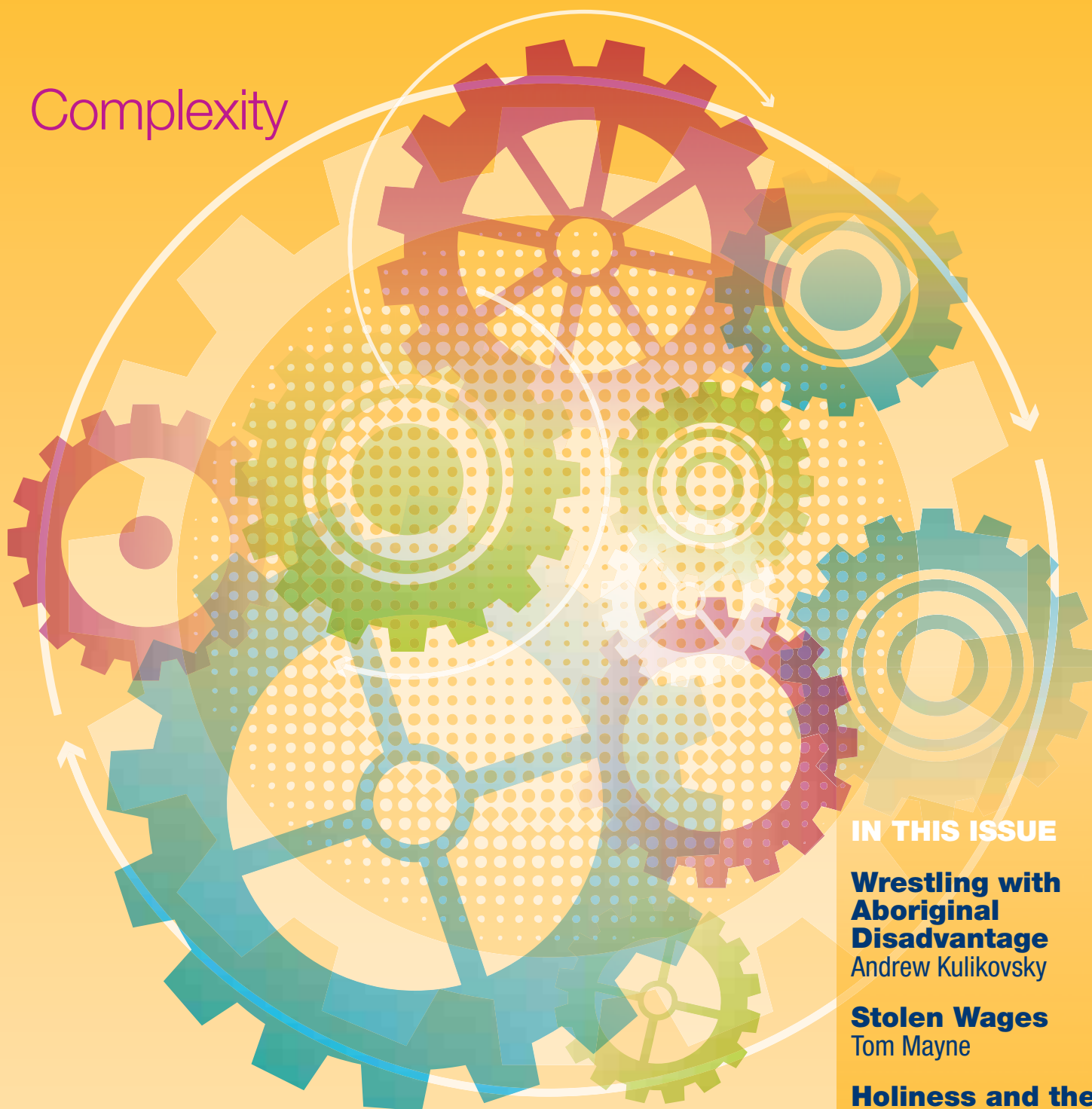


Faith AND Life.

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Complexity



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Faith & Life is the official journal of the Australian Evangelical Alliance. Its purpose is to promote the concerns of the Alliance, encourage its members, inform readers about evangelical initiatives both local and overseas, inspire evangelical thinking and action, provide a forum for thoughtful comment on communicating the gospel in contemporary Australia, and inspire readers to deeper love for and commitment to Christ, the world and the church.

The Australian Evangelical Alliance Inc does not necessarily endorse all the views expressed in articles published in *Faith & Life*. However we believe the articles that are included raise issues which need to be heard and considered by the Christian community in Australia.

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Editorial

We live in a world of short-term problems, experts, easy solutions and sound bites.

The media, with few exceptions, presents the nation's citizens with the 'problem of the week', call in the experts, allow them to offer only the simplest of solutions, and package it in a twenty-second sound bite that can make the TV news or current-affair program. Once 'solved', the issue is shelved in the nation's consciousness until it re-emerges weeks, years or even decades later – unsolved and often more difficult than before.

Complexity goes unrecognised – replaced by the simplistic and ultimately unsatisfactory.

Those with wisdom recognise that many of the issues that surround our lives, our society, our church and our faith are incredibly complex. They require constant attention, constant assessment and reassessment, constant attempts at action, constant ongoing vigilance. They demand acceptance that we struggle: to reach spiritual maturity, to achieve justice in our society, to cope with paradoxes and incongruities.

The complex issues that matter are rarely solved in twenty-second sound bites.

This issue of Faith and Life tackles just a few complex issues. The plight of Australia's Indigenous peoples remains a blight on the nation and demands our attention. Andrew Kulikovsky's article recognises some of the complexity surrounding the situation while requesting that our assessments be biblically-based and culturally-sensitive. Tom Mayne addresses the issue of Stolen Wages that continue to be withheld from Aboriginal people and challenges the church to respond.

The complexity of maintaining holiness in a culture where image is formed outside of relationship with God is the topic of an excerpt from Mark Sayers' latest book. Tim Hein tackles the complex state of the missional church movement in light of the history of trends in the Australian church, arguing for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Less complex, but informative nonetheless, are the book review and usual reports from EA and its sub-entities allowing you to glimpse EA at work.

May the complexities of your life and longing be afforded far more than a twenty-second sound bite.

Cheryl Catford

EA's Vision

- **Local churches and ministries** understanding and exercising their God-given mission: global, national and local
- **Christians** thinking and living as disciples of Jesus in every part of their lives
- **Australian society** characterised by greater truth, justice, love, respect and a better life for the poor and marginalised, especially the indigenous people of Australia
- **Evangelicals** working together locally, nationally, and globally

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An evangelical is someone who passionately believes the central claims of the Bible and traditional Christian faith: such as that Jesus is both God and man; that he announced the arrival of God's kingdom, that he died for our sins; that he was raised from the dead. Evangelicals emphasise personal commitment to Jesus Christ and a desire to live out that faith together and in the community in words and works of justice and love, anticipating God's promised future.

Wrestling with Aboriginal Disadvantage

By Andrew Kulikovsky

To every complex problem, there is a very simple and very *wrong* answer. The interaction between Australian Aborigines and the rest of Australian society and the problems and issues that have arisen are difficult and complex. Such problems require effective and just solutions that are well thought-out and grounded on biblical principles. Token, patronising, ‘feel-good’ responses will simply not do.

As with any problem, an effective solution can only be proposed after the nature of the problem and how it came about is correctly understood. This article will examine the issues and problems facing Australian society in dealing with disadvantage and dysfunction in Aboriginal communities, and a later second article will make some suggestions in regard to how evangelical Christians can be part of the solution and make a real difference.

Guiding Biblical Principles

As evangelicals, one of our distinguishing attributes is our high view of Scripture. Because we believe it is the inspired word of God, it should be our guide for everything we do. Wrestling with the problems facing Aborigines today is no exception. Yet it is rather disquieting to note the amount of commentary on these issues coming from professing evangelicals that ignores Scripture (and facts in some cases!) Let us begin then by examining some relevant biblical principles.

Like all humans, Aborigines are creatures of God made in his image. Yet the evolutionary lies about human history that have permeated all of society have also affected the church. Contra- Darwin, Aborigines are not subhuman or a less-evolved species. Their lack of technological development is cultural not a result of intellectual inferiority.

Like all humans, Aborigines are creatures of God made in his image.

Aborigines have undoubtedly endured much racial discrimination. But the concept of race is never mentioned in the Bible; rather, Scripture refers to families, tribes, peoples and nations. People are never differentiated merely on the basis of their skin colour. The fact that we are all descended from Adam and Eve confirms that all humanity is of one blood, and all are equal before God. In God’s economy there is no racial, social or gender discrimination (Galatians 3:28).

It must also be acknowledged that everyone—including Aborigines—are sinful human beings, and everyone deserves God’s judgment. That is what biblical justice entails. Biblical justice is not equality. Equality is getting what everyone else gets. Justice is getting what you deserve, and we all deserve death (Romans 6:23a). But through his death, Christ satisfied God’s just requirements

and took away our condemnation. Forgiveness is now available to all. However, many of those who talk about the need for reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal Australians seem to forget about the coincidental need for forgiveness. There cannot be any reconciliation without true forgiveness. As hard and as painful as it may be, Aboriginal people who have suffered at the hands of non-aboriginals must learn to forgive. God expects nothing less. This is the message of Christ’s parable of the unforgiving servant (Matthew 18:23-35): one who has been forgiven so much is obliged to extend forgiveness to others. Those who are unwilling to forgive will incur God’s wrath (verses 32-34).

However, God’s forgiveness does not remove *all* the consequences of our sin. The guilty must still be punished. Unfortunately, many of those who neglected and abused Aboriginal children are long-dead so this is not always possible. But the guilt is not all on one side. Aboriginal people also need to take some responsibility for the impoverished state of many of their families and communities.

In addition, evangelicals who love God must also love truth even if that truth is grating, even if it really hurts. We must then first face some hard facts.

Policy Failings

Despite Australia’s great prosperity, the living conditions of many Aborigines are horrid and totally unacceptable in a modern society. This and many other examples of Aboriginal disadvantage are serious problems and cannot be solved by symbolic gestures or throwing money around. Indeed, many of the symbolic gestures appear to be designed to make us feel good rather than actually doing good. Too many non-aboriginals are more concerned about taking the high moral ground than they are about actually understanding the problems and addressing them. Kevin Rudd’s ‘Sorry’ speech may have made many people feel better for a short time but it has achieved nothing of any consequence with respect to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people. Government funding does little to help since most of it goes to the activists and



bureaucrats running the government programs, instead of to those who really need it. Therefore, non-Aboriginals need to acknowledge that all our previous attempts to fix these problems have clearly not worked nor are they ever likely to work. Indeed, the greatest crime Australia ever committed against Aboriginals was the policy of separatism based on self-determination, which began in the 1970s. These policies—continued by successive governments on both sides of politics—led to the destruction of traditional authority structures, established a culture of dependency, and consigned Aboriginal communities to live not much above the status of hunter-gatherers. The sociological fruit of these backward policies can be seen today.

Correctly Identifying the Issues and Problems

As originally stated, before there is any hope of offering an effective solution, one must first correctly understand the problem. Unemployment, welfare dependency, alcoholism, petrol sniffing, abuse of women and children, incest, and generally poor health are merely symptoms of a greater problem. As Noel Pearson has pointed out, there has been a breakdown in basic social order and values. The culture of many Aboriginal communities is fundamentally broken.

The Aboriginal notion of ‘communal property’ is a major contributor to many social problems. The concept of private property, including land possession, is not an Aboriginal cultural practice. The case of *Milirrpum v Nabalco* exhaustively examined the very concept of Aboriginal ownership and whether such a concept existed. After hearing evidence from eminent anthropologists as well as Aboriginal witnesses from eight different Northern Territory clans, the Northern Territory Supreme Court found that, although local Aborigines did have an established system of laws before white contact, these did not extend to

a proprietary interest in the land. There was neither concept nor practice of the exclusive use or exclusive occupation by any local clan or group. In other words, Aboriginals had no concept of land ownership, or private property in general. This finding was effectively confirmed by the famous *Mabo* ruling. Although *Mabo* identified the existence of Native Title, the rights that Native Title conferred were much less than full proprietary rights. Native Title rights do not allow individual Aboriginal people to own, control or utilise their land in whatever way they see fit. Land is a ‘community asset’ which, due to the limited property rights, has extremely limited economic value other than being a source of revenue from pastoral/mining leases.


The absence of private property rights naturally leads to communal obligations. Everything belongs to everyone. This may sound like a noble, even Christian, notion but it is not. It is a notion that has more in common with Karl Marx than Jesus Christ. Private property rights are a biblical concept. They are derived from the eighth commandment: ‘You shall not steal’. In any case, such communal obligations do not work in the real world. For example, a cab operator wanted to give Aboriginal people jobs driving cabs. However, communal obligations led drivers’ friends and family members to expect free cab rides. One cannot operate a cab business by offering free rides!

When there is a death in an Aboriginal person’s clan that person is expected to attend the funeral ceremony no matter how far away the event. This means that Aboriginal workers may have to leave their employment for up to a week. And people in the Aboriginal community die often! One cannot operate any business if your employees disappear for up to a week every few months.

Many Aboriginal health problems are also a product of their culture. As noted above, some communities suffer from alcoholism, petrol sniffing and widespread abuse of women and children. But there is also a problem with many infections and diseases resulting from poor hygiene. Simply failing to wash one’s face has led to eye infections such as trachoma.

The simple fact is that these and other cultural practices cannot continue if Aboriginals are to improve their situation. Culture is not sacrosanct or static, and there is good and bad in all cultures. But it must be acknowledged that there are many elements of Aboriginal culture that have directly contributed to their disadvantage. The work ethic of many communities has been eroded by welfare dependency. No value is placed upon modern education. School absenteeism among Aboriginal children is twice the level of other students. Yet these are things that will most help Aboriginals to escape poverty and dysfunction, and empower them to enter the twenty-first century and participate in the benefits and opportunities of modern Australia.

Conclusion

If Christians really want to *help* Aboriginal people, *really* help them, then we need to give them the *whole* gospel. We have a responsibility to explain that the Christian roots of Western society is the reason why it has produced so many benefits and advantages, and why these things will empower Aboriginal people, restore their pride, and lift them out of poverty and dependency. We need to instil in the next generation the biblical principles of love and forgiveness, and the need to take personal responsibility for one’s choices and actions, as well as teaching them the value of strong committed families, a solid work ethic, and the value of education. 



Andrew Kulikovsky is an independent writer, researcher, conference speaker and author. He is about to complete a LL.B. from Deakin

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Stolen Wages

The disappearance of Indigenous workers' wages from the 1890s to the 1980s

By Tom Mayne

The term, *stolen wages*, entered our vocabulary only in the last few years. However, recent research has shown that government instrumentalities in all jurisdictions except Tasmania were aware of this problem since the turn of the twentieth century. Aboriginal people were victims of gross mismanagement and misappropriation and robbing of wages, social security benefits and contributory welfare payments. The general public including most Christians have been blissfully unaware of the practice – largely as a result of deliberate withholding of information and bureaucratic indifference.

Most of the research over the last decade has been focussed on following the paper trails – where they exist – to missing money in individual bank accounts, often stolen by protectors and to the diversion of bank interest and other monies to top up the 'Aboriginal Treasury Vote'.

The Queensland Case

Researcher Ros Kidd's investigation began in 1993 with the publication of her conference paper, *You can trust me, I'm with the government*. She estimated, and the Beattie Government would later accept, that the amount stolen by previous governments was around \$500 million.

Following continued threats of legal action, in 2002 the Queensland Government offered 'in the spirit of reconciliation' a package that most people considered totally inadequate. The amount offered was cut to \$55.6 million. Depending on a person's age, and irrespective of the number of years worked, they might receive a maximum of \$4000. In addition, next of kin were ineligible and claimants were required to indemnify the

government. Of over 8,500 eligible claimants, only half made a claim (as at October 2006 when the offer closed), the rest believing that the offer was an insult. Many of those who did accept the offer did so because they believed they would be dead before they received a better outcome.

If this wasn't bad enough for the government, there was growing legal threat concerning underpayment of wages. With litigation in the air, by 2003 over 5,500 workers were compensated for underpayment with \$7000 cheques costing the government around \$40 million. Only after threats of further legal action, the Queensland Government in August 2008 reopened the stolen wages case and increased the cap to \$7,000. The government, however, wants to quarantine the \$20 million balance and put it into an 'Aboriginal Education Fund'. But it's not the government's money!

Aboriginal people were victims of gross mismanagement and misappropriation and robbing of wages...

Because of this inequitable situation, reconciliation advocates believe that since governments held all records, access to which were denied workers, the onus of proof should be on governments to show that wages were paid and not on Indigenous workers to demonstrate otherwise. They also believe workers in Queensland should be reimbursed in real terms taking into consideration the number of years worked; next of kin should be eligible; claimants should not have to indemnify the



government and; the Queensland Government to reconsider its offer so that it is more equitable.

In August 2009, legal action was commenced in Queensland's District Court by the Queensland Council of Unions to force the government into distributing the \$20 million balance to claimants. The government has announced that it will strenuously oppose the action.

Where Did the Money Go?

From the 1890s until the 1980s Queensland Government policy was to control the working conditions and wages of Aboriginal people. Many were employed on government-run reserves and church-run missions as well as in private local saw mills and silica mines. Women were employed as domestic servants. The local policeman, who doubled as the government-appointed protector, was authorised to negotiate working conditions and wages with the employer. Failure of the worker to comply could, theoretically, see them fined or even gaoled.

Each worker had a personal bank account in the Bank of Queensland into which wages, less pocket money, was paid. The workers, however, did not have access to their bankbooks as the police retained them. If workers required money from their accounts they had to negotiate with the local policeman.

Appearing before the 2006 Senate Inquiry, Yvonne Butler explained, 'You had to go to the police station and, if he was having a good day, he would probably give you a couple of pounds. There were times when he was away, so you just did without. But most of the time it was always, 'You don't have any money in your account.'

As a result of numerous inquiries it is now evident that much of the money in these individual accounts simply vanished because some protectors helped themselves to the money, the government raided the accounts to top up money in Aboriginal welfare budgets and unscrupulous employers manipulated their paper work to show payments had been made when in fact this was not the case.

In the 1990s the accounts were frozen and what money that was left in them was paid out. Thousands of workers, however, never received their wages.

The Aboriginal Welfare Fund

The AWF was set up in 1943.

Funds from other welfare accounts were channelled into this account together with deductions from Aboriginal wages and 'unclaimed' and 'deceased' wages. Some of this money was used to pay the salaries of government-employed white staff. Kidd has shown that the Fund was incompetently managed and that much of the money was invested in failed ventures. In one case the only documentation covering a failed multimillion dollar cattle venture was some hand-written notes scrawled on the inside cover of the relevant file!

Commonwealth benefits

Between 1909 and the 1940s the Commonwealth introduced a range of benefits including the invalid and old age pension, maternity allowance, war veterans' pension, child endowment, widows' pension and unemployment and sickness benefits. Initially Aborigines were excluded from such benefits unless they were 'exempt' (deemed to be honorary whites by the issuing of a certificate often referred to by Aboriginal people as the 'dog licence') or considered to be of 'good character' and having 'an acceptable standard of intelligence'. However, even when eligibility was shown, the Queensland Government had the benefits paid to it using the funds for the 'general welfare of Aborigines'. There is also evidence that Indigenous servicemen, who returned from WWII, had their war service pensions confiscated by the government.

New South Wales

In NSW, many children who were victims of the *stolen generations* also became victims of the *stolen wages*. This was particularly so in the case of boys sent out as 'apprentices' to rural properties and girls as domestic servants to middle-class white families in town and country.

Lilardia (Margaret) Tucker MBE, born in 1904, describes working as a domestic servant after being taken from her family and sent to the Cootamundra Girls Home, 'I had been nine years away in domestic service and I had earned between £70 and £80 in that time. Our weekly wage was banked by the government and the only money I was given directly was my 6d a week pocket money, increasing to 1/- a week after the first year'.

In 1916, the *Aboriginal Protection Board* that determined the fate of the children was composed of the chief of police, four politicians and six squatters! From the early 1900s to 1969, the *NSW Protection (later Welfare) Board* took workers' wages, less pocket money, and deposited them in personal accounts controlled by the police protector. Account holders were never given access to their own accounts and Commonwealth and other benefits were diverted into the Board's coffers.

In the 1930s a group of Aboriginal people including Pastor Doug Nichols (the only Aboriginal person to later become governor of a state - South Australia) helped form the *Aborigines Progressive Association* and pressed for equality with whites. Little changed and discriminatory policies remained until 2004 when a leaked cabinet minute revealed that all past NSW governments as well as the (then) current one had actively resisted the reimbursement of Aboriginal wages. Following the revelation, Premier Bob Carr offered a formal apology and set up *The Aboriginal Trust Fund Repayment Scheme* that doesn't have an indemnity clause, pays next of kin and until recently, had no cap. In May 2009, however, a cap of \$11,000 was applied. The onus of proof is still mainly born by the claimant.

In the case of one claimant, archival documents from 1947 files reveal that

John (not his real name) on reaching the age of twenty-one when the Board no longer had control over him, applied for his wages so that he could start a droving business and be totally independent of the government. Correspondence between the Aboriginal Welfare Board and the Moree police show that the amount of money in his account was unknown. Even so, his application was refused.

Conclusion

At a time when there are loud voices calling for Aboriginal people to be more responsible and to abandon the 'victimhood' mentality of the past and become less welfare dependent, it is instructive to reflect on how irresponsible governments were in the past in denying Indigenous people their wages. One can only speculate how much less dependency there might be today if Indigenous workers had been able to be part of the real economy. Other jurisdictions including Victoria, WA, SA and the NT are now being dragged into facing up to the issue.

It is disappointing that the Christian Church with few exceptions has been silent on these matters. Only the Uniting Church, the Churches of Christ and the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council made submissions to the 2006 Senate Inquiry in spite of the fact that Christian-run missions must have been aware that Aboriginal workers in their employ were not receiving their due wages. Martin Luther once commented, '...if the gospel does not address the issues of the day, then it's not the gospel that is being preached'. [ea](#)



Tom Mayne is a former researcher of Indigenous issues for World Vision Australia and is a non-Indigenous member of the

Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee.

Holiness and the Christian Dork

By Mark Sayers



Holy

I have come to passionately believe that if we are to regain an understanding of who we are, if we are to find our real identities, we must rediscover what it is to be holy. If we are to rescue ourselves and our culture from the crisis of self, we must re-image ourselves in the image of God. We must return to the source of our identities. For centuries, the path that has been trod by millions of believers on their journey toward their true selves is the path of holiness. Holiness is the key to understanding our true selves.

Holiness is one of the most out-of-fashion Christian teachings in our day and age. I would say that it is so out of fashion that you rarely hear about it. It is enough to make most people run in the opposite direction. *Holy*. The word conjures up so many images—some positive, many negative. Holy people are like those soldiers who diffuse land mines: we admire them, we are glad they are out there, but we sure as heck don't want to be one of them ourselves. Part of the reason for this is that the majority of Christian young adults I meet seem to be facing an identity crisis. Some are shy about publicly claiming their faith. I remember when a major newspaper wanted to do a story about innovative churches in our city and I needed to grab a bunch of young-adult believers on short notice to appear in a photo shoot for the article. As I called friends, one told me that a lot of people probably wouldn't want to be in the photo because it would "out" them as believers to their non-Christian coworkers and friends. They feared their social currency would plummet and their hipness would erode.

No One Wants to Be a Christian Dork

I often meet believers who seem passionate and open about their faith but who also have a great deal of insecurity about their faith that makes them feel the need to communicate to the world that they are just as hip and cool as the rest of the culture. The cry of the day is "I just want the world to know that you can be a Christian and be cool too." Behind this inane statement is the mistaken belief that millions of non-Christians are waiting for Christianity to get hip enough, and then they will convert. I witness all kinds of lengths to which believers go to convince some unseen audience of nonbelievers that they are "just like everyone else." It is as if the secular public is so traumatized by past public impressions of Christians that many Christians have generated a deep insecurity about the link between their faith and their public selves. No one wants to be the term I hear so often when ministering with young adults—a Christian dork. We have come to believe that taking on a public self of holiness, becoming more like God, and taking seriously our God-given identity are all a kind of social suicide.

Holiness Is Wholeness

Ultimately holiness is about wholeness. It is the journey toward finding out who we really are, toward being at peace with ourselves, others, and the world around us. Our culture pushes us toward fragmentation, toward a false projection of self, which creates a split in us between the private and the public. Holiness brings us back together. Holiness points us

toward who we are really meant to be. However, we fear holiness; we have discarded it, saying it's too hard. The problem is that we have a skewed view of holiness. We see it as all about keeping tabs on our bad behavior. *If holiness is moving toward perfection, we ask ourselves, how on earth can we make ourselves perfect in this lifetime?* We think of our own lives and all our imperfections; we think of our culture and the ways that it aids our slips into sin. We see others who seem much more spiritual or together than us fail in their attempts at holiness, and we resign ourselves to the fact that we will remain imperfect. To reengage authentically with the path of holiness, to find our true identities, we need to work through some of the stereotypes of holiness that has made it so un-hip.

Secular Holiness

Interestingly, while Christian holiness is passé, our secular culture cannot avoid other forms of rigid "holinesses" that attempt to regulate our behavior. We may think we are hip, laid-back, twenty-first-century people, but we can get pretty puritanical about certain behaviors today. Just take a look at the green movement sweeping the globe.

We may buy organic foods for our health or take measures to reduce our carbon footprint or drink fair-trade coffee—all great things to do. However, we should realize that a multimillion-dollar industry has created a consumer culture for people who want to feel less guilty about their lives. It is a corporate attempt to keep us giving in to our temptations and buying our way into pleasure while keeping our consciences clear. As Jess Worth illustrates, "So much



of the ethical consumption boom focuses on luxury goods. . . . Their main impact is to make the shopper feel good—'I'm doing something for the planet!'—without having to change their lifestyle one bit, while the companies laugh all the way to the bank." Yet the problem is that sometimes these good activities act as offsets to placate our guilt about the rest of our behavior. Instead of giving us hope that we can grow spiritually, when exercised just in and of themselves, they keep us in the same patterns of spiritual stagnation.

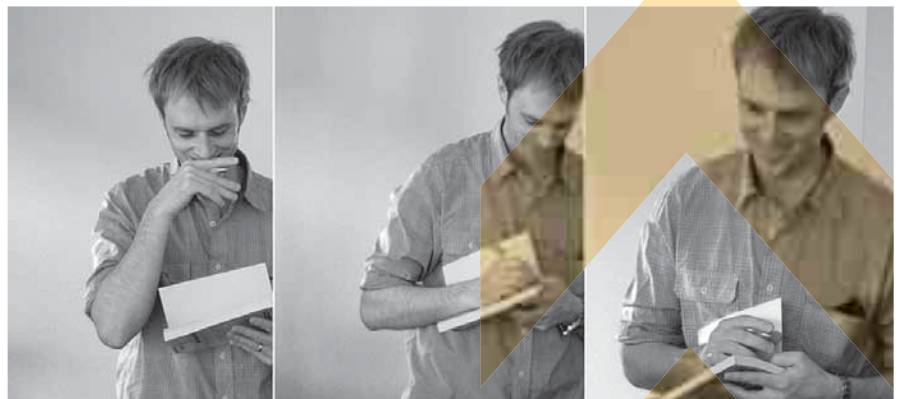
Bar Code Faith

Holiness is fostered by spiritual growth. Spiritual growth, therefore, like holiness, has slipped off the radar for many of the Christian young adults I encounter. Sure, some people want to get rid of bad habits, others wish to move forward in life, and others wish to develop a different spirituality than the one they grew up with, one that fits more snugly with their lifestyle. However, I find very few people wanting to grow into perfection. I wonder if many of us are happy to rest in the knowledge that we have been saved, that we have a spirituality based on getting across the line of salvation. We have convinced ourselves that all that matters is whether we are going to live with Jesus when we die, that nothing about our souls really matters in *this* life. We have the Jesus Club membership card in our wallets to be pulled out in moments of danger or suffering, but the rest of the time we get on with having fun and running our own lives. Christian philosopher Dallas Willard has called such a view of discipleship "bar code faith."

Think of the bar codes now used on goods in most stores. The scanner responds only to the bar code. It makes no difference what is in the bottle or package that bears it, or whether the sticker is on the "right" one or not. The calculator responds through its electronic eye to the bar code and totally disregards everything else. If the ice cream sticker is on the dog food, the dog food is ice cream, so far as the scanner knows or cares.

Now, on one level, the bar code analogy is correct. Christianity is a religion of grace, that is, the scandalous belief that acceptance of Jesus as Lord gives individuals pardon from whatever sins or wrongdoing they have perpetrated. However, Willard makes the point that if that is our only view of faith, if the journey of discipleship begins and ends with that salvation moment, then our behavior and life on earth matter very little. Willard continues:

The real question, I think, is whether God would establish a bar code type of arrangement at all. It is we who are in danger: in danger of missing the fullness of life offered to us. Can we seriously believe that God would establish a plan for us that essentially bypasses the awesome needs of present human life and leaves human character untouched? Would he leave us even temporarily marooned with no help in our kind of world, with our kinds of problems: psychological, emotional, social and global? Can we believe that the essence of Christian faith and salvation covers nothing but death and after? Can we believe that being saved really has nothing whatever to do with the kinds of persons we are?



When we have a bar code faith, in which the only real spiritual transformation that occurs within us happens at the moment of salvation, a number of possible scenarios emerge regarding the shape our faith and lives will take, all of which do little to aid us in our journey toward finding our true selves. **ea**



This is an edited extract from **The Vertical Self** by Mark Sayers (Thomas Nelson, 2010).

Mark is an author, consultant and speaker.

He is the co-director of Uber, a ministry that helps churches and organizations work more effectively with young adults. Mark also leads Red East, a Christian community based in Box Hill, Melbourne.



Re-calibration, but not Revival:

Why the Emerging Missional Church needs the Charismatic

By Tim Hein

Emerging. Missional. Church.

We've passed the tipping point. We get it now. The church is supposed to be about mission.

It's fascinating to reflect that in the 1990s, discussion about a missional framing of church was considered highly controversial in some quarters. But sentiment shifted early in the new millennium, and indeed today there exists an avalanche of books, denominational reports, new academic courses and all the other accoutrement.

And may it continue.

More importantly, may the emerging fruit be several generations of mature and passionate leaders oriented by a full-blown commitment to God's mission, leading thousands of focused and sustainable missional churches. Yes, bring it on.

But I've found rhetoric about mission can be slippery. It can be co-opted. It can be a phantom, a cover. As the astute missiologist, David Bosch has said, and many have rightly oft repeated, 'If everything is mission, then nothing is mission'. For those involved, it is worth reflecting closely on our movement and asking hard questions for, under this all-encompassing moniker of 'mission', I observe a concerning trend, a vital missing element, plus a real opportunity.

Sacramental Church and Charismatic Church

In his seminal book on the Holy Spirit, *Flame of Love*, theologian Clark Pinnock suggests that the presence of the Holy Spirit within the church takes two modes: *sacramental* and *charismatic*.

The *sacramental* primarily emphasises the presence of God recognised or reflected through symbols and signs. It is, of course, more generally denoted through the 'official' sacraments of the church, baptism and communion. Through these means of grace the presence of God is powerfully acknowledged amongst the people.

However, the church has also valued sacramentals, that is, other symbols by which we are reminded and celebrate the presence of God with us in our world. These include candles, songs, stained-glass windows, crosses, icons and art. They are strong useful reminders that God is with us through and in all of life, and that the sacred is named in spaces and places all over.

The *charismatic*, however, emphasises the *work* of the Holy Spirit in the church. It is a strong reminder that God is not only present with us, but is *active*. This is clearly evident throughout the New Testament in spiritual gifts which include, amongst others, healing, prophecy and tongues. Their prevalence invites Paul's guidance on their use in several places.

These are evidence of the *ministry* of the Holy Spirit as people are healed, changed, empowered, filled and renewed and, as it often accompanies evangelistic preaching, transformed. Distinct personal transformation is a normative response to encountering God, in the charismatic, often, but not always, marked by charismatic gifts. The movement is thoroughly evangelical and converts speak of powerful experiential calls to repentance, with distinct changes in their life.

Throughout history the church has tended to emphasise one or other of these modes. Churches that expect and participate with the charismatic tend to leave traditional sacramentals behind along with various other ecclesiastical traditions. These are present in waves throughout church history, rising and falling within movements, revivals and renewals.

Outside these, our propensity is to be reminded and to celebrate God's presence through physical means, surrounding ourselves with sacramental objects. We also become more specific about creating specific sacred spaces.

Recent Trends in the Australian Church

In the last thirty years, Australia has seen a cycle of both the sacramental and the charismatic. From the late-1960s and into the 1970s, the Charismatic Renewal spread across the church, with distinct, widespread, charismatic, experiential ministry of the Holy Spirit. No mainline denomination was untouched.

It unleashed incredible apostolic and evangelistic zeal and activity, with widespread church planting, evangelism and church growth as key elements. It was likewise marked by large church gatherings, many interdenominational, where the charismatic ministry of the Holy Spirit operated as the norm. It also coincided with the introduction of contemporary music styles being incorporated into church praise and worship.

By the early 1980s, as the momentum of the movement subsided, left in its wake were multiple new and greatly enlarged churches, primarily through



conversion growth. Interesting also was the number of new converts called into full-time ministry. As the movement bedded into sustainable church, many of the leaders looked to figures such as John Wimber and Peter Wagner whose teaching fused the charismatic with church growth theory, with resultant impact. Many of these churches are now the largest congregations in Australia.

However, the past decade has seen the charismatic mode decrease significantly in Australia, and the sacramental mode re-emerge, explicitly expressed through, though not limited to, the emerging missional church.

This new-generation sacramental renewal has rediscovered icons, art, liturgy, crosses, and ancient spiritual practices, combined with new use of technology and a more general engagement with contemporary culture. Even in Pentecostal churches, it is interesting to note the decline in charismatic expression, and their strong engagement with mainstream contemporary culture - pop-worship music being just one example. In emerging missional churches, history and contemporary culture have been jointly mined for their ancient symbolic, almost totemic, integration of sacramental expression.

This sacramental renewal certainly contains a reaction to the style of church that followed the Charismatic Renewal and now has real appeal to many of those Christians who were involved. Just as many deserted sacramental churches during the Charismatic Renewal, Christians are now seeking out the sacramental, not back in traditional sacramental churches but in emerging faith communities. Or just within their personal faith lifestyle.

This raises real questions for established churches: What's going on with our spiritual formation? Is it too programmed? Why is there this hunger for a more integrated earthed expression of faith? Has our spirituality become too disconnected from reality? Is it too simple, too neat? Why has a call to a holistic 'missional' lifestyle resounded so strongly with current Christians?

How Does this Impact Evangelism?

But, just as critics of the charismatic had their warnings, I believe this movement of sacramental spirituality contains a real danger of introversion and self-focus. Especially because it occurs under the banner of 'mission', and often there's nothing missional about it.

The recent call to emerging missional church has succeeded in engaging many Christians - not to transform our increasingly secular society for Christ - but to reinvent their own personal lifestyle on more intimate, sacramental terms.

Let me be clear, the prophetic call to mission is robust, timely and necessary. Unfortunately, however, while the critique of current church has resounded loudly, the call to more focused mission has been significantly less often taken on board. Missional church requires higher, not lower, levels of commitment and discipleship. Instead, it has been heard as an excuse to opt out, rather than opt in.

This age has seen a re-evaluation of personal lifestyle, producing a less, not more, overt and committed faith expression, especially in evangelism. As one young adult told me recently, 'If my whole life is mission, then why would I bother going to church?' The lack of evangelism is concerning. Perhaps in correcting a previous imbalance, social justice has emerged as the primary acceptable outward expression of God's mission.

Where to from Here?

I suggest that under the moniker of 'missional', the real shift of the past fifteen years for many Christians has *not* been a renewed commitment to develop the mission of the church to see the genuine conversion of our culture to Christ, but rather a personal reframing of spiritual expression to a contemporary sacramental orientation to suit their lifestyle. This primarily sacramental, lifestyle-movement is not marked by Spirit-led Christians going the extra mile for mission but rather increased attention to lifestyle through quite ordinary and un-radical practices.

The whole church faces real challenges of commitment to church, evangelism and true discipleship.

We must eventually rediscover the *charismatic* ministry of the Holy Spirit to take us beyond this introverted posture, and lift our focus higher than a continual reframing of our small, individual lifestyle to become truly and wholly missional.


The sacramental age is of some value but it must be time used well to better understand the changing western culture. It should be a time for the church to evaluate, forcing refocus, realignment, rethought, retraining, and re-engagement with the real world. It must be a time of preparation, of prayer and of longing. Not for yesterday but for tomorrow. For, just as the sacramental re-emerged for a new generation, the charismatic must do the same.

Perhaps these are the days prior to another mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit?

This would be as equally confronting for the church as the last; birthing new movements and creating incredible momentum for those churches open and prepared to change and engage.

Would your church be ready? Are we willing to become truly missional?

For our talk of mission rightly takes us back to the Book of Acts, but many have overlooked the main character in the story.

The Holy Spirit moves in forgotten ways. And these are times of re-calibration, but not yet revival. 



Tim Hein is Minister of CitySoul, a new missional church in Adelaide. He is passionate about calling young leaders into ministry, and speaks regularly on mission, discipleship and leadership in our popular culture.



Book Review

***Untamed: Reactivating a missional form of discipleship,* by Alan Hirsch & Debra Hirsch, 2010, Baker Books. 208 pages.**

Reading *Untamed* reminded me of two boys in a fight. Their mother was cooking breakfast and Eddie and Murray fought over who would eat the first pancake. Mum in her loving wisdom saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. 'Boys, boys', she pleaded, 'don't argue – if Jesus was here he'd say 'Let my brother have the first pancake'.' Mum was pleased when Murray's eyes grew large with understanding. Murray turned to his younger brother and offered, 'Eddie ... you be Jesus'.

I also tend to turn to a religion that suits me and to a way of following Jesus I choose. But that smooth path turns faith into a consumer product, which like everything else is only good as long as it creates happy living and getting what we want. *Untamed* is a useful guidebook for the adventure along a different path. Alan and Debra Hirsch tag-team in helping us untame God, culture, self-image and mission.

They untame our idea of God, seeing God not in our own image but through a fresh picture of Jesus. Jesus was remarkably accepting of broken and bent people and the Hirschs ask, 'What is it about the holiness of Jesus that caused 'sinners' to flock to him like a magnet and yet manages to seriously antagonize the religious people? ... Why does our more churchy form of holiness seem to get it the other way around?'

They untame our engagement with culture and form a gospel-shaped view of money, status, family and church. They want to celebrate what is good in culture but critique what is dehumanizing, especially consumerism – a serious contender with biblical faith.

They untame our self-image and sexuality, inviting us to find identity in

Christ who loves us. They appeal for a celebration of spirituality (longing to know and be known by God) as well as sexuality (longing to know and be known by people).

And, with incarnational implements, they untame our practice of mission. They insist all disciples are sent on mission and are to engage with the poor and marginalised.

They appeal for a fresh release of creativity in church and imagining of not just different shapes of church, but world-changing discipleship, quoting Bono: 'Dream up the world you want to live in; dream out loud, at high volume!' This begins often with basic hospitality, sharing our home and family life.

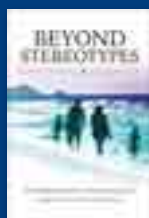
Alan and Debra identify obstacles that trip us up on the journey. They rarely hold back in their prophetic critique, whether against prosperity doctrine or 'theology of the little head', the church's marginalisation of women or pharisaical rejection of gays, worshippers coming to 'be fed' or seeker-sensitive churches that don't disciple, overly pastoral views of church or the debilitating clergy-laity division, the anxiety of Christians to put 'God' and 'orgasm' in the same sentence or our lack of awareness of the social pornography of women's magazines, our slowness to confront greed and its violent consequences or our preoccupation with nuclear

families and consumerism. For example, they contend Santa Claus is 'a religious symbol co-opted to disciple children in thoroughgoing materialism from early childhood on'.

A strength of the book is this couple's sharing from their own lives and experiences; from conversion from the drug scene through to inner-city church planting in St Kilda; from taking risks with missional experiments through to training Forge interns in incarnational mission. The book breathes their heart for those on the fringes, their love for the church and their passion for its destiny as a missional movement. They have an obsession to 'authentically live out the radical, grace-saturated life of Jesus and become more like the One we love'.

I confess I don't live on the margins of poverty in my city, don't house-share beyond my nuclear family, and am not church planting among gay gothic church-burning neo-Marxists. But reading *Untamed* challenges me to act out an authentic discipleship. It opens my eyes to the poverty in my own suburb. It motivates me to work passionately to replant our church. And it invites me to discern where God is to be found in my middle-class, inner-suburban, multicultural, university, pub-going, family-raising, career-pursuing, kitchen-renovating neighbourhood.

Darren Cronshaw



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Communicating Across Cultures: Maximum Impact Language Learning (MILL)



Cross-cultural workers face many challenges when they decide to serve the Lord in a foreign country. Learning a new language can sometimes seem to be an insurmountable hurdle, a barrier that needs to be overcome before 'real' ministry can begin. But, contrary to many people's experience of learning a language in a classroom, language is actually a social activity, not an academic one.

Greg Thomson, an authority on language learning for missionaries, says, 'Don't learn a new language! Rather discover the host world as host people know it and share it with one another.' Instead of seeing language as something to be *acquired*, Thomson encourages cross-cultural workers to see it as something to be *experienced*, by learning to become 'growing participators' in the new host culture.

Understanding that language is fundamentally about relationships will radically transform our view of language learning. Missionaries are in a unique position to demonstrate real incarnational ministry, giving up the comforts of home to serve in sometimes-hostile environments, just as Christ gave up the riches of heaven and humbled himself to live among us. People need to hear the good news of Christ in a language they can understand well, thus learning their language is a crucial part of both ministry and relationships.

While there is no magic pill that will take the hard work out of language learning, there are some ideas and techniques that can make it a more enjoyable experience. The MILL course offers pre-field training to equip missionaries to take on the challenge of learning a new language and develop confidence in building relationships in the host language and culture. Instead of spending time and energy learning grammar rules

and vocabulary lists, language can be learnt by interacting with people who speak the language. The MILL course provides opportunities to do this, and a range of techniques and activities to practise with native speakers of another language, in order to make language learning an interactive, enjoyable experience.

For more information go to <www.mill.org.au>

"MISSION AND THE ARTS" Seminar

Presented by Colin Harbinson

How can Christians use "the arts" to communicate the story of Christ and His salvation across all cultures and sub-cultures?

What does it mean to be a Christian and an artist? Are there new ways of sharing God's truth? What is God's purpose for this generation?





Dr. Colin Harbinson was born in England and has been involved in many varied aspects of the arts, missions and education around the world for over 40 years. Colin is currently the international director of StoneWorks.

For more information and a video clip of Colin's new DVD teaching series, Stone by Stone, go to www.youtube.com/user/colinharbinson and www.stoneworks-arts.org



"Can we imagine a future in which the church in all people groups will reinforce the biblical narrative, pass it on to the next generation, and celebrate the goodness of God within their own cultural framework with their own indigenous instruments and artforms?"

Dr. Colin Harbinson, "The Arts, the Church and Contemporary Mission" in *Contemporary Issues in the Arts & Missions*, December 2007, Vol. 8, September 2008

Melbourne: Friday 18 June 2010

Edge Church
188 Blackburn Rd (Cnr Woodhouse Rd)
Doncaster East

Afternoon session: 1.45 - 5.30pm "The Role of the Arts in Contemporary Mission"

Evening Session: 6.30 - 9pm "Artistic Calling and God's Redemptive Purposes"

Costs: Each session: \$35 per person (\$25 full-time students)
Both sessions (including light meal): \$60 per person (\$40 full-time students)
Group Discount available for those attending both sessions (3 or more participants): \$50 per person

RSVP: Friday 11 June 2010 (Registration forms: www.missionsinterlink.org.au)

Enquiries: office@mill.org.au



Essential Standards heralds new focus for CMA

CMA continues to offer the conferences, events, resources and networking that members have become familiar with and find helpful. However, in addition to the usual array of activities, the recent release of CMA's *Essential Standards for Ministry Governance* booklet (available for free in either print or PDF format) signals a new focus for CMA.

After consideration by the CMA board and consultation with members, CMA decided that a focus on *Essential Standards* for ministry governance would be one of the most helpful ways to contribute to ministry-effectiveness. 'Best Practice' is a commonly used term, for some good reasons, but in ministry-governance, Best Practice can be hard to define. Best Practice may look very different for different

sizes or kinds of organisations, and it can also be a daunting leap for small or young ministries.

Essential Standards, however, are more like minimum standards. Regardless of an organisation's size or style, these essential standards should be achievable by all, and give some guidance about commonly agreed benchmarks. In the publication, CMA has identified 16 guiding principles, and 111 standards, that effectively give a checklist against which a church or ministry can measure its governance. Meeting these standards is not a final destination, but for those who want to govern well and don't know where to start, the standards provide a good stepping-stone on the path to truly effective governance.

This first publication deals with governance standards but CMA is also dedicated to defining similar essential standards in areas such as ministry staffing, fundraising, and financial management. Work now continues on a companion publication that will provide commentary for the standards, as well as a self-audited certification process by which organisations can demonstrate compliance with these standards.

To receive your complimentary copy (or even a copy for each of your board members), visit <www.governance.org.au> and request what you need. CMA invites donations, where possible, to assist with printing and postage costs, but the resource is free as part of CMA's mission to maximise ministry effectiveness.

BALANCE

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PDF brochure, registration and full details at
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For the last seven years, Christian Management Australia's conference has been a gathering place for hundreds of church, ministry and business leaders to connect over the key issues of organisational leadership. In 2010, we invite you to join them for **50+ sessions** by **40+ speakers** on topics like:

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Generational Mega-Trends	Work-Life Balance
Financial Management	Charity Law



Keynote speaker **Dr. Richard Swenson** has addressed the Mayo Clinic, the Pentagon and many other forums on issues of overload, work-life balance and stress.

He is the author of six books, including *'The Overload Syndrome'* and *'In Search of Balance'*.



www.cma.net.au/business

For sample publications, email subscriptions, regional events and membership information, visit www.cma.net.au/business, phone 07 5545 2004 or email cna@cma.net.au

The Ethos Of The Atonement: The Cross, Non-Violence And Abuse

After Ethos' successful launch in late March looking at Climate Change we are firing up our booster rocket with a conference entitled, with apologies to the Rolling Stones, *Can't Get No Satisfaction?: Atonement, Non-Violence and Abuse*. The title is an allusion to 'satisfaction' theories of the Atonement that have increasingly come under attack in postmodern times for allegedly depicting a violent God who engages in a form of child-abuse by punishing his innocent

Son on the Cross to satisfy his just anger at sin. Feminists, Christians concerned about abuse issues (particularly prominent in the press lately), and pacifists have raised issues about the ethos or ethics of the atonement – what kind of character of God is depicted here? Atheists like Richard Dawkins wince at the very thought of it.

For Evangelicals there is nothing more central to salvation than the Cross, its nature and its practical and

pastoral effect on the character of our lives. Therefore, we have gathered a stellar cast of international and local speakers to address these issues.

On the Friday night May 21st, Graham Cole formerly of Ridley College, now Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Chicago, and one of Australia's best theologians, will launch his new book *God the Peacemaker* with an address on some of the contemporary challenges to the traditional penal-substitution view of the Cross. On the Saturday, Chris Marshall of Victoria University New Zealand and a restorative justice practitioner will address Anabaptist and pacifist concerns about the Cross as well as Paul's view of the Law as one way of dealing with the problems of violence, particularly in the Old Testament.

Fiona Hill, a Baptist pastor with a PhD in these issues will speak on *Hear My Voice: An Abuse Survivor's Bid to Speak Within the Church* exploring the way people have (mis)used the Bible to bash victims of abuse, looking especially at Abraham's attempted sacrifice of Isaac. Her workshop after will offer a safe place to explore some of these difficult issues pastorally. There will be a range of other workshops by reflective scholars and practitioners addressing the Cross and social justice, restorative justice, rape accounts in the Bible, truth and reconciliation and evangelism. Note this is a conference not just for theologians and specialists, but also for lay people seeking to see the relevance of the Cross to the challenges of our time. Please go to <www.ea.org.au> for the full program and to register.

CAN'T GET NO SATISFACTION?
ATONEMENT, NONVIOLENCE & ABUSE
Friday 21—Saturday 22 May

Graham Cole
Chris Marshall
Geoff Broughton
Fiona Dawn Hill
Ian Packer
Barbara Deutschmann
Jarrod McKenna

An initiative of
ethos
EA Centre for Christianity and Society

In partnership with the
**ANABAPTIST ASSOCIATION
OF AUSTRALIA AND
NEW ZEALAND**
&
Ridley Melbourne - Centre
for Applied Christian Ethics (CACE)

Friday 21 includes book launch:
Graham Cole's *God the Peacemaker* (IVP)
6:00pm Drinks and nibbles
7:00pm Address by Graham Cole
Ridley Melbourne, 170 The Avenue, Parkville

Conference cost: \$125 (\$75 concession)
including Fri. night snacks & coffee, Sat. lunch.
\$100 Saturday only. \$25 Friday night only.
Register by May 14 via EA: www.ea.org.au

→ European Evangelical Alliance Appoints New General Secretary

Rev Niek Tramper was appointed General Secretary of the EEA at its annual conference on April 22. Rev. Tramper is pastor of the Evangelical Protestant Church in Vlaardingen (near Rotterdam). He was lecturer in Missiology at Ede Christian University. Previously he worked for ten years with the Reformed Mission League as regional director for Europe and the Middle East.

‘The Church and Christian movements need each other in advancing the Kingdom of God,’ said Rev Tramper. ‘Traditional churches cannot continue

without revival. Profound theology and missionary zeal are complementary. The EEA tries to bring together both in Europe, in the light of the many challenges shared by the church in Europe – the need for cooperation between old and new churches, multi-ethnic cities, a growing number of Muslims, tensions between poor and rich, and human rights violations. Meanwhile, in places with few historic churches, the EEA is of great value for facilitating the replanting of churches in countries like Kosovo, Albania and Turkey, as well as in Central Asia.’

→ New International Director for Micah Network

The Micah Network Executive recently announced the appointment of Sheryl Haw as the new International Director of Micah Network. Sheryl commenced the post in April and succeeds Jane Furniss who left in 2009 after five years in the post. Born in Zimbabwe and trained as a nurse in South Africa, Sheryl worked for 13 years with Medair (a Christian Crisis Relief agency) in many

countries including Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya and Mozambique. Recently, she has been a self employed consultant, the Integral Mission coordinator at All Nations Christian College in England, and has worked for the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) International, which is a membership organisation currently with a membership of 40 agencies.

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May 21-22: ETHOS Conference
Melbourne, ethos@ea.org.au

May 26: Finishing Well Seminar 2: Transitioning Well, Melbourne
sue@ea.org.au

June 29: Culture by Design Seminar
Melbourne
sue@ea.org.au

July 1: Culture by Design Seminar
Brisbane
allan@ea.org.au



July 27: Sydney Business Breakfast
www.cma.net.au/events

July 27: Brisbane Business Breakfast
Gold Coast Business Lunch
Toowoomba Business Dinner
www.cma.net.au/events

August 4: Hobart Business Breakfast
www.cma.net.au/events

August 5: Melbourne Business Breakfast
www.cma.net.au/events

August 6: Scoresby, VIC Business Breakfast
www.cma.net.au/events

August 19: Melbourne CEO Dialogue
www.cma.net.au/events

Events Calendar



June 5: Central Coast OneWorld Expo
Erina Fair, NSW
missionpossible@integritynet.com.au

June 15-23: MILL
(Maximum Impact Language Learning)
Kangaroo Ground, VIC
cathy@mill.org.au

June 18: Mission & the Arts –
Colin Harbinson
Edge Church, Doncaster East, VIC
fiona@ea.org.au

June 27-July 3: Missionary Enrichment
Retreat, Winmalee, NSW
sue.giles@wec.com.au

June 3-July 15: Transition Training
Belgrave Heights, VIC
clangsford@globalinteraction.org.au

July 12-22: Foundations of Missionary
Member Care Training
Kallista, VIC
fiona@ea.org.au

August 13-15: ReachOut –
“Lost & Found”, Katoomba, NSW
reachoutmissions.com.au

August 20-22: MIST
Woodville, SA
barryandann@thelocks.net

August 28: Missions Fest
Brisbane, QLD
wrbc@bigpond.net.au





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