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Servant

INTERVIEW WITH GRAHAM PULKINGHAM
CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH
THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN by LARRY CHRISTENSON

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editorial

As we read both the Old and the New Testaments we discover that God continually guided His people through prophecy. It was St. Paul's earnest desire that this gift of proclaiming God's message be sought after more earnestly than all of the other spiritual gifts. In today's world of doubt and unbelief God is not silent. In John 10:27 Jesus says *"My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me."* Today many people are hearing that voice of the Lord as He speaks a particular word into a particular situation leading His children to the waters of life.

In this issue of 'Servant' we feature the first of three articles taken from Rev. Larry Christenson's address to the Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches held recently in Kansas City. It was a timely message from this Lutheran pastor urging us to listen to the 'now word' that the Lord is speaking in these days. Kathy Vogt describes something of the pilgrimage of a small group of Christians working in the northern suburbs of Melbourne as they sought to follow Jesus. Peter Schubert writes of his personal experiences in hearing the Lord's voice from the time when he was a young lad.

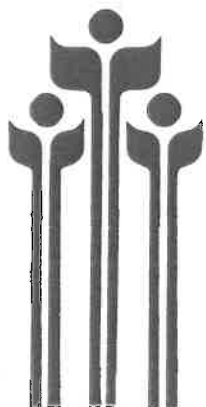
Also we take a look at some aspects of Christian community, charismatic renewal and current developments in Western Christianity in a special in-depth interview with Rev. Graham Pulkingham, the former rector of the now well-known Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas.

Thanks for the letters of encouragement we have received, we need your prayers and support continually.

Blessings in Jesus,

KARL BRETTIG.

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What is Charismatic Renewal?

STATEMENT ON CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

(Prepared by L.C.R. Aust.)

Over the last six years in Australia, many of us will have seen people's lives changed in remarkable ways through the power of God. Many of us will have heard of miracles and healings, speaking in tongues and prophecy. Some of us have possibly rejected these things out of hand; some of us have accepted them as valid expressions of the Christian life in Christ. Most of us, however, simply do not know what to make of it all.

This article therefore attempts to answer briefly, clearly and simply the following questions:

- (1) What is charismatic renewal?
- (2) What is its purpose?
- (3) Where do charismatic gifts fit in?
- (4) What is the place of charismatic renewal in the Church?

What is charismatic renewal?

Fundamentally, charismatic renewal is renewal - renewal in people's relationship with God the Father, in His Son, through His Spirit, whereby through prayer and trust in the Word of God people come to express and actualise in a concrete living way what they as Christians have already received in Baptism. Charismatic renewal urges, in the words of James the Apostle, "*Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only*" (James 1:22). This becomes possible by the Holy Spirit's power and influence in our lives.

Thus, charismatic renewal calls us to repentance, daily conversion to Christ, our Lord and Saviour, that He may pour out His blessings of new life on us. As Lutherans, we, of course, emphasise this truth - the daily need to turn away from sin and back to Christ, His forgiving love and the Spirit's renewing power.

Where charismatic renewal is different from Lutheranism is not in doctrine. Charismatic renewal does not present a new doctrine. Charismatic renewal stresses the belief that our Christian faith really works in a concrete way, right now. Christian faith and life is not meant for Sunday morning only. Charismatic renewal is therefore a spiritual way of life, centred in Jesus and His new life in us. It stresses, that in Christ Jesus we have broken with a life under sin, and now our lives represent an application or expression of the Holy Spirit's powerful activity becoming manifest in our lives. Accordingly, charismatic renewal is quite compatible with any Christian tradition. There can be, and there are, Lutheran charismatics, Anglican charismatics, Catholic charismatics etc.

Charismatic renewal stresses the Lordship of Jesus, that is, with Jesus as our Lord and Saviour we "*should bend the knee*" (Philippians 2:10) not as a token gesture but as a permanent attitude and life of obedience and thanksgiving in all aspects of our lives, even the smallest details. In such

an attitude of surrender to the Lord, there is found true peace and joy. Through God's grace, such is the reality of our Christian Faith of our actual fellowship with Jesus and of the Spirit's power at work in us. As the experience of Jesus' actual love relationship with us has deepened, so it can be said that the charismatic renewal has also brought a deeper realisation of the whole fellowship of believers in Christ, a fellowship not of doctrine but of love. In no way does this fellowship obscure doctrinal differences between Christians of different denominations; rather, it makes us more acutely and most times more painfully aware of our differences. At the same time, however, fellowship in Christ Jesus urges us to praise our common God together, to commit ourselves to our Lord Jesus Christ and thus also to one another as in the family of God and to love freely and fully as God's children.

Through these three thrusts - the reality of our Christian faith, the Lordship of Jesus and the fellowship of believers - persons in charismatic renewal have come to appreciate the Bible more deeply, not merely as an external norm of Christian faith or as a historical witness to God's saving deeds. They see the Bible as a testimony to God's current activity. Instead of being merely the source of doctrine (and/or of legends), the Bible takes on a striking reality for NOW. The Bible is the means of God addressing us with a NOW word for this hour, this situation right now.

Prayer also becomes a real communion with God. Where it was formerly little more than a ritual, prayer has become a joyful activity. We have been reconciled to God through Christ. God is no longer our enemy, He is our loving, faithful friend. What a joy to spend hours in the company of such a delightful friend!

Holy Communion, too, takes on a deepened awareness of the Lord's Real Presence. The Table thus becomes an occasion of joy and thanksgiving (Eucharist) as the Lord actually meets with us, gives Himself to us, nourishes, refreshes and heals us.

Because of the intense healing experience of our innermost being through Jesus, charismatics constantly claim that in their relationships with other people, they can testify that, on renewing their relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, their relationships with others also changed. For many instead of competition in the home, there is now co-operation; instead of hatred, love; instead of envy and strife, peace. Instead of wanting to be served, people renewed with Jesus' life, have found themselves only wanting to serve - not only in the home, but also in the office, the factory and the congregation.

The Purpose of Charismatic Renewal

Being a renewal of our relationship with God, charismatic renewal can be seen as an activity of God designed to restore us from a Christianity

where belief is mere intellectual assent or is based on societal expectations, social and/or familial norms, Western culture and the like.

Charismatic renewal is also directed against the attitude that Christianity is powerless and/or irrelevant because of our technology or some other attribute. Charismatic renewal thus constitutes a challenge not only to disbelievers but also to those who *"keep up the outward appearance of religion but ... have rejected the power of it"* (2 Timothy 3:5)

The Lutheran Church in America has therefore written that:-

"the charismatic renewal should be welcomed as a judgement against mechanical worship, non-biblical preaching, preoccupation with church structure and congregational success, lukewarm faith which expects nothing, compromise with the lifestyle of the world, etc., wherever these exist."

Charismatic renewal thus asks each of us *"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord', and not do what I say?"* (Luke 6:46)

While charismatic renewal constitutes a judgement against a dead or weak Christianity, it also holds out to us to what we are being restored. On the individual level, charismatic renewal calls us to continual personal conversion of life to Jesus as Lord and Saviour and to an ever-ready desire to live and act as His disciple. In charismatic renewal, the beginning of such a conversion is often referred to as being 'baptised in the Holy Spirit' or 'release of the Holy Spirit'. This 'baptism' is not a new sacrament, nor a substitute sacrament; nor is it a purely emotional experience. It is a prayer, similar to a renewal of baptismal promises, which involves the whole person with all his human qualities in a response of deep commitment to be everything that Jesus would have him to be by the working of His Spirit of life, love and power.

On the communal or congregational level, charismatic renewal calls us to live and act as the Body of Christ, that is, to love one another freely and fully and to be deeply committed to one another.

On the total Church level, the purpose of charismatic renewal, and its ultimate purpose, is to bear witness to the fact that God would renew the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit so that the Church thus renewed may evangelise the world.

Charismatic Gifts

In renewing the Church for its ministry to the world, Christ is restoring the charismatic gifts to it. These are gifts of God listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, namely: Tongues, Interpretation, Prophecy, Faith, Miracles, Healing

Wisdom, Knowledge and Discernment. It is from these gifts that charismatic renewal receives the first part of its name. But as it has been already demonstrated in this article the renewal is a renewal of life in Jesus primarily and a recovery of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit for use among us today, secondarily.

Each of the charismatic gifts is defined quite precisely and, in discussion, great care needs to be taken. Without treating each individually, a few general points might be made:

- (1) The gifts are all given freely by the Holy Spirit to whom ever He wishes. Man cannot manufacture them and they are not a sign of Christian maturity. Charismatic renewal does not prescribe that all speak in tongues or exercise the other gifts.
- (2) All the charismatic gifts are given for the common good, that is, they are gifts of service. For this reason, charismatic renewal holds that the gifts should be operative in the Church as a whole. For in them, the Church has at its disposal special guidance, weapons and power which otherwise it has not got. Without these gifts in use, we constantly stand in danger as a church, of attempting to minister the Word of God merely by the power of our own flesh, human ingenuity, man's programmes and the like and not by the Spirit of God.
- (3) The charismatic gifts are all 'good works', that is, they flow from God's grace. They are meant to be used by those who are of a committed, renewed Christian faith. Their proper use will flow out of a life marked by prayer, openness and obedience to God, love faith, hope, willingness to serve and the fruit of the Spirit. Preoccupation with the gifts rather than the Giver, by either those in charismatic renewal or those outside it, is a misplaced emphasis.
- (4) Since the charismatic gifts are good in themselves and since they are given for the benefit of the Church in its ministry to the world, charismatic renewal holds that we should pray to receive them (just as we pray to receive personal gifts such as daily bread, forgiveness, protection, guidance, wisdom, right knowledge, understanding etc.)

Charismatic Renewal in the Church

From what has already been said, it is clear that charismatic renewal has a place in the very heart of the Church for it speaks of a renewing of people in their relationships with God and with one another.

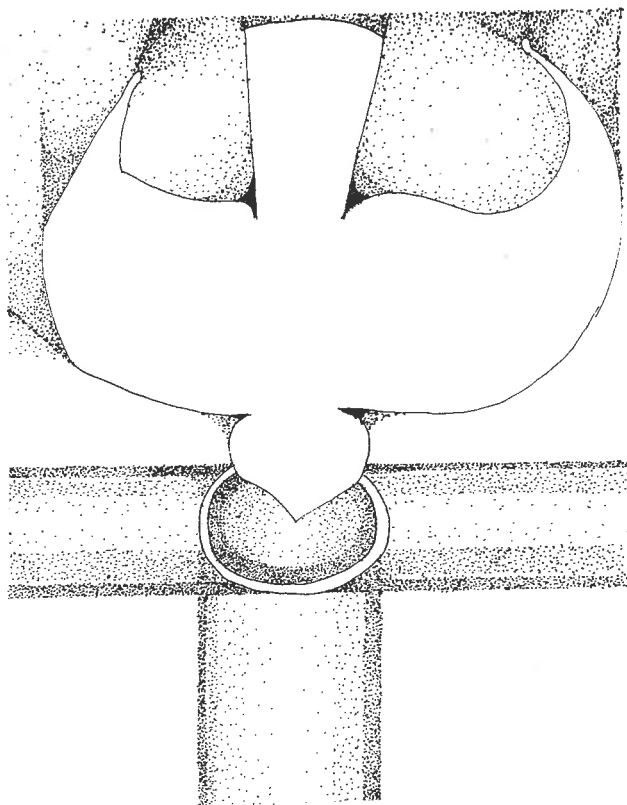
A charismatic renewal which possesses Scriptural balance presupposes a love for the Church and

it spends itself attempting to renew the whole Church. That is, charismatic renewal cherishes all that is good in the Church and, by shedding light on some neglected areas of Church life, it hopes that the whole will be renewed. For example, in 'The Large Catechism' Luther points out that Christ offers us physical healing in Holy Communion. By restoring this aspect of Holy Communion to us, charismatic renewal hopes that Holy Communion itself will become more deeply and more widely appreciated and loved. (A new look at the present wording of our liturgy reveals some exciting discoveries on this score.)

And, more broadly, charismatic renewal is faithful to the Church in that it urges all to support our pastors and officials and also in that it does not teach anything contrary to Lutheran doctrine. Charismatic renewal, being quite distinct from Pentecostalism, does not teach anything against the efficacy of Baptism for example as many persons from various levels of the Church appear to believe.

Events throughout the world in every denomination over recent years strongly indicate that Christ as the Head of the Church is renewing His Body through agents such as the charismatic renewal. (There are also many other means.) Christ is restoring the charismatic gifts to the Church for use today for its ministry of love and service to the world.

Charismatic renewal therefore urges us to cast off the old Adam and to live with radical new faith in Christ, the Lord and Saviour, by the power of the Holy Spirit so that God may be praised and His Kingdom come.



SHOW YOUR TRUE COLOURS

C. H. Spurgeon is, perhaps, one of the greatest English preachers history has known. Once a group of students went along to one of his meetings to discover the secret of Spurgeon's homiletical method in delivering his sermons. Someone who knew that secret well asked them to come beneath the grandstand and take a look at the central heating system of the building where the crowds had gathered. A strange request (especially on a warm day)?...When the door was opened they saw the secret of Spurgeon's teaching method - 500 Christians were seated in there praying for the people!

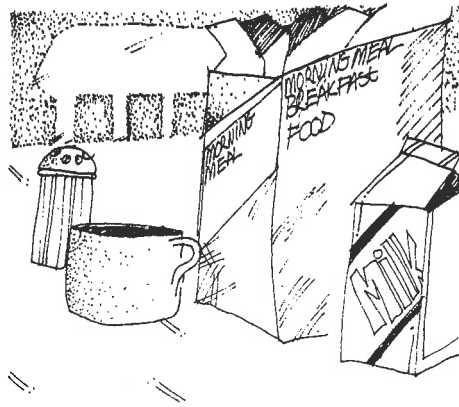
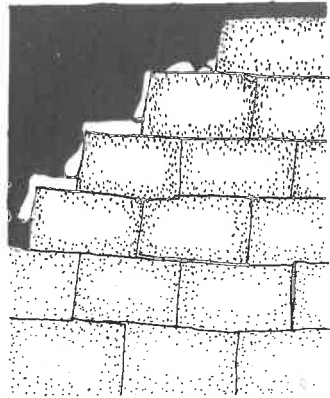
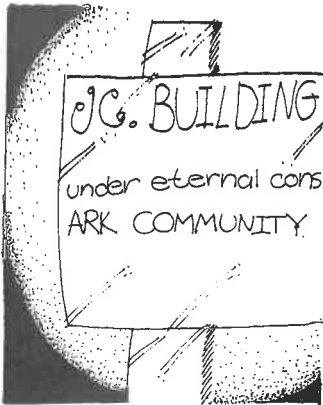
More than ever before people need to hear about Jesus today. Here is an excerpt from one of Spurgeon's sermons which offers a key to the spreading of the Gospel in today's world.

The fact is, that our Lord requires an open confession as well as a secret faith; and if you will not render it, there is no promise of salvation for you, but a threat of being denied at the last. The apostle puts it, *"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."* It is stated in another place upon this wise, - *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"* - that is Christ's way of making the confession of him. If there be a true faith, there must be a declaration of it. If you are candles, and God has lit you, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* Soldiers of Christ must, like her Majesty's soliders, wear their regimentals; and if they are ashamed of their regimentals, they ought to be drummed out of the regiment. They are not honest soldiers who refuse to march in rank with their comrades. The very least thing that the Lord Jesus Christ can expect of us is that we do confess him to the best of our power. If you are nailed up to a cross, I will not invite you to be baptized. If you are fastened up to a tree to die, I will not ask you to go into a pulpit and declare your faith, for you cannot. But you are required to do what you can do, namely, to make as distinct and open an avowal of the Lord Jesus Christ as may be suitable in your present condition.

I believe that many Christian people get into a deal of trouble through not being honest in their convictions. For instance, if a man goes into a workshop, or a soldier into a barrack-room, and if he does not fly his flag from the first, it will be very difficult for him to run it up afterwards. But if he immediately and boldly lets them know, *"I am a Christian man, and there are certain things that I cannot do to please you, and certain other things that I cannot help doing, though they displease you"* - when that is clearly understood, after awhile the singularity of the thing will be gone, and the man will be let alone; but if he is a little sneaky, and thinks that he is going to please the world and please Christ too, he is in for a rough time, let him depend upon it. His life will be that of a toad under a harrow, or a fox in a dog-kennel, if he tries the way of compromise. That will never do. Come out. Show your colours. Let it be known who you are, and what you are; and although your course will not be smooth, it will certainly be not half so rough as if you tried to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds - a very difficult piece of business that.

The man on the cross came out, then and there, and made as open an avowal of his faith in Christ as was possible. The next thing he did was to rebuke his fellow-sinner. He spoke to him in answer to the ribaldry with which he had assailed our Lord. I do not know what the unconverted convict had been blasphemously saying, but his converted comrade spoke very honestly to him. *"Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man hath done nothing amiss."* It is more than ever needful in these days that believers in Christ should not allow sin to go unrebuked; and yet a great many of them do so. Do you know that a person who is silent when a wrong thing is said or done may become a participator in the sin? If you do not rebuke sin - I mean, of course, on all fit occasions, and in a proper spirit - your silence will give consent to the sin, and you will be an aider and abettor in it. A man who saw a robbery, and who did not cry, *"Stop thief!"* would be thought to be in league with the thief; and the man who can hear swearing, or see impurity, and never utter a word of protest may well question whether he is right himself. Our *"other men's sins"* make up a great item in our personal guilt unless we in anywise rebuke them. This our Lord expects us to do. The dying thief did it, and did it with all his heart; and therein far exceeded large numbers of those who hold their heads high in the church.

Unless The Lord Builds The House



Kathy Vogt tells the story of the development of the Ark Community, Melbourne.

"Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain." (Psalm 127:1)

But Lord! there aren't very many of us. We aren't all really committed! Lord, the work is too much for us. We just aren't able to love all those people, we have trouble even loving each other!

How often in the past three years has that cry gone up from our team and its leaders. Yet the Lord God Almighty, our Father who loves us dearly, has shown us over and over again the care and concern He has for us. He has shown us His willingness and His very wantingness to mould us and build us together into a body that is truly able to serve Him. As we continue to step out into the future with Jesus, He will continue to succour and guide us.

The team of coffee house workers of the Ark Coffee House actually only started meeting together in about March 1974. The previous six months had been a preparation time for a small group of Lutheran students who felt the call of the Lord to open a coffee house/outreach centre somewhere in Melbourne. God miraculously gave them a large shop in the Faircote shopping centre for rent of \$65 a month! (We still only pay that amount!) And so the Ark Coffee House came into being. We had to build a kitchen - out of big boxes that cars were shipped to Australia in, and the left over wood made sturdy tables. Every bit of furniture, carpet, cooking equipment, sink, fridge, came from donations. These were mainly from ladies and youth fellowships within the Lutheran Church in Victoria. We finally opened the coffee house about July. God indeed protected us greatly in those days for we had no experience, no real

knowledge of how a coffee house should run, no idea of the type of kids we would be reaching. The only thing we had was a desire to serve the Lord in this way and bring His love into many lives who had never really known it. Even now, after learning, often the hard way, of how to run a coffee house and seeing the Lord touch many of the lives of the kids, we still have to constantly seek Jesus' strength and power to relate and show them something of God's love for them.

It would take a whole magazine to relate all the ways the Lord has guided and moulded us over the years - but He has done it in such a patient and loving way. I'll share with you only two areas - community and leadership. During the first year or so we were constantly aware of the need for following up the kids we met on Saturday nights, and possibly of a nurture programme for those interested in Christ. We weren't ready or able to start this although we often tried. None of us lived in the Northcote area where the coffee house was. (We used to drive over twice a week

from the eastern suburbs). The area is lower middle class/migrant (Greek and Italian). Most young adults shift out once they are married.

The Lord called us to community living in 1976. Many of the team were open to living together in the Northcote area, but when we finally moved there were only three of us. Since our first house, which we only stayed in for six weeks our community has grown and changed in number to eleven in eighteen months. This was a whole new beginning for our walk with the Lord which will continue for many years to come. The Lord in His love for us has persevered with us, shown us things when we were blind, picked us up when we had fallen flat on our faces, and sent us numerous brothers and sisters to encourage us and assure us that we were walking in His will. In His gentle way He has taught us how much we have to learn to trust in Him for everything.

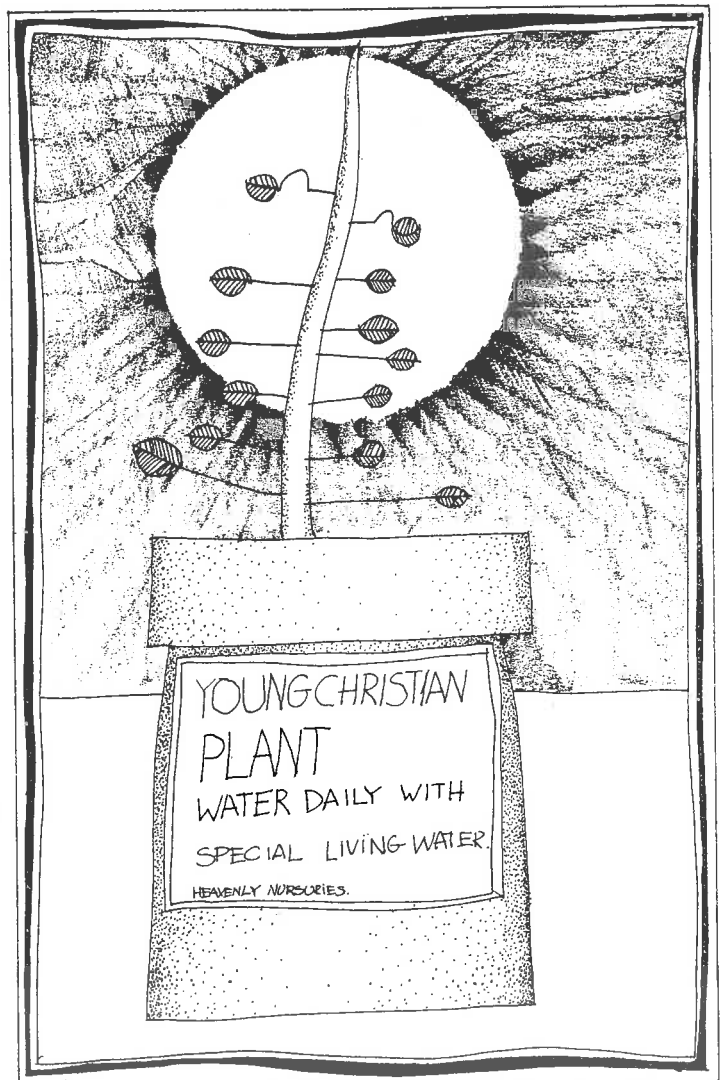
We are starting to know what it means to live by faith and to know by the Spirit of God confirmation of when God is wanting to say something or to move. He works both through ordinary situations to reveal His will for us, (like making sure we get the house that He wants us to have) and through the extraordinary that so often we are tempted to call coincidence, when it is really Him working. Learning to live together, especially as single people, meant we had to learn what it means to die to ourselves. We had to learn what it meant to love the Lord and to love with His love, not in our own strength. We also had to learn what obedience is. In all these areas we are still learning and will continue to until the day we meet Jesus face to face.

Our prayers and yearnings for more older and mature Christians, for married couples and children, to be a part of our community have been answered with "wait patiently". The Lord wants to work and mould the few of us He has chosen first, even if this means a lot of trials to maturity in Jesus, for the sake of His glory, not our own.

Our authority structure is also one set up by the Lord. Jesus is the centre of our relationships with each other. We were led to call leaders to our small body, who although young and inexperienced in what it means to be an elder, tried to follow the Lord faithfully. The Lord has protected the

community through the elders. For a long time we sought an authority or eldership outside the immediate team, but God has shown us that the leadership must come from within. He has however, given us incredible covering and support from brothers and sisters out-side of our community - like Servants of Christ Community and other brothers. And as the Father and the Son are committed to one another, so the Lord has called us to be committed to each other. He has formed within our group a core, that is committed to following Him and His leading, and teaching us much about His ways through this small group of followers. He is enabling us to listen to and hear His voice through our brothers and sisters.

The Lord also has led us into the type of caring community He wanted us to be. After only seven months He gave us a new Christian to nurture and help grow up into Christ. Since then He has blessed us with two others. We have failed often, mainly in trusting the Lord with these dear ones. We have learnt the hard way that it is the Spirit of God living and working in each of our lives and especially in the lives of these new Christians that brings forth change. Praise the Lord that He is patient. The way of prayer and repentance before the Lord, of being obedient to His call to serve all our brothers and sisters, is the way of joy and peace in the Lord.



The community is the Lord's. He has built it, and is continuing to maintain it. At the moment we have three houses in the Thornbury area about six streets apart from each other. We open the coffee house on Saturday evenings, a drop-in centre on Thursday evenings in a separate church hall, and a craft/youth club on Friday afternoons. Our teaching times are on Tuesday evenings, when the team gathers for fellowship. The Lord in His goodness has supplied us with many tapes and books in the last months, and has also given us the time to be able to prepare teaching. Most important for our growth at this time has been our fortnightly Sunday services. We have been richly blessed in singing to the Lord and praising Him. As we continue to walk along the path of praise every day as well as when we fellowship together, the Lord reveals blessing after blessing that He wants to give us. Praise the Lord!

KATHY VOGT

HE STOOD AT THE DOOR (AND I CALMLY FLUNG IT OPEN!)



A young man tells the story of how Jesus entered his life and some of his experiences in listening to the voice of the Lord.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. He who conquers I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

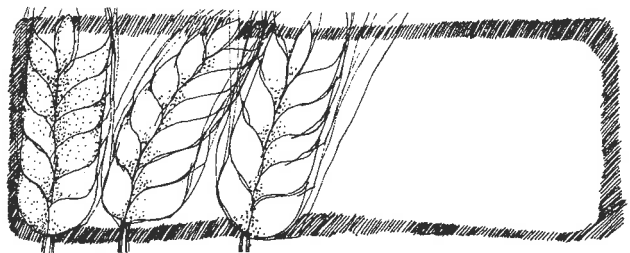
Rev. 3:20-22 (RSV)

I was born and raised a country boy in the dry mallee of South Australia's Riverland. Just to give you an idea of how "country" it was - I used to play football for the Wunkar (my home town) junior colts. Country football is renowned for being tough, but it wasn't the opponents so much you had to be on the look-out for, it was the rabbit holes and mallee stumps on the oval!! Despite the toughness, most of those people were God-fearing, including my parents, and there was hardly a Sunday we missed going to St. John's Lutheran Church, Myrla. My childhood will always be remembered for the sound Bible teaching I received. I clearly remember banging my head against the wall (literally) trying to accommodate Luther's Catechism into my memory! But the thing I will always remember is this. It was a hot, dry day on the farm and I'd been outside playing alone. As I approached the back door of our farmhouse, a picture of Jesus standing at our farmhouse door just about to knock, came into my mind. Just before He did, I raced to the door and calmly (you've always got to be calm before the King) flung it open! With a welcoming gesture of the hand I bade Jesus to enter. At that moment a flood of warmth and peace pervaded my being and I vowed that I would serve the Lord all the days of my life.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me."

Little did I realize that the opening of the back door of a farmhouse could be so significant. I had experienced something that for me was beyond word's description, hence it was kept secret for many years. I wanted to share it but didn't know how. I was afraid that people would mock me. What I also couldn't understand was, that for the next few days, Peace reigned in our house. You see I didn't know Revelation 3 then, but I believe now, that Jesus the Prince of Peace was eating and fellowshiping in our house!! I would like to encourage parents to be faithful in their devotional lives and also to foster the freedom of sharing with your children. It is so precious isn't it? The things of the Spirit are sometimes strange but the Spirit has difficulty working in

our lives if we remain ignorant about Him or are not taught His ways. Let's not flag in zeal for the Lord.



Those days of service that I promised Jesus, have been many now, and I must confess that if Jesus had come on many of them I couldn't have been "calm before the King". But praise God for His gift of forgiveness and praise God for the gift of His Spirit. For the Spirit has called me to the Gospel, the saving grace of Jesus and enlightened me with His gifts. Let me relate to you just one or two instances that describe that truth.

Firstly, the Spirit has called me to the Gospel. Some six or seven years after my "farmhouse experience" I found myself in a spiritual wilderness. Some people would have called it 'backsliding'. I called it twilight. My dawn was the experience with Jesus. Now I'd come to a point where on the one hand I had almost rejected Christianity and on the other, I was striving to hang on. I would force myself to read the Bible because I knew it held the key to life, and I wanted life with a capital "L". But no matter how hard "I" tried the Bible meant nothing to me. Through various people I was made to realize that Jesus still loved me and that He wanted me to repent and just accept Him as Lord. I submitted to that and praise God, suddenly Scripture had come alive. The Spirit had called me to it and now He was giving me understanding. I'd been through the twilight, the darkness was over and a new day had dawned!!

Secondly, the Spirit enlightened me with His gifts. Now I don't want to boast for one minute about the gifts God has given me, but I will say that the gifts God does give are for ministry. I'm involved in a Christian motorcycle group which consists of a number of people who believe they are called to witness to the outlaw bike scene of Adelaide. We meet together every week on Thursday and Friday nights. At one of our Thursday night meetings quite recently we received word that some people were under spiritual oppression in their home and they would like us to minister to them. We got down on our knees and asked the Lord who should go. Not only did He tell us who should go, but He also gave us a word of knowledge as to who to go to when the two elected people arrived at the house, and also a greater understanding of what the problem was. The point I want to stress is this - God has moulded our group together in such a way that we are free to use His gifts. Obviously they are to be used in order and with discernment but they are there to be used!! Had the whole group gone to minister that night we may have achieved nothing. As it was the two who were sent, returned with good news. They had been victorious over the spiritual oppression of the house and its people. (God is a God of efficiency.) The Light has conquered the darkness.



"He who conquers I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on His throne."

Hey, isn't that promise something? I know I want to sit with Jesus and all He asks of me is to "conquer". Not only that, He's given us the weapons through His Spirit! He's given us Life through His Spirit (Romans 8:11). For the years I spent in 'twilight' these truths were not known to me and all the time I wanted to be able to experience again that walk with Jesus and the warmth and peace that only He can give.

Praise God all of you saints, and keep on praying!

PETER SCHUBERT.

THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN

LARRY CHRISTENSON

This summer my daughter and some of her friends went "house-sitting" for people who were going on vacation. I mused about that one afternoon, and it reminded me of our life as Christians. Becoming a Christian is something like moving into a house. We enter a whole new set of spiritual surroundings.

But we soon discover that the house doesn't really belong to us. The owner still maintains possession. As I thought about this I felt inspired to write a poem -

HOUSE-SITTING

I live in a house with many doors
With hallways and windows and seventeen
floors;
There's a game room, a library, and a
furnace, I think
And bathrooms and bedrooms in three
shades of pink.

There's more to this house than I have
explored
(Quite frankly it's more than I could
afford.)
But it don't belong to me, you see,
I'm only house-sitting - I live there
for free.

When I first moved in, Oh! it was a blast.
Never entered my head that it wouldn't
last.
I slid down the banisters and ran up
the stairs.
I sang in the showers and I lounged
in the chairs.

About a month or so later, I forget
just when,
Came a knock on a side door about a
quarter to ten;
I answered the knock, though I had
other things planned,
And there stood the owner with an
empty sack in His hand.

"It's the garbage," He said, without
blinking an eye.
"It's past time we got it; it's piled
sky-high."
Now I thought I had hidden it, made
it look real nice
But He went straight to it without
looking twice.

The next day He knocked on a door out
back
And said, "Let's take a run on the
high school track."
Well, I puffed and I panted till I
thought my lungs would burst
And the blisters on my feet - they
were the worst!

A week or so later, when the sun was
down,
He came on by - it must have been with
half the town.
"Let's cook a barbeque," He said.
"The folks are hungry, they haven't
been fed."

Well, He keeps coming back, this
owner does.
This house-sitting ain't all that I
thought it was.
In fact I get the distinct impression
That He intends to maintain possession.

He ain't turned it over to do as I
please
Seems He's got some of His own ideas.
He's friendly and kind and He don't
get mad.
He just keeps saying, "You'll get the
hang of it, lad."

"This house you're sitting is a
special creation,
I designed it for you and I call it
'Salvation.'
But it's more than a matter of just
moving in
It's living and growing and conquering
sin.

It's answering the door when I come
and knock
It's removing every hindrance and
every block;
It's finding the handle for all the
doors
It's learning to live on seventeen
floors!"

In Revelation 3:20 Jesus says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in." It's interesting that this is not spoken to unbelievers, but to believers who have grown lukewarm. In other words the knocking is for those who have already moved into the household of faith.

Imagine, now, that this house we move into when we become Christians is a house with many doors. The doors represent different ways or places that Jesus seeks to gain fresh access to our lives. We experience renewal - we come to a greater measure of wholeness - as we respond to His knocking. I want to tell you about some doors in the house that Christ has a special interest in for our day -

1. DOORS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HOUSE

These are truths and ways of doing things that are not only different, but are actually contradictory to our usual way of believing and living. Part of Christ's program to make us

whole comes through those doors on the other side of the house. In practical terms this means that we must come to recognize and appreciate the paradoxical nature of biblical truth.

What does this mean? God's truth is too big, too heavenly for my little human mind to encompass. It is like a ring, a perfect circle, ten miles in diameter, and my brain is two inches by four inches. How can God's truth ever get into my little brain? Imagine God snipping that perfect ring at one point, then taking the two ends and feeding them into my mind in two parallel lines. That is the way God's truth comes to me, as a series of opposites or paradoxes. And the Bible is full of them.

"Enter not into judgement with thy servant for no man is righteous before thee." (Psalm 143:2)
"Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness and according to the integrity that is in me." (Psalm 7:8)

Now the skeptics say, "Of course, what do you expect? The Bible was written by all sorts of different people, and they simply contradict each other." But that misses the fact that the paradoxes of Scripture go deeper than any supposed disagreements between different writers. They are woven right into the texture of divine truth. In Proverbs 26, for instance, the paradox comes in two successive verses: "Answer not a fool according to his folly lest you be like him yourself. (Verse 4) Answer a fool according to his folly lest he be wise in his own eyes." (Verse 5)

In 1 John 1:8 we read, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Yet later on the same writer says, "No one born of God commits sin." (1 John 3:9)

If you run into one of those people who tries to avoid all the difficult passages of the Bible by saying, "I only accept the words of Jesus," try this one on him - "He who is not with me is against me." (Luke 11:23) "He who is not against us is for us." (Mark 9:40)

Paradoxes are not embarrassing intrusions into an otherwise error-free Bible, things we must try to explain away somehow. Paradoxes belong to the very nature of biblical truth, and we can never come to maturity as individuals or as bodies of believers until we learn how to handle the paradoxes of Scripture.

Now, what is the solution to a paradox? Consider a practical example. Here are two familiar sayings: "Look before you leap." "He who hesitates is lost."

Which one is true? Well, they are both true. But they are not both equally true in every situation. If you are a lone scout with the Arizona 7th Cavalry, and Geronimo and his men

are in hot pursuit and you come to a high cliff overlooking a river - and the Indians are two minutes behind you - your truth is, "He who hesitates is lost!" Jump - and pray for deep water!

But if they are half an hour behind, then your truth might well be, "Look before you leap." Scout along the river. Maybe you can find a place to ford, even cover up your trail.

A paradox is not solved by mental contortions that try to "harmonize" the contradictions. A paradox is solved in time...in history...in experience. It is solved by a rhythm that moves from one pole of the paradox to the other according to the wisdom which the Lord gives in each circumstance.

In Exodus 14:14 Moses says to the people of Israel who were being pursued by the Egyptians, "The Lord will fight for you and you have only to be still." He remembered the fearful plagues God had sent on the Egyptians and he was ready to sit back and watch God do it again. But in the very next verse the Lord says, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward!"

It is not enough to ask, "Is this word Scriptural, is it true?" We also have to ask, "Is it the word the Spirit is giving us in this situation? Is it God's 'now' word?"

*"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
A time to be born and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to pluck up
what is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and a time to build
up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to cast away stones, and a time
to gather stones together;
A time to embrace, and a time to refrain
from embracing'
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
A time to keep silence, and a time to
speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time for war, and a time for peace."
(Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)*

Matthew Arnold once said, "There is nothing so irresistible as an idea whose time has come." That is doubly true when the idea is a word of the living God, a word He has designated for this particular time and place, His 'now' word.

We sometimes flatter ourselves by thinking that a truth we hold dearly is something that we have discovered, whereas it is much more the case that the truth has discovered us in a particular time and place. Alexander Solzhenitsyn has

written, "Even the most open-minded among us can only embrace that part of the truth into which our own snout has blundered." That, I believe, is a much more accurate and humble assessment of how we come into truth.

One of the problems God has with His Church is that she has memorized His yesterday words so well, and chants them loudly, that she doesn't hear that gentle knock when it comes on the other side of the house, where Christ is standing with a today word.

A young seminary student asked me to read a paper he had written for one of his classes. In the paper he described a particular education programme in which young people not only had classes and Bible studies, but also took on practical service project. He commented, "This would help children realize that being a Christian is not merely knowing the doctrines of the church, it is helping other people in concrete ways." Then he made this interesting observation in the paper: "This past semester I heard so much about 'grace' that I am getting tired of hearing that word. We need to understand the beauty of God's grace, but if it is mentioned too much it becomes a shallow and lifeless word. Works are a needed aspect of the Christian life, for without them faith is dead."

For many Protestants that's a door on the other side of the house. The door on their side says, "By works of the law shall no one be justified." (Galatians 2:16) And, "By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God - not because of works lest any man should boast." (Ephesians

2:8-9) But the door on the other side of the house says, "You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone." (James 2:24)

In the charismatic renewal Jesus has come knocking at this door on the other side of the house. If you hang around a little while with people who have answered that knock, you hear words like "obedience," and "Lordship." The Lordship of Christ - that's what the Spirit is concentrating on over on that side of the house.

Why? Why has the Spirit brought this emphasis on practical obedience and the Lordship of Christ in the charismatic renewal? Because Christians have been dispensing too much of what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called "cheap grace". Just believe in Jesus. It's all free. No obligation. No discipleship. No trouble. No demands. No suffering. Smorgasbord Christianity. Take what you like and leave what you don't like.

So Jesus has gone around to the other side of the house and knocked...looking for the people who are willing to listen seriously not only to His promises as Saviour, but to His claims as Lord. The "Lordship of Christ" is a today word.

Why does Christ come knocking at doors on the other side of the house? He wants to balance what has become one-sided.

(Continued next issue.)

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Book Review

PROPHECY by Bruce Yocum

What is your idea of a prophet? Does the word conjure up a picture in your mind of a rugged and desolate crag of a mountain on which kneels a bearded and bald old man, his feet unshod and his gaunt body draped with an animal skin, and as he gazes intently heavenward, rays of eerie light stream down from a hidden source of light upon his face....? If so, says Bruce Yocum, in his book PROPHECY, it is no wonder that there are so few. He says: "*Few people today have an accurate or adequate notion of what a Christian prophet is.*"

In PROPHECY, the author shows us, through Scripture and from first hand experience, just what prophecy is, how it functioned both in the Old Testament times and in the early Church and also how it ought to function today. He also explains clearly the role of the prophet in the Church today.

This is a book in which there are answers to many questions regarding prophecy, clearing up a variety of misconceptions and misunderstandings concerning the prophetic ministry in the Christian Church.

Questions such as, "*Does God still speak directly to His people?*" "*Is the New Testament gift of prophecy similar in working to that of the Old Testament?*" "*How does a person receive a message from the Lord?*" are answered in an easy to read style, accompanied by a wealth of illustration.

Some of the subject areas dealt with are: The purpose of prophecy, false prophets, the prophetic role and the part the Holy Spirit plays in this ministry, how we are to grow in the understanding and handling of prophetic manifestations in Christian communities, and the importance of testing both prophecy and prophets.

In the chapter on forms of prophecy, Bruce Yocum deals quite extensively with the many ways God speaks a message to His people both to individuals and to groups. Such forms as Oracles, Exhortations, Inspired Prayer, Prophecy in Song, Revelation, Visions, Tongues and Interpretation, Personal Prophecy and Prophecy in Private Prayer. Under Exhortation the author begins, "*Perhaps the most common form of prophetic speech is exhortation*" and he goes on to show, with illustrations from the Book of Acts and from modern examples just what is meant by exhortation and how it can build up and encourage the community and the individual members.

Another very important chapter is entitled, "*Discernment of Prophecy*". This chapter deals with the very important question, "*How can one know what is truly a word from the Lord?*" Further on he goes to say, "*Prophecy has to be submitted to the Christian community for judgement....no individual has the ability to determine with full certainty that he has spoken the word of the Lord.*" and also, "*It is the place of the prophet to receive and proclaim the word. It is the place of the community to verify that the word comes from God.*" Toward the end of the chapter in the section on testing prophecy the author says "*The first and most fundamental test of prophetic utterance is the life of the person who gives it.*" Also in that chapter is excellent teaching on testing the spirits.

The book finishes with chapters on Growing in prophetic service and Prophecy in the church today, which contain practical advice for those who are experiencing the manifestation of prophecy or who may be called to fulfill the role of a prophet in a Christian community.

Altogether I found this book one which contains helpful instruction and valuable teaching, based soundly on the Scriptures. It is a book very relevant to the needs of today's awakening church and could be studied profitably by those who are part of the charismatic renewal.

The author, Bruce Yocum, is one of the leaders of 'The Word of God', a charismatic community in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He is a man who holds a degree in philosophy and has had personal experience in the realm of prophecy.

In conclusion, I would thoroughly recommend this book to all who are concerned for and interested in the proper place and use of the gifts of the Spirit in today's Christian community.

DAVID TRUDINGER

If you would like a copy of 'PROPHECY' by Bruce Yocum write to 'The Mustard Seed', P.O. Box 179, Hindmarsh, S.A. 5007 and enclose \$4.00 to cover the cost of the book and mailing costs, or call in 2nd Floor, 102 Gawler Place, Adelaide, Tues.-Friday, 10.00a.m.-5.00p.m.

GRAHAM PULKINGHAM INTERVIEWED

GRAHAM PULKINGHAM, former Rector of the Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas, is now working as a leader in the Community of Celebration, a centre for church renewal, in Scotland. He is associated with the travelling 'Fisherfolk ministries' who are currently assisting with the development of an Anglican-based, ecumenical community in Canberra.

SERVANT: "Do you notice any significant trends that are occurring in England as the Christian Church approaches the end of the 70's from your experience there?"

GRAHAM: "Yes, I could speak generally - it's not just in England, the same things are happening elsewhere too. There is the beginning of a coming together of what at the end of the 60's was the charismatic movement and the radical Christian discipleship or social conscience among young people in the Jesus Revolution. These two things are coming together now, more than just in conversation.

Also, there is a beginning of reflection; I mean by that sound theological reflection on things that both of these movements have been saying and doing for the last 10 years. I don't mean just a kind of popular, pietistic theology. I mean some pretty deep thinking and deep digging, trying to relate both the charismatic renewal and the radical discipleship groups to traditional theology.

Those three things are beginning to happen together - we've been waiting a long time, but it's beginning to happen."

SERVANT: "What do you see as the future of the Church? Do you see new structures emerging or do you see the same structures remaining or what do you feel the combination of these things will represent?"

GRAHAM: "I don't think either one of these movements has much to say to the structures of the Church, because I think neither one of them is really developing an alternative structure nor are they speaking very clearly to the existing structures. I think the future of the Church of necessity will have to have a deeper sense of what we mean by family as the basis of fellowship. That is a very general and a very non-specific answer to a question about structures - but I don't think I would care to answer it any further than that.

I think the thing that is happening now is family; that needs to continue and I'm sure it will. We call ourselves the family of God, theologically we call ourselves that, we call ourselves the brothers and sisters of Jesus and we have one common Father. We have all the right terms theologically, but in terms of the social happening in Christian lives the Church has really been anything but a family for people; and I think it is now coming together as family, which in a way implies a kind of social revolution in our western world that I think the Church of

the future is going to have to come to terms with."

SERVANT: "What do you see as significant, in this direction, in Australia at the present time. Do you see, a grass-roots expression of this in Australia?"

GRAHAM: "I see the same reaction to this in Australia as I see in the rest of the western world. We have developed a social concept of family which excludes everyone, really except husband and wife. We allow our kids to stay in the family until they get old enough to run off - by the time they reach their middle teens usually they have either psychologically opted out or in fact have opted out into some peer group, the second generation or the youth mob or whatever you want to call it. I see the same reaction in Christian circles in Australia that I see elsewhere, namely a great deal of anxiety and a great deal of fear that the renewal movements that are going in the direction of community are going to tear up the family.

I think in a sense that the nuclear family is itself an inefficient and non-productive social unit, which is to say it can't really care for its own. It has to farm the old folks out to the old age home where the government looks after them, and it has to turn the kids over to someone else to educate them. As a social unit our nuclear family in the western world is not a very efficient thing. In so far as it is inefficient and not productive, I think that the fear and anxiety are rooted in something that is very real because I think that we are going to have to see a radical change in the nature of family as a social unit at least in a Christian sense, if not everywhere across the society in which we live.

On the other hand I think that a lot of fear and anxiety about the threat to family life is really unfounded because to begin with family in the New Testament and in the Old Testament was not a nuclear unit but an extended family. When you read about family in the Scriptures you are reading about an extended family - at least three generations and a very broad base of family including cousins, aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces and all sorts of people - that's family. Those people really belong together. That's not true today. If most of us see our parents at Christmas and at Easter and a few other times a year, we probably think we have done well. That's not true of everyone, but generally speaking in our society it is true. The same thing applies with brothers and sisters. You may see your brothers and sisters once a year after they have married and had their own kids, but there is no sense of real face to face primary relationship any longer in the blood family tie. Our concept of family in the western world is a very unstable one right now - increased divorces, lots of kids that are forsaking home in their mid-teens, long before they are prepared intellectually or socially or emotionally; a lot of youngsters wandering about without any real rudder in their lives. So the nature of family as we have developed it is a

very unsteady thing and must change - something is going to have to happen to stabilise our society as well as the society within our Church.

A lot of people would agree with me that the development in the Church today of a community base, a deepening of communal ties within the Church really strengthens the family. The children are tied much closer to their parents, husbands and wives are drawn closer together, and other people are added to the family who are not blood-kin, but nevertheless they are added as brothers and sisters in the Spirit of Christ, (which ought to be a stronger tie than blood tie). So there is a whole new concept of family developing out of the direction that community is taking a lot of Christians today.

I see all of that happening in this country, I see some families really finding a new life, a new structure of relationships, and I think a new strength for themselves because of the changes coming about. But I find an awful lot of Christians, out of anxiety and fear, reacting against community development because they are afraid that the family as they know it is being threatened."



SERVANT: "Would you say also that there was a lot of fear and anxiety about certain forms of discipline and correction that you need in order to keep a stable Christian family together? It seems that because in society there is such a reaction against authoritarianism, if you like, amongst Christians there is an unhealthy fear of discipline and correction?"

GRAHAM: "I don't think that a reaction against authoritarianism necessarily implies a reaction against discipline. Authoritarianism is one kind of discipline which I for one reject out of hand. I think that there is an enlightened approach to the meaning of authority in our society today where men and women, old and young are attempting to find new and better ways to motivate people and their behaviour. Striking, commanding, forcing, coercion, all of which are associated with authoritarianism in family structures, I think need to go by the board. I think that's a primitive way of administering discipline.

I think, however, discipline is to be continued and I think that we need to find ways to motivate our children in the context of our community lives, in the context of our Christian relationships. They need discipline which produces the kind of behaviour which is productive and creative and fruitful and conducive to growth and maturity. But what you see is not a rejection of authority, it is a rejection of a kind of authority which you call authoritarianism. I think it is a mistake to believe that the world in which we live has become undisciplined - I think the world in which we live is trying to find new ways of disciplining itself and disciplining the young, disciplining the novice - new ways that are based upon a different attitude towards human relationships than the old world attitude of paternalism or authoritarianism. We are in a transition, we haven't found those ways yet, but

I think we are striving to find them. I do not believe in authoritarianism in family life, not in any sense, however, I do believe in discipline in family life and I want to make that distinction."

SERVANT: "Perhaps I could include in my question, do you see a fear of committed relationships, where you in fact are accountable to other people?"

GRAHAM: "Any group of people need to be disciplined. The question is how do you discipline a group of people - that is the real question. Authoritarianism is part of a by-gone era. I don't think that authoritarian relationships on the part of leadership is going to carry us into the new society we are headed toward at all. We are trying to find new ways to discipline ourselves in our lives together, to train our young and to do it in such a way that we will reflect something different than the old paternalistic control, coercion factors. I don't think we have found them yet but I think that we are striving to find them. There are an awful lot of renewal groups struggling at that very place, because there is an awful tension in their lives between the discipline which is necessary for the group to maintain its identity and the freedom that is necessary for the individual in the group to have some real life. They are struggling to find a balance between these two things. I don't know of any group yet which has found the answer to this problem - in spite of what I hear some of them claiming."

SERVANT: "You mentioned a new way of discipline and I would like to ask you do you think that these new ways are based on personal servant-type relationships rather than based on a super-structure?"

GRAHAM: "Yes, but I would think just relationships, not only servant-type relationships. I think we are struggling to find ways to motivate other people based upon our relationship to them. That's the simplest way I can state it. There are a lot of groups of people who are finding new ways of disciplining based simply upon motivation borne out of relationship and I think that's good.

SERVANT: "How do you have discipline yet freedom without it becoming like an umbrella-type authority, but rather bearing up from underneath?"

GRAHAM: "I think this is maybe my own place of failure. Maybe there are some who have found answers better than I have found, maybe lots of people have, but I have not yet found a way to be motivated or to motivate others in relationship to a common life except in my personal face to face relationship with them. So I need to be actively in that relationship with them. If I were to abstract that and make a rule of it then I am not telling the truth - like "I've found the rule that works!" It all depends on the relationship with the persons and how they live and what goes on between them. It is an awkward place to be but I don't know where else to be



right now."

SERVANT: "But you only have the ability to relate to a certain number don't you?"

GRAHAM: "Right!"

SERVANT: "Then you relate to people through other people eventually don't you?"

GRAHAM: "I don't know. Not necessarily."

SERVANT: "Well can you relate to everybody that you are living with, without having to relate through other people?"

GRAHAM: "Well I can where I am now with 65 people, yes that's not difficult. But in the larger community, the one in Houston which had some 400 or more people, that is a more difficult thing to accomplish. Nonetheless it is not impossible to relate in a face to face way with 400 people, it's not impossible but much more difficult."

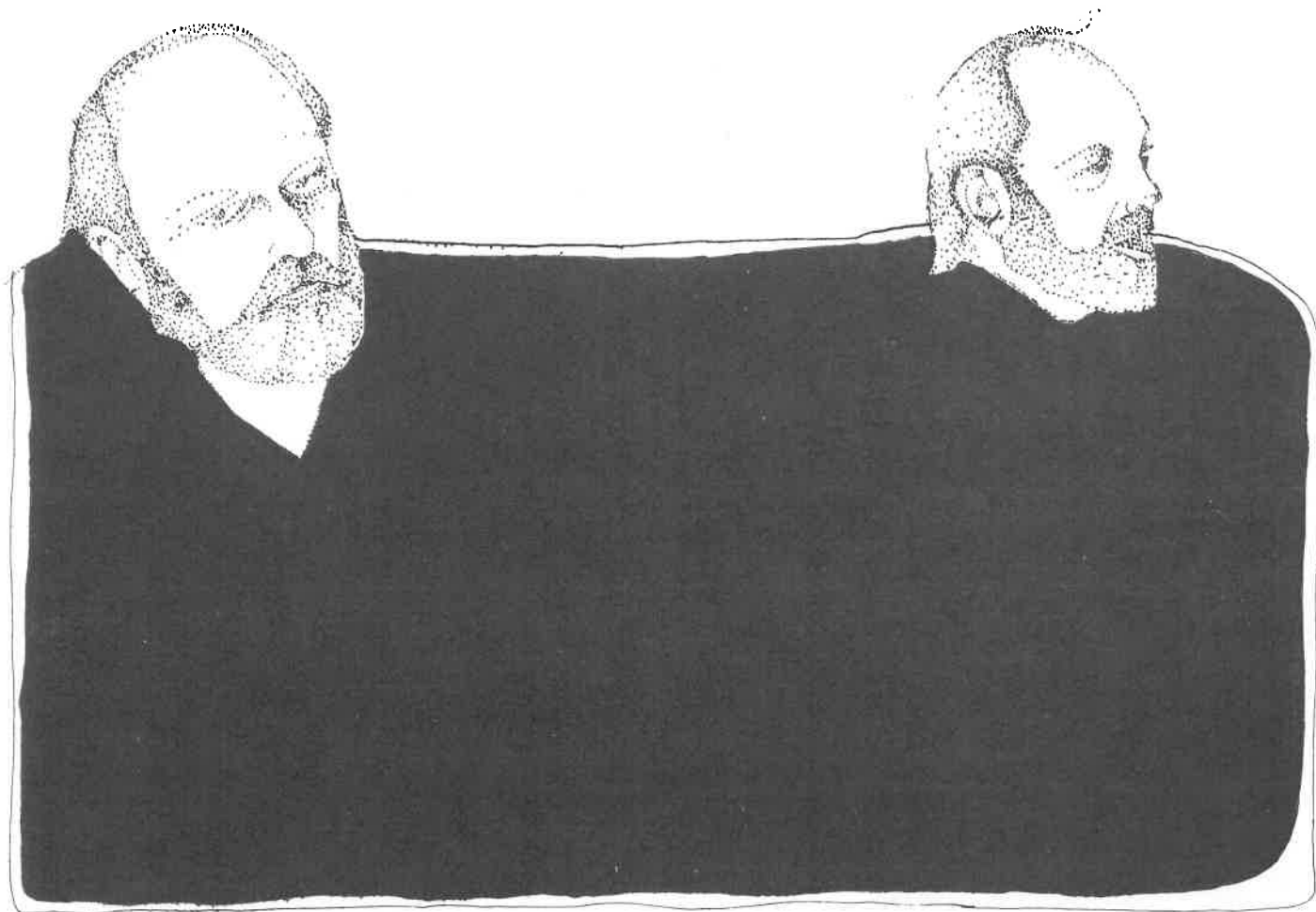
SERVANT: "What do you see as some of the strengths of the charismatic renewal and what do you see as some of its weaknesses?"

GRAHAM: "I think one of its obvious strengths is the devotion that the charismatic renewal inspires in people - personal devotion. I think also the charismatic renewal has set a lot of people free from doctrinal hang-ups that have prevented them from being open to being a minister. I think that an awful lot of people have thought that they have to be authenticated in some special way to minister, to be a servant of Christ, and I think the charismatic renewal has helped us understand once again that all of us who are in Christ are servants of Christ and the only authentication that you need is baptism. I think that is beginning once again to be understood. The charismatic movement or renewal seems to be helping us once again to understand our calling as servants, gifted by the Spirit in our humanity for the service of Christ. I think the charismatic renewal is setting people free to pray in a more natural and spontaneous, human way, taking away a lot of the props from under us yet we don't fall down because we find ourselves sustained by the grace that Christ has given us. I think that the charismatic renewal has helped us catch a new vision of that. I don't think that the whole communitarian movement (I'll call it that) has anything necessarily to do with the charismatic movement but it is part of a general movement of community development for ministry. I don't think the charismatic renewal alone is causing people to come face to face with their need for personal relationship to Jesus. I think there is a much broader movement than the charismatic renewal that participates in it.

I think one of the great weaknesses of the charismatic renewal has been, and is at the present time, that sometimes people who are involved in it leave the impression they are the only real Christians around, or if not real Christians then the only spiritual Christians, which is manifestly foolish. I think very often the charismatic renewal would like very much to exclude from its midst people who don't seem to conform to some particular form of doctrine, practice or ideology; and of course it depends on what part of the charismatic renewal you are talking to, which doctrine, which ideology and which patterns are acceptable. The charismatic renewal seems to be plagued by a kind of sectarian spirit which is dangerous. You also get people in the charismatic renewal who would far rather make proselytes than converts, which is to say they would like to see people responding in faith in the same way they themselves have responded and wouldn't feel quite happy until those people have done so. Rather than letting the Lord do in other people what He wants to do. That very often is a problem.

Those are just a few of the strengths and weaknesses."

SERVANT: "A question that concerns communities in particular. How important or essential do you see a community being attached in some way to some denomination?"



GRAHAM: "I think the community ought to be attached to a denomination or it will become one. By denomination I mean a broader group of people; a group with a broader base of fellowship and a broader base of tradition than just a local happening. I think to one degree or another every community which sees itself as a base for ministry needs to be related to a broader tradition than just itself."

SERVANT: *"Could that take the form of other communities in Australia and overseas relating to them?"*

GRAHAM: "That remains to be seen, because the tendency when groups of people relate together on a permanent basis is for them to become a denomination."

Now they may not actually call themselves that but I think one of the strongest growing denominations in the States today is the one called the non-denominational church. They have very much the same doctrine, the same tradition, the same vision of their ministry and life, the same pattern of worship. They are in everything but name a denomination. They are developing legal and other kinds of ties with one another, exchanging ministries and therefore trying to find common ways to authenticate ministers. They are developing all of the patterns of a denomination. They maintain a certain kind of flexibility within themselves, which is to say you could see local things different here than there.

It remains to be seen whether the growing relationships among various communities can avoid creating new denominations.

(end)

notes & news

***** The recent visit of Nigel Goodwin, Director of the London Arts Centre Group, was a stimulus to those Christians involved in the arts and media here in Australia. Nigel has produced religious programmes for the B.B.C. The ARTS CENTRE GROUP exists to serve Christians who are professionally involved in the world of the Arts, Media and Entertainment. Membership includes musicians, painters, architects, journalists, broadcasters and film-makers.

Speaking to a gathering in Adelaide, Nigel said that he believed that many Christians make a false dichotomy between the 'secular' and the 'sacred'. "I don't believe in secular or sacred. Everything is sacred." He urged Christians involved in the arts to pray more frequently and to listen to God's non-stop broadcast, "It's cool - I'm here!" We should meet together "to pray, to share our scars and tears and to sweat out subjects together" in order that we might make inroads into the Godlessness of contemporary art-forms. We should not be afraid to face suffering. "We need to paint thorns as well as roses" realising that "compost is the food of next year's resurrection."

In regard to worship Nigel said that it was a sad thing that the organ became sanctified and that our worship should include many forms of music, drama, dance, spontaneity, liturgy, sharing and praying together. The Arts Centre Group can be contacted at 21 Short Street, London SE1 8LJ.

***** Pastor Larry Christenson of the American Lutheran Church in San Pedro, California will be the speaker at the next Ecumencial Charismatic Rally to be conducted at Maughan Church in Adelaide on Saturday, 4th February, 1978 at 7.45p.m.

Pastor Christenson will speak in Adelaide after addressing the National Charismatic Conference in Melbourne in January (23rd-27th). He is a Co-ordinator of the Lutheran Charismatic Renewal in America and author of many books on Christian marriage and renewal in the church.

Other meetings Larry will be speaking at include:-

HORSHAM - Wednesday, 1st February, 1978

Venue:- Horsham Town Hall at 7.30p.m.

NARACOORTE - Thursday, 2nd February, 1978

Venue:- Naracoorte Town Hall at 7.30p.m.

ADELAIDE - Saturday, 4th February, 1978

Venue:- Maughan Church, 43 Franklin Street, Adelaide at 10.00a.m.-1.00p.m.

ADELAIDE - Sunday, 5th February, 1978

Venue:- Jacob's Ladder, 2nd Floor, 102 Gawler Place, Adelaide at 7.30p.m.

***** Lutheran Charismatic Renewal meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month, 10a.m.-4p.m., 2nd Floor, 102 Gawler Place, Adelaide. For further information contact:-

Mr. Glen Heidenreich - 339 3951 or

Mr. Peter Jasprizza - 223 6684

***** November 13th, 1977 saw the dedication of the Manoah Christian Community. Three families pooled their resources and bought an old burnt-out mansion in the Adelaide Hills believing that it would become a place where God would be glorified and where people would come to meet Him in a life-changing way. Rev. Doug Kuhl delivered the address and Rev. Bill Bennetts offered the prayers of dedication, while the Rev. A. Wilson said the final prayer and blessing. This represented the coming together of several Christian traditions for the dedication of 'Manoah'. In address the gathering of some 300 people Rev. Kuhl quoted from a handbook on Christian Community called "Living together in a world falling apart" which describes community as "a gift the Holy Spirit is pouring out again on the Church today."

***** During the weekend of the 3rd & 4th of December thousands of spectators gathered at the third Pacific Games - a track and field event for Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan and the United States. Some hundreds of young people received a week of training prior to the games through key Youth with a Mission workers, Loren Cunningham and Don Stephens. A 'Gideon's Army' then went out and evangelized the thousands of people from many nations who attended the Games in accord with the great commission of Jesus.

***** The visit of Dave Andrews who has been working for several years in a Christian community based mission in New Delhi, India was an inspiration to all who heard him speak. Dave, his wife Antonia and their three year old, Evonne are off to New Delhi again with a small team of three others to start another community based outreach to the nationals of India. Please pray for their work. While he was in Adelaide Dave talked about our calling to love one another with both a tough (mind of Christ) and a tender (heart of Christ) love. He pointed out that the Enemy often likes it to be the other way around - (tough-hearted and tender-minded!)

At the 1977 Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches the Lord spoke to the gatherings about the state of disunity and brokenness in the churches.

Many leaders who were present have since urged the whole Body of Christ to turn to the Lord in repentance for the sins we have perpetuated. It was a word not unlike the words of the prophet Ezekiel when he declared the word of the Lord -

"Mortal man groan as if your heart is breaking in despair. Groan in sorrow where everyone can watch you. When they ask you why you are groaning tell them it is because of the news that is coming.....Beat your breast in despair! I am testing my people and if they refuse to repent all these things will happen to them."

Ezekiel 21:6, 13.

Specifically the Lord spoke about His concern for the broken body of His Son, for the hostility among His people and our lack of commitment to one another. These are some excerpts from two of the prophecies. Each of us need to examine our own hearts before the Lord in the light of these prophetic messages.

*"Mourn and weep, for the body of my Son is broken.
Mourn and weep, for the body of my Son is broken.
Come before me with broken hearts and contrite spirits, for
the body of my Son is broken.
Come before me with sackcloth and ashes, come before me
with tears and mourning, for the body of my Son is broken.
I would have made you one new man, but the body of my
Son is broken.
I would have made you a light on a mountain-top, a city glorious
and splendorous that all the world would have seen, but the
body of my Son is broken.
The light is dim. My people are scattered. The body of my
Son is broken.
Turn from the sins of your fathers. Walk in the ways of my
Son. Return to the plan of your Father, return to the purpose of
your God.
The body of my Son is broken...."*

*"I am not pleased with the state of my church, the condition of my people...
There is suspicion and hostility among you; there is argumentativeness among
you....Some of you are still more committed to your friends and your neighbours
and your acquaintances than you are to my people, to those who bear my name...."*

*It is important that you repent. It is important that you turn away from all
those sins that keep you separated from your brothers and sisters. Now is the
time for you to turn away from these things. I will give you the understanding
and the strength that you need....to be one people."*

NEW FROM SERVANT TAPES

1. Spiritual Warfare - Doug Kuhl
(An expository sermon dealing with our life in the Spirit with its battles against the enemy and with examples of the victory of Jesus in people's lives.)
2. Love not the world - Doug Kuhl
(A call to recognise true value in life and head towards it. You can have a complete life in Jesus, in fullness and abundance where there is freedom to worship Him and grow into the full stature of Christ.)
3. The Parable of the Sower - Doug Kuhl
(Our response to Jesus revealed in His Word has three aspects, the ability to freely choose for Him, the ability to share all things with Him and the ability to be transformed into good soil in order that we may bear much fruit.)
4. "Little Children Love One Another"
- Dave Andrews
(New and old principles of community taken from Romans 12:1-13. An exhortation to loving relationships among members of the Body of Christ with reference to the ministries of helping, encouraging and hospitality.)

These tapes and others may be obtained by writing to:-

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102 Gawler Place,
ADELAIDE, S.A. 5000
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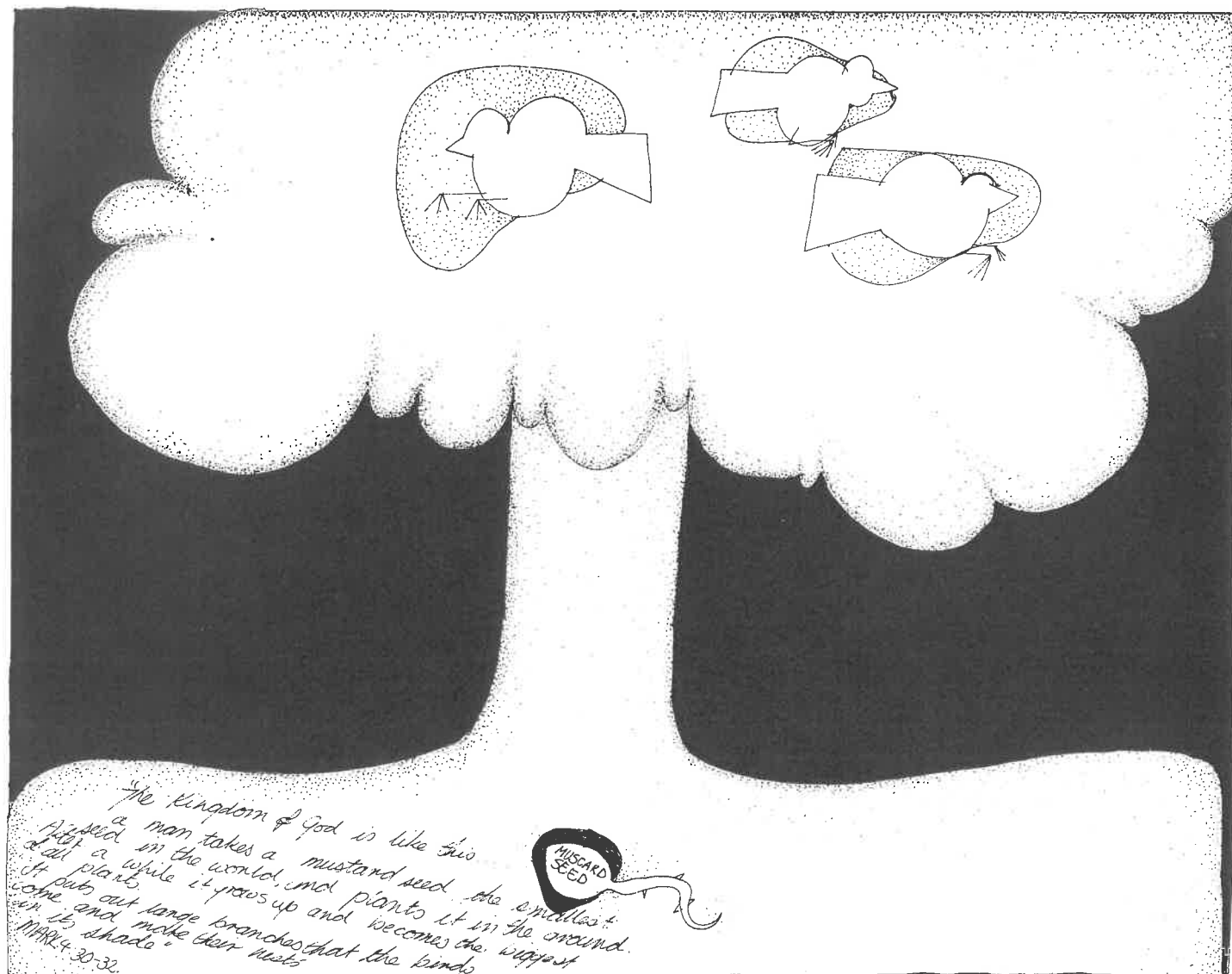
HONEY TREE

17th March, 1978, 8.15p.m.

** THE 2ND CHAPTER OF ACTS **

coming to Australia - May 1978

<u>BRISBANE:</u>	Thursday, May 11th (Festival Hall)
<u>SYDNEY:</u>	Friday, May 12th (Hordern Pavilion)
<u>WOLLONGONG:</u>	Saturday, May 13th (Wollongong Town Hall)
<u>NEWCASTLE:</u>	Tuesday, May 16th (Civic Theatre)
<u>MELBOURNE:</u>	Thursday, May 18th (Dallas Brooks Hall)
<u>MELBOURNE:</u>	Friday, May 19th (Robert Blackwood Hall)
<u>ADELAIDE:</u>	Saturday, May 20th (Apollo Stadium)
<u>SYDNEY:</u>	Sunday, May 21st (Hordern Pavilion) (afternoon)



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"Listen! I stand at the
door and knock; if anyone
hears my voice and opens
the door, I will come into
his house and eat with
him, and he will eat
with me."
Revelation 3:20

