

2 **Everything is Awesome?**
Steve Carlisle

2 **Prayer, Peace, Persecution**
Alison Blake

3 **Editorial**
4 **Faith Alone v. Faith at Work**

5 **Null on Cranmer on Alluring Grace**

6-7 **Has Protestantism Gone Catholic?**
Matt Olliffe

8 **New Zealand General Synod Moves on Same-Sex Relationships**
David Clancey

'Because justification by faith emphasized personal faith, persuasion was important to the Protestant Reformers.'

Ashley Null, *Cranmer's Comfortable Words*, p.3

CONTENTS

AN EVANGELICAL RENEWAL IN ENGLAND?

Mark Earngey

IN AMIDST THE WOES GRIPPING the Church of England, an exciting and energetic meeting of English evangelicals took place on 22-23 September – the ReNew conference. Sponsored by Anglican Mission in England (AMiE), Church Society and Reform, the ReNew conference brought together hundreds of evangelical ministers and keen laypersons in order to advance Anglican Evangelical ministry in England.

As the sole Sydney Anglican visitor it was a great opportunity to sit and listen to brothers and sisters contending for the faith once delivered within the very difficult circumstances of the present day Church of England. The energy and enthusiasm in the room was palpable as a 'way forward' plan was presented by the likes of William Taylor, Mike Ovey, Rod Thomas, and others. This plan has at its heart pioneering, establishing and securing biblical local churches, and has a number of strategies for engagement at a regional and national level within the Church of England.

One of the strengths of the conference was the break-out sessions where delegates could collaborate together under one of the pioneering, establishing or securing goals. Such discussions included revitalisation of churches, planting churches, establishing leadership in a non-evangelical parish, and how to secure a church for the next generation. These were the nuts and bolts of the conference and they really locked our focus onto the evangelisation of England.



To this observer, the background issues of human sexuality and women bishops in the Church of England seemed to spark the conference into prayer, discussion and urgent action – and the result was positive: a conference centre full of Anglican brothers and sisters united together and planning to see souls saved. As one of the presenters, Dr. Lee Gatiss (Director of Church Society) put it: 'My prayer after ReNew is that Anglican Evangelicals have returned to their dioceses with renewed enthusiasm for the task of evangelism, to 'gently instruct' (2 Tim. 2:25) those who oppose them, and to contend for the faith.'

Is it the time for an evangelical renewal in the Church of England? Does this movement signal the return of the Gospel to the heart of the Church of England? With humble, prayerful, biblical beginnings like this – let's pray that it is indeed. ©

EVERYTHING IS AWESOME?

Steve Carlisle



IN RECENT TIMES, KIDS MOVIES HAVE brought us two of the most catchy and upbeat songs one could find. From Tegan and Sarah's hit song 'Everything is Awesome!' from the *Lego Movie* to Pharrell Williams' tune 'Happy' from *Despicable Me 2*, kids all over the planet have left these movies with "feel good"

tunes in their minds and hearts.

Yet, in a world in which so much appears to be going wrong, these songs hit a note of discord with the experience of children as they perceive the nature of the sinful world about them. Indeed as they look around, they may wish to become minions, or Lego blocks, to retreat from the sinful reality they exist in!

However, though sin in this world is a present reality, the Scriptures point us to the hope which we have in the Lord God himself. Whether we choose to use the word awesome in the modern colloquial sense, or in its true dictionary usage, we can confidently assert that indeed it is true that 'The Lord Jesus is Awesome'. He is the creator of all things, the one in whom every part of creation finds its goal and purpose (Colossians 1:15-20). Not only this, in Christ all the

fullness of the Deity dwells bodily (Colossians 2:9). This makes him awesome as we understand our place as his creatures who have been created through him and for him.

Additionally, Paul, in the letter to the Colossians goes on to explain how Jesus has reconciled us rotten sinners to God through his death on the cross, allowing us to be presented without blemish before the Father.

A joy and happiness which is based on the hope of the gospel.

It is this gospel which motivates Paul, and which brings him a greater joy than anything Pharrell Williams might be able to sing about. It is a joy and happiness which is based on the hope of the gospel of which Paul has become a servant (Colossians 1:23; 2:6-7).

You see, for kids right around the world, these songs are just a bit of fun, yet we know as those wearied by the world full of sin that indeed 'Everything is not Awesome' and we are not always 'Happy'. But in the gospel of the Lord Jesus we have a reason for awe, a reason to say 'Jesus is Awesome' and a joy, not based on circumstances in the present age, but on a hope guaranteed in the resurrection of Christ for eternity. ☪

PRAYER, PEACE, PERSECUTION Alison Blake



OUR PERSECUTED BROTHERS AND sisters in Sudan, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan - I'm guessing your church has been praying for them for many weeks now, maybe for years! Do you feel overwhelmed by the magnitude of their need? Are your prayers feeling a bit hollow when you think about their

appalling circumstances?

Reading Psalm 3 and 4 earlier this week it struck me that this must be how today's persecuted believers feel. And David knew a thing or two about praying and trusting the Lord through persecution! A few moments later I decided "That's what I want to pray, on behalf of the church in Iraq, and Nigeria, and Sudan and..."

Take a look at these two Psalms now. How about using these prayers of David to pray for our suffering brothers and sisters in Christ in the 21st century?

Here's what I'm asking of God...

That, despite their horrendous circumstances, persecuted believers would not doubt God's righteousness

(4:1) and keep calling out to him (4:1-2).

That they'd experience and know him as their eternal shield and deliverer (3:3,7-8), who hears and answers their prayers (3:4, 4:1,3) and who keeps them safe (4:8), in this world, but more especially, in the life to come.

That they would be deeply aware of the LORD's sustaining (3:5), his blessing (3:8) and mercy (4:1) upon them. That in the midst of unimaginable terror and suffering they would be filled with deep joy (4:7), able to sleep, free from fear (3:5-6), because they know God's perfect peace (4:8).

That the LORD, by his Spirit, would relieve their distress (4:1), guard them from sinning in their anger (4:4) and strengthen their trust in him (4:5).

Like David I can, and should, ask the LORD, to deal justly with the enemies of his people (3:7), and to shine his light and glory on his people (3:3, 4:6).

Lastly, I'm asking the LORD to turn the persecutors from their delusions and false gods, to serve the God who sits on the throne and the Lamb. (Rev 7:15-17).

Let's keep praying with conviction and confidence on behalf of persecuted Christians. ☪

EDITORIAL

FAITH UNDER ATTACK

AS THE WORLD IS SO VICIOUSLY CONFRONTED BY horrendous evil perpetrated in the name of a religion, all religion gets a bad name.

And so it should. There may be moderates, and there may be extremes, but religion is a corrupting and oppressive influence in this world. Religion is a merely human enterprise and sinful human beings use it to exploit and oppress their fellow human beings.

If even those practising 'God's own religion' in biblical times could get it so wrong, how much more will all other humanly constructed religions! The Golden Calf, so soon after God's salvation from Egypt. Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin with his abominable idols. Solomon with his hundreds of gods. Manasseh with his magic. The Sadducees with their political corruption. The Pharisees with their inhumane legalism. The Christian Judaizers with their 'faith plus ...'

Because Jesus spoke against the oppressive power of human religion, and rescued those who were crushed by it, he was himself broken by it, as religious men garnered political force in order to declare 'the king is dead'.

And so religion became a necessary evil. It destroyed the Messiah, so that the Messiah could rescue people from its clutches, and liberate them into freedom and life. But more than that, his death brought the forgiveness and eternal life that human religion vainly promises, but can never deliver. When he rose from the dead eternal life was proclaimed to the nations, and with it newness of life in the meantime. And that was never to be earned by human effort, religious or otherwise. It is a completely free gift, to be received by faith alone.

True Christianity is not a religion. It has never been a religion. The gospel does not call for religion. It calls for faith. Bare faith. Faith alone.

We are saved by Christ. We are given our place in heaven by Christ's work. We are sustained through death's shadows in this life by Christ's Spirit. We do the good works Christ has already prepared for us. We persevere by Christ's strength. It is all, from beginning to end, about what Jesus did and does *for us*, not about our efforts, our practices, our love, our obedience, our active-ness, our anything else. It is *Christ alone* and so it is *faith alone*.

That automatically dismisses a religion constructed in the name of 'Christianity' as being completely unwarranted, irrelevant, and, in its worse moments, just as corrupt, evil and oppressive as any other. But the tendency for human beings to move towards religion is an ever-present danger. In order to preserve the good news of the gospel which alone can bring healing to humanity's running sore, we must at all times be vigilant against the religious tendency to insert human effort, or co-operation, or obedience, or works, or ... anything! — otherwise faith is no longer alone, and our salvation becomes fatally linked, even in some small way, with our own activity. Faith alone preserves us from the horrors of human religion.

So Protestants should be alarmed at recent trends in scholarship presenting fine-sounding arguments for faith + something else. And Anglicans need to be alarmed at even small additions to their liturgy that confuse those praying it in this same direction.

In Sydney, for example, we should be asking why the adjective *active* has been placed before 'trust' in the new Holy Communion Services, Forms 2 & 3.¹ Such an adjective is never found attached to 'faith' in the New Testament. Neither is it found in our Reformation Prayer Books, nor 1662, nor even the *Australian Prayer Book* (1978). The only adjectives previous prayer books very occasionally attach to faith are 'steadfast' or 'lively'. Why did *Common Prayer* think this change was necessary? If it was an attempt to modernize 'lively', it is inept, for that was the old language for 'living' (as opposed to dead). But because other language in the same services highlights the 'faithfulness' of the worshipper (again, innovative in comparison to previous prayer books), this probably also lies behind the adjective '*active*'. If so, by focusing so clearly on human effort, 'active trust' is moving us away from *faith alone* and these services are moving away from our Reformation heritage. But whether inept or intentional, either way, the adjective ought to be removed in our current usage and in future publications of *Common Prayer*.

Only faith alone can deliver us from human religion and into God's own newness of life. ☪

¹ *Common Prayer* (2012), 52, 60–61.



The Australian Church Record has served Australian Christianity since 1880, seeking to promote independent and evangelical thinking amongst Australian Anglicans. Since 2004 the publication has been online. Back issues are on the website, which also enables notification emails to be requested. www.australianchurchrecord.net

The Australian Church Record is an evangelical newspaper in the Reformed Anglican tradition of the historic creeds and the 39 Articles of Faith, and the standard of teaching and practice in the Book of Common Prayer. We accept the Scriptures as God's word written, and as containing all things necessary for salvation and the final authority in all matters of faith and behaviour.

Publisher: Australian Church Record
Executive Editor: Peter G. Bolt
The Australian Church Record is designed and typeset by Lankshear Design
Australian Church Record. ACN 000 071 438
All enquiries:
PO Box 218, Camperdown NSW 1450

FAITH ALONE V. FAITH AT WORK

ALL TOO OFTEN THE SINFUL HEART FAILS TO GRASP the fact that, when it comes to our salvation, we do nothing. This can be especially so when we speak of the ‘act’ of faith in justification.

The Protestant tradition worked so hard to carefully articulate the place of faith. Notice the contrast between the traditional Catholic view and the way in which the Reformers responded.

For the Catholics, a process existed between what was known as ‘unformed faith’ and ‘formed faith’. The first of these, ‘unformed faith’, basically consisted of knowledge and assent. This type of faith could know about God, and could even give assent to what it knew about God being true. However, ‘unformed faith’ in and of itself was not justifying faith. It was essentially an intellectual exercise.

What was required therefore was a further gift of love. Love would make the will trust, adhere to, and love God, transforming the purely intellectual ‘unformed faith’ into justifying ‘formed faith’. Renaissance Catholic thought thus placed an overwhelming accent on love rather than faith as the foundational virtue for the Christian life.

Compare the following quotes from Luther (Reformer), Trent (Post-Reformation Catholic), and Macchia (a contemporary Pentecostal scholar), on whether the faith which justifies not only produces love but also includes love.

Luther ‘For Paul [in Galatians 2:16] plainly affirms, that no man is justified by works of the law either going before grace [...] or coming after grace.’

‘[O]ur formal righteousness is not charity furnishing and beautifying faith, but it is faith itself.’ ‘As the schoolmen say that charity furnishes and adorns faith, so do we say that it is Christ furnishes and adorns faith, or which is the form and perfection of faith. Wherefore, Christ apprehended by faith, and dwelling in the heart, is the true Christian righteousness, for the which God counts us righteous and gives us eternal life. Here is no work of the law, nor charity [...]’¹

Trent ‘[The justification of the sinner occurs when a man] receives in that justification, together with the remission of sins, all these infused at the same time, namely, faith, hope and charity.’

‘If anyone says that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and remains in them, or also that the grace by which we are justified is only the good will of God, let him be anathema.

‘If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy which remits sins for Christ’s sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, let him be anathema.’²

Macchia ‘The greatest mistake of the Protestant Reformation was to define love as a work and to separate it conceptually from faith as that which alone receives grace.’³

The problem with this kind of thinking is that love itself entails our works of obedience to God’s law. Furthermore, faith here is not alone. It is no longer by faith *alone* that one becomes justified, but rather it is ‘unformed faith’ coupled *with love* that results in saving ‘formed faith’. Protestant thought thus rejected the idea of ‘unformed’ and ‘formed’ faith.

In turn, Protestant theologians were careful in how they defined faith. They wanted to make it as clear as possible that works played absolutely no part in our justification. Protestants taught that true and saving faith incorporated three inseparable elements: knowledge, assent, and trust. They agreed with the Catholics that mere knowledge and assent was not saving faith (even demons can assent). However, against the Catholics they insisted that trust itself was crucial to the very essence of faith. That is, while both Catholics and Protestants agreed that a personal, willing trust was necessary for saving faith, Protestants emphasised that this ‘trust’ element was a part of faith itself and not brought about by love. In this way, for the Catholics love was the root of true saving faith, while for the Protestant Fathers, love flowed from saving faith.

One further clarification that the early Protestants made was to explain the ‘act’ of faith itself as an ‘instrumental’ cause, as opposed to an ‘efficient’ cause. There is no denying that the Scriptures talk of faith as an ‘act’ that we do. However, the Scriptures are also clear that this ‘act’ is in no way meritorious or a work. In other words, while God has freely determined the causal order between faith and justification, the act of faith itself is simply the ‘instrument’ that God has ordained, and is in and of itself no way meritorious. Faith in this sense neither effects justification or merits justification. This is why we must think of faith as an ‘instrumental’ cause and not as an ‘efficient’ cause. Furthermore, once we remember that our union, regeneration, faith and justification are all the result of the one instant act of God’s sovereign grace, we quickly remove any sense of our own obedience or work in justification.

The tendency of the human heart to want to boast in its own achievements is all too prevalent. But there is nothing that we do to merit our justification before God. Like our forebears, contemporary Protestants must continue to work carefully and clearly in defining the place of faith. 

- 1 M. Luther, *A Commentary on St Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians* (E. Middleton, trans. [1807]; Revised: London: James Clarke, 1953), 132, 134-5.
- 2 The Council of Trent, Sixth Session, *Decree Concerning Justification (1547), Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (H.J. Schroeder, trans.; St Louis: Herder, 1941), 114-136 at 121, 132-3.
- 3 F.D. Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit: Creation, Redemption, and the Triune God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 237.

NULL ON CRANMER ON ALLURING GRACE

Record READERS WILL BE FAMILIAR WITH ASHLEY Null's excellent work on Thomas Cranmer.¹ The English Reformation moved steadily forward from the 1547 publication of the Homilies. Bringing in justification by faith, this was quite clearly a Protestant change. The following year, Cranmer began to change the liturgy by introducing some English prayers into the Latin Mass, then in 1549 came the first English Prayer book, and then the 1552 book with its clearly Protestant Holy Communion service. 'The whole service is designed to make believers fall in love with Jesus all over again.'

Null has previously warned in our circles that:

biblical preaching must always guard against an incipient Pelagianism which would turn God's promise to renew us into tasks we must perform in order to please him. The Bible clearly states many dos and don'ts for human behaviour. However, just because our minds may understand how a Christian should live, that doesn't mean that our wills can automatically fall in line.

In his recently published *Divine Allurement. Cranmer's Comfortable Words*,² Ashley Null once again draws his readers back to Cranmer's exposition of the gospel through liturgy. For the Reformers, people come to faith only by persuasive preaching (not legal proclamations or threats of punishment), and the preaching of the gospel of grace was alluring:

to encounter unconditional divine love was to discover something deep within being touched — an unquenchable, often unexpected, longing for a relationship with one's Maker being stirred up; a transforming grateful human love for God being gently drawn out; a fervent drive to express this love in all outward actions rising up and directing the remainder of their lives. [...] Only the assurance of divine love made known in free pardon had that power (p.4).

The oppressive high point of the moralistic strain in Medieval Catholicism is symbolized by the chancel-arch painting found in medieval parish churches depicting the Day of Doom and Jesus as Judge (p.5). Medieval piety was all about 'protecting the soul from Christ's doomsday

1 See, for example, <http://acl.asn.au/resources/dr-ashley-null-on-thomas-cranmer>.

2 A. Null, *Divine Allurement. Cranmer's Comfortable Words* (London: Latimer, 2014).



anger' (p.6). But the Reformers saw this kind of gospel as bad news. Sin is so severe in its effects, that no human heart can free itself from this slavery. Moreover, 'having been so weakened by sin's power, humanity cannot co-operate with grace to achieve their salvation' (p.9). As Cranmer himself put it:

Justification is not the office of man, but of God. For man cannot justify himself by his own works...

Justification is not the office of man, but of God. For man cannot justify himself by his own works neither in part nor in the whole. [...] But justification is the office of God only, and is not a thing which we render unto him, but which we receive of him, not which we give to him, but which we take of him, by his free mercy, and by the only merits of his most dearly beloved Son. (Cranmer, *Homily of Salvation*). 

HAS PROTESTANTISM GONE CATHOLIC?

Matt Olliffe

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE PROTESTANT doctrine of justification by faith alone to the very end of the believer's life? Is Pauline free justification limited to the beginning of the believer's life of faith? What has happened to the Protestant idea of Pauline justification by faith apart from all works at the final judgment? What about the relationship between faith as trusting God's promise, and faith working through love? Is there a distinction between justifying faith *including* love, and justifying faith *producing* love?

Traditionally, Protestant theologians thought that Paul taught that justification was by faith alone from first to last, at the final judgment as much as at the beginning of the Christian life. All works, whether ceremonial or moral, including the acts and attitude of Christian love, which are the fruit of faith, were excluded from the believer's initial, ongoing, and final justification. For the Protestant doctrine

of justification, the sole instrumental cause of justification is *fiduciary* faith, being trust in God and his promises and goodness *alone*, and the sole meritorious cause of justification is the righteousness of Christ graciously imputed to the believer.

However, many recent Protestant biblical scholars teach that final justification for Paul is based at least in part on a person's Spirit-enabled works of love, and many also teach that, when he refers to 'free' justification in Romans 3 and 4, Paul only means the initial declaration of righteousness at the beginning of the Christian life. This view bears some remarkable similarities with the traditional Roman Catholic view of justification espoused at the Council of Trent, which was a specific rejection of the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone. (see table, in which all italics are not original).

Calvin: 'If we are to determine a price for works according to their worth, we say that they are unworthy to come before God's sight; that man, accordingly, has no works in which to glory before God; that hence, *stripped of all help from works, he is justified by faith alone*. But we define justification as follows: the sinner, received into communion with Christ, is reconciled to God by his grace, while, cleansed by Christ's blood, he obtains forgiveness of sins, and clothed with Christ's righteousness as if it were his own, he stands confident before the heavenly judgment seat. After forgiveness of sins is set forth, the good works that now follow are appraised otherwise than on their own merit. For everything imperfect in them is covered by Christ's perfection, every blemish or spot is cleansed away by his purity in order not to be brought in question at the divine judgment. Therefore, after the guilt of all transgressions that hinder man from bringing forth anything pleasing to God has been blotted out, and after the fault of imperfection, which habitually defiles even good works, is buried, the good works done by believers are accounted righteous, or, what is the same thing, are reckoned as righteousness [Rom 4:22].'¹

'They who pervert [Romans 2:13] for the purpose of building up justification by works, deserve most fully to be laughed at even by children. [...] Now we do not deny but that perfect righteousness is prescribed in the law: but as all are convicted by transgression, we say that another righteousness must be sought. Still more, we can prove from this passage that *no one is justified by works; for if they alone are justified by the law who fulfill the law, it follows that no one is justified; for no one can be found who can boast of having fulfilled the law*.'²

'[Re Romans 2:13] We assuredly do not question that the righteousness of the law consists in works, and not even that righteousness consists in the worth and merits of works. But *it has not yet been proved that we are justified by works unless they produce some one man who has fulfilled the law*.'³

'God does not, as many stupidly believe, once for all reckon to us as righteousness that forgiveness of sins concerning which we have spoken in order that, having obtained pardon for our past life, we may afterward seek righteousness in the law; this would be only to lead us into false hope, to laugh at us, and mock us. For since no perfection can come to us so long as we are clothed in this flesh, and the law moreover announces death and judgment to all who do not maintain perfect righteousness in works, it will always have grounds for accusing and condemning us unless, on the contrary, God's mercy counters it, and by continual forgiveness of sins repeatedly acquits us.

'We must strongly insist upon these two points: first, that there never existed any work of a godly man which, if examined by God's stern judgment, would not deserve condemnation; secondly, if such a work were found (something not possible for man), it would still lose favor – weakened and stained as it is by the sin with which its author himself is surely burdened. [...]

'[T]he Lord declares that for Abraham he reckoned faith as righteousness [Rom 4:3], not at the time when Abraham was at yet serving idols but after he had for many years excelled in holiness of life. Therefore, Abraham had many years excelled in holiness of life. Therefore, Abraham had long worshiped God with a pure heart, and kept such obedience to the law as can be kept by mortal man. Yet he still had a righteousness set in faith. From this we infer, according to Paul's reasoning, that *it was not of works* [Eph 2:9]. Similarly, when a prophet says, "The just shall live by faith" [Hab 2:4], the statement does not apply to impious and profane persons, whom the Lord by turning them to faith might justify, but the utterance is directed to believers, and to them life is promised by faith. Paul also removes all doubt when to confirm that idea, he takes this verse of David's: "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven" [Ps 32:1; 31:1 vg; cf Rom 4:7]. It is certain that David is not speaking concerning the ungodly but of believers, such as he himself was. For he spoke from the prompting of his own conscience. Therefore, we must have this blessedness not just once but must hold to it throughout life. [...]

'Accordingly, to the very end of life, believers have *no other righteousness* than that which is there described. [...]⁴

CONTINUED PAGE 7

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

HAS PROTESTANTISM GONE CATHOLIC? (CONTINUED)

'What sort of foundation have we in Christ? Was he the beginning of our salvation in order that its fulfillment might follow from ourselves? Did he only open the way by which we might proceed under our own power? Certainly not. But, as Paul had set forth a little before, Christ, when we acknowledge him, is given to us to be our righteousness [1 Cor 1:30]. He alone is well founded in Christ who has perfect righteousness in himself: since the apostle does not say that He was sent to help us attain righteousness but himself to be our righteousness [1 Cor 1:30].'⁵

Trent: '[W]e are therefore said to be justified by faith, because faith is the beginning of human salvation [...] and we are therefore said to be justified gratuitously, because none of those things that precede justification, whether faith or works, merit the grace of justification' [... Nevertheless, the justified are] considered to have, by those very works which have been done in God, fully satisfied the divine law according to the state of this life, and to have truly merited eternal life [...].'⁶

Recent Scholarship:

'The right way to understand [justification by works in Romans 2:13] is to see that Paul is talking about the final justification. ' [...] 'Present justification declares, on the basis of faith, what future justification will affirm publicly [...] *on the basis of the entire life*'.⁷

'Like his fellow Jews and the whole prophetic tradition, Paul is ready to insist that a *doing of the law is necessary for final acquittal* before God [...].'⁸

'Both [James and Paul] understand that our justification at the last judgment will be *based upon works*'.⁹

'Paul seizes on the chronological placement of Gen 15:6 and cites it as evidence of the initial declaration of righteousness that Abraham attained from God solely on the basis of faith. James views the same verse more as a "motto," applicable to Abraham's life as a whole.' [...] 'James and Paul use "justify" to refer to different things. Paul refers to the initial declaration of a sinner's innocence before God; James to the ultimate verdict of innocence pronounced over a person at the last judgment. If a sinner can get into relationship with God only by faith (Paul), *the ultimate validation of that relationship takes into account the works that true faith must inevitably produce* (James)'.¹⁰

'Romans 2:13-16 must point to a stronger theology of final vindication *on the basis of an obedient life* than is evident in most analyses of Pauline theology.'¹¹

'[G]ood deeds done by believers through God's grace *will be the criterion* for their final justification. [...] *good deeds are instrumental in meeting the outstanding condition for being justified finally*'.¹²

'Justification in the future sense (vindication) *depends upon the works of faithfulness* that issue from an ongoing relationship with Christ (cf Rom 2:13, 14:10-12; 1 Cor 3:13-15; 2 Cor 5:10). Thus when God justifies the ungodly (Rom 4:5), he is not acquitting the guilty. In the past, God reconciles the estranged; *in the future, God vindicates the faithful*'.¹³

'If obedience is the fruit of faith, and if faith is necessary to keep the believer in communion with God, then *obedience is required for maintaining the status of justification* – after all, no one will be justified if they do not persist and persevere in faithfulness'.¹⁴

'[J]ustification according to works is entirely biblical (eg Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10)'.¹⁵

'We have argued that initial justification is by grace and *final justification is conditioned (in part) on spirit-empowered works*. Both assertions are clear in Paul [...].'¹⁶

'Paul does teach that *good works are necessary for justification* and for salvation, and [N T] Wright rightly says that those texts are not just about rewards.' [...] 'Wright correctly says that believers *must do good works to be justified*, but such works are not the basis of our right-standing with God since our righteousness is always partial and imperfect'.¹⁷

- 1 Calvin, *Institutes*, III.17.8, (LCC XX; J.T McNeill, ed.; F.L. Battles, trans.; *Institutes of the Christians Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1:811-12.
- 2 Calvin, *Commentary on Romans*, 2:13 (Vol. XIX; J Owen, ed. & transl.; Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1849; Reprint: Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 95-6.
- 3 Calvin, *Institutes*, III.17.12 (LCC XX; J.T McNeill, ed.; F.L. Battles, trans.; *Institutes of the Christians Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1:817.
- 4 Calvin, *Institutes*, III.14.10-11 (LCC XX; J.T McNeill, ed.; F.L. Battles, trans.; *Institutes of the Christians Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1:777-9.
- 5 Calvin, *Institutes*, III.15.5 (LCC XX; J.T McNeill, ed.; F.L. Battles, trans.; *Institutes of the Christians Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1:793.
- 6 The Council of Trent, Sixth Session, Decree Concerning Justification (1547), *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (H.J. Schroeder, trans.; St Louis: Herder, 1941), 29-46.
- 7 N.T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said* (Oxford: Lion, 1997), 126, 129.
- 8 J.D.G. Dunn, *Romans* (WBC; Waco: Word, 1988), 1:98.
- 9 M.A. Seifrid, Christ, *Our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification* (NSBT 9; Leicester: Apollos/IVP, 2000), 182.
- 10 D.J. Moo, *James* (PNTC; Grand Rapids & Leicester: Eerdmans & Apollos, 2000), 139, 141.
- 11 S.J. Gathercole, 'A Law unto Themselves: The Gentiles in Rom 2:14-15 Revisited', *JSNT* 85 (2002), 48.
- 12 P.A. Rainbow, *The Way of Salvation: The Role of Christian Obedience in Justification* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005), 194, 206.
- 13 B.B. Colijn, *Images of Salvation in the New Testament* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2010), 213.
- 14 M.F. Bird, *The Saving Righteousness of God: Studies on Paul, Justification and the New Perspective* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), 177.
- 15 M.F. Bird, 'Progressive Reformed View', in J.K. Beilby & P.R. Eddy (eds.), *Justification: Five Views* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2011), 154.
- 16 P.M. Sprinkle, *Paul and Judaism Revisited: A Study of Divine and Human Agency in Salvation* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2013), 204.
- 17 T.R. Schreiner, 'Justification: The Saving Righteousness of God in Christ', *JETS* 54:1 (March 2011), 21, 31.

NEW ZEALAND GENERAL SYNOD MOVES ON SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS

David Clancey

THE ISSUE OF LEGITIMIZING same-sex relationships (through blessing, ordination, or marriage) has been bubbling away in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia for many years. At General Synod in 2012 a Commission of ‘eminent persons’ was established to report to the church on biblical, theological, missional, cultural and pastoral issues surrounding the possible blessing or ordination of those in same-sex relationships. This ‘Ma Whea?’ (pronounced ma fea, meaning ‘where to?’) Commission reported back to the 2014 General Synod (held in mid May) and offered ten possible ways forward for the church, spanning the breadth of affirming a traditional understanding, through to developing a liturgy for blessing those in same-sex relationships, or even planned dismemberment of the church. Reports from General Synod seem to indicate that there was an early and strong push for the development of a liturgy for blessing same-sex relationships. But during the synod there was a realization that such a move was impossible for evangelicals to live with, and a desire to do all possible for the church to remain together.

This resulted in the passing of Motion 30, in which General Synod states that it intends to develop a liturgical rite for the blessing of those in same-sex relationships, and for this rite to be brought to General Synod in 2016. The working party charged with developing this right are also charged with bringing to General Synod a ‘process and structure’ by which those who are opposed to blessing same-sex relationships might ‘continue to have integrity within the church’. While the motion makes no mention of what this ‘process and structure’ might entail, it is understood that the creation of a new constitution or new Province have been mentioned. The motion also provides for the ‘recognition’ of those in same-sex relationships in parishes where the Vicar and Vestry request it, and the Bishop permits it. Exactly what this ‘recognition



is, is unclear. But motion 30 states explicitly that such recognitions are not blessings or marriages. Lastly, Motion 30 commits the church to ‘continued dialogue which respects and protects diversity.’

General Synod are to be applauded for their honesty and clarity in giving voice to what they intend to do. What has been bubbling around for many years is now clearly stated. However, it must be recognized that Motion 30 is a grievous document for evangelicals in New Zealand. It states the clear intention of the church to bless what God declares to be sin, and therefore unlovingly removes any need for repentance of behaviour which God says excludes a person from his kingdom (1 Cor 6:11). Some clergy have already left their churches because of this intention. Others feel that until the canons and doctrine of the church actually change, now is the time for evangelicals to express their ‘integrity’ and to clearly ‘dialogue’ with the wider church. That is, to contend in every way possible for the gospel entrusted once for all to the saints. Would you remember us in your prayers? ☺

Motion 30 is a grievous document for evangelicals in New Zealand.