

Editorial

Pieter J. Lalleman

In this editorial I am reproducing most of the first editorial of our Journal, back in 1992. In that issue our founding editor, Nigel M. de S. Cameron, wrote things which are still relevant as they describe the vision behind this journal:

"The European Journal is... offered to the theological academies and churches of the many European nations to aid in the building of a community of European evangelical theology. The new political freedoms of central and eastern Europe, and growing economic and political integration in the west, offer Christians a special challenge as we rediscover and reassert our common identity as the legatees of Christian Europe. Many of us work from within the mainstream churches, many others from outside; together we seek to discover afresh our common heritage, and bridge the gaps of language and culture which have left us so curiously ignorant of each other. If we are to offer the right hand of fellowship across cultural and national barriers we must learn enough of one another to begin to feel that we belong within one community (...).

Of course, there are other initiatives; many others. There are existing international networks of Christians at many levels. In the aftermath of the first Lausanne Congress the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians (FEET) was established as a forum for theological discussion and mutual support. This *Journal* is pleased to acknowledge the work of FEET and to help build upon it. But this is not a society journal, a house journal, it is something more. Journals can serve communities but they can also help them to develop and to expand. Journals are read by many more people than will ever join societies. They sit in libraries, for all to see: they are public property, declaring and demanding that their originating communities are open to inspection and ready to give an answer before the eyes of the watching world.

(...) The *European Journal of Theology* is an evangelical journal; that is, its editorial stance is that of the faith once delivered to the saints, the Gospel. It is not Baptist or Brethren or Anglican or Lutheran

or Presbyterian or Pentecostal, or representative of any other particular tradition of the church, but rather concerned to articulate in a fresh and open manner the rudiments of the orthodoxy of the churches of the Reformation in which is set forth the faith of the ancient churches, founded in Holy Scripture.

The economic and political transformation of Europe poses a challenge to the churches above all because of the insidious tendency of all economic and political progress to bring in its train a politico-economic reduction of social life and all human affairs. If in past generations Christians sat too light to the incarnate character of human life and the ineradicably bodily nature of human being, the temptation to the church today is to falter in its duty to set the temporal in the light of eternity. For that, of course, is the special need of the hour, as we move further into the twilight of the European Christian centuries and a secular, post-Christian society emerges with increasing self-confidence and with less and less indebtedness to the Christian moral and social legacy which made first-generation secularism so attractive. The special role of theological conservatives within and among the denominations is constantly to remind those who name the name of Christ that only sub specie aeternitatis is there wisdom for the here and now; that the superstructure of humane Christian values is dependent on a substructure of doctrine; that the major premise of any Christian theological proposal must always be the canonical Scriptures of the New and Old Testaments; that any Gospel which has ceased to be the Gospel of the redeeming love of God focussed supremely in the cross of Jesus Christ can only be another Gospel. At the same time, those who are marked out as theologically 'conservative' will be prey to the temptation to conserve for its own sake, to elevate their very conservative tradition above the teaching of the Holy Scriptures which that tradition is designed to safeguard. Part of the value of a scholarly journal of this kind is to help those who seek to conserve orthodoxy to unlock its treasures anew to the

church while keeping them open to the criticism and self-criticism which alone will ensure the *semper reformanda* character of all evangelical theological and ecclesiastical endeavour.

So the *European Journal of Theology* is offered as an expression of the mind of evangelical Europe and as a contribution to the building of that mind. It is offered as a service to the evangelical theological community and yet also as a stimulus to the wider church, in its various Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Roman Catholic embodiments. It is offered in the confidence that despite the rise of secularism and the continuing disintegration of Christian theology the preaching of the Gospel and the supreme authority of the Bible remain the rallying-points of the church, for its theologians no less than its most unlearned believers. (...)"

Most of the articles in this issue originated as

papers which were presented at the 2008 conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians (FEET) in Berlin and were edited for publication. We begin this issue with a conference report which also introduces the subject matter of the papers. Added to this collection was the paper by Kusch which is a useful complement.

The next conference of FEET will again be held in Berlin, on 20-24 August 2010. The theme is *Evangelical Theological Interpretation within Contemporary European Culture(s)*. Among the speakers will be professors Henri Blocher, Peter Kuzmic and Howard Marshall. Papers are expected on issues such as *Evangelicalism and the challenge of European cultural change*; *Revelation, truth, authority and worship in postmodern and pluralistic Europe*; *The changing face of ethics* and *Reaching Europe: evangelical challenges in contemporary missiology*. The conference brochure is included with this issue.

Salugenic Community

Journeying Together into Uncommon Wholeness

Susan B. Williams & Peter R. Holmes

What is a 'salugenic community'? 'Salugenic' means 'health-creating'. 'Salugenic relationships' are those relationships that successfully create more wholeness and more Christ-likeness. A 'salugenic moment' is a shared experience that triggers personal change, often accompanied by an awareness of the presence of Christ. A 'salugenic place' is the network built by a group of people who are consistently experiencing salugenic moments together – a network that is committed to encouraging ongoing transformative change.

The book describes six features of transformative change and five characteristics that are needed if we are to build healing relationships. The authors propose that God intends churches to be salugenic places, where anyone who steps in is consistently aware of the reality of the presence of Christ.

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