'vision' supposedly pictured all the Christians in my own church locked up in a prison. The walls and doors of the prison represented Bible doctrines; it was those doctrines, it was claimed, which held the Christians back from running out into liberty and joy. You can guess who the jailer was!

In this 'prophecy', the pastor was ordered to give less importance to Bible teaching, to be open to the Holy Spirit and fellowship with non-evangelical churches. Sadly, many of the Charismatics in the area exalted experience above the Bible; they majored on healing and deliverance ministries and supported excitable

preachers, despite their irresponsible and ludicrous interpretation of the Word. This was deception and a great distraction.

Or consider the example of a preacher invited to address a youth meeting. The instruction to the preacher is that he only has fifteen minutes to speak. However, the 'worship' part of the meeting continues for as long as ninety minutes before the Bible is even read or preached. Here young people are distracted from hearing God speak in His Word. Yes, there are exceptions, but one effect of the movement has been to prioritize on congregational singing, music, testimonies, personalities and dramatic presentation rather than the proclamation of God's Word.

The charismatic movement has distracted Christians from expressing real gospel unity.

The evidence is extensive but I want to identify two major developments in charismatic history.

Back in 1964, the Rev Michael Harper, a curate under John Stott in All Souls Church, London, launched the Fountain Trust after having claimed a charismatic experience. The purpose of the trust was specific: to establish the charismatic movement in the historic denominations. In 1980 the Fountain Trust was closed down 'because it had achieved great success in implanting vigorous renewal movements in each of the main denominations' (D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, p.236). While some people were genuinely converted in these different church groupings, the trust facilitated an interdenominational fellowship and bonding more on the basis of the charismata and a distinctive 'spirituality' rather than on the unique truths of the biblical gospel. Spirit-baptism was perceived as being more important than justification by faith alone and a theological looseness as well as ambiguity developed with regard to the gospel itself.

A further 'milestone' (K. H. Smith, *Evangelicals in the Church of England*, p.333) was the first international conference under Fountain Trust auspices at Guildford in 1971 when Roman Catholics and Protestants shared the platform together. Fountain Trust actively welcomed Roman Catholic Charismatics, collaborating closely with Catholic groups afterwards. This also has contributed to the converging in many areas of the charismatic movement and ecumenism but at the expense of gospel doctrines and unity.

The re-launch of the British Evangelical Council as Affinity earlier this year in a vigorous attempt to promote a biblical expression of gospel unity deserves our support as individual Christians and churches. It is a vital initiative.

The charismatic movement has tended to distract Christians from recognizing the need for revival.

There were stirrings of the Spirit in the 1940s, 1950s and early 1960s in the UK. Goodly numbers of people were converted and there was a growing concern for the Lord to visit His people in power. In this context, the term 'revival' referred to a sovereign, divine outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon believers. The only difference between the 'ordinary', ongoing work of the Spirit and revival was that of degree and intensity, not quality.

How did the charismatic movement distract some Christians? It is a complicated story but here are three pointers:

First, Pentecostal influence on some early leaders in the charismatic movement was significant. Rev Michael Harper, for example, appears to have been baptized with the Spirit listening to an exposition of Ephesians in 1962. It was a profound experience of the Lord. Months later he was heavily influenced by Larry Christenson and the Pentecostal leader, David du Plessis. Both urged him to speak in tongues. It was a distraction, and a genuine work of the Spirit was spoilt.

Secondly, numerous church and interdenominational prayer meetings for revival in England were sidetracked by accepting the charismatic movement's message that 'the first showers of revival' had appeared. Increasingly, there was talk of 'realized revival' and 'renewal'. It was a tragic distraction. There are encouraging signs, however, that some Charismatics are more aware of the need to pray for a genuine revival.

Thirdly, what about ourselves? Issues like the charismatic movement, ecumenism, secession, evangelism and 'worship' styles continue to absorb our attention. Are we ourselves distracted from seeking the Lord? I fear we may be.

D. Eryl Davies is the principal of the Evangelical Theological College of Wales and is the author of a number of books.

Bethlehem Evangelical Church Port Talbot

Visit of Dr Don Carson (USA) 21-24 October 2004

Thursday, 21 October, 7.30 p.m.

Rage against the Church (Rev. 12:1-13:1a)

Friday, 22 October, 10.00 a.m.

Addressing UCCF workers

Friday, 22 October, 7.30 p.m.

Antichrist (Rev. 13:1b-10)

Saturday, 23 October, 9.30 a.m.

'Preaching Today' Seminar

Preaching Old Testament History

Preaching Old Testament Wisdom Literature

Saturday, 23 October, 7.30 p.m.

Preaching to Youth

The False Prophet (Rev. 13:11-18)

A warm welcome is extended to all

Further information from
www.sandfields-church.co.uk

Where do new preachers come from?

Chris Jenkins

Where do new preachers come from? This is an urgent question. The need of the hour is men who will say with the Apostle Paul, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes' (Rom. 1:16). This needs to be the conviction of all believers, but especially of anointed preachers. Paul says again, 'But how are they to call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?' (Rom. 10:14).

A crisis

At present the mainstream denominations are reporting a crisis of recruitment. This was surely one of the primary factors which led to the Church of England's decision to ordain women. At Cambridge where I studied theology there were only very small numbers training for ordination in the denominational colleges. The notable exception to this was Ridley Hall, the Anglican college, where I trained.

The Evangelical world is not producing enough preachers. There are of course over one hundred students at the Evangelical Theological College of Wales but not all of these proceed to full-time preaching ministry. London Theological Seminary is a source of delight to many of us, but is training relatively small

numbers. In the present climate even strong churches are finding it extremely difficult to recruit pastors. Two years ago I seceded from Anglicanism and within days was faced with a plethora of Free Evangelical Churches anxiously seeking a minister. My decision to accept a call to Litchard Mission, Bridgend, was painful because my wife and I knew we were letting down other churches, some of them extremely promising situations.

God's gracious provision

Clearly the fundamental answer to our question is that preachers come from God. Jesus assures us that God has His elect and that God has His preachers, 'When he saw the crowds he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest' (Matt 9:36-38). God is in complete control of the present situation. He calls, He sets apart, He anoints and He equips all to His glory.

But we must not conclude from this that our role is purely passive. We are called to action. When Paul planted churches he looked for elders and deacons and for pastors like Timothy and Titus. Paul places the primary responsibility for training new teachers of the Word on the local church: 'What you (Timothy) have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also' (2 Tim. 2:2).

The importance of training

This means that the local church must give primary importance to training. We must train younger men rightly to handle God's Word. This is our active contribution to sending labourers into God's harvest field.

Association of Christian Teachers of Wales Annual Lecture

Thursday, 7 October 2004, 7:30pm, Bryntirion, Bridgend

Christian Education: A European Perspective

Speaker: Dr John Shortt (EurECA)

Open to teachers, Sunday School teachers, youth leaders and parents

In this respect Anglicanism has been far more strategic and effective than the nonconformist world. This is a trend which goes back to the eighteenth century and Charles Simeon's efforts as the vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge. It is said that Simeon's strategic mission to young men filled over six hundred pulpits in the Established Church.

As an undergraduate at Oxford I attended St Ebbes Church. In the first term I was approached by one of the ministers of the church and given one-to-one training in Bible study. This training continued for three years. Later I had the privilege of working at St Andrew the Great in Cambridge and seeing again this strategy in practice. The whole of church life is orientated to training new leaders.

A lack of urgency

I am frustrated when I look at the Free Church scene which seems sleepily complacent by comparison. But we too can point to a heritage of training in the local church. We need only think of Spurgeon's example at The Metropolitan Tabernacle or Dr Lloyd-Jones' School of Theology at Westminster Chapel. However, at present we seem to lack a sense of urgency. One young man I know at a nonconformist church in a university town was positively discouraged from pursuing the prospect of Word ministry, even though senior Christians were persuading him to preach. In God's providence he then found his way to a new initiative for encouraging potential preachers, Logic on Fire (see a report in the May/June 2003 issue of the *Evangelical Magazine*).

The mistake of the Free Churches is to believe that discouragement of the potential preacher is part of the discernment process. Anglicans don't do this. They believe that no training is wasted even if the young person does not go on to further theological training. They will still have been given valuable bible understanding.

In nonconformity our view of 'call' is biblical in its essence, but has been overstated. It is indeed God's prerogative to call. It is a mistake for a man to go into the ministry if he is not called. But this does not mean we should discourage promising candidates in the belief that this will somehow test God's purpose. The way to test whether you are gifted at riding a bike is to try and ride one. You'll never find out if you keep the bike in the garage. In the same way the best way to test God's purpose is to try and preach not to try not to! It will soon become apparent whether or not a man is gifted.

In Litchard Mission we are deliberately training younger Christians in the belief that some of them will be called by God. One great encouragement has been Richard, a successful local butcher, in whom God's gift of preaching has been seen before our very eyes. In two years he has gone from relative biblical ignorance to anointed preaching. He will begin formal theological training in the Autumn of 2004.

Where do preachers come from? They come from the local church. God has given preachers to the Church and the local church must identify them.

Causes for optimism

There are some new trends in Church life which give cause for optimism.

One flagship training scheme in the English scene in the last ten years has been the Cornhill Preaching Course in the heart of the City of London. This course grew out of St Helen's, Bishopsgate and is run by the Proclamation Trust. There is also a version of the course in Sheffield and hundreds have now been equipped with skills for handling God's Word. Such courses are not intended to replace the three years of study it normally takes to train for the ministry, but they have been a blessing both to Anglicanism and to the Free Evangelical world.

In the last year, a Welsh version of the Cornhill course called Network has been set up at Highfields Free Church in Cardiff run by Philip Jenkins and Peter Baker. This takes a similar approach to Cornhill but retains a distinct identity. Similar initiatives are being undertaken at Gabalfa Baptist Church, Cardiff and Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Swansea. The beauty of these courses is that they are rooted in the local church. Students can pursue secular employment whilst studying the Bible part-time, as students have done for many years on the EMW part-time ministry training course. Such courses provide a useful period for discernment of God's ultimate call.

Theological Colleges clearly have a strategic value and deserve our passionate support. They too provide opportunities for church members to study part-time. Gaining a place at college does not confirm God's call. Only when the candidate's conviction is confirmed by the local church can a preacher truly declare himself called of God. The unique value of colleges is that men and women can set aside often several years to immerse themselves in study and preparation for ministry, free from many other distractions.

Where do preachers come from? From God, the Lord of the Harvest as His Church prays them out into the fruitful field. Let's get down to prayer. And let's commit ourselves financially and practically to identifying Bible teachers, training them, commissioning them, sending them, encouraging them, praying for them and sitting under their God-given ministry.


Chris Jenkins is the minister of Litchard Mission, Bridgend and a member of the editorial board.

Evangelical Movement of Wales Theological Training Course

*Working with local churches to help
prepare men for the ministry.*

A four-year part-time course centred on twice yearly residential gatherings at Bryntirion. For men called of God to the work of preaching, caring for His people, and reaching out into the world with the gospel.

**For more information call 01656 655886
ttc@emw.org.uk www.emw.org.uk/ttc**



A scandalous attack on the cross

A review article

Martin Downes

On 7 October 2004 the Evangelical Alliance will hold a debate about the cross. The debate is in response to preacher, author, and television presenter, Steve Chalke's attack on 'penal substitution' in his recent book *The Lost Message of Jesus*.¹ The doctrine of penal substitution affirms that on the cross Jesus exchanged places with sinners, and voluntarily bore the punishment that their sins deserved, thereby propitiating an angry God. It is a defining belief of evangelical faith, biblically warranted and central to the gospel. Why then is the Evangelical Alliance hosting a debate where penal substitution is being attacked by a well known evangelical?

What is the debate about?

Steve Chalke asks how we have 'come to believe that at the cross this God of love suddenly decides to vent his anger and wrath on his own Son?' (p.182). Chalke considers this to be a mockery of Jesus' teaching about refusing to repay evil with evil and a contradiction of the statement that God is love (p.182). He insists that the cross isn't 'a form of cosmic child abuse—a vengeful Father, punishing his Son for an offence he has not even committed' (p.182). Instead the cross is a symbol of love, a demonstration of how far God is willing to go to prove his love (p.182).

He claims that we have fundamentally misunderstood Jesus' cry of dereliction, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Matt. 27:46). Rather than the sight of Jesus taking the world's sin on Himself being unbearable for a holy God, Jesus' feeling of abandonment 'mirrors those of countless millions of people who suffer oppression, enslavement, abuse, disease, poverty, starvation and violence' (p.185). Calvary wasn't unique. For Jesus the cross became a way of sharing the experience of all who feel abandoned by God in their suffering. The reality, however, is that God is always right there with us in our suffering (p.185-6).

Steve Chalke no longer preaches penal substitution (p.184), but he still believes that preaching the cross is central. 'On the cross Jesus took on the ideology that violence is the ultimate solution

by "turning the other cheek" and refusing to return evil for evil, willingly absorbing its impact within his own body (p.179). The resurrection is the reversal of this, the triumph of love over hate, as the God of love takes on the powers of darkness and wins (p.187).

In a press release Steve Chalke has said that penal substitution is 'a theory rooted in violence and retributive notions of justice' and is incompatible 'at least as currently taught and understood, with any authentically Christian understanding of the character of God'. He is unrepentant about referring to the doctrine as a version of 'cosmic child abuse' because 'it is a stark "unmasking" of the violent, pre-Christian thinking behind such a theology'.

Recovering the truth about God's character?

Chalke considers it a tragedy that Church history has obscured the centrality of God's love. He asserts that the Bible 'never defines God as anger, power or judgement—in fact it never defines him as anything other than love' (p.63). Moreover, he argues, to think of God's attributes without reference to the primary lens of his love 'is to risk a terrible misrepresentation of his character, which in turn leads to a distortion of the gospel' (p.63).

Even texts that speak of God's holiness should be understood as portraying the love that makes God different rather than his sinless purity and 'otherness' (p. 58-9). But God is described in the Bible as light (1 John 1:5) and Spirit (John 4:24). Moreover both Testaments affirm that God is a consuming fire (Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29), and dwells in unapproachable light (1 Tim. 6:16). The sight of God's holiness filled Isaiah with dread and made him conscious of his guilt (Isa. 6:1-5). Christians are called to holiness not impurity (1 Thess. 4:7). This confusion of God's attributes of holiness and love is not just a basic error; it appears to be an intentional misrepresentation to serve his own agenda.

How does he reconcile the frequent occurrences of judgment in the Bible with love as God's defining characteristic? This is his answer:

Yahweh's association with vengeance and violence wasn't so much an expression of who he was but the result of his determination to be involved with his world. His unwillingness to distance himself from the people of Israel and their actions meant that at times he was implicated in the excessive acts of war that we see in some of the books of the Old Testament (p.49).

According to Steve Chalke the conquest of Canaan was done in God's name but not at His command or with His consent. This is directly contrary to Deut. 7:1-2, 16, 20, 22-26; 9:1-3; Jos. 6:15-21; 10:40-42.

A blatant contradiction

All this begs the question, is it ever appropriate on this understanding of God's love, to speak of his anger and judgment? But the following admission is telling:

Although God is love, this doesn't exclude the possibility of him eventually acting in judgement... if God is love, then anger is a legitimate, indeed intrinsic, expression of that love. But because God's anger is born of pure love, it is never fickle or malicious (p.62).

But this entirely undermines his argument. For if there is no final conflict between love and judgment, one wonders why at the cross God cannot demonstrate His anger at our sin, and, at the same time, manifest His love? Is God angry just because we reject His love or is He angry at all deviations from His nature and will? How can God forgive us and uphold His justice?

Steve Chalke is caught in a contradiction. He wants to affirm God's anger in some sense, but is intent on redefining God's holiness and downplaying the seriousness of sin (p. 173). Nevertheless he is right to say that anger is a legitimate expression of God's love. Because the Lord is righteous He loves righteousness and hates the wicked (Psalm 5:4-5; 11:5, 7). The Bible speaks plainly about God's anger against all sin being expressed in the present and at the day of judgment (Rom. 1:18ff, 2:5-11; Eph. 5:3-6).

God's love is not a moral weakness. If sin ought to be punished then there is nothing in God that impels Him to leave it unpunished. If God loves sinners then some way must be found for His justice to be satisfied as well.

Where wrath and mercy meet

Is it true that penal substitution contradicts the statement that God is love? If it is then the New Testament writers were not aware of it. Paul tells us that the God who justifies those who believe, by his *grace*, does so by setting forth His Son as a propitiation (Rom. 3:25). The writer to the Hebrews says that it was as a *merciful* High Priest that Jesus made propitiation for the sins of the people (Heb. 2:17).

The apostle John tells us that God is both light (1 John 1:5) and love (3:16). 'In this is *love*', writes John, 'not that we have *loved* God but that he *loved* us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins' (4:10). On the basis of this wrath-averting death Jesus acts as our advocate with the Father when we sin (2:1-2). Rather than being incompatible with love, God's love saves sinners from His own wrath through the death of Christ (Rom. 5:8-9).

Vengeance is mine

By pitting Jesus' teaching about not 'repaying evil for evil' against the idea of penal substitution Steve Chalke makes a basic but telling mistake. Consider Romans 12:17, 19: 'Repay no one evil for evil... Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord"'. Retribution belongs to the righteous Judge not to private individuals. But the state is given the limited remit to punish wrongdoers, 'For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer' (Rom. 13:4).

Why the debate is a scandal

Let us make no mistake; this debate is due to Steve Chalke's fame and not to the worth of his argument. His writing is logically flawed, arbitrary, reliant on emotional language, and highly selective in its use of Scripture. To brand penal substitution as 'cosmic child abuse' is heretical and blasphemous. This badly chosen phrase portrays God as committing unspeakable evil. We are left with no confidence in the sub-Christian Old Testament revelation or in God's dealings with Israel. It is an embarrassment that this ill-conceived theology should be given such public prominence. Steve Chalke has dressed up old-fashioned liberalism in twenty-first century dress. He has certainly abandoned the evangelical gospel. J. Gresham Machen's words are appropriate:

They (liberal preachers) speak with disgust of those who believe 'that the blood of our Lord, shed in substitutionary death, placates an alienated deity and makes possible welcome for the returning sinner'. Against the doctrine of the cross they use every weapon of caricature and vilification. Thus they pour out their scorn upon a thing so holy and so precious that in the presence of it the Christian heart melts in gratitude too deep for words. It never seems to occur to modern liberals that in deriding the Christian doctrine of the cross, they are trampling on human hearts.²

Martin Downes is UCCF team leader for Wales

1. Steve Chalke & Alan Mann, *The Lost Message of Jesus*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003). All page numbers in the text refer to this book.
2. J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1923), p.120.

EVANGELICAL
Guest Column Letters **TIMES** *EVENTS DIARY*
Essential news, thought-provoking
articles and book reviews every month
APPLY FOR A FREE SAMPLE COPY
Evangelical Times, Faverdale North, Darlington, DL3 0PH
Tel: 01325 380232 Fax: 01325 466153
E-mail: Office@evangelicaltimes.org or www.evangelicaltimes.org



Kelvin Olsen-Vetland

1948-2004

On the afternoon of 10 June 2004, Kelvin Olsen-Vetland passed into the immediate presence of the Lord and Saviour whom he loved so dearly and served so faithfully. He was but fifty-six years of age.

Kelvin was in every respect a big man, but he was little in his own eyes. What a blessing he was to so many! He was a big man physically and possessed considerable strength. More importantly, he was a big man spiritually, with a great love for his Saviour and possessed of great zeal in His service.

Although his name indicated his Norwegian ancestry, he was brought up in London. It was when still a child that he came to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ at a Church Pastoral Aid Society camp in Kent. That faith continued to burn brightly throughout his life, and it was a life given up to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

His loss will be deeply felt by many. To Rose, his beloved and devoted wife, who was a true helper in the Lord to him, and to his children, Pamela, Elizabeth, and Mark, the loss will undoubtedly be the greatest. He loved his family and it was the strength of that love which makes the loss so great.

He will be sorely missed at the Evangelical Theological College of Wales, where he was the Resources Manager. But he was not

just a resources manager: he was a spiritually minded man and he did his work as an act of devotion to his Lord.

We feel his loss deeply at Freeschool Court Evangelical Church, where he served faithfully as a deacon. In addition to his diaconal duties, he served tirelessly each Friday in the children's work, Searchers, each month in the Senior Citizens' work, as well as being heavily involved in the Senior Citizens' Teas and in the Holiday Bible Club. His children's addresses on the Lord's Day will be long remembered as, with open Bible in his hands, he simply, warmly and winsomely commended the Saviour to the children.

As if all this were not enough work, he preached each month at Paran Chapel, Blackmill and, unbeknown to most, he and Rose helped each week in the excellent youth work at Paran. He will be missed by God's people there. To all this was added his work as a trustee of the John Laski Trust, a work committed to the support and the spread of Reformed, biblical Christianity in Poland. Yet although he did so much in God's service, Kelvin never forgot that he was a sinner saved by grace and that he owed everything to the Lord Jesus Christ.

He first became unwell after his holiday last year. Some time later we realized just how unwell he was. He knew that he was terminally ill and that nothing could be done to cure him. For much of this period he continued to do all that he could. He bore his illness with great patience, fortitude, and contentment. It says much for the man that towards the end a great cause of concern to him was the inconvenience to which, he feared, he was putting the nursing staff.

In his closing days he loved, as ever, to have the Scriptures read to him. As has often been the case with God's suffering people, it was the psalms which he asked to be read. During his last week on earth, after he had Psalm 121 read to him, he exclaimed, 'Oh! That's good.' And so the LORD, who promises in that psalm to preserve the coming and the going of His people, was with Kelvin at his last going and took him into His immediate presence.

Some days later a large crowd gathered at Freeschool Court to pay their last respects to a beloved brother and friend. Shortly afterwards, in the beautiful Ogmores Valley, his earthly remains were laid to rest at Paran Chapel, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection unto life on the last, great day. 'Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.'

Stephen Clark

Subscribe to *The Evangelical Magazine*

Annual Subscriptions (6 issues)

Internet only subscription (UK & Overseas)	£9
Print subscription* (UK)	£12
Print subscription* (Overseas)	£14

Call 01656 655886 with credit/debit card details, or send a cheque made payable to EMW to:

Evangelical Movement of Wales
Bryntirion
Bridgend
CF31 4DX

Please ensure you include your full name and address when sending your cheque.

* Subscribers to the print edition are also able to access the magazine online.



New look magazine

I was particularly impressed with the quality and design of the current (July/August) issue, which has combined tasteful, appropriate and attractive use of colour and graphics with clarity of presentation and style—a most professional production that will hold its own in the market place, and certainly gives a solid platform for a helpful collection of relevant, interesting and inspiring articles.

C. R. Watts, New Milton, Hants.

I am writing concerning the recent changes you have made to the layout. I have always read, from cover to cover, every edition since about 1970, with great appreciation—in fact, it is my favourite Christian magazine, and I pass it on to several others in my church... Please, please, could you go back to a non-fancy style where content is the only important thing, without trying to be trendy. Black on white, like a serious newspaper, is still the easiest sort of script to read.

Sylvia Denton, via email

An abiding Sabbath?

I would like to make some comments on Peter Baker's article *The Lord's Day—an abiding Sabbath?* (July/August edition). Isaiah 58: 13-14 speaks expressly about not doing our own pleasure on the Sabbath, but rather delighting ourselves in the Lord. Professional sport, unlike children playing in the garden for instance, involves a large number of people working, selling tickets, catering etc. Keeping one day free from the legitimate enjoyment of sport may help us to stop idolizing it. Is this just moving deckchairs on the Titanic? If we lose the Sabbath we may find ourselves spiritually poorer. Christians in France, for example, sometimes testify to the problems of only having one service on a Sunday. We often find ourselves complaining of a lack of time to read and pray. Let us use God's day to the full.

Marcus Hobson, Llantrisant

In response to the same article was this letter from Revd John Cook. His criticisms were:

i) It does not quote or clearly expound the fourth commandment and fails to examine the way in which the Lord Jesus Christ endorsed this commandment.

ii) God's command to keep the Sabbath holy is directly related to His example of rest from His creative activity, and our obedience honours Him as the wise and benevolent Creator concerned for the true welfare of mankind.

iii) Though the Lord claims that the whole day should be given to Him in spiritual devotion it is clear that He also permits Christians to do works of necessity and mercy and practised them Himself as He healed in the synagogue on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:9-12). However, there is surely a great difference between the work of a doctor on Sundays for the good of others and the activity of sportspersons to entertain others while aiming to achieve honour for themselves!

iv) The evangelism of those engaged in professional sport on Sundays ought to include the application of the Law of God to them with the call to repentance for breaking it! God calls men on the Sabbath to honour and delight in Him and to turn away from finding our own pleasure and doing our own ways (Isa. 58:13), and failure to obey is sin (Jer. 17:27).

v) Keeping His Sabbath is part of our covenant responsibility for it testifies that He is our God, and that our chief delight is in His fellowship both individually and also corporately in the congregation of His people (Isa. 56: 6-7).

I was also disappointed with some elements of Stuart Olyott's article, especially that he failed to emphasise primarily a day for the Lord when His people devote their time to Him in private spiritual exercise and gathering with His people for congregational worship... I am not sure that the closing advice to surround one self with friends, prepare a good meal for them, talk, walk, and laugh, has specific scriptural warrant as divine direction on the Lord's Day.

Revd W. John Cook (Barry)

An article is planned for the next issue of the magazine which will deal with some of the points raised and views expressed in the articles and letters.

Correction

Martyn Lloyd is Assistant Pastor of Rhuddlan Evangelical Church, not Pastor as stated in July/August issue.

We appreciate hearing from readers when they enjoy (or don't enjoy!) the magazine. We'd be delighted to hear from any readers who would like to comment on the articles in the magazine, or on issues that they raise. The views expressed on this page and throughout the magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Board or of the publishers.

Please send your letters to: The Evangelical Magazine, c/o Evangelical Movement of Wales, Bryntirion, Bridgend, CF31 4DX or send an email to letters@evangelicalmagazine.co.uk

Update

Window on Wales

A new resource to help facilitate informed prayer for Welsh life has been produced by the Evangelical Alliance. Called *Windows on Wales*, the resource aims to help those who struggle to pray effectively for government and the nation because they lack information and understanding about the key issues on the ground. An EA press release says, "Window on Wales is a resource that has been specially developed in order to help Christians rise above the temptation of the simple, lazy, copy-out 'God bless Wales' prayers which do not really engage with the issues." Copies can be ordered from Evangelical Alliance, 20 High Street, Cardiff, CF10 1YR.

EMW Ministers' Conference, Bala (14-16 June)

It was an enormous privilege to attend my second EMW Ministers' conference in the beautiful surroundings and hospitable atmosphere of Bryn-y-groes, Bala. The theme of the conference was the 1904/05 Revival. **Geraint Fielder** took us through the story of the Revival in South Wales in a lecture which revealed both his mastery of the historical documents and his unique local knowledge of the area. Similarly, **Philip Eveson** opened up the story of the revival in North Wales. We were reminded that, as with all moves of God, this was so much bigger than the ministry of one man. **Dafydd Morris** offered a critical assessment of the revival in a presentation which was both generous to those aspects of the revival with which he was uncomfortable, and grateful to our God for such a move of His Spirit. The lack of emphasis on expository preaching in Evan Roberts' ministry and the use of young women singers were generally considered to be inadvisable, yet was pointed out that a lack of preaching was by no means true of all the men God used in 1904/05. Reservations were also expressed about the emotional nature of some revival meetings. Notwithstanding these and other criticisms the consensus of the conference was that the revival was a tremendous move of God, the like of which we have never seen since, and for which we all long and pray. Further profitable and challenging ministry was provided by Graham Harrison and Meirion Thomas. The prayer meetings and bible teaching left us all with a godly dissatisfaction regarding our own experience of God in our lives and ministries.

Chris Jenkins

ETCW Word and Spirit Conference (5-9 July)

What do you get if you combine relevant, insightful Biblical ministry, lively lectures on church history, practical seminars on the Christian life and doctrine, stimulating Christian fellowship, fine food and a relaxing friendly atmosphere? The annual Word and Spirit Conference held at ETCW every July.

This year's conference was richly blessed by the Lord. Stuart Olyott gave four morning addresses from 2 Thessalonians, which were biblical, clear, well illustrated and relevantly applied. To many delegates they were the highlight of the week.

Historical sessions included: 'What would Jonathan Edwards say to today's church?' (Ian Parry), 'Welsh Calvinist Methodism,

Martyn Lloyd-Jones and Revival' (Dr Gwyn Davies) and 'The Bible in Welsh' (Iwan Rhys Jones). Dr Noel Gibbard spoke on the Welsh Revival of 1904. All of these subjects were handled with warmth and insight that stimulated interest in church history. A visit to Bethlehem Evangelical Church, Sandfields, included a talk by Dr Gwyn Davies on the work of God during the ministry of Dr Lloyd-Jones in the 1920s. Peter Milsom gave two very practical and helpful papers on spiritual growth and spiritual declension. Ian Parry, using the book of 1 Corinthians as an example, showed us how we can understand and read the Scriptures better. We were encouraged to look at the big picture, to look at the key themes and to move from the text to application. Gareth Williams looked at the life and doctrine of John Calvin, and encouraged us to read Calvin for ourselves. One of the most moving talks was the testimony of a Nigerian Pastor who told us of the work of God in Northern Nigeria, where there is great blessing coupled with persecution.

This was an excellent conference and I recommend the 2005 conference to all Christians desiring to know God and His Word better.

Evan Richards

ETCW Revival Conference (10-17 July)

It was a sheer privilege to be there! Dr Joel Beeke's ministry was hugely appreciated. He spoke five times in the conference on the subject of Revival: (i) tested by Scripture, (ii) tested in Satan's sieve, (iii) tested in ministry (John Calvin as teacher and practitioner of evangelism), (iv) tested in affliction and (v) tested in the family. Each message was instructive, searching and warmly applied.

After such an outstanding start to the conference, one might have feared for a sense of anticlimax, but that was not the case. A hundred years on from the events of 1904, it was appropriate that Dr Noel Gibbard should speak on Evan Roberts and the Revival and be our guide around the principal sites in Loughor. Historical papers were: 'Richard Owen (1839-87): The Revivalist in North Wales' and 'God's blessing in Cross Hands, West Wales, 1952' (Gareth Davies), 'God's remarkable work amongst students over seventy-five years in Wales' (Lindsay Brown) and 'Isle of Lewis: 1949-52 Revival' (Mary Peckham).

Ministry of the Word was ably handled by David Carey-Jones (two heart-melting addresses entitled, 'Draw near to God'), Colin Peckham (Acts 4: 'Another Revival') and 'Hezekiah's Revival' from Gareth Davies. Francois Carr from South Africa included illustrations from around the world in his two talks entitled, 'Characteristics of revival' and 'God's felt presence in the church', Lindsay Brown, the IFES General Secretary, stirred and encouraged us with 'The global picture: blessing and challenges', a picture of what God is doing today amongst students worldwide. 'Sharing and fellowship' led by Dr Eryl Davies proved to be a blessed 'Experience Meeting' and 'Questions to the speakers' turned out to be more of the same.

Times of prayer and informal fellowship together, the reminder of the global family of God (delegates came from England,

Wales, Scotland, Canada, France, Holland, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, USA and South Korea), and most of all, the tangible presence of God were also rich ingredients.

Tape recordings of the messages are available for those who missed the Conference, Tel. 01656 645411. But why not pencil in a visit in person next year, which will be held from 9–16 July?

Kerry Orchard

EMW Camps 2004

We thank God that a full programme of EMW summer camps took place this year. We are grateful to the Lord and the prayers of God's people that the threatened imposition of VAT on camps receded and the work was able to proceed unhindered.

As usual we include a camps report from one of the young people who took part in the camps. This report comes from the first camp of the summer held at Bryn-y-groes, Bala, 24-31 July, for 16-17 year olds:

The bus, as ever several hours late, rolled slowly up the drive, and as the lambs bleated gently and the lake rolled back and forth, the drizzling rain was cut apart by the broadest of Yorkshire accents—must be camp!

Indeed it was camp, led by the Rees's at Bryn-y-groes, who, surprisingly, have asked me to tell you what we got up to. The highlights of camp have to be the time Julie (officer) locked herself out late at night whilst searching for a wetsuit, and the time when two male officers wrestled over a bean bag in the sports hall. Then there was the death slide, where Faye refused to actually do any sliding for fear of RHS (ruffled hair situation), and on which Owain was so speedy he "was last seen nearing Machynlleth" according to reports from a police officer who was at the scene.

The camp also provided great scope for the work of the Spirit, and every camper left having attended bible studies and services at which the Lord spoke to us on a wide range of issues from the Epistle to the Romans. There were also testimonies from officers and campers from an unbelievably broad set of backgrounds. The girls at one point in their bible studies were so enthralled and enveloped in the portion of text that they kept the meeting going for nearly three hours! We have to thank our chaplain Andy for putting so much effort and biblical teaching into his work on camp, and especially for managing that marathon bible study. However, the skill he showed in the pool and table tennis competitions was not really "cricket". Several of his victims at the pool table felt it most unfair that the chaplain was actually allowed to leave camp undefeated!

The believers on camp left encouraged and full of zeal for the Lord. Of those campers that didn't yet believe, several left feeling the need for a relationship with the Saviour. All left with the memory of a really good week and pondering spiritual things. And, yes, the bus was late on the way home too!

David Bowkett

EMW Conference 2004

As usual the annual EMW English Conference was eagerly awaited. This year perhaps, there was even greater expectation—it was a hundred years since the Spirit of God had been poured out so mightily upon Wales in revival blessing. A nation had been transformed and as a result many other countries around

the world had also been spiritually blessed. Oh that God would once again, in our generation, arise in mighty power!

For the historically minded there was an optional coach trip to some of the key revival sites and a seminar presented by Revd Geoff Thomas on 'The Grace of God in the 1904 Revival'. The National Library of Wales also held a Revival Exhibition 'To Save a Poor Sinner'. A recording could be heard of Evan Roberts exhorting from that period. Though somewhat indistinct, it made interesting listening.

The primary purpose of the Conference was the study of God's Word. The main speaker, Revd Andrew Davies (Kensit Memorial Church, Finchley), in his four morning addresses, approached the subject of revival from a biblical perspective. He focused on the coming of the Spirit in mighty power at Pentecost and the outworking of that power in the early chapters of Acts. The apostles became bold and authoritative witnesses in their day and likewise God's children in today's hostile and unbelieving world must be witnesses. We must persevere faithfully in the day of small things, but earnestly plead with God to pour out His Spirit in unusual power. We must know Jesus Christ better. He is all-powerful and can astonish the world bringing multitudes of sinners to salvation. There was much here to warm the heart and to stir up a spirit of evangelism.

The five evening speakers complemented the morning sessions very well. John Blanchard set the scene with his stirring challenge to boldly take the gospel to our lost world. Spencer Cunnah, David Carmichael, and Alan McNabb, each in his own way preached Christ powerfully, passionately and persuasively. The final speaker, Philip Swann had a word of encouragement to both believers and unbelievers. The conference ended with a resounding battle-cry—'who dares wins!'

There were many other helpful meetings, including preaching services on the Sunday, open-air meetings, prayer meetings, meetings for children and young people and a profitable seminar on 'Your Church and the Law'. The Missions Exhibition was not to be missed and more was done this year for the younger teenagers. Another real blessing was having fellowship with Christians from so many different churches. What a privilege to share the great truths of God's Word.

Those who helped to make this Conference possible must be thanked, especially Revd Ken Stockley for his administrative labours, the crèche helpers, the stewards as well the conference chairman, Revd Owen Jones. He wrote, before the Conference began, 'We have an exciting prospect before us and if we come with hearts eager to know the touch of God, will he send us away empty?' Surely all who attended were blessed.

John and Janice Singleton (Southampton)

Personalia

Revd Wyn Hughes, Caergwrle Evangelical Church, Wrexham, has accepted a call to the pastorate of the Heath Evangelical Church, Cardiff.

Revd Colin Jones, Emmaus Evangelical Church, Gloucester, is to retire from the ministry for health reasons. He plans to return to South Wales and will continue an itinerant ministry.

Revd Graham Hind, pastor of Thornton Heath Evangelical Church, and a member of the editorial board is unwell at present.



Evangelical Movement of Wales Christian Bookshops



Nine shops around Wales

All types of Christian books available:
Bibles, commentaries, children's books,
theology, evangelistic books, biographies,
Christian living, etc.

A large range of greetings cards, videos,
music, magazines, computer software,
calendars, etc.

Plenty of choice for all the family

Friendly and helpful staff

Almost any book can be ordered



The Christian Bookshop
95a Stryd Fawr
Bala
Gwynedd
LL23 7AE

The Christian Bookshop
16 Central Arcade
Wrexham
LL11 1AG
Tel: 01978 364405

The Christian Bookshop
31 Holyhead Road
Bangor
LL57 2EU
Tel: 01248 353386

The Christian Bookshop
1a Temple Street
Llandrindod Wells
LD1 5DL
Tel: 01597 823171

Siop Gair y Bywyd
Shopper's World
Wind Street
Ammanford
SA18 3DN
Tel: 01269 596222

The Christian Bookshop
7-9 Wyndham Arcade
Cardiff
CF10 1FH
Tel: 029 2022 0586

The Christian Bookshop
16e/f The Market
Oxford Street
Swansea
SA1 3PF
Tel: 01792 650773

The Christian Bookshop
8 General Market
Green Street
Neath
SA11 1DP
Tel: 01639 631386

The Christian Bookshop
Bryntirion
Bridgend
CF31 4DX
Tel: 01656 665912

