

Salt Shakers

Helping Christians make a difference

What is wrong with the world? “I Am”

G K Chesterton (Reply to *The Times* - 1908)

All that is necessary for evil to triumph is that good men [and women] do nothing

(Attributed to) Edmund Burke MP 1729 - 1797

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Editorial

Martin Lloyd Jones stated in *The Gospel of Genesis*, "The Bible presents us with a definitive, concrete, comprehensive worldview that is absolutely different from anything you can find anywhere else".

He goes on to say the Bible starts with God, it tells us He created everything, it tells us man is not merely an evolving animal but a special creation of God, it tells us how Satan and evil came in and how man fell, how man is utterly helpless and under judgement.

Then it gives the good news of how God, in his infinite love and mercy and compassion has intervened and provided a great and grand way of salvation. Martin Lloyd Jones notes that all of that is in just one chapter - Genesis 3. What an amazing God we serve! Romans 1 tells us that the evidence of God's existence is written on our hearts through the creation that surrounds us and clearly states the consequences of man moving away from God and eventually bearing within himself the due penalty of that sin.

We may despair about the world around us, of the inhumanity of man to man, the cruelty of power misused and of the corruption causing starvation and death in so many Third World countries. We could despair because the bad news seems endless. We read this month of the 345 late-term abortions in Victoria in 2007. That is the deliberate killing of babies, at the request of their mothers, who were more than 21 weeks from conception.

A government report stated that this is the highest number on record and that 164 were performed at a Melbourne clinic on women with healthy babies who said they were suffering psychological or social problems. What of the physiological and social problems of a mother with a 4-year-old?

Should a mother be given the same 'right' to terminate the life of her 4-year-old child when the going gets tough? If not, why not? But of course most people would say 'No' because that seems illogical! Logic seems to go out the window when a woman's 'right' is threatened.

What has that to do with Genesis? It is precisely because the church has devalued life by devaluing the Genesis record of God's creation and the redemption story that we in the Western world are in the state we are in.

Even countries where false religions reign have more respect for life than 'western' so-called Christian nations do today.

The same could be said about them not allowing the legalised freedom to have sex-on-demand as entertainment in brothels and where promiscuity is frowned upon instead of promoted. The freedom of the west is one of our worst enemies because we, the church, have devalued the meaning of life itself.

If there is no need for judgement because we simply evolved at the hands of an experimenting God who had no plan and purpose and we are all 'saved in the end' no matter what, because that God would not be so unkind as to punish sin, then what is the point of values and guidelines for life? Why are we any different to the animals who live by the rules of the jungle?

Thankfully, we can know the truth and, while that truth cannot stop the bad things happening, it can indeed give us a reason to go on - the reason is a loving God who has a plan. Let us not forget that truth does indeed set us free.

Yours in the service of Jesus Christ
Peter and Jenny Stokes



God – or god?: The attack on the nature and power of the God of the Bible

by Roger Birch

Last month, I wrote an introductory article about two different kinds of reality in which I compared man's "6 o'clock news" reality with God's reality channel, a channel not found on *Foxtel!* This article will further develop a comment made at the end of the previous article that to change an attribute, or characteristic, of God, even slightly, can turn our capital "G" God into a small "g" god. To do this, I will change the 'reality' metaphor to that of differing radio stations.

Most people would have experienced, especially after dark, interference from radio stations with a very similar frequency to the one you're listening to. A very slight change in frequency of the tuner, or even the transmission itself, can cause the radio to receive a completely different message. However, most people are far less aware that even the slightest change in one of God's attributes can completely change the picture of just who God is.

On our 'theology radio,' there are many stations which are clearly distinct from, and don't often interfere with, the 'Christian message wavelength.' For example, animism, where god is in the rocks and trees, or New Age, where we're all god, generally don't interfere with the Christian wavelength.

However, what about the 'Christian' wavelength? In reality, under the banner of "Christian," there are some very broad – and very different – theologies. All basically emphasise one or more attribute of God to the potential detriment of another. At a very

high level, we have the major difference between Roman Catholic and Protestant theology. Very simplistically, traditional Roman Catholic theology asserts salvation is through being 'in the church' whereas the Reformation was fought on the belief that one is saved by faith alone. Again, very simplistically, from the aspect of God's attributes, Catholic theology suggests God cannot 'save' someone in the deepest part of the jungle without a Catholic priest being there. But, can we so limit God's power and have Him remain God?

Another high level divide is between the liberal and evangelical Protestant positions. Once again, very

simplistically, the liberal position is typified by the Uniting Church's founding documents that claim the Word of God is *contained* in the Bible rather than the evangelical position where the Bible *is* the Word of God. The Uniting Church's position attacks many attributes of God: His power to correctly communicate His message to mankind, His ability to preserve it, and His truthfulness, among many others. It also elevates mankind whereby the priest, in particular, becomes the 'enlightened one' who determines which bits of the Bible are of God and which aren't.

However, evangelicals don't share a common view or theology, and the differences there can be far more subtle – but equally dangerous.

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Most people calling themselves ‘evangelical’ would probably agree on the basic attributes of God. He is eternal (the Bible opens with “In the beginning, God...” – God never sets out to ‘prove’ His existence) and so questions like “Who put God there?” are meaningless since they change the definition of God by even suggesting He is not eternal; He is omnipotent, that is, all powerful, even over death; He is omniscient, that is, all knowing and so we can be assured of the final outcome; He is omnipresent, that is, He is everywhere at the same time; furthermore, He is unchanging, sovereign, love, wrath, just, mercy, holy, righteous, even jealous, and many other things.

Before anyone claiming to be evangelical starts patting themselves on the back saying they agree with all these attributes, it should be noted that the ‘evangelical station’ on the radio dial is not one distinct station but a series of closely tuned stations which can be subject to interference from nearby stations. Wayne Grudem in his *Systematic Theology* identifies seven distinct strands of evangelical theology, namely Anglican, Arminian, Baptist, Dispensational, Lutheran, Reformed (Calvin) and Renewal (Charismatic/Pentecostal).

All these differing theologies tend to emphasise one attribute of God above another. So, where, for example, Calvinists stress the Sovereignty of God and conclude, “once saved, always saved,” Arminians emphasise God’s love in giving us free will and conclude we can lose our salvation. Given that God is unchanging, the problem is not whether He is Sovereign or love, it is that if God is not Sovereign in its absolute fullness at all times, then He ceases to be God and is reduced to being god. Equally, if He is not love in its absolute fullness at all

times, then we face the same issue.

However good our theological intentions, we need to avoid this dangerous position. So, the balance of this article will focus on God’s ability – or lack thereof – to adequately communicate His clear intent to us since this potentially creates the greatest ‘interference’ on our evangelical ‘radio stations.’

An article I wrote for this magazine three years ago was recently reposted on the *Creation Ministries International* web site. In that article, I suggested the “Litmus Test” as to what constituted a real evangelical, given the current broad usage of the term, was a belief in a straight reading of Genesis 1-11. That article produced a very lengthy, almost exasperated, response from a WA pastor.

One of his objections was that I should refer to the Bible as ‘infallible’ rather than ‘inerrant’ since, he claimed, the latter term

was a recent North American argument and during the Reformation, *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone) was a sufficient statement. Now I doubt whether the average church member would be able to distinguish between these two terms nor identify the very subtle, but major error in citing the Reformation when people’s understanding of terms would be very different from today. So, why demand this change?

This demand perfectly highlights where a slight change of radio frequency, or an apparently innocuous word change, alters not just the station, but its very message. In reality, my Litmus Test flushed out not just a philosophical debate over two apparently similar words, but a major difference in theology. By using the term infallible, the door is opened to permit ‘minor errors’ (a

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term which is further open to definition and hence abuse) of historical detail or scientific fact.

Even if we ignore the obvious challenge to identify any such ‘errors’ to actually justify the word change (and there are no prizes for guessing that Genesis 1-11 is the primary ‘culprit’), what such a change does is to allow interference to our own message from a nearby station, in this case, the ‘humanistic science’ station. Once again, there is an attack on God’s omnipotence, specifically His ability to accurately convey a concept. Regardless of how this objection is packaged, it states that God, the author of human language, does not have effective lordship over that language. It has just reduced God to god.

The Bible was recorded by man, but the words were spoken by God and so the use of human style does not imply errancy, which is precisely the point made by the greedy, sinful, disobedient Balaam in Num 23:19. The Bible affirms that all Scripture is: God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16); completely pure (Ps 12:6), perfect (Ps 119:96), and true (Prov 30:5). Paul believed all things written in the law and prophets (Acts 24:14), and Jesus said the disciples were “foolish” for failing to do the same thing (Luke 24:25); Romans 15:4 states that whatever was written in OT was for our instruction; and Matthew 5:18 indicates Jesus took every letter of the OT literally.

Furthermore, in specific relation to Genesis 1-11, the inherently naturalistic, evolutionary worldview that God had to somehow convey a ‘simpler’ message to these ignorant, ‘ancient’ people who did not have the benefit of knowing the advances of modern science implies God acted out of character. The Bible asserts God is

unlying (Num 23:19; Tit 1:2; Heb 6:18) and nowhere does Scripture even suggest such a condescending attitude to act contrary to His moral nature.

Many arguments have been used to try to defend this inherently unbiblical position, but all eventually fail by limiting the necessary truthfulness of Scripture through mistaking its major purpose for its total purpose. If God cannot get right the comparatively simple task of having the Bible’s contents both accurately recorded and preserved for us today, not only does this question His worthiness of our worship, but

also His capability of doing the far more significant task of raising us from the dead to live with Him for eternity in heaven.

Christians should welcome some of the amazing advances in science and impressive aspects of human philosophy – after all, man is

made in the image of God and so we should reflect His knowledge to some degree. The very great danger, though, is when the messages from those particular radio stations interfere with, and then change the basic message of God’s biblical radio station. At that stage, if we fail to detect and, even worse, believe that distortion, we have just turned God into god.

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Roger is a member of Salt Shakers Reference Panel on theological issues.

**The Bible affirms
that all Scripture
is: God-breathed,
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perfect and true**



News & Action

Tasmania - election

When Greens MP Nick McKim was offered one position in Cabinet for Greens MPs, he demanded two positions in return for supporting a Labor government - but Labor Premier David Bartlett refused. However, on the day prior to the swearing in of the new Tasmanian government, a new deal was struck.

The new deal?

That Nick McKim would have a seat in Cabinet as a Minister, responsible for “sustainable transport and alternative energy” as well as “Climate Change, Corrections, Consumer Protection and Community Development”. In addition, a second position will be filled by Greens MP Cassy O’Connor who will take on a role as a parliamentary secretary.

So much for Tasmanian Labor’s pre-election promise of not working with the Greens in government!

A monument for homosexuals?

Yes, that’s what Melbourne could have in the near future if a proposal made to the City of Yarra actually proceeds.

One councillor, who organised a meeting with the homosexual community to see how the Council could best ‘meet their needs’, told homosexual paper *MCV*, “I can’t see any reason why such a proposal wouldn’t go ahead. The City of Yarra is very keen to support the gay and lesbian community.”

It wouldn’t be the first such monument - New York City already has one!

Federal Charter of Rights - NO!

The Rudd government has announced that they will not adopt a ‘Charter of Rights’.

Attorney-General Robert McClelland made the announcement in a speech at the

National Press Club on Wednesday April 21.

This is good news!

However, the government **IS planning** a major ‘education campaign’ as well as establishing a joint parliamentary committee to examine every piece of legislation to see if it “meets” our international human rights obligations. This will place unacceptable burdens on our parliamentary democracy.

Mr McClelland said the government will also examine federal anti-discrimination legislation to see if it needs ‘changing’. He said the federal government would seek to ‘harmonise anti-discrimination laws’ across Australia. But that would mean adopting the worst laws from across the states!

R18+ video games

The federal and state Attorneys-General met on May 7 to decide on whether to allow R18+ rated computer games.

The Communiqué from the meeting says:

“Ministers considered the preliminary outcomes of the public consultation. Ministers also noted that the Commonwealth intends to release a status report on the consultation. A copy will be available at <http://www.ag.gov.au/gamesclassification>.

Ministers agreed to discuss whether to amend the National Classification Scheme to introduce an R 18+ classification for computer games at a future meeting. Ministers have requested further analysis of community and expert views.”

So the decision has been delayed - for now!

ACTION: Please write to federal Attorney-General Robert McClelland and your state’s Attorney General. Express your concern about R18+ computer games and ask them not to allow these games to be sold in Australia.

Contact details on our website at <http://www.saltshakers.org.au/take-action/parliamentmps/90-attorneys-general>

Religious groups & charities: 'Public Benefit Test'

Another possible threat to religious organisations is looming in the federal parliament. South Australian Senator Nick Xenophon has introduced a private Senator's Bill called the **Tax Laws Amendment (Public Benefit Test) Bill 2010**.

The Bill would force all religious groups or charities that currently receive an exemption from income tax to prove that they provide a 'public benefit' in order to retain this tax status. The Minister would be authorised to establish a 'public benefit test' for this purpose - through regulation, not through a specific law.

The Bill says the 'Public Benefit Test' would operate on the following principles: *"there must be an identifiable benefit arising from the aims and activities of an entity; the benefit must be balanced against any detriment or harm and the benefit must be to the public or a significant section of the public, and not merely to individuals with a material connection to the entity."*

The Tax Office already assesses all applications from religious groups and charities for 'tax-exempt status' according to the 'common law' which essentially covers these principles. One of the 'identifiable benefits' has traditionally been the advancement of religion.

This Bill seems to try and formalise these principles by legislation and the establishment of a formal 'test'. However, this would create further uncertainties and provide additional power to the Minister, who could decide what might be included in the test.

In recent months, Senator Xenophon has

been calling for an investigation into the *Church of Scientology* and spoke in the Senate about claims made to him by former Scientologists. It is possible this Bill is aimed at restricting such groups - however, a 1983 High Court decision found that Scientology is a religion, and it is hard to see how this 'public benefit test' would serve the purpose of removing the tax exemption status of such a group.

Rather, the very broad scope of the proposed 'Public Benefit Test' could seriously affect the operation of many charities and religious organisations as they try and formally establish that they provide a 'public benefit'.

On May 13 the Senate sent the Bill to the **Economics Legislation Committee** for an Inquiry.

No deadline has been set for submissions, but the Committee has to report by August 2010.

ACTION: Please consider making a submission to this Inquiry. We need to tell the Committee that we don't want a formal 'public benefit test' as proposed in this legislation - we want the current status maintained with the Tax Office assessing applications for tax exemption against established common law principles.

Send submissions to Senate Economics Committee, Department of the Senate, PO Box 6100, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 OR by email to economics.sen@aph.gov.au

Note: Read about the Inquiry and read the text of the Bill at http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/economics_ctte/public_benefit_test_10/index.htm



Prayer Update

Federal election

The major parties and their leaders are gearing up for an election campaign. The federal election is due to be held sometime this year. Exactly when is not yet known and partly depends on opinion poll results - the government gets to decide what they think is the most favourable time to have an election.

Pray that the truth will be told about issues and that the people will be discerning about the policies of all political parties. Ask political parties and members of parliament what their actual policies are on key issues.

Preaching of the gospel

Pray that the gospel will be preached in every church and that ministers will be faithful to the Bible. Pray that they will

not be influenced by worldly thinking but proclaim the message of sin, repentance, forgiveness and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Pray that as we follow the issues of the day we might not lose our focus on the true meaning of life and the message of salvation as outlined in the Bible.

State governments

Pray for wisdom for state Premiers and their Cabinets as well as the Opposition leaders.

Legislation

Pray that governments will make godly decisions about legislation that will enable people to live in harmony so that the gospel may be preached (Romans 13).



If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. 2 Chr. 7:14

Pray for people around the world

UK Election

With the recent election giving no party a majority in their own right, the Conservatives have formed a minority government with the Liberal Democrats. Please pray that the two leaders - PM David Cameron and Deputy PM Nick Clegg - will adopt policies that are in accordance with Biblical values.

Muslim converts

Pray for those who have converted from

Islam to Christianity around the world. Their lives are often under threat because of their conversion. Pray for their safety.

Persecution

Please pray for Christians in Iraq who are often persecuted. Many have left Iraq because of the troubled political landscape.

Missions

Please pray for those who have left family and friends to share the gospel with people who have not heard the good news.

Join us for Prayer and Breakfast
Pray for our nation, its leaders and Salt Shakers
7.30 am every Thursday morning at SALT SHAKERS

STDs on the increase

The number of 'sexually transmitted diseases' is continuing to rise in Australia.

Queensland Health says the number of reported **HIV** cases in Queensland is increasing, with 178 new cases of HIV in 2009 compared with 166 the year before.

Queensland's chief health officer Jeannette Young, said men made up 88% of reported cases last year and the highest notification rates were in the 25 to 34 age group.

In January, it was reported that infection rates for **chlamydia** in Australia had more than tripled in the past 10 years, with more than 61,000 people diagnosed with chlamydia during 2009. 'Sexual health experts' called for federal funding for a national screening program - but there was no mention of abstinence and fidelity as a way of decreasing these infection rates!

Meanwhile, in Newcastle there is a significant increase in the number of people diagnosed with gonorrhoea this year - there

have been 41 cases for 2010 compared to 9 for the same period in 2009, 29 cases in 2008 and 13 in 2007. [*Medindia*, 16/3/2010]

The Hunter New England Health's Director of Sexual Health Dr Treeny Ooi said "Men who have sex with men have been identified as a group particularly at risk however heterosexual people have also been infected."

Her solution: have regular checks and 'practice safe sex' by using a condom.

In April, the *World Health Organisation* warned that there has been a rise in "untreatable"

gonorrhoea - a number of cases that are resistant to antibiotics and traditional treatment have been detected in Australia, as well as in China and Japan. Dr Shin Young-soo, from WHO, said, "We are dealing with a serious issue with the implication that gonorrhoea may become untreatable." [*SMH*, 30/4/2010]

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Issues Update

NSW: Relationships Register

The NSW Labor government passed the ***Relationship Register Bill*** on May 12, 2010.

The Register, which will allow homosexual and heterosexual couples to 'register' their relationship, will be managed by the NSW Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages.

The Liberals and Nationals allowed a conscience vote, but Labor supported it as a party Only 9 Members in the Legislative Assembly and five in the Legislative Council voted against the Bill. We congratulate them. These included Greg Smith (Liberal, Shadow Attorney-General), Andrew Stoner (leader of the Nationals), Fred Nile (CDP)

and Gordon Moyes (Family First).

Victoria - Abortions

There has been an alarming rise in late term abortions in Victoria since the abortion law was passed - insiders at the Royal Women's Hospital told *Seven News* that before the law was changed there was one late term abortion every two weeks whilst now there are about three per week.

Leslie Cannold, an ethicist who campaigned for the change in the law, used the revelation to call for the government to insist that other hospitals - who are apparently not prepared to do these abortions - be forced to carry out the abortions. [*Seven News*, 17/4/2010]

Heroes supplied

We honour Anzac heroes who gave all for their country. My veteran dad of Australia General Hospital in World War 11, has told of flying in DC3s along valleys in Papua New Guinea, in 1942-43. As the planes flew low, men were inside with no doors, lying down. They pushed out bags of tea, sugar, flour, bully beef. On a few occasions, not only bags went out, so also did men.

Judith Bond, Glen Alpine, NSW
Melbourne April 2010

Living in a mad world

I am not surprised by the event of the Hammered music festival. Racism and what that signifies is abhorrent to any person with rational thinking but we in Australia are not immune to violent organisation. Lately we have accepted more violence on TV and our entertainment industry pummels society with ever-increasing graphic images.

And this doesn't just stop at our shores either. The 'White Pride' adherents believe they are an organisation that should be seen as one that has the right to think the way they do and that is 'their right'.

So do adherents to Communism and Islam, the link between such organisations is they have set themselves up as the one true ideal, all of them have a mindset of violence against those who think otherwise.

Spokesman for Islam, Australia's own Kayser Trad, would have us believe that by declaring his view that he'd pray for the weekend's Hammered Music Festival and its adherents, he is for peace against violence.

Well, well Mr Trad, if your prayers could go towards all the Jihadists and Islamic terrorists at present slaughtering innocent men, women, and children today who are under Islamic persecution in many countries, wouldn't that I some way help salve your conscience.

Let's get one thing straight. Here in Australia, hypocrisy is rampant, violence is becoming party of mainstream culture. We should condemn all violence perpetrated against innocent people, not just the bits and pieces we agree with or disagree with. Islam is not an organisation of peace, never has been, never will be.

Warren Williams, Oxenford
Gold Coast Sun 28/4/08

Peace as told from the pulpit

I would like to answer Mr Boniface in his sad reflection of what he considers about a church community at Coomera Town Centre (GCSun, April 21). Obviously Mr Boniface sees Christianity as a divisive element that is better done without.

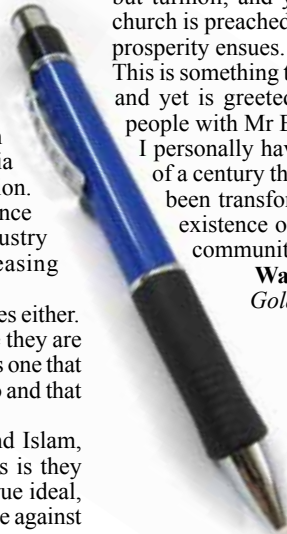
His myopic view of the history of Christianity is astounding to the point of ostrich head-in-the-sand mentality.

History has shown over and over again worldwide that atheism does not bring peace but turmoil, and yet when Christ from the church is preached, peace, harmony, joy and prosperity ensues.

This is something that I find quite astounding and yet is greeted with utter contempt by people with Mr Boniface's attitude.

I personally have witnessed for a quarter of a century the countless lives that have been transformed and renewed by the existence of the church in their local community.

Warren Williams, Oxenford
Gold Coast Sun 11/5/2010



Warming to a theme - Tim Flannery

When Tim Flannery (RA April) equates sceptical thinkers, who challenge

his global warming alarmism, to flat earth believers, he indulges in the normal ploy of a person who is losing a debate - denigrate the opponents' character and credibility and avoid the difficult issues.

No one denies climate changes over time. It's an ongoing part of the world's history.

It's the false alarmism centred on human-generated, non-polluting CO2 that is in question, along with the scandalous eco-political scams being generated by money-grasping individuals and organizations, abetted by naive politicians.

Tim's misguidedness diverts attention away from his valid concerns for Australia, such as industrial toxic pollution, deforestation, excessive immigration and balancing the population with sustainable food resources. Focus on these real issues, Tim.

David G Westaway Navigators Vic 3352
"Feedback" Royal Auto, May 2010.

WA: Euthanasia Bill

The Western Australian parliament's Legislative Council is likely to debate a bill to **legalise euthanasia** in early July.

Greens MP Robin Chapple has put forward a private member's bill called the *Voluntary Euthanasia Bill (2009)*.

The Bill was read for the first time on May 20 - Mr Chapple also gave his second reading speech on the same day.

This was during a time allocated for the Greens to bring up private motions.

The next time that the parliament is likely to address this bill is in the next 'Greens private members' time' - which is on **July 1**.

ACTION: If you live in WA, it is important that you write to the Premier to Premier ask him not to allow government time to be used for the debate of this Bill.

Also contact the SIX MPs who represent your region in the Legislative Council. Ask them to vote AGAINST the Bill. Perhaps you could organise a delegation of concerned leaders from your church to visit each MP.

Please write individual letters to each of the 6 MPs - refer to them by name and tell them you live in their region and they represent you! It is important that your letters and visits are carefully presented and discerning.

If you have personal experiences relating to death and dying, they can be useful in presenting a well argued case against the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia.

For MP names and details see our website: <http://www.saltshakers.org.au/take-action/parliamentmps/85-western-australia> ■

Same-sex 'marriage' debate

The debate about same-sex marriage in Australia heated up last month with the publication of a new book presenting both sides of the argument.

The book, titled *Why Vs. Why: Gay Marriage*, has been published by Pantera Press.

Bill Muehlenberg, who writes *Culture Watch* and lectures on ethics and theology at various Bible Colleges, presented the case against allowing marriage for homosexuals, whilst homosexual activist **Rodney Croome** presented the case in favour.

In the book, each writer presents seven key arguments on same sex marriage. They then had an opportunity to review and counter the arguments of the other person.

The book was launched in May and a public debate was held at *Readings* bookstore in Hawthorn, Victoria. Bill has been involved

in many debates and media interviews about the book, so please pray for him as he continues to stand up for faith and family.

Bill writes "I will continue to stand for biblical truth and faith and family as long as I am able. The other side is working overtime to destroy faith, marriage and family. How can we do any less?"

Bill notes that whilst he focuses on facts, "the homosexual activists have such a flimsy case to make, that all they can do is regularly seek to shoot the messenger and dismiss the message".

Check out Bill's writings at *Culture Watch* - www.billmuehlenberg.com

For more details about the book, see the publisher's page at <http://www.panterapress.com.au/shop/product/4/why-vs-why-gay-marriage> ■

Hitler and Today's Left

by Murray Adamthwaite

During the Soviet era, when anyone with a concern about Communism raised protests about that ideology and its infiltration into Western countries, it became a commonplace for those on the political left to sneer about “kicking the Communist can”. However, when these same Communist sympathisers saw any politically conservative movement, or political candidate, issuing a call for more “law ’n’ order” the left denounced them *inter alia* as “Nazi”, “Hitleresque”, or spelled their names (if possible) with swastikas. We can see this currently in the US state of Arizona, where the governor has signed into law a measure to close the border against illegal immigrants coming in from Mexico, a move with 70% popular support. The leftist brigade has moved down to protest this “attack on migrant rights”, branding the state as “Nazizona”.

This sort of snide and revolting caricature from the left has been standard for many years, when anyone of conservative views is branded as a neo-Hitler; but it is merely “playing the Hitler card” – never mind if such vicious name-calling has any validity to it at all. Indeed, the whole “left-versus-right” divide should be deleted from our vocabulary, because *Hitler was not any sort of conservative*. So what was the phenomenon of Nazism?

Hitlerism, like Italian Fascism, was merely a variation of the Marxist revolutionary ideology, even though Hitler hated Russian-style Communism and saw his war on Russia as a crusade against Bolshevik Communism. But this was not because he stood for capitalism or an ‘originalist’ meaning to his country’s constitution. A

look at what Hitler actually said in *Mein Kampf*, whom he cultivated as friends and co-ideologues, and the policies he implemented both at home and in his conquered countries will bear out the point that Hitler was on the political left in much the same way as today’s so-called leftists are.

First, Hitler was a revolutionary. He had no desire to restore the old Reich in

Hitlerism, like Italian Fascism, was merely a variation of the Marxist revolutionary ideology

any way or form, but like all revolutionaries sought for a new state on the ruins of the old. Like Lenin he accepted the Marxist hate-term “bourgeoisie” and also vilified its values, but unlike Lenin who saw the bourgeoisie in class terms, Hitler saw it more narrowly in racial garb and focussed his attack on the Jews. But there was little to choose between them: in both cases paranoid

anti-Semitism was a direct derivative from Marxist paranoia regarding ‘the bourgeois establishment’, and the phenomenon rapidly grew in Soviet Russia, especially under Stalin. Significantly, the left has now emerged with (or has merely resurrected) the most virulent anti-Semitism, declaring that, for example, the State of Israel is a “Nazi state”, and guilty of “genocide”.

Second, the various totalitarian ideologies of the past century revolved around Marx’s abstract collective concept of the “proletariat”, which Marx never precisely defined. It was therefore up to his followers to define it in their own ways. Lenin anchored it with the industrial workers of Petrograd (St Petersburg), and thereby to ‘downtrodden’ workers in secondary

industry across the industrialised world. At the same time he had no understanding of the peasantry on the land, and saw them as of no significance. This became, during the twentieth century, the standard version of the “proletariat”. The ironic thing about Lenin’s theory was that his much touted “October Revolution” of 1917 was in no sense “proletarian” at all, even by his own definition. It was rather a *coup d’état* or *putsch* by a mere handful of determined zealots. Another irony lay in the advent of “soviets” (workers’ committees): they first appeared in 1905, and their very existence baffled Lenin. According to his theory they should not exist, but they did, and when in 1917 Lenin famously declared “All power to the soviets” it was merely an expedient on his own path to absolute power.

However, other versions of the proletariat gained currency in the inter-war period: Mussolini, whom Lenin admired and supported in the years before World War I, gave it a nationalist interpretation to suit Italian nationalist aspirations (ie Fascism). Then Hitler gave it a racist interpretation, to fit with his ideal of Aryan supremacism coupled with virulent anti-Semitism. Hitler acknowledged that Mussolini had invented Fascism, and saw his own theories as in many ways similar, indeed a variation of Fascism. However, Fascism was in turn a Marxist heresy, as Paul Johnson explains:

“But what exactly was it (Fascism)? There was nothing specific about it in Marx... It was unthinkable to recognize it for what it actually was – a Marxist heresy, indeed, a modification of the Leninist heresy itself. Instead it had to be squared with Marxist-Leninist historiography and therefore shown to be not a portent of the future but a vicious flare-up of the dying bourgeois era.” [Modern Times, p 102]

Ever since, the Marxist Left has followed this line and cherry-picked facts to form a “far right” caricature of both Mussolini’s Italy and the German Third Reich. Meanwhile, Mussolini himself deplored Hitler’s anti-Jewish programme and tried to distance himself from it, but eventually buried his scruples and joined the Axis Powers (1940). In Russia, Lenin, and then Stalin, denounced Mussolini’s ideology, conveniently ignoring the fact that both Fascism and their own brand of Marxism were heresies likewise. Hence, the history of the past century was in a very important respect differing versions/heresies of Marxism slugging it out among themselves.

Both Hitler and Stalin rejected Christianity outright

In this context it is worthwhile to note that during the 1930s, when Winston Churchill was a voice in the wilderness against the rise of Hitler, the British (pacifist) Left was vocal in its opposition to Churchill and in overall support of Hitler, chanting “disarmament” at every turn.

One of these was the Methodist leader Donald Soper, who lamely argued, “Pacifism contains a spiritual force strong enough to repel any invader.” Furthermore, the British Left opposed the war even after formal declaration, and continued to do so, that is until Hitler tore up the ‘Non-Aggression Pact’ and invaded the Left’s darling regime (Soviet Russia) in mid-1941 - then they turned around, and, ever after, the left has been virulently anti-Hitler.

In regard to Christianity, both Hitler and Stalin rejected it outright but while Stalin was an atheist, Hitler was a pagan. He sought to revive the Teutonic myths and symbols to promote his racist utopia, especially that of the Aryan god-man. Significantly, environmentalist earth worship (much like that of today) was also part and parcel of this Nazi paganism.

In summary, in many respects both Hitler

and Stalin were fellow ideologues: that is why von Ribbentrop could sign a Non-Aggression Pact with Stalin in August 1939, and likewise explains the many similarities of their respective regimes, for example, the concentration camps, borrowed directly from Stalin's *gulags*.

Another aspect of the Nazi rise to power was its embrace of socialism. Not for nothing was it *Nationalsozialismus*, or National Socialism, originally the *National Socialist Workers' Party*. After Hitler had taken it over he rewrote its platform to include opposition to capitalism, redistribution of the trusts and profits of industry, abolition of unearned incomes, government control of all aspects of the economy and industry, and expropriation of land for state purposes – in short, all the postulates we now associate with the political left. As is well known, the Nazi state eventually allowed government intrusion into all aspects of private life, pursued a programme of abortion and euthanasia, restricted basic liberties, and established a “thought police”, ie the Gestapo, and we now see this too, albeit in a slower form, with socialist governments throughout the Western world.

My recommendation: let's stop calling these enemies of God and liberty “Leftists”; still

less “Liberals”. Let's call them instead “totalitarian statists”, on a level with Nazi political thugs. Playing the Hitler card is merely a tactic, a projection of their own outlook. They parade as democrats and champions of liberty but all that is nothing more than a masquerade.

Ludwig von Mises was a pre-war Austrian economic theorist who saw through the barbarism of this new ideology. Forced to flee Hitler's regime he came to the US only to find among the American left the same ideas he had fled from in Germany. Writing in 1944 he observed:

“These champions of socialism call themselves progressives, but they recommend a system which is characterized by rigid observance of routine and by a resistance to every kind of improvement. They call themselves liberals, but they are intent upon abolishing liberty. They call themselves democrats, but they yearn for dictatorship. They call themselves revolutionaries, but they want to make the government omnipotent. They promise the blessings of the Garden of Eden, but they plan to transform the world into a gigantic post office.”

Murray Adamthwaite PhD is a member of Salt Shakers Reference panel. He has degrees in history and theology. His website is www.archist.com.au/

Freedom of Conscience

Amanda Fairweather is a medical student. She writes about her experiences addressing the issue of freedom of conscience for doctors. She also had a chapter on this theme in the book 'Don't Leave Us with the Bill', opposing a Charter of Rights.

When the modern world says to us aloud “You may be religious when you are alone,” it adds under its breath, “and I will see to it you never are alone.” C S Lewis

Recently I had the opportunity to speak on

a panel of legal and medical professionals on the place of conscientious objection in professional practice. As a Christian medical student, this is particularly pertinent to my future career as a doctor. I am female and intend to go into rural General Practice. This means it is likely I will have many presentations of women with unplanned pregnancies.

Victoria's *Abortion Law Reform Act*, which decriminalised abortion, includes the infamous clause requiring those who

have a conscientious objection to abortion to refer their patients on to those who don't-knowing that these doctors will likely refer the woman on to an abortion. I see this as compelling a doctor to be a part of the process of a woman procuring an abortion. Therefore, I see it as inherently wrong to be forced to do this.

There has been a push in the medical community to recognise patients' autonomy. This is in reaction to years of paternalistic practice or "doctor's orders" without taking into account the needs and wishes of the patient. Whilst this is generally good, it can have two negative consequences.

The first is that doctors are basically seen as service providers, and whatever the customers - I mean, patients - want, they should get. There is no room for moral interjection here.

The second is that the patient's autonomy is seen as more significant than the doctor's.

On the panel, I got to speak for a few minutes arguing the fact that it is at least as evil to compel a doctor to do something against his or her conscience as it is to compel a patient to do so.

I recognised that there is a power differential between doctors and patients that need to be addressed. Doctors have greater understanding than most patients so they need to communicate their medical knowledge to the patients. However, it is not necessary to then compel the doctor to be a part of enabling a patient to do something the doctor considers fundamentally wrong-something that goes against the doctor's conscience, religion or beliefs. If one of my patients one day desires an abortion the law may allow her to procure one but I should

not be forced to help her get one.

I mentioned that abortion is generally made legal in Western societies not because abortion has been shown to be incontrovertibly a moral good - but because the controversy around it is so unresolved that the law has decided to leave it in the individual's hands. If your conscience allows you to get an abortion, you can, and if not, you're not forced to. Generally these laws are passed under a conscience vote.

There was a discussion on this panel as to whether or not signing up to a

It is at least as evil to compel a doctor to do something against his or her conscience as it is to compel a patient to do so

profession means taking on whatever is asked of you in that role. For example, could a soldier conscientiously object to going to war? I spoke on the fact that these are very different issues - a soldier's job has always been primarily focused around the potential for war. Someone who conscientiously objects to war probably shouldn't apply for the army. However, medicine, from Hippocrates' day onwards, has been about

preserving life. In fact, up until a few years ago, abortion was technically a criminal offence in Australia. Even where it is legal, it is not the majority aim of medical practice - it is only a small part of it. So it is ridiculous to say that signing up to medicine is signing up to enable abortions.

I am becoming more aware that when some people talk about "freedom of conscience" they actually mean "freedom to act according to MY conscience". It is becoming increasingly difficult for Christians to stand up for the right to live out our Christian faith - in word and in action - in the various spheres of society in which we find ourselves. However, it is imperative that we continue to do this - to follow Christ in everything - even when others try to demand we don't. ■

Political Parties - What do they stand for?

Part Six: The Liberal Party of Australia

by Peter Stokes

This is the last part in this series of looking at political parties. This time we look at the Liberal Party and, as with all other major Parties in Australia, we will see that they are not what they used to be and today they do not stand for their original ideals.

The Liberal Party of Australia has very similar roots to the National Party (featured last month) and today still works closely with that Party.

Earlier 'versions' of the Liberal Party included the United Australia Party and a host of small conservative political groups. These were brought together by Robert Menzies in 1944 in an attempt at forming a viable opposition to the growing 'socialism' of the Australian Labor Party (see part 4 in this series). Following a series of joint meetings the Liberal Party was officially launched in February 1945.

The Liberals were not immediately successful and lost the 1946 election. Rather than destroying the fledgeling Party this loss drove them on and they won government in 1949 and governed for the next 23 years. The Liberals have governed Australia for 41 of the last 60 years, mostly in coalition with the National Party.

The philosophy of the Liberal Party was small government, supporting individual freedom, small business, and the family. Thus, the Liberals strategically positioned themselves as the complete opposite to the Labor philosophy of large government, socialism and the rapid growth worldwide of communism.

Classical liberalism advocated both political freedom for individuals and a free market in the economic sphere.

Support for the independent family unit was very strong, as opposed to Labor's

socialist intrusion into family life, and this was a major key to the early success of the Liberal Party.

Although Christians played a strong part in the formation of both our major political parties, their influence has clearly abated over the years as the lie that 'politics and religion don't mix' was spread by those opposed to the Judeo-Christian worldview.

While Catholics were very strongly represented in the Labor Party, both evangelicals and conservative Catholics have tended to support the Liberals due to their socially conservative values.

Yet the name 'Liberal' has constantly dogged the conservatives of the Party with a growing number of 'social liberals' (often called small 'l' Liberals) taking the Party away from its original social conservatism and strong Judeo-Christian roots.

A classic example of this shift is the issue of the family. The meaning of 'Family' needed no explanation back in 1945, but it does today. The Liberal Party have failed to define 'family' in their recent policy documents and some Liberals today even favour the inclusion of same-sex couples as 'family'.

Men like Andrew Peacock, John Hewson and Malcolm Turnbull were clearly 'social liberals' who tried to completely shift the focus of the Liberal Party. Malcolm Fraser has, in more recent days, shown that he too was really a 'social' liberal.

Interestingly, the Liberals have never won an election when they have swung to the 'left'. Obviously, people want an alternative rather than more of the same, and, although that means the political pendulum swings



too much in either direction when we have a change of government, its overall effect has been to hold Australia in a relatively stable political middle ground.

Until recently, that is. We are now seeing too many social liberals in the Liberal Party and the rise of Malcolm Turnbull as leader last year created an incredible backlash when he dug in his heels about supporting the government's Climate Change/ETS legislation. Fortunately, there were just enough 'conservatives' still in the Liberal Party to stop the capitulation to the 'global warming' myth - but it was way too close.

Unless many more socially conservative Christians, with a social conscience, get involved in the Liberal Party and seek to serve the nation and save us from such socially destructive ideas as climate change, an immigration invasion and same-sex marriage, Australia will not stay the place it is today.

As stated last month, the relationship between the Liberal Party and The Nationals, at both federal and state levels, has not always been an harmonious one, yet it has been rare that the Liberals could govern in their own right.

With the recent changing of the guard to Tony Abbott there has been a hope the Liberals will not go the way of the British 'Conservative Party' but he is neither a strong enough nor consistent enough leader to hold the small 'l' liberals at bay. His recent policy 'comments on the run' and gaffs about 'truth' are not healthy for a political leader approaching an election. He may be a breath of fresh air after Malcolm Turnbull, but is he Prime Minister material? I have concerns in this area.

Is he socially conservative enough to prevent the endless push for same-sex marriage and registered relationships being pursued by the homosexual lobby, some people in the Liberal Party and covertly promoted by the Labor Party? I don't think so.

Unless the Liberal Party find their true conservative feet again, with a statesman at the helm, they will be blown by the winds of change.

We only have to look at the UK to see how the loss of conservative values in politics can so easily and rapidly change the political landscape, resulting in the loss of the very Christian heritage and culture held so dear just decades ago. ■

Series wrap-up

This series has been brief - a mere glimpse at the political parties that will be vying for your vote at the next federal election. Unless we understand the parties, their policies and the individual candidates who we vote for, then democracy fails.

If Christians don't become involved at every level of politics, from grass roots party involvement to local, state and federal politics we will lose our Christian heritage and the values that are a major part of that heritage.

If we allow our culture to be influenced by

the *Heinz 57* varieties that are invading our nation through multiculturalism our children and grandchildren will be tossed around on the wind of what is called 'secularism', which is, in fact, simply someone else's worldview and any body's values.

The Christian worldview is best for everyone - do we believe that? We should, because it is the worldview of the Creator.

Care must be taken when voting that we do not sell short our democracy by treating the process with apathy or disinterest. ■

USA: Discrimination law gone mad

Another case of discrimination involving Christians has reached the US Supreme Court. The Christian Legal Society at the University of California's *Hastings College of the Law* in San Francisco took legal action after the University refused to approve them as a "registered student group". Being a registered student group would have entitled the CLS to funding and the ability to book meeting rooms.



The university's reason for not registering the CLS was that the CLS required its officers and voting members to sign a "statement of faith" which includes a ban on "all acts of sexual conduct outside of God's design for marriage between one man and one woman, (including) fornication, adultery, and homosexual conduct." Hastings said no recognized campus groups may exclude people due to religious belief or sexual orientation.

In September 2004, the CLS chapter asked school officials to exempt the group and other religious student organizations from the religion and sexual orientation portions of the university's nondiscrimination policy. School officials denied this request and stripped the chapter of recognition and the benefits of recognition, including student activity fee funding.

CLS then filed a lawsuit on October 22, 2004. The case was first heard by a federal judge in the district court. The judge ruled against them in April 2006, rejecting their claim that their First Amendment rights of freedom of association had been violated. This decision was upheld by the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals in March 2009.

CLS then decided to take the case to the US Supreme Court and the hearing was heard in April 2010.

During the Supreme Court hearing, the CLS lawyer, Michael W McConnell, pointed out the craziness of forcing groups to have officers and members who have opposing views to the group.

The CLS overview of the case states "CLS argues that it is a violation of the right of expressive association to force a religious student organization to accept officers and voting members who hold beliefs and engage in conduct in opposition to the group's shared viewpoints, thereby inhibiting the group's ability to define and express its message.

"CLS also argues that it is a violation of the right to be free from viewpoint discrimination to impose the above requirement on a religious student organization while permitting every other recognized student organization on campus to limit its officers and voting membership to persons who agree with the group's shared viewpoints."

All this sounds like common sense - just like religious bodies and schools in Victoria being able to employ Christians and specify a moral code for behaviour!

During the oral arguments in the Supreme Court hearing, Justice Antonin Scalia said, "It is so weird to require the campus Republican Club to admit Democrats, not just to membership, but to officership. To require this Christian society to allow atheists not just to join, but to conduct Bible classes, right? That's crazy."

The judges are yet to hand down the ruling. Please pray that the Court rules in favour of the CLS.

The CLS outline of this case, along with documents: <http://www.clsnet.org/center/litigation/christian-legal-society-v-martinez-uc-hastings> ■

World News

UK: Lesbian parents

Two British lesbians made a public event of being the first lesbian couple to sign their baby's birth certificate. The women were named as 'mother' and 'parent' on the certificate instead of the traditional 'mother' and 'father'. The British parliament allowed this to occur by passing the *Human Fertilization and Embryology Act* in 2008.



UK: Election result

In the recent UK election, the Conservatives gained the most seats, but not enough to govern in their own right. David Cameron is the new Prime Minister and Nick Clegg, the leader of the minority partner, the Liberal Democrats, is the Deputy Prime Minister.

As UK Christian group *Christian Concern for our Nation* says "It's being heralded as a new era in British politics - a time for partnership and consensus in tackling the big issues facing our nation. What all this means in practice remains to be seen but what is certain is that the Biblical vision needs to be articulated with clarity and courage to those who govern our nation."

UK: Antony Flew dies

Antony Flew, who was a prominent atheist until his 81st year when he came to believe in God when he realised that incredibly complex DNA could not have 'made itself', has died at the age of 87. In 2004, he said, "The almost unbelievable complexity of the arrangements which are needed to produce life, show that intelligence must have been involved." He went on to write a book, called *'There is a God - how the world's most notorious atheist changed his mind'*. Mr Flew described himself as a 'deist',

saying he didn't believe in an afterlife and questioned the personal interaction of God with us.

Fifty years of the Pill

Fifty years ago the oral contraceptive pill was launched. Initially, church groups opposed the Pill but such opposition has declined over recent years. However, there are many medical and ethical complications, as we have previously reported.

Even former sex icon Raquel Welch recently said that contraceptives have shattered marriage, the "cornerstone of civilisation". She wrote "Seriously, folks, if an aging sex symbol like me starts waving the red flag of caution over how low moral standards have plummeted, you know it's gotta be pretty bad." [*LifesiteNews.com*, 12/5/2010.]

Canada: Funding denied

The Canadian government has refused to give any money towards running 'Toronto Gay Pride 2010'. Last year, the government's *Marquee Tourism Events Program*, which assists Canadian tourism events, awarded a \$400,000 grant to the event. [LSN, 12/5/2010]

We congratulate the Canadian government for deciding not to financially support this event - now we need to encourage the NSW government not to fund the Sydney mardi gras in the name of promoting tourism through its 'Events NSW' program.

Violence and video games

In March 2010, Dr Craig Anderson, the Iowa State University Distinguished Professor of Psychology, released his latest research - a meta-analysis of 130 research reports on more than 130,000 subjects worldwide. It was published in the *Psychological Bulletin*, an American Psychological Association journal. He found that the research "proves conclusively that exposure to violent video games makes more aggressive, less caring kids -- regardless of their age, sex or culture".

Ministry News

Peter and Jenny have now moved home and are reasonably settled. They will usually be in the office on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday but this will be flexible depending on meetings and other commitments. They will work from home on other days and will be contactable by mobile phone.

We are always happy to respond individually to any comments, questions or requests for assistance. Our role is to help you, so please ask if you'd like help and we will do our best to provide it.

We continue to offer one-day worldview schools and are available to talk at your church about being salt in the community and how we as Christians can 'make a

difference'. We can provide seminars on the current issues and are able to speak on specific topics as well. Please ask!

Our appeal for funding for the video production project is going slowly. If you received the form last month and are considering the project, we'd love to hear from you as we plan the next phase of implementing the project.

Resistance Thinking is going well. **Cameron Spink**, the co-ordinator, is sending weekly emails - these include his own articles and others that highlight current events. The forum on the website - www.resistancethinking.com - enables young adults to discuss the issues of the day.

Salt Shakers website provides resources, campaign updates, contact details for MPs, information on issues and more. Why not check it out!

ACTION checklist: Tick the box as you complete the task

Page	Topic	Action / People to write to	Done
6	R18+ rated games	Federal and state Attorney-General	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Public Benefit Test	Submission to Senate Inquiry	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	WA: Euthanasia	Premier, Six MLCs	<input type="checkbox"/>

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