

Pastoral Dynamics for Pastors & the People

Book One

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Angry Heart or Tranquil Mind?

For Pastors and the People

The Cleansing of the Memories

The Grace of Counselling

The Meaning and Making of Man

Oh Father! Our Father!

The Wisdom of God and the Healing of Man

The Wounding and the Healing

Pastoral Dynamics for Pastors & the People

Book One

Geoffrey C. Bingham

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Foreword

This booklet is the first in the Series *Pastoral Dynamics for Pastors and the People*. It is hoped that the Series will draw away our attention from promoting church growth as a kind of end in itself, and focus attention upon the nature of the Church, especially as it was portrayed in the apostolic era. The materials we have for this are really inexhaustible and they bring us a wealth of elements, subjects and themes, which can immediately be utilised in shaping and correcting our ideas of the people of God, the purpose of the people of God, the nature of the Church, and the activities and actions of the same. These materials also help us to understand the difference between the living organism which is the Church Universal in its true being, and those organisations which see themselves as churches and struggle to know the dynamics of the Church as it has operated with Christ as the Head, the Holy Spirit and the Word as its true power and action, and God as the Father of all the Family in heaven and on earth.

We might well ask whether we are not on some perfectionist drive to revive the Church and make

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it into an ideological unit designed to bring about a more perfect humanity. No: this is not at all the case. The gospel prohibits such an aim. ‘The whole counsel of God’ does not envisage anything ideologically. The Church, that is, ‘the people of God’, are the Father’s community for doing His will in history. They are in His Story, living His Story and telling it. The rise and fall of local assemblies is not a matter for great concern, not, anyway, in the long run. The second and third chapters of Revelation tell us that such community movements are in the hands of the Lord of the churches who walks amongst their golden candlesticks.

No: we are about seeing the miracle of the people of God’s grace, being His people and doing His will in this world, whilst there is time. To think of it in such simple—if not obvious—terms, means that many of us will have to go through radical changes in thinking and action. It is not formal conservatism which drives us back to the apostolic matters of the Church, but the need for true, organic life and action. We will see, then, whether this endeavour is a true biblically inspired and biblically based one or just another reformist attempt. The fact is that we are speaking of the Church from within the Church, and that is a valid matter.

As for myself, I have to confess that the plan to write the first booklet has been partially

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hindered by the lack of time to fulfil the aim appropriately. Lack of time showed up when the multiplicity of materials was revealed; when other Studies were required in the ordinary course of teaching ministry, and when an invasion of the 'flu absorbed otherwise useful time. This does not excuse the almost cursory manner of the written text. I am hoping that it will set me and others into a more detailed exploration of all that is involved in the study of 'Pastoral Dynamics'.

I am hoping that as these booklets are shaped, so too will interest in this vital theme be increased and critical use of them be sharpened.

Part One

Introduction: The Scope & Purpose of the Studies

The primary idea of these Studies was based on the idea that churches are formed by the Holy Spirit; that they are constituted of members of Christ's body by baptism into him; that Pastors lead churches in what we call 'pastoral ministry' and that Pastors and people are the community of the Triune God, the family under the Father, under Christ as Lord of history, and under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is certainly the biblical view. It was thought that a revision of the Apostolic nature of the Church would be helpful.

With this in mind, research of the Acts and the Epistles shows us that the Church was born at Pentecost of the gospel, as the Spirit-filled Peter and the apostolic band witnessed to the risen Christ, and listeners believed in him for the forgiveness of sins, were baptised and received the gift of the Spirit. The new community, then, arose

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from what we call ‘the *kerugma*’ or ‘the good news’. It immediately was occupied in four things, ‘the apostles’ doctrine, the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers’. With these elements as its life it was moved to institute ‘the daily distribution of food’ and other help to the indigent—the widows and orphans, and others in need.

It was envisaged that with these elements in mind the proper life, faith and practice of a church could be understood. To the word *kerugma* could then be added *didache*, that is, ‘teaching’, and *koinonia*, that is, ‘fellowship’. Continuing research reveals that a further exercise in the Church was *paraclesis*, that is, the practice of ‘exhortation and encouragement’. In all this it was assumed that the *kerugma* would continue to be proclaimed to those outside the Church, for such was to be part of the activity of the Church. The conclusion could then be that pastoral dynamics could be understood and practiced in the light of *kerugma*, *didache*, *koinonia* and *paraclesis*, as all of these elements are one together and the source and expression of pastoral life.

It could be envisaged that a *praxis* or mode of practice deriving from these four elements could be formed, and that would ensure what we have called ‘pastoral dynamics’, and this could possibly be the case. However, as we face both the

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history of the Church and the present forms and practices of churches, we see that churches have been, and often are, a long way from the apostolic form and practice. A large number of factors work to bring about these differences. Probably culture may be one of the strongest conditioning factors. Denominations have not only varying cultures but also beliefs and practices. These are realities we face.

Even more to the point are the differences in ministry of both the clergy and the laity. These two terms—‘ministry and laity’—as we use them today seem not to be found in apostolic days. Whilst some denominations of churches hold out for a layered or hierarchical system of ministry,¹ yet others seek to live as democratic structures. Where ministry is hierarchical then those not in it are generally understood as ‘the people’ or ‘the laity’. The laity may be thought of as those to whom the hierarchy ministers, and who, in their turn, are supportive of the work of the ministry, both materially and spiritually.

¹ The Roman Catholic Church is wholly hierarchical to the last degree, while other episcopal churches, for example the Anglican Church, have bishops, priests and deacons. These differ from Presbyterian systems with ministers and elders, the minister also being an elder. Some denominations have a pastor and elders, or a pastor, elders and deacons. The Salvation Army did not originally claim itself to be a church, but is so, though without celebrating the sacraments. The original form of Brethren Assemblies did not allow for pastors, though having a form of eldership.

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In the light of all these elements it seems clear that the setting out of Pastoral Dynamics is going to be a vast task, and will warrant sharing further series of Studies from time to time. We now proceed to tackle the matter of the formation of churches, the life of the churches, and the doctrine and practice of faith, as also the pastoral care which is exercised in the local Community of Christ, as under the Fatherhood of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit.²

² We suggest that those who attend or read these Studies on Pastoral Dynamics undertake a wider reading. There is no lack of relevant material, but the books named here should prove sufficient for a beginning. *Christ's People in Today's World* by G. Bingham (NCPI, 1985); *Christ's Living Church Today* (Bingham, NCPI, 1993); *Dynamics in Pastoring*, Jacob Furet (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1986); *Jesus and His Church* by R. Newtown Flew (Epworth, London, 1943); and *A Theology of Pastoral Care* Eduard Thurneysen (John Knox Press, Virginia, 1962). No one should think that the present series of Studies on Pastoral Dynamics will be sufficient without, at least, the wider reading of the recommended books. A second set of books are those of Roland Allen which examine the way in which the gospel ignited spiritual fires and churches came into being and were the cause of other fires spontaneously igniting. Titles are (i) *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Christian Church*, (ii) *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*, and (iii) *The Ministry of the Spirit* (ed. D. M. Paton), all published by Eerdmans, Grand Rapids. Very close to these writings is Vincent J. Donovan's *Christianity Rediscovered* (SCM Pr., London, 1982).

Part Two

The Birth & History of the Church: The Kingdom of God & the Church

We need to have a theology of the Church, its ministry and its sacraments. We are able to deduce this from reading the Acts and the Epistles. All we seek to do at this point is to see how the Church came into being and then how local churches were formed or formed themselves, and the pastoral elements that were operative within them.

The preaching of Jesus was primarily to do with the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God was not so much to be a Society as the very action and rule of God in and over Creation, bringing it to its ultimate completion. It included the submission and cooperation of all peoples in general, but, in particular, only those who had entered the Kingdom could be called the special Society of God, that is, the true people of God. In

the Old Testament these were known as the *qahal*, once called by Stephen ‘the *ecclesia*’, that is, ‘the congregation’ or ‘church’ (Acts 7:38). The faithful remnant of Israel at the time of John the Baptist waited for the Kingdom of God to come. They expected this to be the triumphant rule of God over all nations, but especially over Israel; hence Jesus was welcomed on Palm Sunday as the triumphant Davidic King.

We conclude that Jesus did not preach the Church as a coming event. However, he did speak to his disciples regarding the Church, as we see in Matthew 16:17–19 where the disciples are told that Jesus will build his Church and that the keys of the Kingdom will be given to the disciples, ‘I will give you [plural] the keys of the kingdom’. The Church and the Kingdom are not identical, but the Church is to do with the Kingdom, to proclaim it and to live in accordance with it. The Church is the Society for the Kingdom, and the Society within the Kingdom.

The people who came together on the Day of Pentecost were those faithful to Christ, those to whom Christ had appeared following his Resurrection (cf. I Cor. 15:3–8; Acts 10:40–41) and they were to be witnesses to his Resurrection. The coming of the Holy Spirit caused believers in Christ to be enlarged numerically but they were not called ‘the Church’ until Acts 5:11. Not until the Sanhedrin had opposed the new believers as a

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group was it thought appropriate to call them ‘the *qahal*’ or ‘the *ecclesia*’. Then they were seen as the Society of Jesus, and although they continued to worship at the temple, were opposed by the leaders of the Jewish *qahal*, even to the point of persecution.

THE CHURCH BORN BY THE WORD OF GOD AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

We speak about the continuity and the discontinuity of the Church in relation to the *qahal* of Israel. The witness of the small community of Jesus on whom the Holy Spirit fell at Pentecost was a witness to Jesus’ Resurrection and his Lordship. This was publicly voiced by Peter in the form of a proclamation which has come to be called the *kerugma*. Peter was speaking to a great crowd of people who wondered at the Pentecostal event which was attended with certain startling phenomena. He was saying that Joel 2:28f. was being fulfilled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the making of all the Jews who received the Spirit into a prophetic community. Peter’s words clearly indicated that those on whom the Spirit was poured were truly Israel. This put in disrepute those who had crucified Jesus, since God testified against them through the Resurrection of Jesus. Such were called by Peter ‘this crooked generation’.

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Three thousand people—all Jews—many of whom had helped to crucify Christ, believed Peter's message and were baptised in the name of Jesus the Christ, and became one with the followers of Jesus, receiving the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. This new community was to be enlarged by more Jews believing and being baptised. Thus it is that we have the Church. Since all were Jews the Church had *continuity* with Israel. Indeed it must be said it was true Israel. At the same time discontinuity of the Church with the visible Israel took place when the Community was opposed by the Sanhedrin—the Jewish parliament—when it opposed the apostles and began destroying the disciples when Stephen was stoned. Spurred on by this event the scattered members of the Church began preaching the *kerugma* not only to Jews but also to Samaritans, Greeks and other Gentiles.

THE CHURCH AS THE TRUE ISRAEL

It is essential that we see the Church as the new People of God, and continuing the mandate given to Israel to be the witness to God to the nations, otherwise we will see it simply as a community springing off from the main body of Israel and having no continuity with Covenantal people whose identity lay in the Covenant made by God

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with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the Covenant specialised, so to speak, with Israel at Sinai. Indeed the New Covenant of which Christ was said to be the Mediator was linked with the prophecies concerning this Covenant, as also with the Covenant God had made with David.³ Because this latter Covenant also constituted matters of the Kingdom of God it is of utmost importance. Galatians 6:16 is greatly debated. The *RSV* text is ‘Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon the Israel of God’. The *NKJV* translates, ‘And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God’, and possibly distinguishes two different sets of people, one of which is the Israel of God. ‘Peace and mercy to all who follow this rule, even to the Israel of God’, is the *NIV* translation, seeming to equate ‘all who follow this rule’ with the Church. The *NASB* translates, ‘And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God’, which seems to refer to two distinct groups.

Many scholars see the Church as the ‘Israel of God’ and call it ‘the new Israel’. In Romans chapters 9 to 11 Paul hammers out the message, but

³ For a wider treatment of this issue see my *Love’s Most Glorious Covenant* (Redeemer Baptist Pr., Castle Hill, 1997), *Comprehending the Covenant* (NCPI, 1999) and other books quoted in the Bibliography.

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again his words are seen differently by scholars. Whatever the conclusions that they come to, one thing is clear, the Church has continuity with Israel and its nature cannot be understood without seeing it as commissioned to do what Israel should have done through its Suffering Servant, namely to be 'A light to lighten the Gentiles [nations], and to be the glory of thy people, Israel' (Luke 2:32; Isa. 42:6-7; 49:6). Without this key we cannot understand the nature of the Church.

The Church, then, was given the keys of the Kingdom, the Kingdom which it is bound to proclaim and to declare open to its hearers.⁴ Whilst it does not proclaim itself at all, it is the Community which proclaims Christ as Saviour and Lord, and into whom believers come as they are joined to Christ by baptism.

⁴ It can be said that the apostles opened the Kingdom of God to Israel (to the Jews) at Pentecost, to the Samaritans when the apostles came and laid hands on them (Acts 8:14-17), and to the Gentiles at Caesarea (Acts 10:44f.). That means that the Kingdom of God is open to all peoples since the Day of Pentecost. Thus the Church does not so much open the Kingdom of God to people as it declares it is open to them who will believe the gospel (Acts 20:25; cf. 8:12; 28:23, 31).

Part Three

The Church & Its First Pastoral Dynamics

We have a choice of researching either the apostolic Church and its pastoral dynamics, or of researching modern churches and their pastoral dynamics. Of course we can research both, and this must surely be of great benefit. It certainly will give us grounds for comparison and then for judgment of the materials we have researched. In any case it would seem best first to examine the apostolic Church and later evaluate our findings in the light of what we now see as the practice of pastoral dynamics.

We begin to see these pastoral dynamics on the Day of Pentecost when the Community suddenly emerged:

- The first thing we note is that they had had the *kerugma* proclaimed to them.
- Secondly, they were baptised, receiving the gifts of forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit.

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- Thirdly, they were warned against the crooked generation of Jews which had crucified Christ.
- Fourthly, they attended to four things: (i) the apostles' doctrine; (ii) the fellowship; (iii) the breaking of bread; and (iv) the prayers.
- Fifthly, 'fear came upon every soul', and many signs and wonders were done by the apostles.
- Sixthly, they began the daily distribution of aid to those in need in the new Community.

We note that the apostles continued with their ministry of proclamation, which was attended with signs and wonders. Also opposition from the Jewish leaders began to mount.

The pastoral life of the Church could only be said to have intensified, as the days went by, as the *kerugma* was continually proclaimed, as signs were done—for example, the miracle at the gate Beautiful—as opposition intensified, and as the Community prayed for the persecuted apostles. The result was a fresh infilling of the Community by the Spirit, and an intensification of the social care for the indigent by the members of the Church.¹

¹ We use the word 'Church' for the full Church which came into being and is now in being throughout the world. We use the word 'church' for each local church. It happened that the local 'church' at Jerusalem was then 'the Church'.

**EVALUATION OF PASTORAL DYNAMICS
IN THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM**

The first seven chapters of Acts set out the birth, nature and action of the Church as it came into being at Pentecost and built into a significant community in the following days. These chapters constitute a powerful social document. They reflect the nature of Israel as a community, as the *qahal*, the social community whose ways of living were prescribed in Exodus and Leviticus. Leviticus chapter 19 is especially relevant, as its prescription for helping the indigent is a powerful social document in itself. It was along these lines of love that the early church moved. As for old *qahal*, so then for the new *ecclesia*. We note in Acts that the new churches formed in Asia and Europe cared much for the church at Jerusalem, ministering to the needs of its members who were in poverty.

The great documentation of the Epistles shows that churches were communities of activities in proclaiming the gospel, being continually taught the whole counsel of God, being unique in fellowship, versed in worship and intercessory prayer, and living as people to whom gifts were given which were in the service of love, both within the church, and outside it where it was seeking the conversion of non-believers.

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One clear matter in our evaluation is the fact that when the apostles proclaimed the gospel at a centre, as a result of their teaching, churches sprang into life. Those same churches were quick to proclaim the gospel, not only in their immediate environment, but also out into the countryside and even beyond that. There was a reason for them doing that, which we will discuss below.

We have, then, to discard many contemporary ideas of ‘making’ and ‘planting’ and ‘replanting’ churches, and of organising social aid, as such, as the expression of our love (*agape*). However admirable some of these ideas may be, they do not express or replicate the spontaneous life and action of the primal Church. We will also have to look at the structures of ministry as we have them today (i) in their form as it has come down in history, and (ii) as we are seeking to reshape them today in the light of what we call ‘need’ and ‘utility’ and ‘marketing promotion’.

In the light of all that follows let us keep in mind that we are not trying to replicate the early Church in its ‘forms’ as though that will make right the shape and action of the Church as it was apostolically, and thus bring forth success in the church community. By ‘success’ we mean developing the power of the local church in evangelism, and authentic church life in worship, power and action. It is doubtful that the early Church thought in such terms.

THE CHURCH & ITS FIRST PASTORAL DYNAMICS

Whilst in this short section we have not fully evaluated the pastoral dynamics of the apostolic church, this shortage will be supplied as we discuss the way churches came into being, and the nature of their life and witness beyond their own perimeters.

Part Four

The Way the Churches Came into Being & the Nature of Their Communities

When we say ‘came into being’, we could be close to the truth that this is ever how they come into being, but whilst this apostolic way of their birth—coming into being—was as we will describe it, yet in lands and nations with a substantial Christian history, the circumstances will differ to those which we call ‘unevangelised world areas’. Geographically there are relatively few areas left to evangelise. When, however, we face countries into which the gospel has reached but has not succeeded numerically to effect conversions, then we face the more problematic task of facing animistic religion, and the ancient religions of Buddhism, Hinduism and Shintoism. We also face the matter of the Chinese race with its strong

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culture which has its roots in Confucianism and—latterly—Communism. Islam is really an offshoot of Judaism and Christianity, and probably presents a greater problem than other religions and cultures. In Australia we face the immediate problems of secularism—the virtual rejection of the Christian gospel—and the multicultural growth of our society, with the growth of the individual religions which have come to this land, to say nothing of Aboriginal spirituality.

We are saying, then, that when we examine the elements which helped bring churches into being, and established them in themselves and as part of a rapidly growing movement, these elements may or may not be the way we should go today, especially when we have the subject of Pastoral Dynamics before us. As indicated above, there are four elements which brought churches into being, substantiated them, and which developed the shape of churches in the apostolic era. These elements are (i) *kerugma*; (ii) *koinonia*; (iii) *didache*; and (iv) *paraclesis*.

THE KERUGMA: THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

The gospel was spoken into various situations and needed to be relevant to them. Peter was the first to utter the *kerugma*—the proclamation—or the

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‘good news’ (*euangelion*). Since it was preached to Jews it had to make sense to them. Peter was of no great importance in Israel, which tells us that *kerugma* (proclamation) had to have power and authority to be of any affect and effect. The word *kerugma* derives from *kerux*—a trumpet blast, in effect—and *kerussein* ‘to proclaim’, for the Emperor’s officer would blow the trumpet in the marketplace, and then proclaim the authoritative message of the Emperor and expect it to be obeyed—under fear of death. There was, then, the content of the message, and the proclamatory power of it. The two elements effected the message.

A setting out of the *kerugma* in the Acts and the Epistles takes, roughly speaking, the following pattern:

- From times of old, the law and the prophets, that is, the whole body of Israel’s history and thinking, including its story.
- The prophetic forecast of the good news of the Kingdom of God to come (Isa. 52:7), and of the Covenant, ‘You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant’ (Acts 3:25), and so of the blessing for all nations.
- The prediction of Messiah—his work and his rule—fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

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- The meaning and purpose of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. The apostles were witnesses to Christ in all his work.
- The command to believe on him for salvation since he has been made ‘both Lord and Christ’, and primarily because of his resurrection (cf. Acts 1:8; 4:33; Rom. 10:9).
- Belief in Christ—with baptism in the name of Jesus—would bring the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Those baptised would belong to the new Community of Christ, the true Israel of God.

An Evaluation of the Apostolic *Kerugma* & the Present *Kerugma*

If we compare this *kerugma* with what is often today called ‘the gospel’ we may detect vast differences. Rarely now is reference made to the Story of God from creation to Christ’s incarnation. Audiences are not treated to even a brief history of the people of God in the Old Testament, let alone the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah. Much gospel-preaching is not proclamation so much as persuasion to believe on Christ, and this as beneficial for the fulfilment of one’s

needs. The question is whether this kind of preaching really effects the transformation of the hearer and brings him/her to understanding Christ and his Church. There can be no true founding of a church without the pure *kerugma*.

The points we want to make here, regarding Pastoral Dynamics is that *true kerugma is essential to the birth of a true church*. If we form a fellowship or community on any other grounds then it will be deficient as a church—whatever else it may purport to be. Whether the church is badly formed or well-formed—even originally by the *kerugma*—it will need constantly to have the *kerugma* proclaimed. Each generation, indeed each decade, will need to have the gospel proclaimed *in the power* of the Word and of the Spirit. Certainly we may form a group of people which we may call ‘the church’, but the group will not really be a church.

Further, since the kind of resultant *koinonia*, *didache* and *paraclesis* depended wholly on the *kerugma*, it can be observed that the nature of present pastoral dynamics will depend wholly on the kind of *kerugma* we preach initially and then continuously.

THE KOINONIA: THE FELLOWSHIP

We have observed that Israel was God’s *qahal*, His congregation. Many of this *qahal* followed

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Jesus who told his disciples that he would found his church on the confession—the reality—that he is ‘the Christ, the Son of the living God’ (Matt. 16:17–19; cf. 18:20). On the day of Pentecost some 120 of the Jewish *qahal* received the outpouring of the Spirit and manifested their fellowship. Three thousand joined them, and we are told ‘And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers’ (Acts 2:42). We are then informed of the further action that took place:

And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved (vv. 43–47).

One of the great miracles of the day of Pentecost was this fellowship—the *koinonia*. This new company of believers devoted itself to the apostles’ teaching, to its new life as a fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. This *koinonia* immediately expressed itself in love-concern for one another, ‘And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and

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they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need'. Acts 4:32–35 records:

Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made to each as any had need.

This is surely the quality of fellowship, a true pastoral dynamic, in the midst of which the apostolic proclamation was stimulating and powerful.

A reading of Acts concerning the new life of each church and the ways in which they lived in love, unity and fellowship shows us the necessity of members being affected by the *kerugma* which had been the source of the new community life, and, as we shall see, of its discipline. It is not as though *kerugma* was the initial proclamatory teaching of the new community, and was then followed by another kind of teaching called *didache*. All the time *kerugma* had to be known and understood, for it continued to affect the Church, and kept it seeing it was part of the Story of God, the Church thus seeing it was in the last age—the Eschaton—and as such was continuing the Story.

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In this way it knew its identity as God's working force in Christ and the Spirit.

An Evaluation of the Apostolic *Koinonia* & Present *Koinonia*

We have indicated that the apostolic *koinonia* issued from the apostolic *kerugma*, *didache* and *paraclesis*, since all of these came simultaneously into operation. We need to discern any differences which may presently be the case, so that we do not mistake learned socialisation for spontaneous *koinonia*. The unity, love and fellowship are the work of the Spirit and the Word, and are not mere sociality. Nor can we correct division of persons and groups within the churches but by a special work of the Holy Spirit of true fellowship and not by education alone. The life of love of the churches is the heart of their witness. Where *koinonia* is lacking, there the motivation to proclaim *kerugma* is also lacking.

THE *DIDACHE*: THE TEACHING

In Acts 2:42 we read 'they were continuing in the teaching [*didache*] of the apostles'. We remember that Jesus was called 'the teacher'.¹ In John 11:28

¹ See Matthew 13:54; 26:55; Mark 1:21; 6:2; 12:35; Luke

Jesus is referred to as teacher. Teaching was certainly part of his vocation: nothing was intelligible apart from it. What we have to note is not that he was simply imparting useful information, but that his teaching was astonishing. It was with power and authority, startling listeners, and it was with signs and wonders so that it was dynamic. What he said seemed to be new teaching, yet it was in keeping with ‘the law and the prophets’, that body of Old Testament teaching which was canonical and the truth. On the night of his betrayal Jesus had told the disciples the Holy Spirit would come and teach them all things, lead them into all the truth, and cause them to witness to the truth. In Matthew 28:19–20 he commissioned them to teach, ‘Go therefore and make disciples² of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age’. In Acts 1:1 Luke talks of what Jesus had ‘begun both to do and to teach’ in his lifetime, inferring that he would go on doing

4:15, 31; 6:6; 13:10; 19:47 for his being seen as a teacher. He was often addressed as ‘Rabbi’ or ‘Good Master’, the equivalent of the modern ‘Doctor’.

² ‘Make disciples’ (*matheteusate*) really means ‘make pupils’, and ‘teaching’ (*didaskontes*) was the teaching of those who declared their adherence to the new teacher by being baptised into him and his system—Christ and the Church.

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these two things, presumably through the apostolic ministry.

Whatever was the case, the apostles began at Pentecost to 'do and to teach'. The *didache* became prominent and important. It was certainly the 'all things' which the Spirit was teaching them as he was 'leading them into all the truth'. It was certainly teaching which was gripping the newly inaugurated Church.

The Contents of the *Didache* (Teaching)

The writers of the New Testament Epistles often refer to what they have previously taught their readers. Indeed it is the basis on which they teach further. Much of this will be seen in the element *paraclesis* which has to be related to *kerugma*, *koinonia* and *didache*. In Acts 2:42 'the apostles' teaching' was obviously the truth which the Holy Spirit had taught, and was teaching them, in his first and subsequent outpourings on the Church.

In hindsight we can see the Story of God was a developing Story from creation to the coming new creation, from the protological to the eschatological, and that the Incarnation and the work of Christ was central to it all, and was—and is—dynamic in the whole action. This the apostles had seen and received, and now they would be passing it on. All in the Church would need to

know ‘salvation history’ and ‘creation history’ and that these things led to the *telos*, the final completion of all things. Without such teaching they would lack historical perspective and so be limited in the experience of hope. It is not enough to see the *kerugma* as ‘saving’. It is bringing converts to be participators in the plan of God.

It is also necessary to note that the apostolic ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher were all teaching ministries, each teaching according to the gift given. As Christ’s teaching was dynamic and with an authority not just of Man and his academies, so the teaching gifts, combined with the gifts called ‘charismatic’—that is, gifts of the Spirit—produced disciples who were alive and vital in their ministries. The idea of a group of people being led in worship and taught, and nothing much more than that—that is, the whole congregation *not* being involved in teaching and action—is not found in New Testament churches.

An Evaluation of the Apostolic *Didache* & the Present *Didache*

In the apostolic age *didache* (teaching) extended what the Jewish converts already knew in the sense that it showed (i) Christ as the fulfilment of the Scriptures; (ii) the Church as the new *qahal*; (iii) the outworking of God’s plan through

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the Church; and (iv) the Church as the source of salvation to all the nations. The Gentile converts were instructed along the lines of 'the law and the prophets' and then in the four points just outlined. That is why we say that they did not just sit back and listen, absorbing it but being the receivers only, that is, receiving without acting on the Word heard. As we have pointed out, the teaching of Jesus was dynamic, astounding the hearers. So was the *kerugma* and the *didache* as they came to the new converts. They, also, had to be about communicating this amazing truth in the support and motivation of the *koinonia*.

Without *didache* there would be no comprehension of the Church's nature and its place in God's history. There would thus be no understanding of the identity of the Church. The great doctrine of the *Eschaton-Telos* in the light of Christ's return in the triumph of the defeat of all evil powers and the judgment of them, to say nothing of the resurrection of the faithful to eternal life and the establishment of the New Heaven and the New Earth, would be lost without *didache*. So essential, then, is that word.

When we come to look at *didache* in our present situations of churches throughout the world, especially in regard to pastoral dynamics, then we have to say that we have to a great degree lost the sense of the importance of the foundation of the Old Testament for our understanding of the Story

of God. Without being versed in ‘the law and the prophets’, Christ’s accomplishment in his work cannot be adequately known. In addition we have the vast problems of culture and hampering traditions which have too often impinged themselves upon the principle of Galatians 3:28 (cf. I Cor. 12:13; Col. 3:9–10): ‘There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus’.

Our gratitude is to the goodly company of Old and New Testament scholars who have enabled us, afresh, to see what was the substance of the apostolic *didache*, but it needs a goodly company of teachers to renew us in that *didache* in the setting in which the gospel is preached today. This is a vast subject. We have scarcely touched its edge, but where *didache* is being taught it is bringing forth the same sort of apostolic fruit.

THE PARACLESIS

We have indicated that the fourth element present was the *paraclesis*, which can be translated as the synonym nouns of the verbs ‘to entreat’, ‘to beseech’, ‘to invite’, ‘to ask’, ‘to urge’, ‘to conciliate’, ‘to exhort’, ‘to encourage’, ‘to console’, ‘to comfort’. The pattern of the *kerugma* is teaching, but it is proclamatory teaching; *didache*

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is teaching to fill out the knowledge of ‘the whole counsel of God’; and *paraclesis* is the kind of teaching which is intended to stimulate to true spiritual, moral and ethical action.

Today we have a fair idea of what is ‘Christian teaching’ along these lines. Hundreds of years have conditioned us to recognise what is moral and ethical action which springs from a spiritual basis. This can be tested by looking at *paraclesis* in non-Christian religions. It is particularly so when paganism is studied. Because this is so, and because every religion produces the culture of the devotee people, then the Apostolic Church had to teach the differences in moral and ethical practice in Christianity to those in the society which it addressed.

In the Old Testament we see there was a widespread sense of morality when the Pharaoh and Abimelech of Abraham’s day were going to take Sarah into their respective harems. Much in Jewish law which was moral was practiced before the law as given at Sinai, but the nature of Yahweh as against the pagan gods determined a morality different from theirs. Israel’s high order of morality was known to those outside Judaism. The Wisdom books in the Old Testament—especially Proverbs—project a high morality and a lot of wise commonsense. Cultures can permit practices which would be offensive to Judaism and Christianity. Whilst we may think of each religion

having its own ethics, yet where there are large cities we often have a society which goes with certain mores of the day. In Paul's time homosexuality was not looked upon with disfavour in a Hellenic culture. The bases of families differed from culture to culture.

So we have Paul teaching against paganism, and exhorting his converts and readers to different standards of life, especially to sexual chastity in regard to both fornication and adultery. Passages to be studied are Ephesians 4:17–32, Colossians 3:1–23, I Thessalonians 4:1–7 and II Thessalonians 3:6–13. Whilst these passages are obvious enough to us today, they were not so then. Romans chapter 6 and other passages emphasising practical holy living can also be included in *paraclesis*.

There are many other uses for *paraclesis*, such as the encouragement to the Church which is opposed on a number of fronts; often by cultures, sometimes by governments, generally by Israel, and then by the unseen—but not unfelt—powers of darkness. These conflicts are felt in the Acts and the Epistles, to say nothing of the Book of the Revelation. Even so, we should see *paraclesis* as dynamical a word as the three others. Nor should we see it embattled. Rather it embattles. It comes not only from apostolic authority and pastoral leadership, but also from the heart of the people. We have to remember that it was a

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community of love, worship, prayer and unity, and that all shared in its works for all contributed. Thus *paraclesis* was tendered mutually. Ephesians 5:18–20 is typical of mutual exhortation, the mutual action of *paraclesis*:

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.

Likewise Colossians 3:16 says in a similar exhortation, ‘Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God’. The exhortation, ‘addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs’, has affinity with ‘teach and admonish one another in all wisdom’.

There are other elements of mutual encouragement in the face of steady opposition. It is not just ‘whistling in the dark’. Philippians 2:1–4 spells it out:

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of

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you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

We have barely touched upon the uses and actions of *paraclesis*. There are, besides, many encouragements and comforts as also related words such as *nouthesis* and *sterizein* which are intended to admonish, direct, correct and support the church members. Coverage of these is beyond this small document, but the care exercised by members of the Body of Christ as well as by leaders are an assurance to us that wherever a church is the Church then all these elements will be coming into play.

An Evaluation of *Paraclesis* Both Apostolic & of Today with Associated Actions

We can see the four main elements are as the one in that they are the word which comes to the Church from the Triune God, from God as Father, Christ as Lord and the Spirit as the Revealer. In one way looking at it is incredible, for every element of the word is indispensable to the Church. Exhortation which was an old prophetic ministry within Old Israel is the *paraclesis* of the New Israel, without which it cannot continue on its way in its significant life of witness and movement towards its final hope in Christ. Along the way it must not keep to moral and ethical actions solely for its own integrity but because of its

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Lord and his moral glory, and because this is the way in which the *telos* is billed to come. True or pure hope is therefore dependent upon the life the Church lives in keeping with its prophetic being in Christ.

Exhortation is becoming increasingly unpopular in an age when human autonomy seeks to be the order of the day, when the democratisation of the Church is increasingly sought and where exhortation is looked upon as a moralism. It is interesting, nevertheless, to see the forms of 'correctness' which are being legislated secularly. 'Human rights' are in the fore and human responsibility is little emphasised except in its duty to preserve human rights and to correct the wider order of international behaviour. In spite of the varying fortunes of ethics as a discipline for studying, the New Testament *paraclesis* seems to have retained its substantial nature.

Part Five

The Church & the Word

It is here we must pause and look at the true pastoral dynamics which are operative in the Church, and which must be understood if we are to comprehend the pastoral life of the Community of Christ. We have suggested that the four ways in which the Church came into being and in which it must always continue to operate are *kerugma*, *koinonia*, *didache* and *paraclesis*. We could have said, 'By the word of God', which could have meant, 'the word of the Father', 'the word of Christ', and 'the word of the Spirit', or 'the word of the Triune God'.

It is quite clear that the three 'words'—the *kerugma*, the *didache* and the *paraclesis* are the one word of God in three different actions or modes, and in the context of the *koinonia* that was present even before Peter first uttered the *kerugma*, and which went on being present for the communication of *didache* and *paraclesis*. Peter's *kerugma* needed to be the proclamation of

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the witnessing Community. Peter for his part was simply explaining the *event* of Pentecost and his explanation began with the quoting of Joel 2:28–32, and led on to proclaiming Jesus of Nazareth and what he had been and done in terms of *kerugma*. What is to be seen and understood is the effect of Peter's proclamation. Listeners heard Peter's word which brought them to understand what they had not hitherto understood. Probably this happened to many more who were present, but it was the 3 000 in which Peter's word did its full work. That is, the word brought not only understanding, but it also brought 'the moment of truth', that is *the moment when the truth effected action in the mind*—in the minds of the 3 000. It is 'the moment of truth' which concerns us.

We may well ask, 'If the word is proclaimed, and listeners hear it, then does the word, of its own utterance, so affect the hearers that the moment of truth comes to them and thus effects its purpose?' The answer must be that in the word it is God Who is speaking—no matter who the appointed utterer may be—and that the response or reaction of the listener will be according to his or her attitude towards God. The mystery of acceptance or rejection of the word is known only to Him. Whatever the case, the word responded to will bring the fruits of its promise and/or command, and the word rejected will bring judgment. The fact that the word cannot be

rejected until heard is brought out by Paul in Romans chapters 9 – 11. Starting in 9:6, ‘It is not as though the work of God had failed’, he then proceeds to show God’s word had not—and does not—fail. In 10:18 he asks—of Israel—‘Have they not heard?’ He then proceeds to say they have and quotes Psalm 19:4 as proof, ‘But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for “Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”’

We say, then, that the truth does not come without effecting the action that God Who speaks the word intends should happen. We may speak of this as ‘revelation given and received’. This means that we presuppose the revelation was needed, that what the word does is to communicate understanding and confront the will for consequent action. All of this is borne out by Romans 10:17, ‘So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ’ (*RSV*). The *NRSV* has, ‘So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ’. The conclusion is that it is the word of Christ which, being at the same time the word of God, is that which confronts Man to be believed. Only in this word can Man know the mind of God, the nature of God, the will of God.¹

¹ It is true that God uses many *media* to communicate His mind, but ultimately those *media* have to spell it out in *words*. These words are the word of God. Words are intelligible to Man,

THE PRACTICAL OUTWORKING OF THE CHURCH AND WORD OF GOD

It is not intended here that we take up this vast subject of the word of God. It demands closer scrutiny and this will happen ahead in our Studies. We have two things here for examination: (i) the word of God as the Church proclaims it to the world, and (ii) the word of God as it is spoken in the Church community.

It is axiomatic that God reveals what He will by what He says. A word has meaning, and words are uttered to constitute what God intends to communicate. Since God is incomparable then He reveals as He will, in the way He wills. Even so, as we mentioned above, the word is not only to give understanding but also to lead to action in the moment of the truth being received.

The matter of truth we will need to examine later, as also the matter of 'witness to the truth'. 'Thy word is truth' is enough for the moment. God's truth and God's faithfulness are virtually the one. The truth which will make the enslaved free is the word uttered by Christ and which is Christ. The Church proclaims this word, the

and he must hear them. This is his privilege and his responsibility.

kerugma. It, itself—as its members—has been through the truth of the gospel, or it could not proclaim it. It does not just proclaim a deposit of truth given to it, a form of words as such, but it proclaims the saving word of God in living words which save human beings.

The second matter, that of the word of God within the community, brings us to conclude that *didache* and *paraclesis* are the word of God coming in the various words of God to various situations. We have seen that we cannot presuppose *kerugma* not to be needed within the community, likewise the ministries of ‘apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher’—all of which are ‘word’ ministries—are likewise required within the community as well as outside of it.

When we consider the work of pastoral oversight—in particular, the work of the pastors and elders—then we discover from the New Testament text that this also is the work of the word of God. When we turn to the word of the *paraclesis* we find it is not limited to pastors and elders or other ‘teaching’ ministries. In fact the whole community is involved in what is a mutuality of teaching.

What we need to recognise in all this is that every word spoken by the people of God, by the members of Christ’s body, is to be done with aforethought. Paul warns against the affects and

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effects of false teaching, of deceptive or manipulative teaching, of corrupt and seductive use of words. Any conversation is to be 'gracious, seasoned with salt'. The injunctions are to 'But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices' (Col. 3:8-9) and, 'Therefore, putting away falsehood, let every one speak the truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another . . . let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for edifying, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace to those who hear' (Eph. 4:25, 29). 'Speaking the truth in love' (Eph. 4:15) is not just gracious talking, but communicating the clear truth to all listeners, and this is accorded to the generality of the Church.

'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God' (Col. 3:16), is a key injunction to all members of the Church.

We come, then, to this powerful conclusion that the Church lives wholly under the word of God. Its mind, its thinking, and its action are in accordance with this word. For there is no other word. 'Thy word is truth' must mean that to live in the truth and witness to the truth, the Church must have no other word than God's.

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When we think about this we see what happened in the Garden of Eden. When Man moved from the word of the Father–Creator, he moved from the mind of that One, and so moved from what is the proper mind of Man. Man the image of God cannot be truly image apart from the mind of God, that is, the word of God. Thus all in the Church—those in the Image of God which is Christ—must have that mind. The Church, then, is always the Community of the mind of God, as against the idolatrous, the pagan, and the secular mind of the humanity which rejected—and rejects—the sovereign God of glory, that moral glory which God has always revealed to those who are His people.

This brings us to see that in proclaiming, teaching and living the word of God the Church is moving in the will and purpose of God as it moves in this present time of the *eschaton* towards the fulfilment of God's action in the *telos*. We have yet to work out the relationship between the word of God, the truth, the witness to the truth, and the life of the Church, especially in what we have called its pastoral dynamics. These are what give the Church its identity, and it is in that identity that the members of the Church have their strength, and so their anticipation of faith which we call hope.

With so many elements set out for our consideration in Pastoral Dynamics, we have to

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pause at this point for a conclusion which will help us to see the vast sweep of the Triune God with His people, His flock, and His Family. Throughout the universe these dynamics of His birthing His people, His giving of life to them, and His nurture of them to the maturity of eternal sanctification, glorification and perfection are always in action. What knowledge of them we can gain will aid us in the wisdom we need in our own, personal participation in them. It is these thoughts we try to gather together in our following conclusion.

Part Six

Conclusion to Book One

The *schema* of our Study in Pastoral Dynamics can be seen as it is sketched in the Contents—the format of what we have considered in this little book. We have a rough geography of the ground we have tried to cover. It is, in fact, an attempt at a vast coverage, since it mentions certain elements in an introductory way which, themselves, are quite major, and will be dealt with in succeeding books as we hammer out more of our pastoral elements.

The fountainhead of the life of the Church—indeed of the Church itself—has always been Pentecost. The flow which began then and had its substreams—so to speak—in the outpouring of the Spirit on the Samaritans in Samaria, and the Gentiles in Caesarea, has never ceased. The statement of Paul in Galatians 3:5, ‘Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?’ informs us that God ‘goes on

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supplying the Spirit'. This is supplemented by Paul's injunction in Ephesians 5:18 for his readers to 'go on being filled with the Spirit'. It is unthinkable that God does not go on supplying the Church with the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit.

The presence of the Spirit and the continual utterance by that Spirit of the word of God means that *kerugma*, *didache* and *paraclesis* were—and are—always the word to the Church in its life of *koinonia*. Thus the Church lives by the Spirit and the word. In what we have already compassed, then, many elements which are of the gospel—that is, of faith and practice—have scarcely been mentioned. Such are sin, human depravity, the personal powers of evil; the matters of Man's bondage to sin, the flesh, Satan and death; the great truths of repentance and faith, God's forgiveness and His cleansing of the conscience from pollution; and then the doctrines of justification, sanctification, and ultimate glorification and perfection.

It just happens these are all the subject of the word as *kerugma*, as *didache* and as *paraclesis*, and they are alive and active—as we keep saying—in the context and environment of *koinonia*. In the life of the Church these things are not dealt with simply in line upon line, one element after another, all being experienced sequentially and—so to speak—tied up neatly. The volatility of our

temperaments, the matters of environment and circumstance, the battle in which we live and move continually, and the constant matters of interrelationships all work to mean that we do the round many times of many things. Now our weaknesses and failures confront, our innate moral impotency troubles us. We are occupied afresh with repentance, with the reality of God's forgiveness of sins, and ours to others. We have times when justification looms large both for pain and for pleasure. Other days we are occupied with the matter of personal, practical holiness, or the great matters of worship and service.

So the changes are rung for us and even sometimes by us, on all the eternities. We can know dreadful wounding and then incredible healing. We can know painful discipline and joyful freedom. Just a formal practice—if, indeed, such can exist —of *kerugma*, *didache* and *paraclesis* cannot guarantee a proper Church format and life. We keep needing to see that the Holy Spirit is present for all elements of the Church's life and practice. Christ, the Church's Head, walks amongst the candlesticks, as the Lord and as the 'great Shepherd of the sheep'. The Church is his Bride and his Wife, and works with him in the plan and counsel of God. As Prophet, Priest and King in his community he effects its nature, and all of this in the light of the 'God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all'. So much,

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then, every day and hour touches upon the whole life of the Church.

If, then, in this one small book, we have ventured to speak of Pastoral Dynamics, let us see that it calls for our continued attention and participation in all elements of the whole counsel of God. Virtually nothing that is there in both Old and New Testaments, to say nothing of the great actions of the Church down through its history, will not be met, and will not be part of the living subject of Pastoral Dynamics.

Addenda

These Addenda are to support and supplement the four important words—Kerugma, Koinonia, Didache and Paracletis—that we have used.

Future Studies will further implement their meaning and value.

KERUGMA

There are other verbs than *kerusso* ‘to proclaim’ (*kerussein*, present, active, infinitive, e.g. Matt. 4:17), which have similar meaning. The verb *kerusso* is used some 61 times in the NT as well as many times in the OT (LXX). The verb *euangelizomai* is ‘to preach the good news’, and is used most often in Lukan and Pauline writings. *Kerugma* is the noun ‘message’ or ‘proclamation’. C. H. Dodd was the original expounder of the *kerugma* as being distinct from ‘the teaching’—*didache*. Some scholars following him have felt the distinction was not wholly valid. His first *kerugma* and second formulations of it were:

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The prophecies are fulfilled, and the New Age is inaugurated by the coming of Christ.

He was born of the seed of David.

He died according to the Scriptures, to deliver us out of the present evil age.

He was buried.

He rose on the third day according to the Scriptures.

He is exalted at the right hand of God, as Son of God and Lord of quick and dead.

He will come again as Judge and Savior of men.

The age of fulfilment has dawned.

This has taken place through the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

By virtue of the resurrection, Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of God, as Messianic head of the new Israel.

The Holy Spirit in the Church is the sign of Christ's present power and glory.

The Messianic Age will shortly reach its consummation in the return of Christ.

An appeal for repentance.¹

¹ Both formulations are in C. H. Dodd's *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1944, pp. 17 and 21–24 respectively) and are quoted from *The Essential Nature of New Testament Preaching* by R. H. Mounce (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1960, pp. 5, and 60f.).

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Dodd's thesis has been questioned and greatly reshaped. However, the fact is that the proclamation was a body of truth proclaimed by the apostles, embodying the gospel but approximating to what Paul called 'the whole counsel of God' (Acts 20:27). This *kerugma* is dynamic as to both utterance and content, and should be read as such in the first chapters of Acts, and then Acts 13. Elements of it are gathered throughout the Epistles. We must beware of thinking that to have the *content* is to have the *kerugma* itself—that most dynamic body of truth which, under the Holy Spirit, creates the Church and constantly vivifies it.

KOINONIA

Whilst *koinonia* is the context in which proclamation, teaching and exhortation have their power, *koinonia* cannot be organised into living operation. The power of the proclaimed and taught word through the Holy Spirit is what gives the community the sense of its identity as God's community in the Kingdom of God and as the people of God who are part of His Salvation History as it proceeds to the appointed goal of the *telos*. This knowledge is quite dynamic and is the only setting for true exhortation.

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DIDACHE

Catachesis, as the word is found in Romans 2:18, I Corinthians 14:9 and Galatians 6:6 is ‘the form of instruction’, and implies there is one who is taught (Gal. 6:6, *katechoumenos*). Rarely used, it is not as powerful as *didache* and the verb ‘to teach’—*didaskein*. In Deuteronomy 6:4–7 is the famous passage about teaching one’s children what was good, and was most dynamic, for it was not just rote-teaching. It was teaching on ‘the way’ and of ‘the wisdom’, and its action in the OT requires our attention in order to understand fully its significance in the NT. In the NT, as we have partly seen, Jesus’ teaching amazed the crowds who heard him: Mark 1:27, ‘And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching! With authority he commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”’ He took authority in all his teaching as we see at the end of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 7:28, 29), ‘And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes’. In Matthew 28:18–20 Jesus gives authority to teach to his disciples, where to teach is to make disciples, that is, those who know his teaching and live in it.

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This is the way *didache* is taught by apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher, by the older women to the younger woman—and so on. It was assumed that teaching would be in the power of the Holy Spirit so that (I Cor. 2:13) ‘. . . we [can] impart this in words not *taught* by human wisdom but *taught* by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit’.

Paul is the paradigm of a true teacher, ‘For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher’ (II Tim. 1:11), and he taught others in order that they, in turn, teach others, ‘You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also’ (II Tim. 2:1–2). Where biblical teaching is absent, then so is the true power of the Church. Some churches attempt today to teach from contemporary human knowledge, from the idea that present teaching has moved beyond that of OT and NT times.

PARACLESIS

It is helpful to know that it is by motivation that exhortation is applied. Thus in Romans 12:1, ‘I appeal to you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God . . .’; Romans 15:30, ‘. . . by our Lord

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Jesus Christ'; I Corinthians 1:10, '... by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ'; II Corinthians 10:1, '... by the meekness and gentleness of Christ'. In Philippians 2:1–4 there is really a long and powerful exhortation. We note the basis of it, 'So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind'. In Philippians 4:2–3 Paul directly exhorts Euodia and Syntyche to agree, and on the basis of their former ministry with him, Also he exhorts help for these women from his brethren, 'I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. And I ask you also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.' In Philemon 8–10 Paul could command Philemon but he prefers to appeal to him on Onesimus' behalf, 'I appeal to you for my child ...'

All exhortation is based on what the readers already know, the *kerugma* and the *didache* which have been taught livingly in the context of vital *koinonia*. Apart from this context and background, readers are not in the Story of God. In Romans 13:11 is an exhortation which has its motivation built into it, 'Besides this you know what hour it

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is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.' Here the *eschaton* is the context, and the coming *telos* (climax) is in view. Thus moral exhortation and moral response is truly powerful.

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