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DOGMA, AUTHORITY, AND RELIGIOUS REFLECTION IN A CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH IN WILTSHIRE

by

Michael Taylor MA, ARCM

A thesis submitted to the Council for National Academic Awards in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy.

Sponsoring Establishment: Department of Social Studies of Sheffield City Polytechnic

Collaborating Establishment: The Diocese of Bristol

January 1989

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ABSTRACT

DOGMA, AUTHORITY AND RELIGIOUS REFLECTION IN A CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH IN WILTSHIRE

by Michael Taylor MA ARCM

The central aim of this study is to identify and describe the ways in which conventionally religious people show varying degrees of flexibility in matters of belief. An attempt is made to examine the range of attitudes and approaches to belief in a particular context, and to explore the extent to which some place themselves firmly within a particular dogmatic stance, claiming a strong authority for doing so, whilst others seem to approach their religion without many preconceptions, and in the spirit of an open enquiry. This is a practitioner study, where a professional is engaged in a critical examination of his own work by means of qualitative research methodology.

The study is based on thirty interviews with a cross-section of the members of the eclectic congregation of a large Anglican parish church in the market town of Chippenham in Wiltshire. The researcher is the vicar of the parish concerned. Members are selected according to gender, age and churchmanship. The interviews are analysed in the light and context of contemporary psychological, sociological and theological insights.

The thesis concludes with a discussion of the significance of the existence of such a range of beliefs and attitudes to belief within one specific religious setting. There is potential for profound disagreement and division, and a consideration is made of the pastoral possibilities and implications of the research.

P R E F A C E

It was entirely due to the provocative and sometimes mischievous questioning of the late Jacqueline Burgoyne, tutor and friend, Reader in the Department of Applied Social Studies at Sheffield Polytechnic, that I began and persisted with this study. Part of Jackie's attention was always drawn to the task and training of clergy. She insisted that we consider and examine what we were doing and why and how we were doing it. Always supportive, she nevertheless wanted us to understand better what we were up against, and particularly the tensions which exist between affirmation and doubt. As she was fond of quoting: 'If you question too much you have to leave the party'. Yet Jackie questioned relentlessly, without leaving; and helped many of us also to question. Her approach was rigorous, yet affectionate. Her tragic and untimely death early in 1988 left many of us missing her, her good sense, and her unusually incisive and usually witty perceptions. This study, though it falls short by a long way of her hopes and intentions, is dedicated in gratitude to her.

I should like also to express my thanks and appreciation for the help I have received from many other quarters. At Sheffield Peter Ashworth stepped in most generously and ably as my new tutor and David Clark helped to evaluate the progress of the work. Alan Billings, my second supervisor, now in Oxford, has kept a critical theological eye on things, and I have greatly valued my consultations with Rupert Davies, Alan Webster, Monica Furlong, George Willis, Edward Patey, Denis Nineham, Jill Dann, John Tinsley, Michael Hare-Duke, Sue Walrond-Skinner, John Townroe, Peter France of the BBC, David White, and many others. Without the assistance of Peter and Sally Jefferies the word-processing would not have been accomplished; and Veronica Grant and Rosaleen Harford carefully and patiently transcribed long hours of recorded interviews. Lastly I must thank those who agreed so readily to be interviewed for their willing help and co-operation: and for trusting me with their views and opinions.

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1 : THE PROBLEM

The aim of this piece of research is to explore the ways in which conventionally religious people do, to a greater or a lesser extent, review, consider, and if necessary change their beliefs and practices or permit the Christian Church to do this. Do they think of the place where things are at the moment as a provisional position, where perhaps they will take their stand for the time being, or is there a confident sense of having arrived, perhaps a long time ago - having been "led into all truth"? How far do they acknowledge their own doubts and uncertainties or to what extent do they opt for one of the many available fundamentalisms: resting in the authority which they offer? How far are those who remain ambiguous about their beliefs, and ever unable to express or articulate them, resisting the claims of faith or refusing intellectual rigour or the possibility of making a real commitment?

The task is to carry out this research within the context of one particular Anglican church and its very eclectic congregations. Those interviewed will be invited to share their perception of these things to assist the purpose of understanding better the nature of Christian belief; to help me (as both researcher and as parish priest) to clarify my own insights into the community of

faith for which, in their name, I am given responsibility. Thus this is a practitioner study, where a professional engages in an endeavour better to understand an aspect or aspects of his work.

The starting point for this research has been the growing awareness on the part of a parish priest of the many 'fundamentalisms' evinced by those who participate in the life of a parish church. There have been many studies in the nature and character of Biblical fundamentalism: Barr (1977;1984), Kung and Moltmann(1980), Packer (1958). I use the term in its broader sense to include and to describe a variety of possible dogmatic approaches to Christian believing and Church life. The 'problem' has been described in the following way:

> What starts as a search may freeze into a dogma. A lived experience is committed to parchment, copied, learned by heart; then recited as part of the Creed and enshrined in a tomb of man-made tradition. By then the search has died that is at the heart of all religiousness.
> (Wijngaards: 1986)

My own stance is to see religious belief and practice essentially as a tentative and exploratory matter. I take it that religious language is highly analogical and metaphorical; is both ambiguous and puzzling:

> Let us always be cautious of talking about God in straightforward language. Let us never talk as if we had privileged access to the diaries of God's private life, or expert insight into his descriptive psychology so that we say quite cheerfully why God did what, when and where. (Ramsey: 1957)

I find an antithesis between 'doubt' and 'certainty' which I pursue through this piece of research. Doubt, within a framework of belief and churchgoing, might reflect mere confusion, intellectual laziness or lack of commitment, or it might reflect an awareness that we could be wrong in our perceptions, conclusions and definitions, and seek to permit new or other ideas and understandings to come at us, particularly through a greater openness to those with whom we differ. I have, in my title, used the phrase "religious reflection" to describe such an approach.

> What I wonder is whether we can truly love God unless from time to time we disbelieve in his existence. I suspect that to love God with all our heart will sometimes, perhaps often, involve us in being atheists. (Williams: 1976)

Certainty suggests, conversely, that sufficient of that which we call 'God' and of God's will and purposes is clear and unmysterious, that the definitions are adequate and truthful.

Ecumenism, or the encounter with those of other faiths and outlooks will be more difficult. Change within one's own system of belief, perception and practice will have to deal with notions of a 'revealed' or 'received' truth which is neither mutable or negotiable. I have linked the words "dogma" and "authority" in my title, to suggest that there is a certain way of regarding the dogmatics of belief as authoritative which does tend to preclude doubt or questioning. Towler describes this as 'certitude' (Towler 1984).I follow Towler in regarding certitude as an "overshooting of the mark", and a consequent abandoning of the quest of faith and truth: a quest which will at some point demand a real and rigorous involvement in the implications of its claims.

I have recently listened to a number of colleagues who, considerably senior in years to myself, express the awareness that they grow less certain about what they believe or can consistently assert. I do not interpret this as a loss of faith, whatever that might mean, but to a deepening perception of both the complexity and the ambiguity of the claims of religion:

> There is hardly a phrase in the Creed which I have not doubted at some time or another. (Patey: 1987)

> Preaching becomes harder, and I become less and less sure what I can say. (Willis: 1987)

Harry Williams wrote, in the preface to his collection of Cambridge sermons about the need to relate one's claims and assertions to actual experience:

> I resolved that I would not preach about any aspect of Christion belief unless it had become part of my own life-blood....All I could speak of were those things which I had proved true in my own experience by living them and thus knowing them at first hand. (Williams: 1965)

R. S. Thomas (the priest and poet) had described the possibility of moving in and out of belief, yet without giving up or letting go of everything:

> Prayers like gravel
> flung at the sky's
> window, hoping to attract
> the loved one's
> attention. But without
> visible plaits to let
> down for the believer
> to climb up,
> to what purpose open
> that far casement?

I would
have refrained long since
but that peering once
through my locked fingers
I thought that I detected
the movement of a curtain."

(Thomas: 1987)

The realization is that, however great the claims of Christianity to have a revelation - that which above all is identified in the person of the man Jesus - it deals, at the level of people's daily existence, with claims about a God who is essentially hidden, and whose apparent absence from the human stage leaves many thoughtful and sincere Christians deeply troubled.

The "problem", as I see it, exists therefore where people's religious claims have moved into an area of fundamentalism (be it doctrinal, biblical, liturgical, ecclesiological, or in whatever form) from where they find it difficult to understand or relate to those for whom it is necessary to question, doubt, or reserve their position. Dogma can be handled as possessing the kind of authority which is beyond doubt, beyond questioning, and which renders religious reflection an ultimately futile exercise. The problem also exists where those who are open or ambiguous about their beliefs find no way to value or benefit from the faith and confidence of their more assertive and assured companions.

2 : BACKGROUND STUDIES

REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY LITERATURE

2.1.1 Psychological Studies:

a. Introduction:

Since it is the case that the language and the claims of religious faith are cloaked in metaphor and poetry, and that there is much about the pursuit of religious truth which is both ambiguous and puzzling, it is necessary to ask how it is that some can be so certain, so dogmatic about these claims. It is therefore appropriate to give some consideration to the psychological roots of religion: to consider theories and frameworks suggesting that unconscious motivations or behavioural patterns may lie behind the outward forms of at least some religious belief and practice, as well as to consider the studies suggesting particular psychological motivations. The endeavour is not to question the veracity of the underlying religious belief, still less to debate the issue of religious truth, but to consider the ways in which people make their response to what they understand that truth to be.

In 1984 the new Bishop of Durham, David Jenkins, provoked a stormy reaction when he raised questions and doubts concerning certain aspects of Christian faith and tradition . Comment was made about the anger that was unleashed: for example a psychiatrist encouraged people to consider what underlay their reactions:

> We are being forced to look, if we will, at the tension between faith and doubt, commitment and questioning, doctrine and mystery. It seems hopefully possible that having to face this conflict - in the Church, in a particular person - we may also come to explore it more personally in ourselves.
> (Coate:1984)

At the end of 1984 Bishop Jenkins wrote an article for The Guardian (The Guardian 17.12.84) suggesting that there were pathological elements in the volleys which had been loosed against him. Some of the reactions to the fire at York Minster in the early hours of July 9th, only just after his consecration as Bishop there on the previous Friday, "brought out how strongly a 'primitive' belief in an arbitrary and vengeful God ... is alive". The correspondence addressed to the Archbishop of York especially indicated that: "the area of religious belief is often

charged with intense anxiety and, alas, real neurosis". There seemed to exist "an absence of a concern for truth among the self-styled defenders of Christian faith and orthodoxy". David Jenkins observed that organised religion had always been the enemy of the free, critical pursuit of truth.This was not a new point but he had been disturbed by the extent to which militant enthusiasts for Christianity and for the Church had seemed so liable to reinforce this point and so totally unaware of this threatening aspect of the history of the Church. Was authority to be related "only to providing assurance ... a means of serving personal security in a very limited and individualistic form (which goes) with a high degree of dependency?" Thus he concluded that those critiques of religion and of the Church had been reinforced which claimed to show religion more as part of the pathology of humanity than of its health.

These were severe criticisms, and provided a more-than-sufficient justification for an examination of some of the psychological aspects of this study.

The Psychological Studies:

In his introduction to 'Psychology and Religion' (Brown 1973) L.B.Brown observed that religious behaviour was now 'recognized to be an amalgam of personal and socially derived responses', and refers to the identification of different religious orientations and emphases.'A theory', he comments, 'is of limited use if it only describes differences between...religious positions'. Brown wishes, rather, to know how religions are used to explain and guide experience, to tame the environment, and also to refer to a particular set of values or orientations to life. To what extent do people express needs and other psychological characteristics in their religion? What relationship do a person's beliefs have to experience, on the one hand, and to religious traditions on the other?

Historically, interest in the psychological roots of religion was perhaps at its peak at the beginning of this century. There were many publications containing regular articles on religious behaviour: e.g. The American Journal of Psychology or The Psychological Bulletin - started in 1904. The first empirical study of conversion was published in 1896 (J.H.Lenba, 1896) and the first of many books entitled "The Psychology of Religion" in 1899 (Starbuck, 1899). William James published his "The Varieties of Religious Experience" in 1902 and Schaub (1924) writes of the many American publications on the subject of

conversion, religious revival, religious growth, or the influence of adolescence upon religious life.

The decline in publications on the psychology of religion is apparent from about 1930. After 1933 the term "psychology of religion" is scarcely mentioned in the Psychological Bulletin. Reasons suggested for the decline in interest have included the failure to separate the subject from theology, philosophy of religion and the more polemical phenomena (now handed over to the psychoanalytic schools) coupled with a tendency towards a more behaviouristic and positivistic world view (Douglas 1963).

Since the 1960s especially there have been numerous attempts to redevelop the field of religious psychology. There have been systematic studies by Clark (1958), Johnson (1959), Strunk (1962) and the emergence of new journals: "Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion" (1961) and "Review of Religious Research" (1959). Neil Warren (Warren, 1970) makes his assessment of the more recent empirical studies. He is enthusiastic about clarifications of the areas for research. (In 1962 Glock suggested five dimensions for study: religious beliefs, practices, feelings, knowledge and conduct.) He believes that this clarification led immediately to the progress in the area of prejudice and religion, and which is of considerable relevance to the subject of this study. (To what extent can those whose belief is strongly dogmatic or authoritarian be said to be 'prejudiced'? Are those whose religion is more reflective found

to be without prejudice?) Warren identifies six difficulties in current empirical research in religion: the lack of experimental studies, poor sampling, lack of controls (intrusion of extraneous variables), lack of sophistication in the experiments, too much generalization of findings, and lack of proper relating to other work in the field (op cit).

There follows a summary of the research which has been carried out in the three fields most relevant to my topic: Religious Certainty, Authoritarianism and Prejudice.

b.Studies in Religious Certainty:

In his "Study of Religious Belief" (Brown, 1973) L.B.Brown records using a modified form of the same questionnaire that Thouless had used in 1935, and with very similar results being achieved (Thouless, 1935). Each subject is asked to "show the degree of certainty with which you believe or disbelieve" each of the statements given. The questions cover:

Authoritarianism ("Obedience and respect for parents are the most important virtues children should learn" etc)
Humanitarianism ("The death penalty is barbaric and should be abolished" etc)

Institutionalization ("Every person needs to have the feeling of security given by a church" etc)

Individualism ("Private devotions are more important in the religious life than attendance at public church service" etc)

Beliefs about Christ ("Jesus changed water into wine" etc)

Beliefs about God ("There is a personal God" etc)

Other orthodox Christian beliefs ("Evil is a reality" etc)

General Religious Belief ("The Bible is literally true in all its parts" etc.)

Opinion ("Religion is the opium of the people" etc)

Fact ("Tigers are found in many parts of China" etc)

Miscellaneous ("Everything is relative" etc).

Like Thouless, Brown found that religious statements are held more strongly than "provable" ones, or those which can be settled by reference to common- sense experience. He suggests that this tendency to certainty over religious statements is perhaps to avoid the uncertainty which would necessarily follow from a weaker acceptance. The results also show that it is easier to be uncertain about a factual matter which can be settled, than to be uncertain about something which is literally a matter of belief. Certainty about religious matters is possible because of the social support that can be evoked to sustain these beliefs.

Brown's other conclusions suggest that religious belief is a relatively isolated cognitive system in which intensity of belief is independent of the strength of opinion on other matters. He

suggests that what determines strength of belief is Church membership and attitude towards that membership - rather than personality factors. There is confirmation of a relationship between dogmatism and anxiety, reported by Rokeach (1964). Finally, although Brown finds that his results suggest a cognitive theory of religious behaviour (beliefs and questions thought out and answered in their own right) he accepts that there are other theories: for example of affective responses to certain religious signs, symbols, objects and verbal formulations. Preachers, it is pointed out, often repeat well-known formulations to maintain appropriate responses, rather than for their actual meaning.

c.Studies in Authoritarianism:

Argyle surveyed the work done on links between "religionism" and authoritarianism in his major work "Psychology and Religion" (Argyle, 1958). He concluded that authoritarianism was higher for religious people in general, particularly for Catholics and for religious conservatives. He noted with interest the finding of Adorno and others (1950) that truly devout people were less prejudiced than "conventional" church members. Further results from Adorno suggest that authoritarians:

- have greater repression of unacceptable tendencies in themselves;
- project these impulses on to others, whom they may see as hostile and threatening;
- show a higher degree of conformity;
- are more concerned with power than love in dealings with other people;
- have a rigid kind of personality.

Maslow, in 1937, had found the authoritarian to be insecure and to possess other negative qualities such as drive for power, hostility, and prejudice (Maslow, 1937)

Fromm found the authoritarian sadomasochistic, suffering from guilt feelings, and exhibiting homosexual trends. (Fromm, 1950)

Sanua considered the finding of Allport (1954) that there was total inconsistency of response from students asked in the same investigation to tell how their religious training had influenced their ethnic attitude. Some had said that the impact was negative and that they were taught to despise other religious and cultural groups. But others had declared that the influence was wholly positive.

Sanua found this easy to understand:it was likely to be the mark of an authoritarian character to belong to a church because it was a safe, powerful, superior in- group. It was associated with tolerance to belong to a church because of its basic creed of

brotherhood.

Thus the study by Putney and Middleton (1961) found that students who were highly orthodox in religious beliefs tended to be authoritarian, as well as extremely concerned about their social status and conservative on political and social issues.

Other studies referred to by Sanua indicated a positive correlation between certain types of religiousness and authoritarianism.

d.Studies in Prejudice:

> ... The correspondence between religion and prejudice has become perhaps the most fully understood relationship in the entire field.(Warren: 1970)

His claim looks less impressive when he goes on to criticize most of the research as dogged by "unproductive approaches and weak methodology". However, he points out that it became well-established in the 1940s and the early 1950s that churchgoers are

more prejudiced than non-churchgoers. (Allport and Kramer, 1946; Adorno, Frenkel-Brassica, Levinson and Sandford, 1950).

In 1956 Holtzman shows that the relationship between church-attendance and prejudice is not such a simple one as some had thought. Instead, frequent attenders are found to be significantly less prejudiced than infrequent attenders, and frequent attenders are also often less prejudiced than non-attenders. Feagin (1964) and Allport and Ross (1967) were dissatisfied with the single, blanket category of "church-attenders". They attempted a division between those who actually lived out their religion ("intrinsically motivated") and those who merely attended, or used, their churches: extrinsically motivated types. The latter were found to be significantly more prejudiced than intrinsically motivated people. However, churchgoers who were "indiscriminately pro-religious" were more prejudiced than either type. Other research on this has been carried out by Spilka and Reynolds (1965); Allen and Spilka (1967); Maranell (1967); Glock and Stark (1966). However, Richard Hunt and Morton King's "The Intrinsic-Extrinsic Concept: A Review and Evaluation" (1971) finds the following weaknesses in this method of categorizing churchgoers:

i. There is no combination of so-called Intrinsic and Extrinsic factors which you can bring together on one scale.

ii. It is not clear to what kinds of phenomena the Intrinsic-Extrinsic concept refers, and whether they have anything specifically to do with religious behaviour.

iii. The 'Intrinsic' notion is not a single religious dimension, and there is no single variable for the overall concept. The labels and the gross idea should be abandoned in favour specific, constituent items such as: degree of reflectiveness, of unselfishness, of universality of application, of humility as against dogmatism, of association and fellowship with others, and so on. It would have been most useful, if somewhat improbable, had a single category emerged into which could be placed all the members of the Church of England parish in Wiltshire who tend towards dogmatism and authority, and another for the reflective types. Nor, on the basis of these studies, can prejudice be said to be the common characteristic of those who attend church. As Michael Argyle had suggested in his 1958 study: it is not the genuinely devout but the conventionally religious who are prejudiced. That is consistent with the subsequent findings.

ALLPORT AND ROSS came up short with a great paradox (Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1967): noting previous research results on the matter of church attenders and prejudice, they added their additional finding that "a certain cognitive style permeates the thinking of many people in such a way that they are indiscriminately pro-religious and, at the same time, highly prejudiced. They found many factors in religion making

for bigotry, and concluded: "It does seem that religion as such makes for prejudice". Then the paradox: a long list of "great figures whose labours on behalf of tolerance were and are religiously motivated - Christ himself, Tertullian, Pope Gelasius I, St. Ambrose, Cardinal Cusa, Sebastian Castellio, Schwenckfeld, Roger Williams, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King". They conclude:

"These lives, along with the work of many religious bodies, councils, and service organisations, would seem to indicate that religion as such unmakes prejudice."

Mention might be made here of experiments carried out i;n the 1960s to test "Religious Belief as a Factor in Obedience to Destructive Commands" (Bock and Warren, Review of Religious Research, 1972, 13(3), 185-191). The method is well-known. The subject thinks he or she is being ordered to administer electric shocks of increasing severity to a "distressed" patient. No shocks are received, but the patient simulates the effects. The results of this research (Milgram 1963) are interesting and were unexpected. It was hypothesized that persons scoring in the extremes on religious scales would perform more obediently. It was in fact found that they were significantly more resistant. The theory was formed that the religious extremes consist of people who have made strong commitments. They were then capable of making decisions consistent with moral conscience; they could

resist the command to inflict further shocks. The religious moderates were unaccustomed to firm decision-making. They were willing to surrender moral conscience to someone "knowledgeable and decisive". It seems that, having taken a definitive religious stance, one is in a position to act freely, in accord with conscience.

e.Psychoanalytic Approaches: Freud:

Freud starts from the point that in religion an adult person is preserving a piece of infantile life. Religion is not rooted in a healthy, mature understanding of reality; it is an illusion, a neurotic symptom. Freud's first full-scale book on religion was published in 1913: "Totem and Taboo". According to Freud's theory, here, of incest taboo, Oedipal slaughter, and subsequent totemism, a sense of guilt belongs to the very nature of religion. In his second book on the problems of religion: "The Future of an Illusion" (1927) Freud is less concerned with what might be the origins of religion, and more with its nature. Belief in God springs from fear. The idea of God develops and is maintained through remembrance of the situation of childhood years: the childhood yearning for protection from the perils of nature, destiny and society are a phenomenon persisting from the years of childhood into maturity. Freud points out that there is no proof for the teachings of religion. Yet doubt was, in

earlier times, severely punished. Religion, for him, reflects the wishes of a helpless child who is incapable of coming to terms with reality.

Freud gives a good survey of his view of religion in his "New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis" (Freud 1933) :

> The consolations of religion deserve no trust ... If we attempt to assign the place of religion in the evolution of mankind, it appears not as a permanent acquisition but as a counterpart to the neurosis which individual civilised men have to go through in their passage from childhood to maturity ... Religion is an attempt to master the sensory world in which we are situated by means of the wishful world which we have developed within us as a result of biological and psychological necessities. (p204)

Freud considered that there must be a long struggle against religion. Psychoanalysis was not interested in controversy as a weapon, and yet the arguments brought forward by the supporters of religion could easily be answered. Religion was said to be sublime: beyond the reach of human intellect and not to be approached with "hair-splitting criticisms". Not so. Religion should be judged by science. Because it was beneficent and elevating it was not necessarily true. Freud dismissed the notion that religion offered protection to believers:" Who would even enter a motor car if its driver were motivated not by traffic

regulations but by the impulses of his soaring imagination"? (op cit p.207).

Religion, claimed Freud, could see no value in a system of thought which was unable to tell how the universe came about or what fate lay before it. Science, it suggested, could not even draw a coherent picture of the universe, show us where to look for the unexplained phenomena of life, nor how the forces of the mind were able to act upon inert matter.It collected observations of uniformities and dignified them with the name of laws. Everything it taught was only provisionally true, to be replaced tomorrow by something else even more tentative. None should sacrifice their highest good for this honour. But science was a young human activity, and unlike the religious 'weltanschauung' it was capable of undreamed-of improvements. Religion was an illusion: "and it derives its strength from its readiness to fit in with our instinctual wishful impulses"(p.211).

f.Psychoanalytic Approaches: Erikson:

Freud's pupil, Erikson, considers Freud's framework of understanding for infant development (Freud 1917). Freud's proposition was that in certain phases of development which he and his successors had demonstrated as belonging to the early years of life, certain 'patterns' were released. In later life they exerted their influence to a greater or lesser degree, and

the whole panorama of religious life reflected these particular phases, often in all kinds of combinations. Freud arrived at his division into phases on the basis of the sensitivity of particular 'erogenous zones' in the child: the mouth, the anus and the sexual organs. Freud, as has been stated, saw religion as something left over from early childhood. Erikson (1951, 1958, 1959, 1966, 1968) changed the negative view into a positive one: in religion the 'basic trust' of the earliest years is preserved.

THE ORAL PHASE: in Erikson's development of this view our fundamental and positive attitude to reality is based upon the basic trust established through a child's relationship with its mother. Characteristics of this trust are:

a certain delight in reality;
a sense of ultimate security;
ability to absorb and integrate negative experiences;
capacity not to be overwhelmed by one's own negative impulses of fear and aggression;
capacity for giving and receiving love.

THE ANAL PHASE: in this phase it is said to be important for the child to have some achievement to show, because in that way it can obtain praise. According to Erikson the capacity now develops to 'let go' and to 'hold on'. Erikson says this phase has penetrated the West: many people feel the compulsion to be

just as thrifty and exact in matters of love, time and money as they are in their excretions. Pride, doubt and shame can play a part. Under the pressure of the child's relationship to its parents can develop the compulsive personality. If the first phase leads to basic trust, the second, says Erikson, leads to 'law and order'. The pattern released in this phase is reflected in religious terms in pharisaism, puritanism, and in the problems connected with secularisation (Faber 1976).

THE OEDIPAL PHASE: the special characteristic here is the male child's relationship with his father, now discovered as the 'one who confronts us'. Erikson emphasizes that all the phases are necessary for a development of one's own identity - every phase builds on the previous one (Erikson 1968). In the pattern released from this phase, or its religious concomitant, God will be experienced primarily as a person, and as 'will'. In this relationship guilt, forgiveness and reconciliation play an important part - with the problems of authority and guilt standing at the centre.

g.Psychoanalytic Approaches: Jung:

Jung held that the function of religion was to keep people open to the depths within them (which also transcend them), but at the same time to prevent their being overwhelmed by those depths. For lonely and intellectualized Westerners, he felt religion could not perform this function automatically, as it once had.

Jung resisted the efforts of many theologians to get him to speak of "objective reality". He felt a psychiatrist and psychologist should show only that psychic reality is also reality.

The centre of Jung's contribution to ethics lay in his methodology of "opposites". When a person became fixed along some particular line (his favourite example was the one who tried to handle everything by thinking, even when feeling or intuition would be appropriate) something in the psyche tried to signal us, warn us, and re-direct us so we might get things in better balance. So Jung did not believe in rationalistic control by clear consciousness; neither did he believe in letting the unconscious take over, for it could destroy the psyche altogether if unchecked.

Thus his theory not only called for expanded awareness of inner and collective as well as personal contents of the unconscious, but also held that many devices of culture (especially religion) through the ages were precisely to foster this kind of relationship.

Any preoccupation with the outward forms of religious dogma was seen, in Jung's thought to be missing the point. The essence of religion was not its doctrines, but 'individuation': the process of bringing together conscious and unconscious experience. Church religion, although it was necessary, with its dogmas and rites, to protect us from the direct assaults of the unconscious ('the disruptive and schismatic influence of individual revelation ' Faber) was often a substitute for direct experience. Dogma was always secondary (cf Faber op cit p.48) . Faith, for Jung, had to be renewed. It had to be filtered out of its dogmatic and intellectual forms and remoulded as a new process.

h.Conclusions on Analytic Approaches:

Faber makes this comment about the contribution of Freud and his successors to the understanding of religious behaviour:

> Analysts have opened our eyes to much that was concealed before: that connecting lines really do run from religion to neuroses and visa versa. Freud's ideas about religion are to be taken seriously even if they have to be rejected in their unqualified form. I am thinking of the discovery of the libidinous and aggressive elements in religion ... and also.. of a concept like projection, the truth of which is increasingly the subject of investigation by theologians.(Faber:1976)

Faber values the discovery that the sense of guilt is a central phenomenon in religion. He asserts that the kind of neurotic, escapist religion described by Freud really does exist. (eg. see Freud's "New Introductory Lectures").

Clearly, also, Jung's emphasis on the need for all human-beings to engage in the process of what he calls 'individuation' - the coming together of outer and inner consciousness - has considerable implications for the study of dogmatic and reflective approaches to religion. Not only does Jung seem to suggest that dogmatic approaches are misdirected and, literally, superficial, but his thought forms the basis of a significant strain of Christian theology, reflected in the writings of eg. Paul Tillich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, John Robinson, and many others. Cunningham concludes an article on Jung's positive approach to religion with this observation:

> Some find in Jung liberating possibilities for the renewal of faith. Others fear that,setting his undoubted theraputic success to one side, Jung is the kind of friend of whom the theologian might well be wary lest theological truths be swallowed up in sympathetic psychological understanding.(Cunningham 1983).

2.1.2. Sociological Studies:

The field of psychological study thus casts light on some aspects of religious belief and behaviour. Clearly it is also the case that there will be social factors which affect both the nature and the strength of the claims of those who are conventionally religious. The Church has been observed by sociologists to have become an increasingly vulnerable institution in recent decades, for reasons recounted below. It has also seemed possible for studies described here to identify different types of believing within and among churchgoers, which seem to bear directly on the contrasting degrees of dogmatism and openness which are found.

Despite the large number of studies in the sociology of religion during this century and the variety of approaches (Functionalist: Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, Malinowski; Marxist: Karl Marx; contribution of religion to sociology of knowledge: Berger & Luckmann; contribution of religion to social change: Max Weber, Kautsky) the studies relevant to this current work are first of all concerned with the perceived decline in the significance of "conventional" religion or with the decline in status of the clergy. In this section I shall consider the conclusions of Wilson (1966), Luckmann (1967) and Towler (1968) before proceeding to the other work of major significance here: Towler's "The Need for Certainty - A Sociological Study of Conventional Religion" (1984). The relevant studies are thus

those which deal with the authority of the institutional church or with the attitudes of its members and of society towards that authority.

a.Bryan Wilson's "Religion in Secular Society" (1966):

Wilson indicates the once-enormous significance of the concept of the Church in European feudal society. There was a monopoly of spiritual power, supported by the coercive power of political authority. But religious institutions and functionaries lost their control of diplomacy, education, the regulation of trade, etc, and civil authority had less need for the "good offices of the Church". The sanction of new class, skills and resources, unaccommodated by the Church, the tolerance of organized dissenters, reduced the status of the Church (in sociological terms) to that of a denomination. Protestantism speeded the process of religious tolerance, and anti-clericalism became a significant manifestation of political radicalism.

From the Enlightenment, Wilson argues, large numbers of people effectively ceased to be religious (a point which would be contested by students of implicit, or folk religion: eg. Bailey 1976, Clark 1982) and thus the various denominations of the Church have sought to "shore up their claims to status". Wilson maintains that what he calls "ecumenicalism" has been the main response. It rests on the weakened intensity of specific belief and of the sense of superiority and apartness. It is a response

which may "save the Churches from becoming sects": which he defines as the drawing together of communities which are often small, which usually demand a strong communal allegiance among their members, and which expect salvation primarily for those who belong (Chapter 11). Ecumenicalism is associated, for Wilson, with liturgical revival and the re-assertion of the episcopacy: all are endeavours to improve the claim to social status on the part of the ministry, emphasizing the antiquity of the religious role, reassuring clergy of their legitimacy, permanence and usefulness. Liturgicalism, in Wilson's analysis, supplies an exclusive field of skill and technique for the clergy. Episcopacy enhances promotion prospects and "perpetuates the claim to high dignity, association with ruling elites, and the maintenance of the religious instituion in some nominal position of high social importance".

Wilson saw three alternative manifestations of the struggle of the clerical profession for survival. There was the sectarian option, implying a loss of social influence and position. There was, second, the attempt, manifested particularly in the U.S.A., to strengthen institutional aspects: multiply positions, re-asserting professional expertise, and identifying closely with the cultural goals and styles of secular society. Or there was, third, the tendency among a minority of clergy to become "an entrenched but increasingly functionless intelligentsia", more and more involved in social and political affairs. Wilson concludes that the second option has been the general choice of

clergy: with its ecumenicalism, liturgicalism and attempt to show where the religious organization fits in to the goals of secular society. He derides this choice. Ecumenical religion will merely reflect the values of the social organization. In truth, secular society no longer has any dependence upon religious thinking, practices, or institutions. Moral matters have been relegated to the private domain; religion, too, has become largely a private concern. (This, in Wilson's analysis, has been especially true of evangelical Christianity.)

Wilson concludes that our secular society thus has little direct regard for religion, although it does not yet function entirely without it. Should religion find new functions to perform in response to the growing institutionalism, impersonality and bureaucracy of modern society, it would be of the sectarian variety, and no longer of any institutional kind.

b.Thomas Luckmann(1967):

Luckmann explored the decline of European Church-oriented religion in recent decades. The studies indicate a decline in the number of members of congregations who join activities which lie outside the ritual functions of the churches. Catholicism exhibits higher rates of participation than Protestantism. In the case of Anglicanism the level of participation, generally, in church-oriented religion seems, in European terms, particularly

low. Luckmann compares European social history with that of the U.S.A.: the lack of a feudal past in the latter, of a peasantry; the "frontier experience; successive waves of ethnically and denominationally distinct immigration; the rapid urbanization and industrialization, the Negro problem, rapid establishment of a middle-class outlook and way of life. In religious history the U.S.A. is distinct, also, with its Puritan period, early separation of church and state, and "persistant and peculiarly intimate" relation between politics and religion. There has been the era of revival movements, and the "prodigious development of sects and transformation of sects into denominations".

Given these elements peculiar to the U.S.A. Luckmann is surprised that the findings on church religion in the U.S.A. exhibit so much similarity to the European data.

He summarized that the pattern invited the conclusion that church-orientated religion had become a marginal phenomenon in modern society. How did that accord with the high degree of involvement in church religion in the U.S.A.? That, said Luckmann, was not a reversal of the trend of secularization, for those American churches had themselves become secularized:

> Whereas religious ideas originally played an important part in the shaping of the American Dream, today the secular ideas of the American Dream pervade religion. (Luckmann: op cit)

Thus it appeared that the cultural, social and psychological function of the churches was 'secular' rather than 'religious' (Berger, 1961). Luckmann concluded that traditional church religion had been, in Europe, pushed to the periphery of modern life, whilst in the U.S.A. it had undergone a process of internal secularization.

Luckmann's explanation of the marginalization of traditional church religion was that the latter's meaning-systems appeared to be unrelated to the culture of modern industrial society. Churches survived primarily by association with social groups and strata orientated still towards the values of a past social order. Where churches had adapted to contemporary culture they had necessarily taken on the function of legitimating that culture. When this had happened then the universe of meaning traditionally represented by the churches had become increasingly irrelevant. Thus secularisation had decisively altered either the social location of church religion, or its inner universe of meaning.

c.Towler (1968) The Changing Status of the Ministry:

Towler declared it his intention to clarify, in sociological terms, the changes which appeared to be taking place in the ordained Ministry of the Anglican Church. There was an

anachronistic relationship between the religious and the secular society and culture. Wilson's reference to sections of the clergy as: "the charcoal-burners or alchemists in an age when the processes in which they were engaged has been rendered obsolete, technically and intellectually", is cited (Wilson, 1966). Towler wished to examine the roots of the secularization-problem in a limited context.

First there was the matter of decline in numbers: the numerical strength of the Ministry had declined by some 20% since the turn of the century. This had to be set against a 40% rise in the total population. The average age of clergy had also risen: an increasing number of older men entering the ministry. Thus even when the numbers were held constant fewer years of work were available from personnel. A further factor contributing to numerical decline was the number of clergy, the majority younger ones, leaving the parochial ministry.

The second problem considered by Towler was the Ministry's loss of social status. Though, theologically or spiritually, this might seem desirable, it was a radical break with tradition and clergy had yet to adapt to it. Towler found it hard empirically to substantiate this, but regarded as significant the relative drop in clerical income. Clergy incomes had, in the course of this century, become often lower than those of manual workers. Towler quoted studies from the 60s (Richards, 1962; Gallup Poll,

1965) showing that social esteem of clergy remained, paradoxically, quite high:

> ... influential in the community, devoted to public service, useful in the parish, sincere, overworked, underpaid ... (Gallup: 1965)

Wilson had suggested, however, that the reason for such findings might be:

> ... spiritual affinities of the occupation which induce respondents to give a relatively high rating to clerics, since people with any religious dispositions at all cannot but pay some attention to the traditional claim of all religious professionals to have the highest calling of all. (Wilson: 1966)

Although an effective measure of the social status of clergy had yet to be devised, Monica Furlong had well described the real loss in prestige which had to be granted. She had argued (Furlong, 1966) that in an un-churched society the clergyman was becoming thought of as someone "not qualified as the twentieth century understands qualification". It was difficult for people to understand what the clergyman was up to, and so they were apt to suggest that he wasn't up to anything in particular: not a

social worker, doctor, probation officer, teacher nor welfare worker. There was a growing feeling in the community, Furlong had maintained, that the Church was played out, and the clergy with it. This might also be evidenced in the exaggerated respect ("almost superstitious awe") sometimes shown to the clergy, and indicating how little religion was a part of people's ordinary, everyday lives.

Towler considered a third problem after decline in numbers and loss of social status: that of "role uncertainty". This picked up Monica Furlong's point. Clergy were uncertain exactly what they were there to do. The parochial clergyman had exercised a number of roles: teacher, organizer of Christian activities, preacher of the Word of God, administrator of Church affairs, pastor of the flock, and priest in his sacramental duties. Now almost all these roles were affected. Fewer clergy had university degrees: more lay people had theology degrees, especially in the teaching profession. Lay organizers and administrators had been encouraged to take over administrative work. Lay readers had for many years assisted in the Ministry of the Word. Pastoral responsibility was being shared among the non-ordained members of a local church. It was thus becoming increasingly difficult to describe the extra-liturgical role of the parochial clergyman as anything other that that of a full-time Christian. In his "Religion, Society and the Teacher" T. A. Ling suggested:

> ... it is possible that what we are witnessing,

> therefore, is the gradual disappearance of a once familiar figure: the full-time parochial clergyman. (Ling: 1967)

Ling had speculated whether this was a tragedy for the churches, or not.

Towler goes on to question the sense in which the Ministry is an occupation at all ("which takes its rightful place among the other professional occupational groups ... such as doctors, social workers, and psychiatrists"). Social status had once been based on ascription: not on achievement. Yet clerical status was ascribed, not achieved. The clergyman was now the odd-man-out in any sociological analysis of his position. This change in the character of the ordained ministry relative to Western society as it had evolved was at the root of the three problem areas Towler had identified.

Towler offered three "lines of development which could lead to a stable and viable form for the Ministry":

> i. clergy becoming efficient, full-time religious organizers, co-ordinating and administrating church affairs.
>
> ii. conscious acceptance of shrinkage, loss of prestige, and anomalous social status, though few

might seek this "impecunious and anomic mode of existence".

iii. replacement by lay leadership, with full-timers limited to religious orders or teams of evangelists.

Towler, writing in 1968, expected "sociological changes in the nature of the Church and its group of full-time employees ... before the end of this century".

d.Towler: The Need for Certainty:

Towler investigated the 4,000 letters written to Bishop John Robinson after the publication of his book "Honest to God" (Robinson, 1963). Towler observed that most of these letters were not about the book, but were spontaneous statements of religious concern. The letters were analysed, and five contrasting ways were identified in which people today might be religious within the conventional traditions of the main Christian denominations. Those five ways, though mutually incompatible, coexisted within the churches: they were Exemplarism, Conversionism, Theism, Gnosticism, and Traditionalism. Towler noted and explored the intense and anguished desire for religious certainty which marked the letters. He suggested that this "lust for certitude" was a

debased, yet common, form of religious aspiration. Religious conviction was itself a response to the human need for order and meaning, and evoked the precarious response of "faith". But faith could degenerate as a result of people's need for certainty:

> We may say that faith is three-quarters of the way along the road which leads to certitude, but that the road is one which rises slowly to a high summit of faith whence the traveller can see the country spread out ahead clearly, but in all its complexity; thereafter the road drops steeply into certitude, and having arrived there the final destination is seen only partially, from very close quarters and from one angle. Those who set out on the quest for religious knowledge often have trouble in not overshooting the summit, but when they do overshoot it and descend into certitude, their last state is no better than their first, despite the fact that they are on the other side of the hill. In common with our own day, the Victorian era was particulary notable for overshooting the summit and Disraeli's judgement on the belief of his own times was clear: "I hold that the characteristic of the present age is craving credulity.(Towler: ibid)

TRADITIONALISM:

Towler's sociological study of conventional religion, as he subtitles it, identifies "traditionalism", then as one of the types of such religion. ("The types described here are 'ideal-types' in Weber's sense of the term. They are not categories. They have the strengths and weaknesses of ideal types, for they have considerable analytic power and yet are of little immediate utility in quantitative empirical research ... they are more obviously useful in the interpretation of survey results ... ") (op cit p17). Traditionalism may be a powerful element in the stance adopted by those who are especially dogmatic about their religion:

> traditionalism ... is much the most efficient type of religiousness of the five described here ... It has an answer to no question in particular, but in its own special way it is able to prevent any troubling question from being asked at all ... by defining the whole of experience as unproblematical. (Towler: ibid p85)

Traditionalism, in Towler's findings, believed in everything conventionally included in the Christian religion. There was a quality of obligatoriness such as Durkheim had found to be characteristic of religion generally in his day: "Essentially,

it is nothing other than a system of collective beliefs and practices that have a special authority."

This characteristic had gradually disappeared from other aspects of religion in our own day, so that Luckmann had suggested that the notions which were now sufficiently obligatory (by Durkheim's definition) to be called 'religious' in our culture were individual autonomy, self-expression, self-realization, the mobility ethos, sexuality, and family centredness (Luckmann, 1967). In Luckmann's view the religion of the churches was effectively dead.

In the case of traditionalism, however, Towler maintained that the striking aspect was the necessity of believing, rather than what was believed. (This was also true of 'conversionists', another of Towler's five types of religiousness, where "the insistence with which conversionists will affirm the truth of a range of beliefs should be interpreted as a series of re-affirmations of the central experience of having been saved": op cit p82).

It was the essence of traditionalism to cherish the tradition it had received. This "cherishing" could be expressed in defensive postures, relaxed moods, or postures of attack. Religion, Towler observed, accorded well with the conservationist ideals of receiving, cherishing and handing on, constituting a framework where the pattern was accepted as universal and God-given.

Church buildings, liturgies and ministries spoke of permanence, epitomizing and guaranteeing tradition.

For the traditionalist every element of the tradition was important. To question or threaten any particular was to risk the entire pattern and its stability. The cognitive style of traditionalism involved no assertion of truth and implied no doubt. To believe meant to cherish and to "hold dear".

Traditionalists tended to regard unbelief as "sad, bad or mad" but not to take it seriously. You could not ask them to explain what they believed or why. The best they could do was recite the Creed, or quote from the Bible or a favourite hymn.

Towler's study was based on letters resonding to the publication of Dr. John Robinson's "Honest to God", (Robinson, 1963). When a Bishop of the Established Church declared it unlikely that Jesus had physically ascended to the sky, or risen from the grave, that a meal shared with friends could be as holy as Holy Communion, or that fornication was not necessarily wrong, Traditionalists were then compelled to the questioning of belief very seriously. Some adopted a response of sad resignation, some counter-attacked vigorously, others sought the forcible restraint of their attacker, as someone who must be deranged. If religion were seen as a symbol of changelessness and security then it was all the more outrageous that the threat came from a bishop, one appointed to be a custodian of the religious tradition.

Towler found that the Rites of Passage were a significant assurance in traditionalist terms. There was anxiety associated with the experience of a birth, with a person's coming to adulthood, to marriage, to death. Religious ritual surrounded such events with ritual, with supernatural meanings and explanations. The particular event became located in a larger story. Traditionalism's strength was in conveying the feeling that all problems did have a solution and rehearsing those solutions in solemn fashion as though everyone had always known them to be true.

Traditionalism placed great value on certain national or organizational symbols of religion: bishops in the House of Lords, clearly identifiable clergy, cathedral and church buildings, embodiment of church teachings in the law of the land, religious education in schools, Choral Evensong on the radio.

Towler observed an interesting converse to the "world falling apart" experience of the traditionalist when one part of the whole was called into question by a bishop. Many traditionalists entertained skeletons in their closets: they were divorced and re-married, or no longer could believe in the Virgin Birth. For them it was an enormous relief, hearing a bishop question the proposition that Jesus ascended bodily to the skies, to learn that there was nothing wrong with having such doubts.

For the traditionalist, Towler concluded, the whole corpus of beliefs, practices and values had about them the quality of the sacred. There could be no question or degrees of belief in this type of religious attitude: it was all or nothing.

EXEMPLARISM:

Towler describes this type of religiousness as 'exemplarism' because it sees in the life, death, and teaching of Jesus an example for all to follow.

Differing 'Christologies' have produced differing models for Christians: the (12th Century) Abelardian view focussed on the suffering Christ, effective in a subjective way for the disciple who identified with these sufferings; the (19th Century) way of the exemplarist Ernest Renan emphasized the moral figure of Jesus: the 'beautiful and original and self-sacrificial genius of ethical understanding, who by the union between moral person and moral teaching changed the world.' (p.20).

Exemplarism, said Towler, implied a stripping away of much of the supernaturalist weight of Christianity. Salvation was through honouring the man Jesus, however he was perceived. Exemplarism was popular today, and its main emphasis was on a Jesus who was isolated and alone. He was the 20th Century heir of Siegfried and Tristan. His was a private, and very unspectacular victory.

In Britain there was a strong moral emphasis, relating to the common claim: 'you don't have to go to church to be a Christian' (p.22). There was a tension in exemplarists between loyalty to the institution of the Church and their private devotion to the person of Jesus. One of Towler's respondents observed: 'I found 90% of those in church were not Christ-like' (p.25). Another commented: 'I am not prepared to allow any religion to come between me and my God' (p.25). 'Christmas time is sullied by the insistence that Christ's birth was magical' (p.26). Jesus appears as the 'pinnacle of human aspiration, not as the link between the human and the divine'. There is no strident denial of the existence of God, and nor are questions about the existence of God of paramount importance. Rather, the idea of God is 'unnecessary and unreal'.

'Hope' is the cognitive style of exemplarism: with its focus on Jesus as an example of what humanity is capable of becoming: the possibilities of human achievement. It is not a revolutionary creed, nor a conservative one. The doctrine of human nature is a high one 'verging on the Promethean': the opposite of Freud's view of religion as rooted in guilt and dependence.

Towler indicated the exemplarist character of the scout movement, the Boys' Brigade, and kindred organizations. He saw the 'Samaritans' as an interesting and more recent example of exemplarism in its attractiveness to helpers who feel marginal to the Church, yet think of themselves as Christians.

THEISM:

Towler gives this name to that type of religious attitude which focuses on God and his creation. Belief in a benevolent Creator-God is fundamental to theism, for without that there would be no sense or order in the world. The world is good. Theism is grounded in a sense of wonder and awe in the beauty and order of nature. There is a careful plan, and 'the heavens declare the glory of God' (p.56). Thus natural, rather than revealed theology, is represented here.

Towler suggests that theism is 'the way which is most fundamantal to western culture'. God becomes synonymous with all that is wonderful or awesome. We are creatures in the face of the Creator.The wonder and awe may be emotional or intellectual. Traherne and Wordsworth illustrate the affective response (p.58), and a number of the respondents demonstrated the more cognitive one: seeing all as 'sub specie aeternitatis'.

Jesus is only of subsidiary importance: the opposite of exemplarism. God saves. Christ is unnecessary (p.60). We must trust God more: we are tiny and insignificant in relation to him. The Church should dislose this God, yet often only offered boredom: 'the one place where this God is inaccessible' (p.61). Theism, typically, is 'unchurched': the sunset-touch has been obscured. In the face of suffering and evil theism can only place its trust in this God, and his ineffable will. 'What is evil, after all?', is asked (p.63). 'If suffering can be made to serve

a useful purpose, then the evil in it is exorcized': it becomes good, as for Job.

Such theism requires a positive, affirmative attitude to life. Joy is celebrated; suffering is accepted; God is praised for his goodness. It is betrayed in the claims of those who say they feel closest to God 'under the blue dome of Heaven'. Theism trusts: that is its characteristic cognitive style. It is undogmatic, passionate, and 'well-nigh invisible'. Towler comments that no other type of religiousness will believe implicitly in God, and at the same time be disturbed by the problem of evil.

GNOSTICISM:

Towler defines Gnosticism as marked by 'an overriding concern with "spiritual" matters'. Gnosticism is a) greatly concerned with life after death, and b) believes that we have access to the powers of the spiritual world.

The spiritual world becomes of greater interest and significance than the world of the senses. We need to awake to 'true' reality, readily perceptible to those who have the right knowledge. The term 'mysticism' may be used, defined as ' a partial lifting of the veil which divides us from the unseen' (p.69). There is a note of impatience with those who cannot see this. Goodness, beauty, badness and ugliness are illusions. The theodicy is dualistic: equal forces are at work; all that is temporal and material opposes all that is spiritual and potentially divine.

Evil is fundamentally unreal, belonging to the surface of things. Beneath that surface suffering is a sham, and must be exposed as such by penetrating the surface. Indeed, God does not take evil seriously: God cannot consider evil because of his purity. Evil belongs to an inferior level of existence.

God, for Gnostics, is the principle underlying the universe, rather than a person or a being. 'The old idea of a personal God looking down on the man whom "He" has created capable of sinning ...does not come into the picture' (p.72).

Prayer in reinterpreted as the purifying of understanding: there is no 'one' to whom to address prayer. The Pauline concept of the two bodies, spiritual and physical, is important, and 'gnostic' correspondents with Dr Robinson frequently quoted this passage, thus anchoring themselves within, rather than outside, the Christian tradition. Gnosticism, however, distinguishes itself from the Christian mystical tradition because there God is personal and the basis is a relationship; because the 'spiritual life' is regarded as a special calling for the few; and because mystics are not themselves preocuppied with mystical experiences. For gnostics, Jesus was all spirit, 'lightly clothed with flesh' (p.74). His life is the type of all human life. He leads the way beyond this life. The soul or spirit is detachable from the inferior body (p.76).

The cognitive style of belief for gnostics is 'knowledge'. Belief is not enough. The gnostic must know. 'I had to know, to understand, to prove, and that I think is most urgently needed today' (p.78).

CONVERSIONISM:

Mention has been made of "conversionism" as the other of Towler's five religious ideal types where the necessity of believing was more important than what was believed: since it constituted a "series of affirmations" of the central experience of having been saved" (op cit p82). Clearly there would be an equal tendency among conversionists, as among traditionalists, to be dogmatic about their religious position.

The fundamental feature of conversionism was its basis in real and immediate experience. The experience was of having been freed from the weight of sin (it was 'sin' not 'goodness' which characterized the natural state of this fallen world: p39), released from a burden of being alive in an entirely new way. Towler explored the claims of the 'converted' in their letters: the date of conversion was specific, the world and society and the individual were "lost" unless they were "saved", the whole of creation and human-nature was of itself utterly corrupt. Towler commented that these frightening reports were always given from the other side of conversion. Had it always looked as black at the time as in retrospect? Thus the quality of life in the past

was reinterpreted after the conversion and set in contrast to the present experience of having been saved. By the same token a vigorous condemnation of unregenerate life would help to encourage converts to continue in thier new way. It would also stress the need for the world to be converted.

Towler observed that among the conversionists was to be found religious conviction at its very strongest: not an opinion, nor a religious preference, but a certainty about the way the world was, with the conviction reckoned to be of universal validity. The experience which mattered was of having been converted, not of being converted. There was a tendency, cited by William James (James, 1902), for the person who had passed through conversion, and "having once taken a stand for the religious life" to feel identified with it, no matter how much their religious enthusiasm declined. Thus the Church as such presented a grave problem: it contained many who had not had this experience. In a way those not "re-born" were worse than confessed unbelievers, blurring the vital distinction between "saved" and "un-saved". Conversionists would short-circuit the laborious efforts of the ecumenical movement in order to join in forms of worship which expressed their shared experience.

The cognitive style of conversionism was "assurance", Towler suggested: to "be assured": for all the language of conversionism was in the passive (born again, saved, converted, baptized in the

Spirit) expressing the idea that human beings were mere nothings, wielded as tools by the hands of God.

The Church was not rejected by conversionists, though a 21-year old girl was happy to tell a bishop that he did not know the Lord Jesus Christ as his saviour, and was therefore a "child of the Devil" (op cit p46). The Church, re-defined, was the social group of the converted: drawing the dividing-line between saved and damned.

Conservationists saw pain, suffering and evil as of no great importance. They were trivial compared with the assurance of having been saved. Pain was a test one knew one would pass. There was only the joy of salvation.

The moral code of the conversionist was, like the theology, absolute and God-given. The human experience of love was suspect, since love derived from that love of God which could be known only to the convert. Moral law was vital, because of the sinfulness of humankind. Apart from God's laws (enshrined essentially in the Ten Commandments) society became steadily more dissolute, corrupt and spineless. Immorality resulted where God's laws were used as a basis for discussion, instead of as a "God-ordained basis for human relationships" (op cit p52, letter 1114). Secular culture was a threat and a distraction. It had no intrinsic value: nothing escaped the taint of sin or could be of value in itself. The arts and humanities were suspect,

striving for a human vision to rival the Christian vision. Independent canons of artistic judgement were extremely hazardous: good music or theatre, for example, was that which served the Lord. The sciences were safer, where confined to a mechanical understanding of the world, and this type of religiousness appealed especially to doctors, scientists, and men of war and commerce, for example.

Politics itself could not advance the Kingdom of God. It might be an aid to conversion through certain changes it could bring about, but generally the a-political option was preferred, with a preoccupation for work with individual rather than social reform.

Towler concluded that conversionism adapted to the contemporary world by denying it. It offered salvation from the world's nastiness for the individual: who remained, thereafter, in the world but not of the world. It was important that the conversionists' strongly asserted belief in a range of conventional doctrines should not be allowed to disguise the importance of its three distinguishing characteristics:

> the experience of having been saved or converted;
> the belief that human beings are naturally wicked;
> the conviction that non-religious culture was of little significance.

2.1.3. Theological Studies:

There are thus sociological pressures on Church and clergy affecting the strength and confidence of their religious assertions, and there are also types of religiousness which may or may not demand unwavering faith, or admit of questioning or doubts.

The churches themselves are clearly not unaware of these issues, and the debate at various levels within the Church as a whole has raised many questions about the theology, the doctrines and the position of the Church of England.

The Establishment Debate: Church and State:

Bishop John Habgood stated the aim of "Church and Nation in a Secular Age" (1983) as being: "to explore the role of a national church in a secular, pluralist society". A church which generated confidence ought at the same time to be generating criticism. That confidence had to live by a tradition, yet make the churches vulnerable to every new thing which threatened them.

There was an argument that it was faithless to concentrate, as Habgood did, on the extent to which churches were conditioned by society. Shouldn't the transforming power of the Christian Gospel be the answer? Yet the contrast between what the

sociologist said, which seemed scarcely to be noted in the parishes, and the theological assertions of the Church was not as great as it might seem to be. Awareness had long been growing of the fact that the Bible itself belonged within a particular society: had both shaped it, and been shaped by it (p174). Habgood himself uses sociological tools for his study: "sociological self-knowledge can bring real liberation ... frees us from the tyranny of our own preconceptions ... is a step on the road to God" (p7).

The part of Habgood's book which relates most closely to my topic is his chapter on Establishment. Was there "a clinging to a meaningless facade of social importance" on the part of the Church of England? Did establishment imply active collusion with the social order, with a false appearance of success?

Habgood wished to distinguish between two distinct uses of the word 'establishment'. In a limited, technical sense it meant a well-defined relationship between church and state with overtones from history and convention. In a broader, more modern sense, it referred to those in English society operating as a kind of 'master class': key people from politics, civil life, the professions, and the church, who were supposed to confer together in order to "fix things". Habgood maintained that the latter sense had scarcely pertained for a hundred years despite "access to influential circles for a a limited number of people who would otherwise be unlikely to count for much in public life". There

were perjorative overtones about the second kind: eg. accusations of "establishment-mindedness", which could easily rub off on to the first meaning. This was 'guilt by association', and not a necessary connection.

Habgood wrote therefore as one who wished to defend the historic asociation between Church of England and State. There was an implied sense of responsibility for the nation as a whole, and in particular for those whose religion was mostly inarticulate and submerged. Further, there was the perception by others that the established Church was responsible. Then there was the need of those who carried enormous responsibilities and needed those in whom they could confide and in places they might confide in them. The Lords Spiritual constituted a visible and permanent reminder of the relationship between Church and State.

Those who criticized the involvement of the State in the appointment of bishops overlooked the very restricted nature of the choice available to the Prime Minister, and the fact that nobody could become a bishop unless the church, through its archbishops, was willing to consecrate him. There was an ultimate guarantee of freedom. The world of politics into which bishops who were Lords Spiritual entered needed help in holding on to "some distant, simple vision" but also in facing the conflicts and contradictions on the road.

Habgood had a vision, himself, of the ecumenical Church of the future. There would be much diversity. Why should not one section of this united Church accept particular responsibilities formerly associated with establishment? Establishment would be understood, first and foremost, in terms of responsibility, not prestige. Top tables at feasts were already shared far more widely than formerly. The process would continue.

Disestablishment would almost inevitably, in Habgood's view, alienate large numbers of people whose residual allegiance to the Church of England was bound obscurely with the fact that it represented 'England'. Habgood would regard this as a tragic loss: for them, the Church and the nation.

Finally Habgood saw the involvement of a national church as a corrective to "little England-ism". However much a nation might try to live for itself alone, Christianity could not do so. The international dimensions would, by the very nature of the Gospel, be constantly re-opened. It would insist on counter-balancing the nationalistic thrust of a Falklands victory celebration, for example, and that was a very real result of the wider vision of Christianity and its developing relationship with the Anglican Communion and other world Christian bodies.

Rupert Davies published "The Church of England Observed" in 1984, and he too deals with what he calls "the dilemma of establishment", but comes to somewhat different conclusions from

those of John Habgood. First of all, and from two points of view, establishment placed the Church of England in a false relation to the modern world. The first perspective was that there was a contradiction between a Christianity which claimed to have no favourites, a universal Church which could not align or identify itself with any particular human grouping whatever, and an established church necessarily connected with the interests of one particular nation. The German Protestants' predicament at the time of Hitler showed the potentially dangerous consequences of this. Further, there was a special association with that section of English society possessing the major amount of power, wealth and security. The Church of England was friend of the "haves" despite many endeavours to shake off this image or loosen the connections. Bishops in the House of Lords, palaces and large houses, security in finance and prestige (however diminished), perpetuated the reality and coloured the image.

The second perspective of the Church of England in a false relationship to the modern world stemmed from the perception that there is a prophetic role which had to be fulfilled by the Christian Church: an imperative deriving from both Old and New Testaments to speak out, addressing the Word of God to its generation. This involved criticism of the existing order, of currently received ideas, and, from time to time, of the government of the day. There had been a clear disparity at the end of the Falklands Conflict between the government's wish to thank God for victory and the Church of England's desire,

represented by its leaders, to thank God for the ending of the war and to pray for speedy reconciliation. When the report "The Church and the Bomb", subject to hysterical outbursts from some Members of Parliament, had been rejected by General Synod, had voters been swayed by the thought that to back the Report would see Church and government at odds with each other?

Davies carefully exemplified the 'Establishment attitude' reflected in this country among non-ecumenical Anglicans and large sections of media and the general public besides. This paternalistic disposition towards non-Anglican churches was a significant consequence of establishment. The vicar or rector would assume the right to take the chair and the initiative on all ecumenical occasions. The Church of England thought it knew what was best for the rest, regarding itself, in Voltaire's description, as: "L'Eglise par excellence" (p70). The 'parish priest' aspect could lead to a sense that other priests and ministers were there by intrusion, or special permission. In fact the parish system in rural areas no longer corresponded to the actual Christian situation, and in towns and cities no Anglican incumbent could actually care for all who lived in his parish.

Establishment was the cause of 'establishment attitude': into the blood of most Anglicans had been injected pride of position and orthodoxy. The resulting infection was more social than religious. It persistently, insidiously and gently corroded

church relationships. It would continue for as long as Establishment survived, and was itself the most convincing argument for disestablishment.

The Authority of Theological Dogma in the Church of England:

The late John Robinson, in a small book written in 1972 on his return to Trinity College after ten years as Bishop of Woolwich, described the royal motto above the College's High Table: "semper eadem" - always the same. He went on to write:

> I believe the crucial divide in the Church today - cutting across all denominations and parties and even, as I know from myself, individuals - is between those who basically accept (and even welcome) the end of the stable state (however painful) and those who deny or resist it. (Robinson: 1972)

Robinson refers the the near-end of reassuring centre-periphery modes of communication (op cit p16). These had depended on the road, the railway, the trade-route, the telegraph. Now, said Robinson, ideas were flashed around the world in seconds, recognizing no chain of communication. That which had taken several generations to be funnelled from professor to pulpit to pen had become instantly available. There would be no more fixed centres, and no clear edges.

The Church of England could once have been said to take its identity and derive its character and authority from the original formulation of Anglican principles during the reign of Elizabeth I. Then a 'via media' was established between the opposing factions of Rome and Geneva, and Anglicanism as a doctrinal system came into existence. Ecclesiastical development was to be limited by the appeal to scripture, as containing all things necessary to eternal salvation. Truth was to be sought from the joint testimony of scripture and ecclesiastical authority, based on the traditions of the first four centuries. Richard Hooker (1554-1600) was held to be the most accomplished apologist of this Elizabethan Settlement. In his 'Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity' (published between 1594 and 1662) he marked out this 'via media': the Church of England was Catholic in that she believed herself to continue in all essentials the Church of the early centuries. She was Reformed in ridding herself of some of the doctrinal and practical innovations of the Middle Ages. The Church of England, Hooker made it clear, was not confined by the explicit words of scripture. Tradition and reason were assured of a place beside scripture, though subordinate to it. (Macquarrie: 1984, Edwards: 1974)

To review or to attempt an assessment of the authority of theological dogma in the Church of England in the 1980s is a complex task. Clearly identifiable in the pages ahead will be those today who take their stand on ecclesiastical tradition ("semper eadem"). Equally distinct are those for whom the

authority of scripture is paramount (scriptural tradition). And John Robinson's remarks characterize those for whom, in a rapidly changing world, reason will be the primary tool by which God enables people to perceive and understand divine truth. As Leonard Hodgson wrote in his Gifford Lectures of 1955-7: "What must the truth have been and be if men who thought and spoke as they did put it like that?" (Hodgson: 1957)

For the purpose of this study I am concerned to know where authority is perceived as being found today. Are members of the Church of England (and no less those more loosely associated or having no specific association at all) able to identify any common Anglican theological tradition? ((Holloway: 1984))

A Commission on Christian Doctrine was set up in 1922 by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. Its task was 'To consider the nature and grounds of Christian doctrine with a view to demonstrating tahe extent of existing agreement within the Church of England and to investigating how far it is possible to remove or diminish existing differences' ("Doctrine in the Church of England", ed. W. Temple: 1938). The Commission was expected to take twenty years to carry out this task. In fact it reported in 1938, anticipating many of the arguments over Christology aroused by the book called "The Myth of God Incarnate" (1978); this was pointed out by Geoffrey Lampe in his introduction to the 1982 reprint of the report. The report referred to the sources of Christian doctrine, giving pride of place to scripture, yet

explicitly denying the doctrine of verbal inerrancy of scripture. The authority of scripture was by no means held to be incompatible with the approach of critical scholarship. Church tradition was placed next as the source of doctrine: all Christians were to allow a very high authority to doctrines which the Church had been "generally united in teaching". The largest section of the report was given to matters of ecclesiology: Church, ministry and sacraments. There were smaller sections on God and redemption, and on eschatology.

A further Doctrine Commission Report ("Christian Believing") was published in 1976. Its preface notes that the brief, unanimous statement at its centre was arrived at only with great dificulty. One member wrote later that its implication was that unity in the future would be a unity in asking questions rather than in agreeing answers (G. Lampe: Introduction to 1982 ed. of "Doctrine in the Church of England": the 1938 report). The report was never discussed and was, says Lampe, quietly and rapidly buried (ibid).

Another Commission was speedily set up under the chairmanship of John Taylor, Bishop of Winchester. It reported in 1981: "Believing in the Church". There was a strong emphasis on the corporate nature of Christian belief: "To belong to a church is to believe what the Church believes" (p9). There was an implication that there is a definite Anglican doctrinal position, as Stephen Sykes had already argued cogently in his "The

Integrity of Anglicanism" (1978):

> The present Anglican Church has incorporated a regular doctrinal structure in the content of its liturgy and in the rules governing its public performance. (ibid)

Doctrine was spelled out, in one chapter of the 1981 report as "declared", "implicit", and "diffused". Declared doctrine was the explicit statements in the Bible, creeds, articles, Prayer Book, ordinal, canons, Lambeth pronouncements and of General Synod. Implicit doctrine lay in liturgy, and the way it was done. Diffused doctrine was that penumbra of folk religion, unsophisticated, verging on superstition, yet indicating to the Church what the people at its fringes expected it to believe.

The 1981 report found that most of what is said about religious belief in these days seems "marked by an exaggerated individualism". It emphasised the corporate nature of Christian belief and the relationship of the individual believer or inquirer to the Church's tradition, the "heritage of corporate faith expressed anew in each generation, within which we do our own thinking about Christian belief today". This view of the corporate nature of faith may indeed help those unsure of where they find themselves, amidst the many varieties of Christian thought and communication. A parallel is made with John Ziman's point about the answerability of the individual scientist to the scientific community:

> The creation and preservation of a free consensus is the over-riding aim of Science. The individual research worker is bound to operate within the terms of that consensus and in a perpetual dialogue with it ... Every scientist sees through his own eyes - and also through the eyes of his predecessors and colleagues. It is never one individual that goes through all the steps in the logico-inductive chain; it is a group of individuals, dividing their labour, but continuously and jealously checking each other's contribution ... the audience to which scientific publications are addressed ... actively controls the substance of the communications that it receives. (Ziman: 1968)

Ziman had presented a powerful account of just what did, in fact, happen, as a Church of England parish came to terms with "new" or unfamiliar thought. Liturgy and worship continued. The re-telling of the Christian story went on. In varying degrees and as a long-term process (how long depended on the openness of that community and the ways in which the challenge was presented) the community assimilated what was being said, faced the questions and informed its corporate faith.

Tom Wright makes a plea in his essay in the Church of England Doctrine Commission Report entitled: "Where shall doctrine be found?" for a clearer statement of the corporate body of doctrinal belief of the Church of England:

> Declared doctrine is part of the Church's struggle

> to be the Church, to be holy in its thinking as well as in its living ... If we conceive of God in ways that are fundamentally wrong-headed, we will end up attempting to serve him in a manner which in fact dishonours him. God is not honoured when the Church fails to appropriate and enjoy the great truths that form its doctrinal heritage, in need of constant re-thinking though those truths may be. (op cit p136)

Tom Wright would wish to be sure that truths with which, in some sense and in some ways, the Church has been entrusted, should be passed on to subsequent generations:

> If it is true that 'God has still more light to break out of his holy word', it is wise that doctrine should not be too tightly defined. But if it is also true that God has already, in the past allowed 'more light' to break out, a failure to be illuminated by, and in turn to reflect, that light within the living context of that Church, under the guidance of the Spirit, is to risk throwing some of God's good gifts on to the rubbish heap. (op cit. p138)

Wright also wants clear statements of doctrine for ecumenical reasons, in order to achieve unity of faith. There must be a check on those who teach things which the Church as a whole disagrees with. Articles of Faith should be revised, since "a doctrinal vacuum will quickly be filled with ideas from other sources". On the matter of effective controls over what ordained and licensed teachers of the Church say and write, he is

concerned about: "the tender consciences of those who believe passionately that truth matters, and that the Church has a responsibility to stand for truth, and that if a church does not do so in some way or other it is wrong for serious Christians to remain within it". (op cit p139-40)

John Macquarrie ventured the view in his essay "The Anglican Theological Tradition" (op cit) that due to historical accident Anglicanism had neglected systematic theology - even though such theology was demonstrated in writers like Barth, Tillich and Rahner to be open and provisional in character. The Reformation in England, whilst being much less radical than that of Calvinism or Lutheranism and and thus preserving its strong links with the Catholic tradition, had tended thereby to produce a kind of theological lethargy. Other countries had produced confessions of faith and textbooks of dogmatics. The Church of England believed itself to have abided by the faith of the universal Church. Its articles of faith were no systematic statement of Christian theology as a whole, merely indicating breaks with certain ideas prevalent in the medieval period. Macquarrie also indicated a preoccupation with the Bible and the Fathers which had tended to stifle development and creativity. Stephen Sykes had suggested (op cit) that this theology was parasitic upon the tradition it criticized, whilst making no contribution of its own. There was, said Macquarrie, a little truth in the quip that theology was created in Europe, corrected in England, and corrupted in the United States. Macquarrie ended his essay with

the hope that the 'authentic spirit of the via media' would continue among the conflicting movements of the present time, ensuring the continuance of a theology rooted in biblical witness, true to catholic tradition, and 'commending itself by its inherent truth to reasonable men and women' (op cit p32).

John Robinson had indicated the beginning of a new era. The Church was summoned to know as truth what it had hitherto held as sacred tradition (op cit p20). For Robinson this did not mean a systematic renewal of the balancing act between scripture, tradition and reason, as it did for Macquarrie, but "a religion of doubt (where) a new human idea of God is struggling to be born" (p45). It was this religion of doubt which led to a recent television programme in which the Editor of 'The Sunday Times' (with Karen Armstrong) confronted Bishop Hugh Montefiore, John Dury (Dean of King's College, Cambridge) and David Holloway (an evangelical vicar). ("A Church for England" - Channel 4 - 5th December 1984).It is worth taking note of the resulting discussion since in many ways it typifies the interaction in the 1980s between the two stances defined by Robinson as characterizing the greatest divide within Anglicanism.

David Holloway argued for the defence of a "deposit of faith" held by the Church of England:

> There is a sticking point. You cannot go on for

> ever denying doctrines, and hope to remain a coherent body ...
> A seismic change has occurred: of late we have been differing not just over secondary matters, but on fundamental issues.

(David Holloway regarded the Virgin Birth and the Empty Tomb as such fundamentals. His comments, and indeed the whole programme, were provoked by the controversial statements of David Jenkins, since he had become Bishop of Durham that year.)

John Dury argued that in the Church of England matters of doctrine have always been matters of debate. All dogma should be criticized. He deplored a religion which resists criticism. The Church of England includes and embraces its own doctrinal criticism. Truth, in any case, is better not put across in propositions and dogma, but, for example, in liturgy and in music. Bishop Hugh Montefiore took what was in many ways a middle course. He agreed with John Dury that worship and liturgy best show what the Church of England believes. He agreed that since New Testament times there had always been conflict within the Church; "always has been and always must be". But freedom of interpretation is to be allowed "within certain buoys, within certain limits". It was indeed the job of the theologian to think, and to "think dangerously". Hugh Montefiore made the case for an irreducible minimum of Christian belief which could not be freely interpreted: though he did not include in that the doctrines of the Virgin Birth or of the Empty Tomb.

Diversity and confusion in matters of belief and dogma is undoubtedly an increasingly important issue for parishes such as the one considered in this study. Don Cupitt's 1984 television series: "The Sea of Faith" is only another of the many excellent radio and television programmes in the 1980s which have raised uncomfortable questions about the nature and validity of Christian belief, and brought those questions before millions of people: questions which might hitherto have been reflected upon only by a limited community of scholars and enquirers. Cupitt's conclusions are devastating for traditional Christian belief, especially since they come from an ordained clergyman in the Church of England:

> All meaning and truth and value are man-made and could not be otherwise. The flux of experience is continuous and has no structure of its own. It is we who impose shape upon it to make of it a world to live in. (Cupitt: 1984)

In his Introduction to : "Holding Fast to God" (Ward 1982) Keith Ward identified four specific problems for Christian belief today as he attempted to answer Don Cupitt: they were scientific thought, critical thinking, the conservative nature of religious institutions, and language which went beyond the limits of meaningfulness.

Scientific thought had led us to understand that we were not the centre of the universe, and that the world itself was part of a continuous natural process; all pre-scientific ideas of the

nature of the world had to be modified; what then became of Biblical beliefs such as beliefs in a 6,000 year creation, in a God just above the clouds, and in divine interference in nature or the belief in bad and good spirits, in demons and angels? How much of traditional faith had therefore to go? asked Ward. Cupitt was claiming that only the sciences could tell us the facts.

Critical thinking (historical, literary, sociological and psychological) had been applied to the Bible. We could no longer regard the documents of the Bible as having descended from heaven, untouched by human reflection.They were historical documents, bearing the imprint of their times, with accretions of legend, moralization,and polemic abounding. If this was not literally dictated truth from God, then how much could be believed? How could we know what Jesus was really like or what he really had said from such fragmentary documentation? Cupitt had rejected the historical questions about Jesus. Religion was not about ancient history, but about an inner growth towards disinterested love.

The conservative nature of religious institutions was recognised as a third challenge to the credibility of conventional religion: since it endeavoured, paradoxically, to communicate a gospel of new life. Marx and Freud had illustrated how religion could be used as a power of social dominance and psychological repression. Religion, said Cupitt, meant being free to become personally

creative, self-aware and unafraid to face reality. Faith had to be a matter of freedom, not of dogmatic control from outside.

A range of philosophical problems had become acute in recent years: problems concerning what survived death, concerning a timeless God acting in history, concerning the notion of a perfect being who might simply be a projection of human ideas, concerning the existence of evil and suffering:

> "Modern philosophy is very concerned with meaning and the limits of meaning. It seems that much religious talk, at least when interpreted factually, gets beyond the limits of meaningfulness." (Keith Ward, op cit ix)

2.2 THE PLACE AND THE SETTING:

This study is based on a particular Church of England parish in Wiltshire. There follows a description of the town, the parish, and the parish church where the study has been carried out. It is important to recognize that, whilst every parish and church is in some sense unique and different from others, this parish is also in a sense typical of many hundreds of others in similar contexts across the country.

The Town:

Chippenham, on the River Avon, is the largest town in North Wiltshire, and is set between the Marlborough Downs to the East, the Cotswolds to the North and West, and Salisbury Plain to the South. The town seems to have been of some significance even in Saxon times, the kings of Wessex using it as a centre for their hunting activities in the royal forests of Melksham and Braden ("A Short History of Chippenham Parish Church" 6th ed. - undated). Alfred the Great, it is claimed, stayed in Chippenham for lengthy periods, and his sister, Aethelswitha was married in Chippenham to the King of Mercia. Chippenham was a royal manor and is referred to in the Domesday Book as having been held by Edward the Confessor.The present-day proximity of the town to the M4 Motorway, to the main railway route between London and the West, and close to the major centres of Bath, Bristol, and

Swindon, has made it an increasingly popular place for people to live.Whilst the town remains at the centre of the surrounding agricultural area, with an important market every Friday, it is also the main development, design and U.K. production base for the Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company.Industrial expansion has occurred generally since the construction of the motorway, and a major new shopping development opened in 1986.Housing expansion between 1985 and 1996 is proposed at 3,900 homes, approximately 1,000 having already been built by the beginning of 1987 (Wiltshire Structure Plan 1986 ed.) It is nevertheless the case that local employment has declined, so that whereas in 1970 the Westinghouse Corporation employed some 7,000 people,its current figure stands at less than 4,000.The population of the Town of Chippenham, between 600 and 700 at the time of the Domesday Book, and in 1890, 4,618, had risen to 22,122 by the 1983 Census. It is projected to rise to 30,000, after the current phase of development.

The Parish:

St Andrew's Parish covers the central and business section of the town.Despite this it is a heavily residential area,containing the major site for housing expansion.The town is bisected by the main railway line between London and the West, crossing the town diagonally from South West to North East. Everything to the South

of this line is part of St Andrew's Parish.There is considerable ribbon development along the London Road, the continuation of the town's High Street, and thus the town has embraced and swallowed up many ancient cottages and absorbed terraces of small Victorian housing in a progression of building expansion since the beginning of this century.The newest housing is aimed mostly at the middle-class, executive market, but much of the older housing (including one council estate and some council-owned terraces) is occupied by working-class people who form the backbone of old Chippenham, with its underlying network of extended families.

In the parish there are four primary schools, a technical college, the town's general hospital, and four old people's residential homes.

The Church:

St Andrew's is the ancient parish church of Chippenham. It is a fine building: light because of the high windows of its clerestory,the absence of too much stained glass and the thinness of the pillars of the nave; grand in scale, so that its former pews could install a thousand people when required to do so. Pevsner had some difficulty in identifying what was original in this much-restored building. ("Wiltshire" N.Pevsner - 1981 ed.),but located one Norman arch and window, the lower part of the tower, and two medieval chapels.He was impressed by a fine organ case from the 18th Century, and a 13th Century chest

displaying, among other things, a fox preaching to some geese. At the present time the church has an attendance on Sundays of 200 - 220 people except on special occasions. Most of these come to a Parish Communion service at 10.00am each Sunday.Although this represents, in an area of expanding population, a substantial increase over the last few years, it is a far cry from either the accommodation- potential of the church, mentioned above, or that proportion of the local population which any parish priest might wish to see in his congregation. In 1906, for example, average attendance at the main morning service was around 250, and in the evenings about 450. (Register of Services 1905-1916: Wiltshire County Records Office). Nevertheless today it is a lively church, with a high proportion of its members actively engaged in its ministry. The tradition of the church has been in the more Anglo-Catholic part of Anglicanism, but many worshippers are of evangelical background and there has been an attempt to make this town centre church a spiritual home for as many people as possible. A disproportionate amount of time and attention has to be given to those who occupy the theological (or ritual) fringes of the Church of England.(A passionate protest was received from an Anglo - Catholic member shortly before Easter 1987 about the inclusion of a Methodist woman preacher in the service for Good Friday. At about the same time an evangelical member of a study group was complaining about those who would not take the Bible literally.)

A strongly ecumenical stance means that a Local Ecumenical Project is being set up with Methodist and United Reformed Church

neighbours, and that there is a firm commitment to the local Council of Churches.Issues of change and the management of change have been in the foreground in the past few years.The replacement of the pews by chairs in 1973 perhaps heralded an era of renewed concepts of ministry and styles of liturgy and worship ("The flexible seating and ability to clear the nave at will has restored...the usage which was possible in medieval times" - Pevsner). In 1982 the new Alternative Service Book (1980) was introduced, and a nave altar was constructed in 1984. There has been an increasing devolution of responsibility in each area of the church's work or responsibility. Women have been included in leadership and decision-making roles.The first woman Deacon was appointed to the staff in 1984, and several women from the parish are considering the possibility of ordination themselves. The interviews in this piece of research will show that this process, though too slow for many, is still too much for others to swallow painlessly.

The endeavour to be a place for everybody has meant that the fairly colourful liturgical tradition (frontals, albs and amices, nave altar, servers, candles, processions) has been harnessed to an 'evangelical' commitment to the serious study of scripture, and to a sense of mission both as looking outwards to an expanding local population and as a sensitivity to the newcomer at services. This has led to modifications in the style of services, to the preaching and to the music which is used.

Town, parish, church and congregation thus are presented here as being relatively diverse, with the church so situated that its ministry needs to relate to a regular flow of newcomers of varied background, and at the same time to sustain the ministry of its long-standing members. The interviews in this study endeavour to cover the full range of those who use this church, and may be encountered within its doors.

2.3 CONTEMPORARY RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS:

The final background study endeavours to explain and take seriously another context in which a Church of England parish church finds itself. If such a church does not declare where it stands in the matter of 'churchmanship', then others will certainly wish to find a label for it. Moreover if, as is the case in Chippenham, the Parish Church includes those of differing churchmanship, members will themselves be aware of those differences, and will understand something of what underlies them. An important aspect of this study has been to select for interview representatives of the different traditions represented. Here I outline the background and try to show how I understand these traditions of churchmanship.

2.3.1. Evangelicals:

1984, the year in which I began this study, was the year of Mission England: only one of several major and concurrent evangelistic enterprises in Britain, and the culmination of a lengthy period of preparation and pre-publicity. Billy Graham was back:

> I would like to challenge the churches. I believe that simple, authoritative, urgent, even

> repetitive presentatation of the Gospel will be listened to by the people. (The Times 31.7.84)

Billy Graham carried out a 3 month campaign in 6 English cities, addressing a total audience of more than a million people at nightly meetings in football grounds:

> There is a vacuum in this country and that's why you have the cults moving in. This is why you have drugs moving in. It is a substitute for something spiritual. (The Times 31.7.84)

It was reported by the Mission that nearly 97,000 people 'came forward' at the meetings. This is significantly higher than for a Billy Graham crusade elsewhere in the world, and significantly higher again than the proportion in his campaign in the 1950s and 1960s. The Press noted that this English campaign was strongly supported by the English churches, with the training of armies of counsellors and the setting up of "nurture groups" in many parishes, including the one which is the subject of this study, though it is not an "evangelical" parish.

Billy Graham, then aged 65, belonged neither with the militantly separatist evangelicals of the American Christian Right (with their unswerving doctrine of biblical inerrancy) nor, on the other hand, to the "new evangelicals" with their emphasis on the rational defence of faith (Watson 1975, Stott 1984, Sheppard, 1983).

But the roots of all these evangelical movements and emphases lie in the Reformation, and with the Protestant commitment to justification by grace through faith and the supreme authority of scripture. The reference has come to be applied particularly to those who espouse and experience justification and scriptural authority in an intensified way: personal conversion and a rigorous moral life, on the one hand, and concentrated attention on the Bible as a guide to conviction and behaviour on the other, with a special zeal for the dissemination of the Christian faith so conceived.(Facre:1983)

Clearly the issue of authority is fiercely raised by a campaign like Mission England; though it is not of course intended that this authority should be a matter of debate:

> Sixteen hundred years were needed to complete the writing of the Bible. It is the work of more than thirty authors, each of whom acted as a scribe to God. These men ... acted as channels for God's dictation; they wrote as He directed them ... the rules of conduct set forth by the ancient scribes are as fresh and meaningful to this generation as they were to the people of Jesus's time." (Graham: 1954, 1984)
>
> Christianity finds all its doctrines stated in the Bible, and the true Christian denies no part, nor attempts to add anything to the Word of God. (ibid)

Before considering the kind of response there was to Mission

England I want to refer to a chapter by David Watson, the English evangelist who died early in 1984, on the subject of doubt (Watson: 1975). In his chapter "Why Doubt?" David Watson, acknowledging that Christians will doubt, offers the following causes of doubt: it is temptation, such as Jesus experienced in the wilderness; it is disobedience as, for example, through relating to the wrong people ("How can a Christian be a partner with one who doesn't believe?"); it is ignorance, as when people just don't understand that their sins are forgiven or have left "the rock of God's Word" or read the wrong religious books ("We must neither be choked by a surfeit of tough theological meat nor sickened by the souffles of spiritual experiences"); it is loneliness as when we fail to relate to or share problems with other Christians; it is inactivity, as when we have no constant outlets in loving service and active witness to others; it is confusion, due to the failure to seek guidance from others or due to unanswered prayer ("We may be much more aware of the darkness and silence and pain, but we have to accept by faith that 'in everything God works for good with those who love him'."); finally our doubt may be the consequence of ingratitude which "can rob a Christian of the experience of God's love almost more quickly than anything else ... Certainly the tonic of thanks-giving is one of the greatest antidotes to doubt".

I have included those references to David Watson because they illustrate well what Billy Graham is doing when he calls for "simple, authoritative, urgent, even repetitive presentation of

the Gospel". To engage in the widely discursive and fundamental question raising is, to evangelicals, not merely wrong-headed, but also extremely dangerous. Christian faith must be dogmatic, and Christian teaching and preaching must be authoritative. The sort of theology which keeps on raising questions and doubts is perverse; religious reflection will reveal only our own puzzled face; we shall merely "look on glass".

The reaction to Billy Graham of that part of the Press which was not already committed through religious affiliation was equivocal. Under the heading "Missionary Superstars campaign to save souls" the Observer reported:

> Dr Graham, guest of the Queen at Sandringham and the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth, is now considered part of the establishment by many Anglicans. 'He no longer thinks heaven is a bigger and better version of the American way of life' a church official said. (The Observer: 13.5.84)

Clifford Longley in The Times, recorded the results of a pre-Mission England, Graham-organisation opinion poll which claimed to show that out of the entire Bristol membership of all church denominations, one in three said they were likely to attend the Billy Graham meeting, and 38% expected it to have a lasting impact on their lives. Clifford Longley concluded that the success of Billy Graham in England lay in the very Americanism about which Graham himself was so diffident:

> It's not easy for an Englishman, even a trained preacher, to talk openly and movingly of his love for Christ and Christ's love for him, as Billy Graham can do. (The Times 11.5.84)

Dr. Mark Corner, of the Department of Religious Studies at Newcastle, writing in the "Face to Faith" column of The Guardian,quotes Billy Graham's advice for Church of England bishops:

> If you have some doubts, keep them to yourself. Laymen have enough doubts of their own. (The Guardian 9.7.84)

Such an attitude to religious doubt is worrying, says Corner:

> History suggests that religious conviction may easily degenerate into intolerance and fanaticism ... People who are certain of the rightness of their cause, including religious leaders, tend also to be ruthless in the means they adopt towards furthering it. (ibid)

Corner suggests that, whilst some raise questions, the spirit of the age demands answers:

> Living with the answers, however simplified, is what people prefer. Does the Virgin Birth trouble you? Just believe what's in the Bible and ignore the fact that two of the Gospels don't mention it. Worried about the Empty Tomb? Cliches like "The Church has always believed it" will cover up the

> complexities of theological argument in both past and present ... the Christian message, neatly packaged and presented as a "take it or leave it" list of doctrines, becomes the simple answer to all life's difficulties. (ibid)

Corner concludes by commending Tennyson's dictum: "There is more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in all their creeds."

2.3.2. Anglo-Catholics:

The Anglo-Catholics in the parish with which this study is concerned are mostly elderly and form a small but articulate minority group. I use the term "Anglo-Catholic" to refer to a party within Anglicanism, most clearly identifiable since the Oxford Movement of the 1830s. When the Movement spread to other parishes of England in the 1840s, it laid emphasis especially on the sacraments and on the important place of ritual and ceremonial in public worship.Other aspects included commitment to work in slum parishes and the revival of religious houses and communities for men and women. The link, resisted by many, was made with Catholic Modernism when Charles Gore and others published "Lux Mundi" in 1889 accepting the critical study of the Bible and other liberal and modernising developments. Latterly there has been some disagreement within the movement over Prayer

Book revision, over liberalising tendencies such as the support for the ordination of women, over "new" theology, and also concerning liturgical niceties. To this Movement is owed the popularising of the Sunday Eucharist, a raising in the standards of worship everywhere, and a great concern for Church unity, though primarily with Rome, and hardly at all with the Protestant tradition. Alec Vidler comments that present day Anglo- Catholic organisations and pressure groups, such as the Church Union, "have more the appearance of a survival than a revival". (Vidler:1983)

The most public of debates concerning Anglo-Catholics in recent years has undoubtedly been that concerning the ordination of women. Thus Bishop Eric Kemp, at the AGM of the Church Union in 1984:

> Unless there is substantial change in that House (of Bishops) during the next three years we cannot with any confidence seek the guardianship of Catholic faith and order in that quarter ... I find it hard to enter into the minds of people who are so convinced that their theological opinion is right. (Church Times 30.11.1984)

In a curious way Bishop Kemp seemed to be calling for more doubt and religious reflection - though only on the part of his opponents in the House of Bishops, who voted 41:6 in favour of the ordination of women at the November Synod 1984.

> The time has come for all who believe in the historic faith and order to which the formularies of the Church of England bear witness, whether they come from the Catholic or Evangelical wing, to join together in its defence and in the setting forward of the truth for today. (ibid)

The unequivocal stance of many Anglo-Catholics concerning apostolic authority is illustrated in an angry letter about the proposed inclusion of the ordination of United Reformed Church candidates in the ordination service in Bristol Cathedral on 6th July 1984:

> Let us have no illusions about this service. To use the word "ordination" regarding candidated of the United Reformed Church is wrong and out of context. The proper and correct definition of ordination is 'the sacrament whereby men are authorised and empowered to do the work of the priesthood. The person carrying out the act of ordaining ... must be a bishop of the apostolic tradition as founded in Holy Scripture. (Church Times 15.6.1984)

In his anthology of lectures celebrating the centenary of The Church of the Advent, Boston, and the 150th year since the Oxford Movement began, Richard Holloway writes of "Anglicanism: a Church Adrift?" (Holloway 1984). Understandably, then, with the Oxford Movement in focus, his perceptions and criticisms come from the Anglo-Catholic quarter. And he speaks out of this tradition, shoulder to shoulder with John Macquarrie, Owen Chadwick, and other Anglo-Catholic giants of the areas where he

would wish to see both more and less authority from the Church:

> Now Anglicanism strikes me as being ... decorously ceremonial, often a bit childish in its dependence on secondary matters, and very slack in its grip upon the really essential core of the Christian faith ... that irreducible minimum of theology and behaviour, without which you are not really a Christian at all. (ibid:p.7)

Richard Holloway poses this question:

> Is the Church any longer priest to the world, does it speak of God ... or has it become scold, judge, social worker, echo, fellow- traveller, slavish imitator, anything ... but ... the place where the world catches the rumour of God, the place where the great and eternal longing of humanity for God is, in some wise, satisfied? That is what they got from the Oxford fathers.

Holloway suggests that two sorts of erosion have taken place. One is:

> the critical assault of the clever upon the simple affirmations of faith ... believers are often frightened and not very clever and ... the clever are often over-sure of themselves and of very little else ... What we need is an affirming Church that celebrates the reality of God.

The other erosion concerns neo-puritanism, which assails us, says Holloway, from both Left and Right with its moralism:

> We are now in a situation where we are told exactly what a Christian ought to do and think and act upon, on a whole spectrum of issues from the economic organisation of the state to complex matters of social and sexual legislation ... one of the paradoxes of the present situation is that many Christian leaders speak with magisterial certainty on social and political and ethical matters of considerable complexity, while they speak with hesitancy and equivocation about matters that relate to the central elements of revealed truth. We must re-discover and re-affirm what is primary and central, and then proclaim it with joyous conviction. (ibid)

That emphasis on primary theology and secondary morality may sound well until we see what it actually can mean in terms of social analysis. Here is Bishop Graham Leonard, a noted Anglo-Catholic bishop, writing in The Guardian about Christians and social evil:

> We have fallen into the temptation to concentrate on the symptoms rather than the causes ... what we call the evils of the world ...(he refers to problems of violence, poverty, bad housing and war)... are but the symptoms of the work of evil itself ... because we human beings can be violent, grasping, unjust, greedy and bitter ... To wear the armour (of God) we need penitence ... to recognise that we are God's mortal children. (Guardian 6.2.84)

Dr. Mark Corner replied swiftly. It was <u>because</u> people face

problems of violence, bad housing, poverty and war that we could become violent, grasping, unjust, greedy and bitter. The Church had all to often preached against human nature but not human society. It had (the complete opposite of the theological interpretation made by Dr. Leonard) condemned individual people with all manner of epithets as sinful, evil and corrupt but failed to see that such evil is but a symptom, and that the real corruption lies in the societies which generate such sinfulness. (Guardian Letters 9.2.84)

I found that particular dialogue most helpful in understanding the basis of the endeavour not to become involved, as a Church, in pronouncing on social evils, but rather, as would be said, on directing the human individual towards the grace of God. Such a stance is taken not just by many Anglo-Catholics like Dr. Leonard, but by evangelicals as well (vide supra). When the cry is heard that Christians should "keep out of politics", it may be a squeal of discomfort from those who find the Church opposing their own stance; but equally it may be the consequence of a particular theological dogma concerning the fallenness of human beings and a belief that the only hope for society is to direct the individual to God.

2.3.3. Liberals/ Progressives:

I refer to the "Jenkins debate", for this, more than anything else, has concentrated minds on the Church of England over the matters of authority, dogma and religious reflection. Should all dogma be open to criticism? Bishop David Jenkins himself quite clearly was taking this course in his Bampton Lectures of 1966:

> The end of this argument ... will come ... only when we are brought to that perfected community which is the fulfilment of humanness through Jesus Christ in the reality of God himself. Only then may we hope to know for certain both what the truth truly is and that such truth truly exists. (Jenkins: 1966)

Thus far Jenkins says no more than that Christian belief will ultimately be verifiable though it cannot be so at present (the response to the Logical Positivists which the philosopher John Hick was also offering) (cf. Hick 1968). However Jenkins continues:

> Meanwhile, I suggest that in living by faith we are in fact arguing for and searching for truth. The peculiar nature of the faith which is the response to the reality in Jesus Christ is the assurance that the truth for which we seek has already sought and found us. The peculiar danger of faith is to pervert this assurance into a self-centred conviction that we have found the truth. So we can seek because we have been found and are ourselves committed to putting whatever we find at the service of and to the test of further seeking. (This is) ... the experiment into God.

Two years later, in his book of working papers entitled "Living with Questions" (1969) Jenkins was to put it like this:

> The only theology which does justice to the reality defined by Jesus Christ is a broken theology in which all theories are systematically and constantly being broken up so that they may be open to further possibilities.

In 1984 a Church, many of whose leading theologians have published and explored and explained this "broken theology" for more than 20 years, was jolted into awareness of it when David Jenkins became a bishop. A letter to The Times highlighted the gaps between academic theology, public preaching and popular belief, which lie behind the unfamiliarity of what Professor David Jenkins (as opposed to Bishop David Jenkins) had been saying for at least 20 years:

> The correspondence columns of the papers certainly reveal a gap between the academic theologians and many in pulpit and pew. The more horrific and stultifying gap is that between the believing Christian and 'the man in the street', who rejects a religion based as he thinks, on 'fairy stories' and historic improbabilities. May Professor Jenkins long live to pursue and purvey the truth at Durham, as his predecessors in that see have done in the past. (The Times: 12.6.84)

More shocks were to follow, and a gasp from the Church Times

after the Bishop published his diocesan leaflet for December."Virgin Birth may not be literal truth" was the headline in the Church Times:

> The Bishop of Durham hopes he is not going to spoil anyone's Christmas - but - 'we have no right to insist on the literal truth of the story about the Virgin Birth of Jesus ... To insist on literal language as being the only way, or even the principal way, of bearing witness to God, is to get stuck in something very close to magic and superstition.
> (Church Times 84)

In fact before that had come the Enthronement sermon: a further statement of his position with regard to authority and dogma, given in Durham Cathedral on 21st September 1984:

> I face you, therefore, as an ambiguous, compromised and questioning person entering upon an ambiguous office, in an uncertain Church in the midst of a threatened and threatening world. I dare to do this and I, even with fear and trembling, rejoice to do this because this is where God is to be found. In the midst, that is, of the ambiguities, the compromises, the uncertainties, the questions and the threats of our daily and ordinary worlds. (Jenkins:21.9.84)

The reaction was instantaneous, and was in response also to the fire at York Minster, where David Jenkins was consecrated:

> the Lord ... (was) threatening to burn down a cathedral in which recently there had been

> consecrated a bishop of our Anglican Church who publicly expressed disbelief (sic) in several tenets of the Christian faith shared by all confirmed members of the Church." (Pettitt: Church Times)

> In Halsbury's 'Laws of England' it is stated that clergymen of the Established Church who publicly repudiate fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith are guilty of 'offences cognizable by the Courts', in that they are depraving the Book of Common Prayer, and maintain doctrines repugnant to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion - doctrines which are absolutely essential to the Christian faith or at least of most high importance.
> (May: The Times)

The present controversy is not concerned with personal honesty or private variations of belief on lesser points of doctrine. It is to do with the pastoral consequences of a bishop-elect doubting the key article of faith: the bodily resurrection of Jesus." (D. Pocock: The Guardian)

> Most preachers and teachers, for obvious pastoral reasons, tend to speak positively in interpreting the Christian faith to their hearers, leaving negative points to be inferred rather than speaking negatively; the penalty is, alas, the kind of sterile backlash we have just witnessed. (Preston: The Guardian)

Not all the response was been sterile,though. Religious

reflection had been provoked: Dr James Mark takes issue with Professor Mascall in The Times about the distinction between objective truth and subjective feeling as the basis for theology (The Times 25.6.84 and 27.6.84).The Senior Lecturer in Theology at Ripon College writes to The Guardian about the secondary development of Virgin Birth stories around the primary account of the incarnation, and explores "resurrection" as a means of explaining the "exaltation of Jesus" rather than a physical event. (The Guardian: 14.7.84)

Professor Leaney writes to the Church Times exploring why St. Paul apparently knew nothing of belief in the Virgin Birth (Church Times 8.6.1984) and a clinical psychologist writes in the same issue of her excitement that we are:

> being forced to look, if we will, at the tension between faith and doubt, commitment and questionning, doctrine and mystery ... It may be that some of us can enter a step further into that profound mystery which is God's activity in his world.

Conor Cruise O'Brian wrote an editorial in the Observer apologising to Bishop Jenkins for accusing him of not believing in the resurrection, and quoting extensively what the Bishop had in fact said on the subject. He concluded with a postscript:

> After reading the above, my wife says she still thinks the Bishop doesn't believe in the resurrection, and that in any event, God certainly did strike York Minster. I hope other readers may

find my argument more impressive. (The Observer: 5.8.84)

Another contribution to the theological and doctrinal debate, now opened out fully to the public, came from Leslie Houlden of King's College, London, and formerly Principal of Cuddesdon:

> Each Christian generation 'witnesses' to God-made-known-in-Jesus as it honestly can ... we are all limited in our perception of the light we have from him. So the issue is, what is legitimate witness and what is not? Plainly it is an issue not easily or finally to be resolved; and even guardians of the faith are to be encouraged to explore it relentlessly. (The Times: 16.6.84)

Christopher Derrick wrote in The Times of an apparent "Taboo on Religious Truth" (30.6.84) and a corresponding article appeared in The Guardian by Michael O'Donnell: "How Doubt went out of Fashion" (1.8.84). John Drury wrote to challenge Clifford Longley, The Times religious affairs correspondent:

> the only categories he will allow are truth and lies determined by reference to historical facts. He thinks it dishonest to use such categories as myth and allegory, failing to notice that these are forms of historical reflection. It is quite impossible to do justice to any religious literature or tradition in such a rough and ready way: as impossible for the historian, the anthropologist or the literary critic as for the theologian. It also ignores 200 years of biblical criticism, the bulk of which has been done by

> members of the churches and is now in the Christian bloodstream. (The Times: 13.6.1984)

Bernard Spurgin reminded us that if our criterion for belief was what Jesus taught, what the early Church believed, and what the ancient fathers proclaimed, then:

> ... they probably believed that the Earth was the centre of the universe ... and all matter is made of earth, air, fire and water. We know better now. It is naive to assume that progress is not possible in theology when able minds are applied to it. (The Times 8.6.84)

An article by John Habgood appeared in The Times (22.9.1984) emphasising the differences between "dogma" and "dogmatism". Scientists, he claimed, would recognise a sense in which it is proper to speak of scientific dogmas. But "few would admit to holding such assumptions ... in a dogmatic spirit."

> Dogmatism, in the adjectival sense, is held to be anti-science, and the arrogance, blindness and intransigence with which it is popularly associated, have spread a blight on the concept itself, and clouded the relationship between science and theology. (The Times: 22.9.84)

The most substantial essay on the need for adjustment and re-statement in comprehending the Christian gospel came from Professor Dennis Nineham in his sermon at the consecration of Professor David Jenkins in York Minster. As Christianity moved

westwards shortly after the lifetime of Jesus it had to come to terms with Greek thought. It had, for example, to become enshrined in a creed: something "unknown in Jewish religion or any other". The process was often a highly acrimonious one, and the Councils were often deeply divided. There were problems of which the New Testament Church had not been aware. To speak of Jesus Christ as "of one substance with the Father" was to use a technical term of Greek philosophy unknown to the Bible or the earliest Christians.

When the Roman Empire fell European culture had remained, broadly speaking, static for some 1,000 or 1,200 years. It was a period of cultural inferiority with a consequent tendency to absolutize the past and to think that the truth had already been finally and absolutely declared. It came to seem that an essential part of being a Christian was to be able and willing to "believe exactly what had been believed in the past and to express it without remainder or reservation in the traditional terms". Professor Nineham spoke of the gigantic cultural revolution in the last 200 years or so: unprecedented change affecting every area of human thought and experience - and still continuing. In this situation we had to practise and spread our faith. "Ye have not passed this way heretofore." No-one would recommend Christians to underestimate or treat lightly the faith of their forefathers but how were we to relate to it and learn from it? Nineham acknowledged a debt to Leonard Hodgson for his question:

'What must the truth be now if people who thought as they did put it like that?'

The language of the past had always to be put through the sieve of that question. And "what is disclosed to us now must play a much larger part in deciding what Christianity is than was formerly appreciated". Nineham looked for a trustful openness which would welcome the new truth God was constantly granting us. It meant, to quote an earlier Bishop of Durham, "being tentative in theology while remaining sure in religion." It was quite unrealistic to try to bypass or short-circuit our disagreements by appealing to statements and formulae of the past. The question at issue was precisely what we were to make of those formulae.

That piece of historical understanding clarifies the nature of the issues raised for religious reflection by the consecration of Professor David Jenkins and the contemporary debate.

2.3.4.Conclusions on the general context of the study:

The theological range and context in which members of the Church of England live and move is thus a confused and a confusing one. Because of this there is the tendency, indicated by the 1982 doctrine report (vide supra) towards exaggerated individualism and/or defensive parochialism. The situation is not a happy one for those who see themselves, in whatever sense, as defenders of the faith, and find that so many are ready to call into question what they feel called to defend and propagate. The situation is also unhappy for those who, believing that truth can only be encountered through courageous and open exploration, come up hard against brick walls of dogmatism and fundamentalism, and accusations that they are the heirs to a Nero or a Domitian in their "hostility to God". Nor does the situation commend itself to those whose commitment to ecumenical progress with other churches requires a certain clarity about what the Church of England itself professes to believe. Thus Rupert Davies (op cit p. 100) comments:

> ... it seems to be characteristic of some of the Anglican parties that each of them claims to represent the Anglican position.

It is not the function of this essay to assess the merits or attractions of proposals like those of Stephen Sykes in his "Integrity of Anglicanism" (op cit 1978) for a systematization of Anglican theology; nor of Dr. Rupert Davies's call for an entire

new framework of church relations in England. I have merely noted something of the range of possible theological stances. Any church (and the one in this study is no exception) is likely to contain representatives of these differing positions co-existing with one another and with the views of the church leadership, with greater or lesser degrees of tension. My study of a Church of England parish in Wiltshire takes into account this diverse theological background and context in examining the actual attitudes and views which are encountered.

2.3.5. General Conclusions on Background Studies and value of this preliminary work:

The problem, as I have described it (Chapter 1), exists where people's religious claims have moved into an area of fundamentalism: from which they will repulse all that requires them to question or doubt their position. Dogma, the content of belief, is handled as possessing the kind of authority which is beyond doubt or questionning, and which renders open religious reflection an irrelevance.

These preliminary studies in psychology, sociology and theology bave provided me with an essential background to the research and

a contemporary context within which to conduct this qualitative investigation.

The psychological studies have again and again illuminated the findings, clarifying the recognition of occurrences of authoritarianism or prejudice, or, on the other hand, of openness and freedom from prejudice. From the doors of a church emerge those who are authoritarians and those who are not; those who are prejudiced and those who are not (Adorno, 1950; Argyle, 1958). Sanua indicated plausibly (Sanua, 1969) that churches can attract authoritarians because they (the churches) may constitute "safe, powerful, superior, in-groups"; and that they may attract tolerant people because of their creed of universal brother and sisterhood. Argyle found a generally higher-than-average level of authoritarianism among religious people: yet the most committed ones seemed freer from prejudice than the average person (Argyle: op cit) (cf. Holtzman, 1956). Allport and Ross maintained that intrinsically motivated people (those who "lived out" their religion) were significantly less prejudiced than the extrinsically motivated (who merely attended church but didn't get involved).

So-called "indiscriminately pro-religious people" were the most prejudiced of all (Allport and Ross, 1967). These categories, however, were severely criticized by Hunt and King (1971) as

over-generalized. The suggestion, however, that conventionally religious people are more prejudiced than the 'sincerely devout' seemed to Argyle to be substantiated (Argyle, 1958).

This interesting, if inconclusive, field of research suggests to me the need to look carefully, in my study, at the use of authoritarian or prejudiced language about religious matters, and to see whether it relates in any way to the level of religious commitment of the subject,

The insights of psychoanalysis indicated, in the conclusions of Faber (1976), a real link between religion and neurosis. There would be libidinous and aggressive elements, and the concept of projection, where people "behave as though not only feelings but important aspects of themselves are contained in others" (Brown and Pedder: Introduction to Psychotherapy: 1979). The tendency to separate good and bad aspects of the self and represent them in the creation of heroes and monsters, gods and devils, idealization and contempt for others, has also been noted (Brown and Pedder, op cit). Fear and insecurity were, in the view of Freud, essential characteristics of religion (Freud: "The Future of an Illusion", 1927). The developmental stages of infancy identified by Freud (Introductory Lectures, 1916 - 17) suggested to him that where an individual had failed to develop through a particular stage he or she might demonstrate respectively an

incapacity for giving or receiving love and trust (oral phase); the inability to let go leading to pharisaism or puritanism (anal phase); or the tendency to experience God as an authoritarian figure leading to a primary emphasis on guilt, and the need for forgiveness and reconciliation (the oedipal stage).

In my study it will be important, therefore, to consider indications of neurosis in religious behaviour. The relationship of a subject's explicitly religious language and behaviour must be made to the whole person. David Jenkins found that the volleys of anger loosed against him as a "doubting" bishop indicated that: "the area of religious belief is often charged with intense anxiety and, alas, real neurosis". This, in his view, reinforced the opinions of those who held that "religion is more part of the pathology of humanity than of its health" (Guardian 'Agenda': 17.12.84).

The sociological studies have indicated the decline in the ascribed status of clergy and all they stand for. Where an authoritarian or dogmatic stance is discovered it can no longer rest in an automatic and universally accepted view either of that role or of the tenets of faith which it appears to represent. The identification by Towler of ideal typologies has assisted both in clarifying the understanding of stances adopted by members, and also in seeing how these individuals stand out in unique and

individual ways from the typology. The sociologists provide the essential context for this study. If Wilson is right that we live in a secular society where people have effectively ceased to be religious, what does that mean for the churchgoer today (Wilson, 1966)? What pressures does it exert? Are support for ecumenism, episcopacy, or interest in liturgical renewal "death-throe" activities, as Wilson claims? (op cit). Are they defensive postures, or signs of continuing faith and life? If Clark is right, on the other hand, that "a large amount of religious activity takes place outside church or chapel" (Clark "Between Pulpit and Pew", 1982) then what does it mean to those in my study that <u>their</u> way is still to attend church regularly?

Luckmann described how the secular ideas of the American Dream had now pervaded American religion (Luckmann, 1967). There will be an endeavour, in my study, to note whether any such tendency to what he calls "internal secularization" exists here in Britain as well.

Towler's study on "The Need for Certainty" (1984) comes close to my own field. It becomes necessary to ask whether evidence of a clinging to dogma and authority and the refusal to reflect or question fundamentally is part of what Towler perceives as the "lust for certitude": where, in his words, faith has "overshot the mark". Towler found this tendency most evident among

"conversionists" and "traditionalists", and it has to be asked whether my subjects belong among the five ideal types to be identified in conventional religion: exemplarist, conversionist, theist, gnostic, or traditionalist.

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The theological studies illustrate contemporary issues - those of which these members could not fail to be aware and to which they

relate in the course of the interviews: especially to the visit at that time of Dr Billy Graham to conduct a mission in Britain and for the controversial enthronement, and events surrounding the enthronement, of the Bishop of Durham. The debates about dogma, authority and religious reflection thus moved around these and other current issues at the time I was conducting my study.

I have not pretended that the theological and general context in which members of the Church of England live and move is other than a very confused one. It is to the project itself that I now turn, seeking to discover how the main participants, the members of one particular parish church, will move out of this, their background: how they will relate to it, to one another, and to me as both priest and researcher.

3.0. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Background to the Project:

The initiative for this project emerged from a study prepared in 1983-1984 for a Mid-Service Clergy Course at St. George's House, Windsor, in the summer of 1984. That study was entitled "To what extent does the Church Facilitate Personal Growth?" (Taylor:1984).

I recorded the results of interviews and conversations with, among others, three bishops, one professor of theology, a writer, a television journalist, an employee of the British Council of Churches, a lecturer on contemporary spirituality and the Dean of a cathedral (both of the latter had been principals of English theological colleges), and a cross-section of people within my own parish. My interviews spanned a range of ages and of churchmanship from Evangelical to Anglo-Catholic, and included radical, as well as conservative-thinking individuals.

This earlier piece of research (see appendix A) suggested the possibility of a further study. Why were some expectations of growth so low? Why did there seem to be a sense of so little communication or sharing of ideas within the institution of the

Church? Why was the experience so strong of rigidity or fixity of ideas? There follow some examples of the more critical comments received:

> It seems to me that the Church is very often a conspiracy to hide from each other the kinds of experiences we all have but don't like to talk about...sexuality, for instance. We might be a group of people for whom sex doesn't exist.

> I feel that the reliance of the Church on plant, on huge buildings...instead of projects for people is tremendously depriving: the mission should be in the world: that's where the money should go, instead of constantly being sucked into the liturgy.

> The Church is a hierarchy that governs by people who are one sex, one class, on the whole; one race: and who therefore have a very narrow perception of what unity is.

> ...getting too close to people, sexual feelings, homosexuality, divorce ... the average Church congregation is harder than everybody else about it.

> "It was all just bumping back", said someone after giving a talk in a church: "like being in a

squash court...no kind of response at all...it was really horrible."

On the whole no church tradition is about growth, because the Church hasn't approved of it. The Church has said: You don't grow. You do as we tell you.

My own experience.... is that some people come to a kind of wholeness, but actually that they are few.

My project evolved: to look at the existence within the ranks of Church members of dogmatic, closed or authoritarian stances on the one hand, and of open, reflective or exploratory ones on the other. I should seek to investigate a cross-section of those attending one particular church.

In September 1984 I was clear that I wanted to consider attitudes to change and innovation (new services, ordination of women, alterations to churches etc), opinions about the recent "Billy Graham" evangelistic campaign in the area, and about certain much-publicized statements from the new Bishop of Durham. I also wanted some indicators about political and social views, and about self-perceptions. It would be important to note whether the attitudes to religion related to a particular political stance, or a particular individual outlook. I speculated

('Hunches' September, 1984) that I should find most churchgoers reluctant about change, disliking having their religion tampered with.It also seemed possible that there would be widespread disapproval of Bishop David Jenkins of Durham, who was engaged in rocking the boat.

I hoped,also,that I would find people who were aware of the dangers of religious intolerance and of the need to relate to the experiences and aspirations of those from whom they differed. I further hoped there might be signs of a greater openness to the views or ways of others which was enabling people to see their Christian faith as a part of the human search for ways to care, co-operate, and survive in a difficult and divided world.

3.2 Choosing the Method:

At first a questionnaire approach seemed possible, inviting a range of responses to questions in three groupings: the first on content of belief, the second on attitudes to change in matters of religious belief and practice, and the third on social and personal attitudes (sample questionnaire: October 1985: see appendix B).

I carried out three interviews along these lines, and found the results to be extremely disappointing. My interviewees were lively people with plenty to say. They were extremely cramped by the method. There was a clear tendency on the part of the interviewee to "complete" an answer ready to move on to the next question.The questionnaire-approach had led to an inappropriate succinctness.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of closed questions and was done on paper. The second and third parts consisted of open questions, and the responses were tape-recorded and transcribed. Although these latter responses were clearly of greater length, the average reply was transcribed into three or four lines. The average response, or uninterrupted comment in my earlier study was between twenty and thirty lines. Even if I could have processed the questionnaire results satisfactorily they would have been too superficial.

3.3 Towler- based research into Ideal Types:

Robert Towler maintained that researchers have often imposed inappropriate categories on religious believers (Towler 1984). He maintained that much attention had been paid to assessing degrees of religious commitment (Glock and Stark: 1965; Lenski: 1963), and too little attention had been given to the types of

belief evinced. Researchers tended to approach those they wished to research with pre-conceived categories in mind.

Towler hoped to overcome this problem by studying a correspondence of 4,000 letters written to John Robinson after the publication of 'Honest to God' (1963). As a result of this study Towler offered a typology of five meaning-systems encountered among Anglicans (and perhaps also among the members of other churches in Britain). Towler's five "ideal types" are:

exemplarist (belief that Jesus is above all else a historical person to be admired and followed);
conversionist (focusing on the believer's response);
theist (primary manifestation of awe regarding the divine, or trust in Providence;
gnostic (characterized by a sense of the sharpness of contrast between matter and spirit);
traditionalism (emphasizing that Christianity is an inherited framework, rather than picking out any definite content as of crucial importance).

Towler's thesis was criticized (McCaffery: 1985): the approach might indeed, given the nature of the material, be free from categories imposed by the researcher. But was the spectrum covered by these letters from the 1960s broad enough "to encompass today's range of Christian meaning-systems"? When "Honest to God" had appeared the term "Liberation Theology" had

not yet been coined. It was surely now one standpoint within the terms of conventional religion, yet it was irreducible to any of Towler's five ideal-types. McCaffery finds, however, that Towler's advice to questionnaire designers is unexceptionable: that one should avoid confusing strength of assent with the meaning of assent. The questionnaire must not be worded so that the respondent who is unhappy with the meaningfulness of a formulation becomes impossible to distinguish from the respondent who accepts the formulation, but doubts the substance of the belief concerned.

I had wondered ('Towler and the Need For Certainty': 7.9.85) whether my research task should be identified as a testing of Towler's categories, within the context of one particular, eclectic Anglican church. Could I identify Towler's five "types" and also see if there were further standpoints emerging, not reducible to these types? I consequently evolved a question paper designed to identify people's views, opinions and stances along Towler lines (see APPENDIX C).

I had the sense, once again, as I tried this approach, that I was cramping people. They had much more to say than my questions allowed, and, even if they could be categorized, what was the point? I didn't want to end up being able to say how many of each type I had in my congregations. I wanted a deep insight into the way people thought and felt about their religion, and particularly where they perceived change or development occurring (see "Aims of Research", above). My first study had indicated

the potential of a qualitative approach for a fuller and freer flow of ideas and thoughts, more appropriate to the nature of this investigation. The need for this is best described by Rupert Davies, who writes:

> What troubles me is ... the whole business of (psychological) research into religion. The immense heterogeneity of religious people seems to me to make such research in its nature unreliable. Religion, I know, is as much corporate as private; but it is partly private, and for many people very private indeed, related closely to the individuality of each individual ... Within each religious grouping the individual members vary very greatly from each other ... literature abounds in religious stereotypes: they are so much easier to describe. But actual <u>people</u> don't fit into these categories.People are disturbingly, and encouragingly, <u>different</u>.The utmost sophistication in research methods does not overcome this. In other words this is a field where samples and questionnaires and statistics are more than usually unsatisfactory - much more than political polls.(Davies: 1985)

Would such an approach be too "soft" though? There was a need to consider the potential of an appropriate qualitative method.

3.4 Final Pilot Study: Jan/Feb 1986:

The study on Church and Personal Growth in 1984 had attempted to look at 16 specific areas. In the light of experience gained subsequently the recorded interviews now seem rambling and imprecise.Plummer (1983) refers to Allport's (1942) "forms of life history writing" and to the "comprehensive life document". Here the subject is indeed encouraged to ramble freely, the interpretations being made later (Plummer p.108). I had set out to do something more limited and specific; but I was covering areas more than once; I was duplicating questions; failing to note that an answer had already been given. Some of my questions were truly obscure: thus I announced in one interview: "This is the bit about narcissism and the Kingdom of God" - to receive the response: "What's that then?"!

The areas for study were a confusion of my own priorities and those of my supervisor: I had not yet clarified my objectives.The subjects sometimes went all round the houses, unchecked, and unsure what I was after. My layout of prompts/questions was hard for me to follow or memorize, and I had not yet properly mastered the technique of tape recording. The style of writing-up now also seems mannered: not "novelistic" (Fineman and Mangham: op cit) but merely indirect and padded.

The pilot interviews using questionnaire technique had been extremely disappointing. In a larger survey the results might have been statistically interesting: here there was no sense of adequately probing religious views, commitments and attitudes, as well as the social, political and personal areas I wished to cover.

I now returned, therefore, to a further (and final) series of pilot interviews using a freer technique. The response was exciting: the subjects (there were four at this stage) spoke freely and the interviews were recorded (see APPENDIX D).They took place in January/February 1986. I was now clearer what I wanted to ask. I had developed the layout of the interview notes and prompts, and improved the recording with the purchase of a "conference" microphone. I now had an efficient system for audio-transcribing directly on to a word processor.

During this further pilot study I gained a good response to a series of broad questions, which I followed up freely with impromptu supplementaries: within the context of an extended, recorded interview. This was the approach which I decided to adopt: a fairly free (but structured) interaction, informal, yet frank and relying on a degree of sharp listening and questioning which would evoke the strongest and clearest responses possible.

3.5 The main study

In APPENDIX 'E' I have included a summary of some of the recent theoretical thinking on qualitative methodology. Much of this is gathered in the report of the proceedings of the International Association for Qualitative Research, at its first international symposium in 1983 (Ashworth, Giorgi and de Koning:1986). In particular I have focussed on suggestions in Peter Ashworth's subsequent paper: 'Adequacy of Description - The Validity of Qualitative Findings' (Ashworth: 1987), and much of his advice there has been incorporated into the presentation and analysis of the interviews I have explored in this research.

The main study consists of interviews with thirty members of the parish concerned: a qualitative investigation involving some 15% of those who attend the church regularly. The areas covered in the interviews covered:

- the kind of church service preferred;
- whether views or religious beliefs have changed or varied much in the course of a person's life;
- do they perceive the Church as guardian of faith, enabler of personal pilgrimage ... or something else?;
- views about the nature of God;
- the basis of authority for beliefs;
- reactions to and interpretations of natural disaster and tragedy;
- attitudes to changes which have taken place in the parish church e.g. removal of pews, new

forms of service, alterations to interior and layout;
- views on styles of teaching and preaching;
- feelings about the ordination of women;
- views on unity with other churches (ecumenism);
- matters of value judgement.

An opportunity was included to discuss political views and opinions, and finally a section on how the person saw himself or herself, particularly in terms of response to insecurity and uncertainty and the willingness in personal life to accept risks or move into new areas.

3.6 Choosing whom to interview

As long as I was thinking in terms of a piece of quantitative research and some kind of a statistical result from a sample, the selection process presented a grave problem. A random selection from the list of churchgoers (say every seventh person on the list) would be necessary. I was very aware, however, that there were certain people I ought to include. I knew them to be in some sense typical, or representative of a certain sector of the congregation. A random selection would possibly exclude them, and actually risk missing some areas of opinion and attitude altogether. An element of pre-judgement did seem appropriate at this stage: I must reflect in my conscious choice the relative proportions of men and women in the congregations, the age-range represented, social and educational background, and what I knew of opinions, conservative or otherwise, and churchmanship. After this initial and necessary selection it must be left to the interview for the responses to emerge as they would, from a "disturbingly and encouragingly heterogeneous" group of people.

Summary of Those interviewed

GENDER	male	12
	female	18
AGE	under 45	13
	45-retirement	5
	retired	12
SOCIAL GROUP		
	professional/mangerial/intellectual	10
	between	16
	working class	4
OPINIONS		
	conservative/traditional	12
	between	8
	progressive	10
RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION		
	Anglo-Catholic	6
	no party	20
	Evangelical	4

3.7 The Question of Bias:

Three particular domains of bias have to be recognized: those arising from the subject being interviewed, those arising from the researcher, and those arising from the interaction between the two. In the case of this particular piece of research, being a practitioner- study, it will be necessary to consider the role of vicar-researcher, and how this may affect the results in each respect.

In the first domain the respondent may conceal, modify , exaggerate or invent the truth, may seek to impress the interviewer (Douglas 1976) (Plummer 1983). In this research we bear in mind that the vicar, a highly symbolic figure for some, may represent the churchgoer's whole relation to his or her church, beliefs, and even to what they understand of God. Lienhardt shows (Lienhardt 1961) how the 'men of divinity' of the Dinka Tribe in East Africa are regarded as 'vehicles and representatives on earth of divinity'. Weber shows how the priest has traditionally been associated with the determination of factors to be blamed for suffering' and with all that pertains to the 'cure of the soul' (Weber 1969) .Towler,in his essay 'The Changing Status of the Ministry?' (Towler 1968), and despite the questions he raises about that status, observes:

> The sociological nature of the ministry has not changed to a significant extent since the Middle Ages. (Towler: ibid)

Bryan Wilson described the clergy still as:

> charcoal-burners or alchemists even though those processes had been rendered obselete, both technically and intellectually. (Wilson: 1966)

There seems every reason, therefore, for the member confronted with a researcher who carries any or all of these associations to exhibit bias on a grand scale.

The second area of possible bias arises from the researcher. The prejudices, assumptions and beliefs of the researcher may influence the questioning: and especially his or her pre-existing theoretical orientation. A vicar could be expected to have a vested interest in 'enhancing' the beliefs, the faith, of his congregation: in dispelling doubt and dismissing uncertainty. Will he therefore 'hear' those more uncertain responses? Will he hear the doubts and criticisms about himself or his own role when they too are expressed? It may indeed be a painful experience to listen to and receive what members have to say about his own cherished theories, beliefs, and endeavours .

And the third area of possible bias arises from the interaction between respondent and researcher. There might be too much formality to encourage intimacy, or too much informality to

encourage an adequate response. The 'social space' may be unsuitable. Prior interaction may feed into this relationship. Non-verbal communication may be indicating how far either the respondent or the interviewer may go. Vocal behaviour may influence and affect either party. Therefore is the vicar-interviewer to appear dressed for his role as vicar? Or will he startle the member with some new guise intended to indicate that he is now a 'neutral' person? Is the interview to take place on church territory or is this the long awaited 'visit from the Vicar'? Have there been disagreements over church matters which will cause a climate of antagonism or hostility, or, conversely, is there collusion of some kind (due to help recently given; a problem solved) which will affect the interview?

Thus it was the case that Dorothy, the Anglo-Catholic, began her interview with some conspicuous attempts to show how well everything was going. "I'm getting on better", both summarizes this effort and demonstrates a prior interaction (ie when things had not been going so well). Later on her snappy: "I don't know what you teach the children now..nothing?" was an indication that she had overcome (or forgotten) the desire to please, as the interview proceeded, and was able to speak forcibly (as indeed I was familiar with hearing her speak).

Margaret carried into her interview her experience as a clergy widow, desperately missing the kind of life which she saw me

having with my family and work. Nevertheless, she told me without equivocation that vicars "sit on the fence". They "trod the easy path". They often failed to "stand up and be counted". Her own convictions as an evangelical would not be suppressed. (I have discussed, with each main interview, the extent to which the hermeneutics of suspicion were required in its interpretation.) Jack brought to his interview a strong antipathy to change ("No changes are for the better, Michael") and an awareness that I had been responsible for many changes which he disliked. I have indicated how, when a change was mentioned of which he approved, he was unable to acknowledge the fact. His firm stance is described in the preface to the interview, and in fact it was possible for him to exemplify well the characteristic approach and attitudes of the traditionalist. I was rewarded by being allowed, at the end of the interview, to be played a recording of the speech made at his retirement from his job, a decade ago. This was evidence that, though it had indeed been painful to listen to him, Jack felt that he had been heard. It could have been the case, also, that the interview with James would be too 'soft'. I have outlined before the analysis of the interview the similarity of views and background which he and I shared. Yet here the merely predictable responses were not forthcoming: in fact the fore-understanding needed substantially to be modified.

Thus although it might have been the case, and indeed a criticism of such a practitioner- study as this one that severe bias would occur, it seems that the encounters were able to

yield a relevant significance which could indeed be explored by the rigorous methodology of qualitative research. Plummer comments as follows on this matter of bias:

> A close examination of all bias in the researcher could only be possible if researcher and informant were mechanical robots. To purge research of all these 'sources of bias' is to purge research of human life. It presumes a 'real' truth may be obtained once these biases have been removed. Yet to do this the ideal situation would involve a researcher without a face to give off feelings, a subject with clear and total knowledge unshaped by the situation, a neutral setting, and so forth. Any 'truth' found in such a disembodied, neutralized context must be a very odd one indeed....The task of the researcher, therefore, is not to nullify these variables, but to be aware of, describe publicly and suggest how these have assembled a specific 'truth'. (Plummer:1983)

In the chapter of 'Findings' I have endeavoured to set out the considerations relevant to the analysis of each interview. I have therefore considered my relationship to the groups to which the person interviewed belongs, and my relationship to that person. I have set out my fore-understanding about the outcome of the research in general, and this interview in particular. I have considered what is the life- world of this individual. It has been necessary to ask to what extent the approach was empathic and nurturative, and when it was threatening or analytic. Were there instances of 'psychoanalytic 'interplay, (transference etc)

evasions of truth, instances of misinformation or the adoption of 'fronts'? Were there moments which particularly needed dwelling on, considering why this was thought to be a proper response to the question: and whether the resulting analysis was coherent; whether or not the fore-understanding had been challenged.?

By these means it has been possible to strive for a 'truth', in this study, which is both clear and illuminating, casting light both on the interaction between vicar-interviewer and parishioner-respondent, and upon the community as a whole. There was indeed a 'truth' which the members were prepared to share with this researcher,and a sense, at times, that more was disclosed because of who he was: someone, on the whole, whom people were accustomed to trust.

L I B E R A L / P R O G R E S S I V E S

JAMES

Strong challenges to the status-quo regularly emerge. What is our educational task, it is asked, towards others and for ourselves? What are we about, and how do we communicate what we think we mean? How could the worship be more attractive to outsiders,as well as to ourselves: more meaningful or more exciting for everyone? How long shall we continue to ignore the needs of the Third World? Shall we continue in splendid isolation,even, from the other churches in Chippenham? How long must we wait fully to receive the ministry of women? Who is making the decisions here? What is authority in the Church? Who is responsible for the young? Who is in touch with those arriving on the new housing estates? - and so on. The questions keep coming. Fresh ideas are also engendered by a flow of theological students training in the parish for periods from three weeks to three months at a time, with their own frequently perceptive reports and criticisms. It is also apparent that a high proportion of newcomers to the church are professional people: trained to ask questions, and to think about and handle new ideas.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS: JAMES

The following are some of the considerations relevant to my analysis of this interview and based on the work done by Fordham (1974), Schaffer (1983), Wertz (1983), Hycner (1985), Hagan (1986), and Ashworth (1987) on qualitative research methodology.

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS:

1.What is my relationship to the groups to which the person interviewed belongs?

2.What is my relationship to the interviewee?

3.What are my fore-understandings about the general outcome of the research?

4.What are my fore-understandings concerning this person?

5.What is the life-world of this person?

POST-INTERVIEW CONSIDERATIONS:

6.To what extent was the approach used empathetic and nurturative (hermeneutics of meaning recollection) and to what extent threatening or analytic (hermeneutics of suspicion)?

7.Can I detect instances of 'psychoanalytic' interplay: transference etc? Were there evasions of truth or instances of misinformation or the adoption of 'fronts'?

8.Were there recurrrent themes? significant moments of unclarity?

9.Are there moments which need dwelling on: 'Why was that thought to be a proper response to that question?'.

10.Is the resulting analysis coherent, and has my fore-understanding been challenged?

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS:

1.My relationship to the groups to which James belongs:

James has often made joking reference to the different ways in which he has to see me. At the time of the study he was deputy head of the English Department at the local comprehensive school of which I am a governor (employer). He taught two of my children (parent), was lodged in a church flat situated in the churchyard (landlord and neighbour), sang in a local choir with me (friend and fellow musician), produced plays for church occasions (patron?), and worshipped at the church (Vicar). We had also both at different times been undergraduates at Cambridge and much involved in college music there.

2.My relationship to him:

Characterized, as I perceive it, by considerable mutual respect: both recognizing that we had much in common - especially music, English literature, and a particular interest in ways of

communicating in public situations. To some extent mutual admiration.

3.My fore-understanding about the general outcome of the research:

that I should

a) be able, broadly, to find three groupings amomg my members: those who were dogmatic about their beliefs and claimed powerful (divine?) authority for them; those who were and remained open to questionings and doubts and had a 'reflective' approach to religious beliefs and practices; those who were in transition between these positions, or who showed evidence of a recent or gradual change in their approach - which might or might not have come about as a result of my own approach;

b) find the younger members more flexible and less dogmatic;

c) find a relationship between the member's religious, political and personal views.

4.My fore-understandings concerning this person: he would have a strong commitment to the main (parish communion) service at St Andrew's Church, that his depth of thinking on literary and educational matters, well known to me, would be reflected in his thinking about religion; that there would be some interesting ideas about the nature of God, probably unorthodox; that he would stand very loose to 'given' doctrinal authority; strongly support radical change in church structure,layout, worship etc.; that he

would be opposed to didactic approaches in teaching method; be liberal in his politics and in favour of the engagement of the Church in the political scene.

5.The life-world of this person: as already indicated he moves in a fairly cultured, artistic and intellectual milieu. His orientation is towards a constantly intelligent evaluation of the world around him. He is a deeply committed teacher, devoted also to his girl-friend and to their baby. There is a clash, in this life-world, between a fairly traditional and churchy upbringing, and the cohabitation-situation in which he finds himself. Part of this life-world at the time of the interview was the aspiration towards a more senior teaching post, which he has since achieved.

The Interview with James: (twelve areas of response):

AREA 1.Church Services: ("What sort of church service do you most favour?")

James gave three examples of services which had meant a great deal: a college service with fine music ("I just have never felt quite so uplifted"); a Parish Communion Service at St Andrew's, Chippenham, when "there just seemed to be some fantastic

readings....with time in between to think about them"; and "this village in Lincolnshire where we used to go as a family...the naturalness of it all... you could see through this perfectly framed Georgian window...local farming types (in church) and seeing the sheep grazing (outside) at the same time".

James offered some 'horror stories', "to show you the sort of line I take, I think".There had been a choral Evensong in Bath: "I thought it was such a backward-looking shrine; principally we seemed to be worshipping the man himself; the vicar himself. (He) used to dress up and have incense pouring out of every nook and cranny... about twenty of us turned up to sing some really superb material, and there were about two in the congregation."
The other 'horror' story involved an informal gathering in Lincoln Cathedral, when the congregation had been required to sit in groups, to discuss and to pray together. "We would sit in a circle and pray for God to do some quite extraordinary things...I just felt very uncomfortable. I know now it was more an emotional outcome...it was getting chummy in a way I don't feel like being at the moment."

AREAS 2 & 3: Change or development in religious beliefs and perception of the Church:

Here James did not seem to fulfil my expectations (fore-understanding). "I'm afraid I would have to answer they (my religious beliefs) have stayed consistently shallow.... I can

remember the feeling of the Communion Service for three services after being confirmed...but I'm afraid, looking back, it was laid on a fraction too thick then; I have to regard that as a phase of somewhat unthinking enthusiasm." Clearly there was disappointment that these early feelings could not be sustained. Yet James had neither been prepared for this, nor had been able to explore the implications. He was emerging as someone who was still nourished by fine religious music and aesthetic, yet needed to see connections with the life and society around him. Emotionalism was rejected, either at the time, or in retrospect. In fact he attempted two interpretations of the failure, as he saw it, to make much progress in religious matters: his family had never encouraraged him "to question or to say outrageous critical things at an age when we should have done...I think sadly that has only happened far too late...There wasn't a foundation built up that somehow would be tolerable to..would be understanding of internal change."

The second explanation concerned the institution of the Church: "The message was:'just turn up and it will be alright'...a great sense of frustration that er somehow things could be shifted a bit more quickly than they are." His example related to the moments of intercession in a church service: perhaps Northern Ireland was mentioned, or the grain mountains: "I feel like standing up and saying: well, what are we going to do about it? - here we are, about 200 people: we could actually do something now. Singing a hymn is going to do absolutely nothing about any of these things...here is somehow an

opportunity missed." The Church had not stimulated him to undertake commitments such as he had when at school, working for a summer in a psychiatric hospital.

In analysing these comments I recall Luckmann's observations (Luckmann 1967 op.cit) about the increasing marginalization of traditional church religion. Luckmann found that its meaning-systems often appeared unrelated to the culture of modern industrial society. Churches were surviving by orienting themselves towards the values of a past social order. When, as in the U.S.A. they had adapted to contemporary culture, they had taken on the function of legitimating that culture. James rebelled against the possibility of an enclosed, subjective religion based on the intensified experience at Confirmation, the priest-and-liturgy focussed aesthetics in Bath, or words of prayer and intercession which remained only fine words and failed to confront the problems of modern society. He searched for that interface between the Church he had been brought up to love and respect (and not to question) and the society in which he, a modern-day intelligent layman, had to live and teach.In Bishop John Robinson's terms this was expressed as 'the Church needing to know as truth what it had hitherto held as sacred tradition' (Robinson: "The Difference in Being a Christian Today" 1972).

AREAS 4-6 & 8: Perception of God, Basis of authority, Theodicy. Religious teaching style.

The question about possessing any particular understanding or picture of God which made sense produced a long silence, and then the answer:"No". Again this seemed a surprise, in such a deeply thoughtful person. Had he ever found himself encouraged to explore this area: either at Confirmation time, or since? Again: "No". It had been in the way certain others had lived and behaved and in nature that James had had the "closest sense of the working of God....I'm afraid it's pretty romantic and I don't feel very proud of those (examples)". I pressed him for reasons: was his case like that of Graham Greene, who had left the Anglican Church on account of its impoverished symbolism and language? After another long pause he suggested that he must be impervious to the language, though it was the case that he worked quite a bit with languages. (The typist complained here of faint speaking and unclarity.) Reluctantly, James admitted his reliance on the perceptions of others:

> (pause) I just have, I think I, I, I just have to see it through other, through other people. It's just the way other people have, have, have expressed it that I hang on to.

We moved on to discuss problems of evil and suffering. Were there any conflicts here which he had to grapple with; any conflict

with ideas of God which came over in church? Again he admitted that he didn't grapple with these things: his girl-friend was far more intensely affected by the world's news than he.His experience of that sort of suffering was 'pretty limited': 'I mean I don't feel I've grown up in that area very much'. On the other hand doubt was 'a bit of an attraction':

> I quite like the business of doubt. I quite like exploring the meaning and seeing...what things might mean....at the moment I suppose I can't stand wishy-washy views: feeble, weak-minded, liberal, pusillanimous, pedestrian..... I always had this admiration for ..those who would be solidly atheist, produce all the arguments with the skill of a seasoned Socrates. So...doubt isn't a problem in that way. I think I'm the doubting sort and always will be. It's what has kept me going in my job really.

Did this mean that he would reject authoritarian or dogmatic teaching in the Church? Wouldn't it be better if we stuck to the approach of the 'Quinque Vult', for example: "This is the Catholic Faith, which except ye believe ye cannot be saved"?

> It means having nothing at all in practice. It's like having a departmental syllabus that says 'We do this, this and this' and the actual reality on the ground is nothing at all like what is on the paper..a set of totally banal..aridities.... The statments have got to be reviewed every time, to be shown to work.

James recalled having come across someone who would not read a lesson in church because the translation was not the 'old' one.

> I could understand that they were happy with that...but in a totally complacent, reassured way: in the way that I collect photographs of class play productions around me and have a filing cabinet of memorabilia....morale boosting, self-supporting,..(but) they don't reflect who I am today, who just over Easter did things and learnt things that have moved me on from the person I was before Easter.

James had been gaining confidence through this dialogue. He suggested that, grateful as he was that he had learned Latin and could understand what a Quinque Vult was, he had to say: 'Oh how pleasantly archaic'. And to admit that we could not all, in terms of getting on in the world, be meditative or making it our business to show that those creeds were relevant today.

Once again in this section of the interview there was Robinson's 'needing to know as truth': very evident in James's remarks about the Quinque Vult. Again, puzzlingly, the apologetic failure to have grappled with the most fundamental theological questions: whilst declaring that doubt and questioning were his lifeblood.James relegated the hermeneutical task to others. If those others existed in the church he belonged to, how had they failed to engage him in the task? I quote from Professor Denis Nineham, whom I interviewed in my study on attitudes to personal

growth.

> The Church has not expected people to grow: it has said 'Do as we tell you'.(Taylor: 1984)

James was not one who would do as he was told, but neither was he someone who had been encouraged to grow. There had been no 'descent into certitude'(Towler:ibid), and yet little evidence of a journey of faith either.

AREAS 7,9,10,: Altering the Church. Ordination of women. Church Unity.

The question: "Do you find the Church as you come across it too bound by traditions from the past?" produced further difficulties: it was doing the best it probably could to help others and to put the parables of caring into practice. You had to work with those you had. It had to play the game, or it became a very esoteric, minor religion. But could I rephrase the question, since he was becoming terribly confused.I asked whether he sensed any refusal to face up to change. James could not locate the question anywhere specific and so I enquired about the ordination of women. He was strongly in favour: the arguments against were unconvincing, the scriptural evidence against was not 'vivid', and the issue did indeed illustrate one of the problems concerning the Church's inability to change something. Church unity mattered only if you were trying to choose an issue

and fight for it,but not if you only wanted to thrash out a common theological standpoint.In terms of a group of people 'fired by their worship to do something', then the different strands of faith and the different language and rituals were pretty small fry.

In each of these responses I was aware of the undogmatic personality, the potential explorer, yet never somehow having set out to do the actual exploring. Questions which might have been related to the intrinsic nature of the Church of which he was a declared member, to the nature and process of its worship, for example, or to its beliefs as expressed therein, were found to be confusing, and eventully related to some social activity or outward task.Here was no need of religion for neurotic or escapist purposes (Faber op.cit). Nor was this, in Argyle's terms (Argyle 1958 op.cit) a "conventionally religious person" of the sort Argyle found most inclined to be prejudiced.

AREAS 11 & 12: Political views and view of self:

Mrs Thatcher had succeeded in politicizing a lot of people who otherwise might not have been. No, he was not proud to be in England as a result of her reign: 'not in the slightest'. But he was glad to have made some personal attempt to be involved with needier people:

> I know I've been a pretty protected greenhouse flower and haven't had much experience of the

> rough end of things...and yet I go back to that psychiatric ward...some of the roughest people...and did teacher training with classics but took a place in a comprehensive school - an incredible plunge.

James saw himself as fairly ambitious; increasingly sceptical about other people:

> I'm just aware that in every situation where I want to change something or I want to be responsible or to be in charge...it becomes more complicated: political.

He was not a great risk-taker, yet had been described as a lunatic,on skis, and had successfully produced a play which no-one thought he could bring off. Uncertainty was a bit of a challenge: though he was aware that things like his bronchitis were closely allied to psychological pressures.

> If I am faced with an uncertain situation I will quite happily allow it to ride for a long time.

James made a general comment about the interview at the end:

> It was a nice interview for discussing what is the picture now. I didn't at any stage feel threatened..but on the other hand I think I feel I've skirted around. I know the moment I felt most uncomfortable was when you asked: 'What's your idea of God'.

CONSIDERATIONS AFTER THE INTERVIEW:

1.The approach: in this instance fundamentally empathetic and nurturative (hermeneutics of meaning recollection).There were no substantial challenges from me on the basis of my awareness that truth or meaning were not being disclosed. The task of unpacking meanings was a shared endeavour.

2.'Psychoanalytic' interplay: some intellectual jousting near the beginning of the interview. He offered three examples and couldn't remember the third:

ME: And your third...story?

JAMES:: Oh dear, I think I've been too clever.

(The situation was resolved by laughter, and an assurance that the point was well made and we could move on.)

There was a need for reassurance, since several times James felt, self-critically, that his answers were inadequate in terms of the amount of consideration he ought generally to have given to the matter under discussion.This was significant in terms of my fore-understanding of him as a deeply thoughtful person.

ME: ...religious beliefs..?

JAMES: I'm afraid I would have to answer they've stayed consistantly shallow.

3.Recurrent themes or significant unclarity?:his own inadequacy and failure to explore his beliefs; the sense that he is less committed over social issues than he once was, and that he depends on the confidence of others for his own faith:

JAMES: I think I just have to see it (God) through other people...it's the way other people have expressed it that I hang on to...my grandmother who is 96...(is) exceptionally and practically devout in a quiet way.

4.Moments that need dwelling on: 'Why was that thought to be a proper response to that question?': an example:

ME: What about doubt?

JAMES: I'd say at the moment it's a bit of an attraction...

It would be easy to take this as a general response to the question, but it comes with a kind of relief. He has found the admission of his own lack of thinking in these areas quite painful, yet has not tried to evade. Now there is an opportunity to have his uncertain position affirmed: he finds doubt attractive, first of all, because he has expressed himself doubtfully up to this point in the interview.

FINAL COMMENTS ON 'JAMES' INTERVIEW:

1.My fore-understanding concerning the general outcome of the research was that younger members would tend to be flexible and less dogmatic than their elders. Despite his condemnation of weakness and pusillanimity in belief, James expressed no doctrinal commitments. At one point he seems to be urging strongly for the Church to be more active in working among the needy (the'intercession' comments), but taken in the context of the whole interview this could more appropriately be considered as a further expression of frustration at his own failure to be more socially committed.

2.Was there the expected link between religious, political, and personal views? The distaste for dogma was extended to religion and Thatcherism alike. The personal agonizing about commitment to the needy (was it enough to choose a state school in Bath?) crossed over into both his politics and his view of the Church.

3.Much of the fore-understanding about James himself was wrong, however. He did not have the expected strong commitment to the Parish Communion service: the perceived focus of parish life. Worship itself was important for him where there was fine music, good readings with time to think about them, and a relevance to the 'real' world. Other considerations were less important to him. There was no indication of the same depth of thought about matters of religious belief that he gave to matters of English

literature and teaching and education. The interesting and unorthodox ideas about God did not materialize, and nor did the strong support for radical change in Church structure, layout, or worship. These were, as has been indicated, areas which had failed to excite James or to draw very much of his attention. They were areas, I yet maintain, where he was potentially very interested indeed, and would eventually make a considerable contribution. But this would only be the case if the local church in his new neighbourhood was able to command his attention and to challenge him more successfully than we had done.

LIBERAL/PROGRESSIVE GROUP: OTHER INTERVIEWS

This was by far the largest group, reflecting the attitude of the largest portion of the congregation. There are sixteen members who are of liberal/radical persuasion. The preference of the majority (12) is for the Parish Communion service, and several mention the importance for them of the participation of children. The majority (11) stressed how their views, unlike James's, had developed and changed. Liz had become more tolerant,less rigid. Peter saw things as less black and white. Gill was more questioning. Josie felt she had become more flexible, and Olive claimed that her views and beliefs had changed 'utterly and absolutely', partly through marrying an agnostic. Pru had moved from tradition to experience, Nick understood more, and Sue had become more questioning and doubting.

The church, for this group, was a place of pilgrimage or journeying (7), a friendly community place to meet and know people (5), place of respite or escape from pressures (1). God was perceived in abstract terms (8), as a father-figure or old man (5), as being 'not there' (2) or as a figure of suffering (1).

Authority, for this group, resided in discussion with others (5); in thought-provoking sermons ('meaty',said one,' but not dogmatic' said another) (5); with the clergy ('provided they are

not assertive' said one) (3); 'there should be no dogma' (1); intuitive thought, reason, general (not religious) education (2).

There was much less assurance where theodicy was concerned. The problem of pain and suffering was 'worrying' (5); doubt itself was attractive (1); God was limited in power (3); I need to learn to accept it (1); no problem (5).

Changes in the style of worship or the use or layout of the church building were viewed extremely positively (14) and religious teaching must be done 'undogmatically' , 'not by the book', 'with an open approach' , 'by discussing everything', 'by raising questions' , 'thoughtfully'. James wanted 'poignant examples' and Viv appreciated 'confident and intelligent preaching'.For Liz it should be through 'care and support', never didacticism.

Ordination of women was favoured by 12, some forcibly. One was against and three indifferent or unsure. Church unity did not figure prominently on their list of priorities: not keen or not important - 11. There were two who wished we were doing more.

The response of this group to questions about the Thatcher government was, for once, unanimous: all 16 were opposed. Seven were risk-takers and ten saw themselves as cautious and not inclined to take risks.

How then did this group define itself? Most stressed the importance of change in their own lives, and favoured change in the life of the Church. Their perception of the purpose of the Church varied greatly, as did views of the nature or being of God. AUTHORITY must be sought, not imposed, and teaching must be undogmatic and allow for questioning (James: 'The statements have got to be reviewed all the time - to show they work'). There was more anxiety with this group than the others concerning theodicy: indications, perhaps, that more time had been given to thinking about these matters - and less to applying given doctrinal formulations. Most wanted women ordained (natural justice) and cared not greatly about church unity (too churchy; too much doctrine involved. The group was more cautious than reckless, reflecting,perhaps,its thoughtful constituency; and the unanimous disapprobation received by the Thatcher government seemed linked with the strong opposition to the imposition of authority in the Church: the government was perceived as an authoritarian government, above all an uncaring government.

FINDINGS 4.2 THE TRADITIONALISTS

TRADITIONALISTS: These are those who do not find a place in their theology or viewpoint for avoidable change. Towler describes their main feature as " the necessity of believing, rather than what is believed."

> The essence of traditionalism as a style of religion is that it cherishes the tradition which it has received. It may be simply appreciative, wishing to affirm all it has known as good, or it may be aggressive,defending belligerantly its security.....Traditionalism is a style of religiousness which holds to the old ways....and so if any particular is threatened or called into question it is the pattern itself which is sacred....We understand what traditionalists mean when that say, ' I believe' , if we take them to be saying ' I cherish and hold dear'.
> (Towler,1984)

For these reasons, which I try to track in the interviews, traditionalists surface strongly in all 'renewal' debates and when some new development in the life or ministry of the church is proposed. Issues for them recently at St. Andrew's have included removal of the pews, introduction of the Alternative Service Book (1982), the construction of a nave altar

(consistently opposed since first plans were drawn up in 1969; constructed by a large team of members of the congregation in 1985), the possibility of women being ordained priests, changes suggested for Sunday Evensong, alteration in the time of the Parish Communion service, moving of the choir to a new place in the church, and statements by the more radical bishops. Their position has been much weakened at St Andrew's through the advent of many active newcomers and young people, through sufficiently clear evidence that changes have increased (and not diminished) the size of the congregations, and through their sense that they have at least been listened to - even if not agreed with.

INTERVIEW: JACK

Preliminary Considerations:

My relationship to one of the groups to which Jack belongs is uneasy. As former verger of the church in this study (he retired during my time as Vicar) he represents the 'old guard'. He was, and is, devoted to the building, like many vergers. He loves it as he first knew it: neither as it was before then (eg before major alterations and reconstruction in the 1870s) nor as it has

become since, through alterations made by me and my two predecessors, all of which he resents. My personal relationship to Jack is good: friendly, though he frequently 'speaks his mind'. His life-world still centres on the church: daughter in the choir, grand-daughter a server, son on the Parochial Church Council etc. His wife will not come to church now because of the 'changes', and despite the family's involvement. Jack has too much to lose. I expect Jack to emerge in the interview as strongly traditionalist, dwelling much on the past, lecturing me about the present. He will say that I am neglecting the older people: that too much attention is paid to the young. He will relish this extended opportunity to speak his views. I shall need to be aware of these motivations behind his replies, and to be wary of some of his answers (hermeneutics of suspicion). In analytic terms he will play the father to me, and seek to illustrate my inexperience in church matters. I shall try to accept that role in order to hear what he has to say.

AREAS OF RESPONSE:

Areas 1 & 2: service preferred and changes in personal religious views.

Jack likes the evening service best. But he begins the interview with a protest: the choir has been singing too much lately, which "takes the congregation's interest off the service". His views have 'certainly changed', since he was brought up a Methodist and

changed allegiance to accommodate his wife. "It didn't make any difference to me, actually. It was what she wanted." It didn't change his belief in God because they had had a proper Sunday School, which he'd attended morning and afternoon."Whereas today I think that's one thing that's lacking..there's not the tuition put in regarding the religion and the Bible that there was in those days."

The Church of England was compared unfavourably with the Methodists. They had had some quite good parsons, whereas in the Church of England you got such a mixture of clergy and lay readers."The services are not so interesting as they used to be."

Areas 3 - 6: perceptions of God, Authority, and Theodicy.

God is 'round about us... wherever you are: I mean like when I was at work or at play - then I like to feel he's round about us.' Natural disasters were 'the same as I look at war: sent for a purpose':

> If we had no war, we had no disasters, the world now is overpopulated as it is....I mean the number we lost in two world wars. If those men were still here now...then the world would be even more overpopulated than what it is at the moment.

Another interpretation emerged shortly afterwards, though:

> With so many chemicals flying around in the world

> today I think it's more our own shoulders, than it is on anything to do with God. I mean the point is you've got atomic power, you've got for producing electricity stations, some coal manned, some by, you know, the nuclear. But the point is in this country alone if you look around, and it can be done even in a place like Chippenham, and build a um water generator... then half your chemicals would be gone.

Areas 7 - 8: altering the Church and religious teaching:

I asked Jack if he thought that the past was in any way holding us back. The answer was short: "I think there's too many changes, Michael". After a pause he elaborated:

> I mean going back...over the years the church service then was from the old prayer books entirely, as you know, and I used to get more out of those services than I do out of the ASB (the 1982 Alternative Service Book)...Now I see there's talk of going to the ASB on the Sunday evening service. Now in all respects I can't agree with that. The majority of folk are people ...near my age... and if you're going to take away that ...it's not going to help the people, I'm certain.....Stay to the tradition, and leave alone.

Were there any changes Jack could recall which had been for the better? Could he remember any such changes? Again a short answer: "For the better. No, I can't." And then a further elaboration:

> Although I still go to church now, and although you've changed to the nave altar: I've got to have my Communion somewhere so I can't do otherwise than follow what you're doing...but I, I've still got no interest in it.

The expression of a need to "have my Communion" is curious. It would characterize more the approach of an Anglo-Catholic with strongly sacrament - based beliefs; much less that of an ex-Methodist. Jack has no other resonances of Anglo-Catholicism, and the possibilities are either that he is responding to teaching received whilst an Anglican, or that this is actually a rationalization of his need not to abandon the place where he has had a significant role for a number of years and where his children and grandchildren are to be found. The "Communion" is the main occasion of worship and the service at which Jack might therefore most wish to be present.I incline to this latter interpretation, although there are interesting instances (see below) of Jack's apparent response to such teaching.

Next there came an objection to the replacing, some years before I came to the church, of the Sunday parish breakfast in the church hall with coffee in church after the service:

> I've said this openly to other people...open up a shop in the church...that's the thing I'm dead against. I haven't had a cup of coffee in the church since it started.

And a protest about the moment in the Communion Service called

The Peace, when all are invited to greet their neighbours:

> You get up out of your chair, you pass (the Peace to) them or they pass (it to) you, you shake hands with them, and that's the only thing you do...that's the last of it. There's nothing in that Peace that you do. You're wasting peace.

Ought there, I asked, to be more authority about the way the Church teaches people? Should people be <u>told</u> more? Jack replied that the way it was put over today was taking the interest away from what you were listening to. And the teaching had to be backed up with a story, the way Preb Willis did it. ('Preb Willis' is a retired priest who assists at St Andrew's.) He introduced his experiences from the churches he had previously been in.

> There you see, Michael: that's interest to the people who's listening to him....of great interest to the congregation.

AREAS 9 & 10: Ordination of women and Church unity

Although Jack 'wouldn't campaign for it' he still thought there was a 'place for women in the church'. "I mean I don't see why a woman can't put over her point of view from the pulpit." Communion and all that sort of thing?: "Well, there's no reason why they shouldn't, is there?"

As far as Christian Unity was concerned, Jack was "quite in favour of working with other churches." He declared that, from the Methodist point of view, the 'feeling' in that church was far greater than it was in the Church of England, as in St Andrew's. (This remark about feeling led to the above comments about parish breakfasts and the Peace.)

AREAS 11 & 12: Political and personal views

Mrs Thatcher had done a 'marvellous job'. It had been a help to the nation, and Jack appreciated that. And it was important that we continued to build up our defences. If the Russians weren't prepared to play ball we should go on to their doorstep, and that would stop them. He had no sympathy with the teachers:they had caused unnecessary trouble. But the nurses were another story:

> With the hospital staff, if they doubled their pay tomorrow, I'd be quite happy. I think the nurses

> earn every penny that they don't get, and the teachers: they don't earn half what they're paid. That's my true opinion of those people.

Black people didn't try hard enough to be part of the community. But a lot of people treated them badly...'and that's quite wrong...Although they're black they're the same as me any day of the week'.

Third World development should be encouraged and supported, if necessary by government means. The Bob Geldorf and Blue Peter appeals had shown the way.

> I think what we ought to do is to encourage those countries to do more for themselves....through diplomatic sources, inter-government changes. I mean there's plenty of our science side..as would be prepared to go out there.. and sort them out a little bit. That's all it needs.

Jack outlined how he had come to be an assistant foreman with the Chippenham Westinghouse Corporation. He had never sought changes of work or preferment, but it had come to him: "I was quite happy to turn the handles". He felt that he had always listened to people, and told them when he didn't agree with them. "I think that's the only way to go through life." Always cautious. Not easily taken in: "not by any means". Disliked uncertainty: "I'd rather sort it out". He was very taken with Mother Theresa of Calcutta: "because I should think she's the most religious person that's ever preached God's word". The Bishop of Durham? "I just don't like the bloke." Billy Graham was "a fairly nice person as

far as his religion's concerned. But "I haven't a lot of room for this bandwaggon business...because it's only a bandwaggon after all, isn't it?...cos if you're not saved by the time you go to one of his gatherings, that hour and a half's not going to make much difference."

COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON JACK'S INTERVIEW

I had anticipated the strong traditionalism: with its dwelling on how much better things had been in the past. Thus I was warned by Jack not to change the evening service. Sunday School was not done properly now: it had been an important part of the framework he grew up within; and none of the changes which had occurred had been for the better. (I think Jack would have stuck to this point of view even whilst agreeing with me that the later time of service on a Sunday morning was a help to older people. There were no credits to be gained through changing things.) There was more than a hint that Jack now came to church only under protest: "I've got to have my Communion somewhere" (see the comment above).Innovations like The Peace, or coffee after the service provoked some very valid comment about triviality (the graphic statement: 'it's wasting peace'!) or inappropriateness (a 'coffee shop in church') : yet these comments rested in the fact that change was involved. The Peace had replaced the old Methodist conviviality ('they mixed and they were out there nattering') and the coffee had replaced the parish breakfast

('John Allen' - my predecessor - 'did away with the breakfast which was always well appreciated and people sat at the table there as they wanted').

Towler's observations on traditionalism were well exemplified in the interview with Jack. Towler wrote:

> It cherishes the tradition it has received...a style of religiousness which holds on to the old ways...and so if any particular is threatened or called into question it is the pattern itself which is threatened.

Jack often expressed this in terms of 'interest'. Where change had occurred, for him the 'interest' had gone. Services were 'not so interesting'. With the nave altar, though he'd got to have his Communion somewhere, 'I've got no interest in it'. In the discussion about preaching (was he contrasting the fulsome Methodist style of his childhood days?) he three times indicated a lack of 'interest' now. If Evensong were changed the congregation would not be 'interested'.If that which one cherished and held dear were to be threatened or damaged in <u>any</u> way, then its coherence, its poetry, its ring of nostalgia (and nostalgia does seem to play an important part in the traditionalist response) would be spoiled. The response to it could not be the same as before; the <u>interest</u> would not be there. It was thus significant that Jack's remarks about God were a description, in his words, of what he liked to feel: "I like to feel that he's round about us".

Jack's theodicies conflicted:

a) "if they were still here now then the world would be even more over-populated than what it is at the moment"; but

b) "I think it's more our own shoulders than it is on anything to do with God".

But then so did his politics:

a) Thatcherite, and anti-teachers; but

b)pro- blacks ("although they're black they're the same as me any day of the week") and pro-overseas development through government aid ("our governments should get together with the people of those countries").

In these instances I felt that the first view represented that most consonant with Jack's general standpoint. The second was,very possibly, a response to the kind of preaching and teaching he would have received week by week in St Andrew's Church (my two predecessors and I have all placed some emphasis on overseas development, for example.) The latter responses are therefore coherent, and less surprising than they at first seem to be. Nevertheless, it was extremely interesting to find indications in such a strong- minded and forthright person of the Church's ability, if that is indeed what it was, to modify both theological and social thinking. In any event it has to be

conceeded that at some point Jack's opinions have undergone some change which he has , at least partially, accepted.

INTERVIEWS WITH THE OTHER TRADITIONALISTS:

The three other traditionalists I interviewed were all men: Doug, George and Michael.They are all in the oldest age-group. There was variation in the services they preferred. For Doug it was the 'quiet early Communion', and he also attended Evensong; never the Parish Communion. George attended Evensong only: he had given up coming to Communion some years ago, because of the changes. Michael chose Parish Communion 'because of the music': but found Evensong a good, quiet service for ending the day. Doug's views had 'stayed exactly the same'; George's had 'not changed at all'; Michael's had 'strengthened'. The important thing about the Church for both Doug and George was the building: that it was there and that it was open and available to them at any time. (When George was ill recently it was his difficult walks to the church which were his first achievement and perhaps his main aid to recovery.) Michael saw the pupose of the Church as being 'to forward God's Kingdom'. (After thirty years as Churchwarden his sense of vision and direction constantly intruded on his traditionalist attitudes.) God was, to Doug (who answered with some difficulty) 'someone who is around' .George was, he

admitted, confused about God, but thought of a human form. Michael thought of God 'as Jesus Christ'.

It was the Bible, for both Doug and Michael, which formed the basis of Christian authority. For Doug it had to be read aloud, and well-read. Michael read it by himself after breakfast each day. George looked to the traditional framework of services and sermons. None had any problem with theodicy: Doug insisted that we must never doubt God; George saw no problems. 'Dead Germans', he observed, 'makes you think': but he was not able to pursue this thinking very far. Michael pointed out that the evils of this world were 'mainly our fault'.

Alterations in the life of the local church? There should not be changes, Doug declared. The important thing was tradition, and that which was familiar. George was proud that he had been the only one to oppose the removal of the church's pews, some years back. Change was acceptable to Michael, if it 'brought the Church to the people'. None of these three wished for more dogmatism: both George and Michael stressed that sermons should be simple and clear and not too intellectual. Preaching with more authority was not required.

The ordination of women did not present great problems; to George it was a 'man's job', and women's voices did not come over well. Like Vic, Doug and Michael were in favour. Doug said: 'I like seeing women'. Nor was church unity opposed directly: we should,

said Doug, concentrate on unity within our own church, since the different congregations did not know one another. George thought we were doing well enough 'in this town'. Like Vic, these traditionalists (all politically Conservative) wanted no politics in church: or, as Michael qualified it: no party politics. It was necessary, said Michael, for controversy to be avoided.

Two of the traditionalists thought they were inclined, or had needed, to take risks in their lives. Michael described himself as an 'ordinary chap', and did not believe in risk-taking.

FINDINGS 4.3: THE ANGLO-CATHOLICS

My main examination of the interviews upon which this study is based focusses upon their groupings (by churchmanship) as Anglo-Catholic, Evangelical, Traditionalist or Liberal/Radical. I have not shown empirically that these four groupings are the only possible ones, and indeed it will be seen from Appendix 'G' that I have also considered the interviewees by age, by gender, and by the extent to which they adopted authoritative or dogmatic postures. The churchmanship groupings, whilst (as is demonstrated) never confining the member to the characteristics of their group, have two particular advantages. The first is that the member would readily acknowledge membership of his or her particular group. Thus there was no covert categorization or labelling on the part of the researcher. The other advantage is that the groups reflect a great deal of historico-theological material which goes in part to explain the stances and attitudes of the member (especially true for the Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals).

The members of the parish who belong to the Ango-Catholic group are mostly elderly, and usually, though not invariably, prefer the early Communion Service on a Sunday. They are watchful for the erosion of any aspects of catholic teaching, liturgy,

ceremonial or sacramentalism: for any 'lack of reverence',which they find generally better 'preserved' on these less participatory occasions. A mild controversy arises from time to time over which missionary society to support, and leaflets suggesting reasons for not ordaining women are supplied from the same source. There is a concern that relations with the Free Churches do not become too friendly (disguised as 'Why aren't we doing more about the Romans?'). This group has never quite identified itself at St Andrew's sufficiently to oppose anything in any concerted way and, generally speaking, individual care and attention to its members is enough to evoke a great deal of general support from them.

EXAMPLE OF INTERVIEW WITH AN ANGLO-CATHOLIC: DOROTHY:

Preliminary Considerations:

My relationship to the group of Anglo-Catholics to which Dorothy, in her mid-80s, belongs, is an uncertain one. It is clear to them that I have Anglo-Catholicism somewhere in my own background, yet seem insufficiently pre-occupied with ritual matters, and too interested in ecumenism (including that with the Free Churches) to be the real thing. Both inside and outside the church building I tend to wear the 'wrong' clothes: certainly black is not my favourite colour.I am not a very 'ecclesiastical' person and yet,

confusingly, I know how to be and to behave like a priest when circumstances require that of me. None of this escapes the notice of those who wish to be identified as 'Anglo Catholics'.

Relations with Dorothy are good. Years ago I had sat with her elderly companion as she died. I am 'called in' for regular chats and consultations and to answer on any particular matters, especially to do with the worship, which have come to her attention. Dorothy has remarked that she is unhappy when I am away from the Vicarage.

My expectation would be that the interview allowed an extended opportunity for making requests or protests where things were not being done properly: that is according to Anglo- Catholic tenets. There would be a considerable degree of inflexibility and crossness where change had occurred in the wrong direction: change would be very acceptable where it had accorded with Anglo-Catholic principles and practice.

The life-world of Dorothy centres on the Church. It would be true to say that her religion is her life. It made her very happy, after she sold her house, to move into a 'home' opposite St Andrew's Church, and next door to the Vicarage. She used, many years ago, to be the 'Missions Secretary': almost a personal assistant to the Vicar, in fact. Now she accepts responsibility for looking after the church bookstall and tidying the service books, throughout the church.

THE INTERVIEW:

Areas 1 & 2: service preferred and changes in views:

The interview got off to a very positive start:

> I love the new chapel for private prayer; I've moved my seat now as you know, and I'm getting on better.

For corporate worship,did she prefer the 'old' services to the new?

> Oh no,no,no; I've got beyond that....At 'Rite A' (the newest form of the Communion Service) the other day I had to concentrate on the replies a little bit: but that's my lack, my fault.

Had her beliefs changed at all over the years?

> Yes, I suppose they have; I think I've got broader-minded. I think I was too spiky....Before I was a bit irritated with the services I wasn't used to...call it broadminded or circumstances how you please. But I still prefer the other....

There followed a discussion about the way in which she had changed her practice over receiving Communion: she now received

it in her hands and not directly in her mouth. This had been the result of a sermon by the Bishop which had impressed her."You hold out your empty hands: you come to Him empty; you return filled."

Areas 3 - 5: perception of Church and of God; authority.

The Church was about keeping the faith and doing our duty. It was about trying to grow more, enlarging our outlook about what each bit of our faith really meant: the Creed, for example. She did not like using the word 'spiritual' for that would make her sound pious.

Concepts of God centred very much around the Communion Service:

> I always put myself at the altar where I last received my Communion, before I start my prayers...the things I offered then, or wanted to receive then, are still with me until my next one.

Dorothy used the Bible increasingly and her current reading was building up her understanding of the Church:

> I think that's a failing of the Anglo-Catholic church that it doesn't attach enough importance to the Bible...Father Hudson (from one of her past parishes) said it's a matter of discipline, whether you're getting anything out of it or not.

I wondered whether that kind of discipline had been a burden to her - and she agreed: ....."but I know it's wrong not to discipline myself". Was there a problem about feeling guilty?:

> Well of course Canon Snow (my predecessor-but-one) didn't approve of that. I learnt something different from Canon Snow which I never felt very happy about: he never wanted you to kneel if you knew you couldn't: to make any extra effort: which was contrary to my way of looking at it....I wanted to set a standard that I frequently failed and pull myself up and start again. Do you think that's a bit much for an old woman?!

Areas 6 & 7: Theodicy, and Change in the Church:

Was Dorothy ever assailed by doubt?

> No, not really. I often wonder why I'm not. I think I ought to be.

Questions of pain and suffering and the unfairness of the world?

> No, because I think there's an answer for all those things. I think God can work through things that we do wrong or that are wrong, and it's our job to comply with them. A lot of us can only pray.

When I asked about changes that had taken place I unleashed a catalogue of concerns: the choir now ignored the altar, genuflection had all but ceased.

> I don't know what you teach the children these days: nothing?.... I think we have deteriorated over what I call reverence....people talk in church - I've never heard anything like it in this church - haven't these people got houses in which they can talk?! ....I mean I was taught long ago at St Saviour's you never moved until the candles were put out - that was in 1925, 1926: you see my religion dates back an awful long way, doesn't it?.....I don't like all this peace: now it's taken too far....and that leads me to something else: the Confession: it should be at the <u>beginning</u> of the Communion Service, not halfway through.

I noticed I was becoming a bit defensive by now:

> My religion goes back quite a long way as well: not as long as that, though!

<u>Areas 8 - 10: ordination of women, religious teaching. Church unity.</u>

> I'm going to be terribly frank on this. I think it (the ordination of women) is a physical impossibility.

> Christ is a man. You can look on God as neutral if you like, which I don't. But Christ is a man, and Christ gives and the woman cannot receive unless the man gives. None of us can receive, except from a man. And that's the beginning and short of it all. And I am very against it.

In our concern about church unity we should pay far more attention to 'the Romans', said Dorothy. She thought that the Romans understood why they were Romans better that the non-conformists understood themselves. She had 'had my periods of wanting to turn Roman' , but was advised against it by Father Hudson: since the Romans had their quarrels too. 'I think some of the Anglo-Catholics are more Roman than the Romans are.....I don't think we should accept Communion from the Non-Conformists because we don't believe in their (orders).'

I asked whether she would value a more dogmatic sort of teaching and preaching at St Andrew's. 'Definitely', she replied. People should be reminded about Confession from time to time, as a preparation for Communion. More teaching about the saints' days. Rogation should not get missed out.

It should be automatic....I mean if people are going to carry their presence of God with them, they've got to have some posts on which to hang it.

What about right and wrong: was that a clear-cut matter?

A sin is a sin, but on the other hand circumstances do alter situations...I think it's very difficult, you know, to draw the line....I think I've become more tolerant: that might be it. I've altered a lot these last few years.

AREAS 11 & 12: views of society, politics, self.

Earlier Dorothy had wanted a stricter application of Canon Law in the Church. She felt equally that the law of the land should be applied more strictly: there was illegal picketing, there were people making false social security claims:

It's all breaking the law and causing terrible havoc. If the law isn't right it should be put right....I think the dishonesty - there now, I haven't become tolerant over that! - of the way people get their extra bits..is really..we've become a terribly,terribly wicked nation.

Reluctantly, Mrs Thatcher had done a good job: since there seemed no-one else to do it. She had been wrong to bomb Libya, though; and 'I can't make up my mind about the Falklands'.

She did not consider that she had been an ambitious person: but took things as they came:

> I ran a branch of the chiropodists. I started it. I was asked to go on the Council of Lecturers, but really I hadn't the time because my church came first...I was on committees and so on....I think church people <u>should</u> do it, and perhaps I was wrong at the time.

COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON DOROTHY INTERVIEW:

The approach to the interview required some caution, some suspicion: here was someone who depended enormously on her good relations with the local church and the current Vicar: whoever he might be. She evinced a great wish to be positive at the beginning of the interview. There was a need to please me, and to show she had indeed adapted to new things and was 'less spiky' (her words). She praised the new arrangements for weekday services ("I've moved my seat and I'm getting on better"). If she had to concentrate rather hard on the 'replies' in using the newer forms of liturgy, then "that's my fault, my lack". She was also over- anxious not to sound pious, and apologized if she did. Thus,at this early stage of the interview, Dorothy was concerned to please: to give 'right' answers and to appear moderate, flexible, and tolerant. There was an evident fear that she might not continue to be loved and accepted if she presented herself in an unacceptable way. It was a characteristic of all these interviews, however, that the subject quickly forgot that he or she was speaking to 'the Vicar': genuine views, attitudes and opinions rapidly emerged and only occasional re-assurance was then needed from the interviewer.

The traditional Anglo-Catholic preoccupations with (canon) law and (liturgical) order crept through, and I was lambasted at several points. The altar was ignored by the choir as they

processed past it. Genuflection had all but disappeared (I'm not aware that it was ever much practised in this particular church); there was too much talking before the service.

Despite these and other criticisms, the desire to adapt, not to be left behind, was a genuine one, which had entailed no small effort on her part.There was a great tension between the things she had been 'taught' (the ghosts of Anglo-Catholic clergy and their injunctions from the past constantly haunted the interview), and her own wish to be at home with the present. This caused conflict and guilt: there were standards which she herself was failing to maintain. She ought to kneel for worship because she had been taught to kneel for worship. She ought to doubt...though this was an unlikely piece of received instruction. It might be that she was very aware that others experienced doubt and she wanted to be in tune with them. The sense was stronger, though, that there was a masochistic element to faith which could not be evaded: "I'm a terribly, dreadfully lazy person".

Moral issues were seen to have a certain amount of grey about them. In matters of faith she entertained no doubts ('perhaps there ought to be (doubts)'). There were the expected absolutes in terms of the Church: no ordaining of women because it was impossible; unity meant a striving first for unity with Rome and no concessions to the rest. Her commitments to her church had had to come before the possibility of preferment in her profession,

so that it was true to say that her religion was the most important thing in her life.

Argyle (1958) noted links between 'religionism' and authoritarianism, which I found illustrated in this interview: borne out in the call of this church member for a stricter application of Canon Law, for personal rigour and discipline (she did not like being told by a recent Vicar not to feel guilty about sitting when she was unable to kneel) , and for better law-enforcement where strikers or claimants were concerned. Argyle found the highest levels of authoritarianism among Catholics and religious conservatives. Adorno also noted the tendency to repress unacceptable tendencies in oneself and to show a high degree of conformity and have a fairly rigid personality. I noted all these tendencies in the course of the interview.

The resulting analysis is indeed coherent, but the fore-understanding is challenged by the number of instances of a real success in shaking prejudice off, and adapting to newer ideas. There had been, as I observed, no small effort on her part - but effort is something that Anglo-Catholics know a great deal about.

OTHER ANGLO-CATHOLICS INTERVIEWED

Five other Anglo-Catholics were interviewed. Appendix G shows in summary how they responded to questions under the main headings considered. All insisted on Eucharistic worship in preference to any other. Three, apart from Dorothy, would admit no change to have taken place in their views whatsoever: Ron: "My religious beliefs have stayed basically the same as I was taught...I don't think they've really changed... what I was basically taught by my first vicar". Joan: "No, they've been very consistent..it was a discipline at first: but I don't even think about it now....My beliefs haven't changed." Miss Binns: "...very constant: I've even got an Old Testament Father...a glorious one that rides on clouds and things!"

Perceptions of the Church were consistent: its task was to maintain Tradition,to uphold the sacraments, to preserve the sense of reverence and mystery. God could be "Christ with me", totally abstract Spirit, Heavenly Father, or Christ being made known in the Communion wafer. There was great variation here.

Teaching was mentioned repeatedly as the basis of authority: again, received tradition, perhaps mediated through the words of a preacher. The theodicy was completely consistent: it was not God's fault if people suffered: good would come of it, or God had a plan, or God would sort it all out in the end. We could be

blamed, but not God. "Thy will be done" summed up this approach: faith triumphed over perceived adversities.

Alterations to their familiar church building were received cautiously: criteria mentioned were:"if it accorded with traditional practices" and "if I agree with it"; there was a concern that nave altars, choirs at the side, chairs instead of pews, led to a "loss of reverence": an emphasis which was important to the Oxford Movement, of which they are heirs. In every case there was an insistence that a more authoritative teaching-style was needed: fewer questions should be raised, we should hear more of doctrine and of teaching about the sacraments, more sermons on worship, more on Creeds and Catechism. Miss Binns expressed her point wittily: "I think if you have any doubts yourself you are safer on the questions". Nevertheless: "I'm a great believer in the old Catechism".

Views of this group on the ordination of women ranged from: " impossible" or "never" to "only if they're single and very devout". This was not a cause which would gain much support here. Politics was inconsistent: only one member of the group was a supporter of Mrs Thatcher's Government; two were strongly anti and another (who had wanted more dogmatism in church) felt she, Mrs Thatcher, was too authoritarian. It was exceptional to come across this latter inconsistency, since one of the characteristics emerging from these interviews was the accord between religious and other views and values. Here the comment

had come from Joan, a quietly spoken, retired teacher. There was a sense that it was dominance in women to which she objected: "I wouldn't disapprove of men saying: 'We'll never have another woman as head of the government', quite honestly".

None of this group was ambitious: they were,to a man and woman, 'cautious', 'passive', 'not ambitious', takers of 'no chances' and 'a worrier'. A common characteristic was, rather, to seek to trust God and to depend on his Church. Personal ambition did not accord with this approach.

FINDINGS 4.4: THE EVANGELICALS

This is a group whose membership has been growing considerably in this particular church. Some are refugees from the hostility to them at a neighbouring (Anglican) church; others from the perceived excesses of the main (Methodist) evangelical church in Chippenham. At St Andrew's they have identified an evangelical among the church's staff, and what one of them described as a 'reflective' vicar. (His personal reservations about some aspects of their theology need to be noted where his role as researcher is concerned.) They are keenly committed to the work of the church's mission committee, and to supporting prayer and study groups and generally have brought valuable gifts for the whole church community.

INTERVIEW WITH AN EVANGELICAL: PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS:

There is a need to consider my relationship to two particular groups before embarking on an analysis of the interview with Margaret.

1.With the Evangelicals: Here I am definitely suspect. This particular evangelical churchgoer has a special interest in the Church's healing ministry. She is, by Towler's definition, a 'conversionist' (see above). She will testify to her strong

'personal relationship' with Jesus Christ. She has been dogmatic, at church conferences, about the kind of faith which she thinks churchgoers ought to evince: and expresses this in evangelical terms which concern the primacy of scripture, a high degree of trust and dependence in faith; 'showing more fellowship' ; 'winning others for Christ'; being 'saved', and so on. It is clear that I am not very good with this sort of language; I speak it like a foreigner, clumsily, and without the appropriate conviction. Nor am I either emotionally or intellectually at home with the very transactional language used by evangelicals concerning the nature of salvation, atonement or redemption. My own roots, both theologically and temperamentally are in the 'creation-incarnation' tradition, and owe more to the empiricist and rationalist traditions of Hobbes, Locke or Hume, than to the threads of personal salvation-ism which are held by Margaret.

2. Clergy families: Margaret is, in her mid-50s, the widow of a Vicar who, from her descriptions, seemed to bear some resemblances to me. Though widowed some eight years Margaret still grieves for her husband and for the life of the Vicarage which she shared with him. There might be a need here for some 'hermeneutics of suspicion'. To what extent is a subconscious need expressed to see me as the lost husband: perhaps to protest where I fail to fulfil the role- model provided by him?

AREAS OF RESPONSE:

Areas 1 & 2: service preferred and changes in personal religious views.

The 'Family Communion Service' was the one which 'unites us all, from the tiny ones to the very old'. But she had not always preferred the same services. She had grown up a member of the Plymouth Brethren and then become a Baptist. Anglicanism was at first like 'going into a pagan church'. Brought up in Malaya, one's faith was tightly defined: Christian, Buddhist or Muslim.Dressing up in the Anglican way, bells, robes and incense, and reading services out of a book went very much against the grain.She had come to accept that 'trappings' did help other people, without needing them herself. There had been a personal conversion when she was fourteen: 'I couldn't sleep but I decided in that night that I really wanted to love and serve the Lord'. There had also been a kind of vision: Jesus appearing to her in the guise of her late father; promising never to leave her.

The early experinece as a member of the Plymouth Brethren had left her less dogmatic, she felt, than she would otherwise be. 'I have a lot of grey areas and a lot of questions.' She used to know what was right and what was wrong. Over the years she had come to see that what was right for her was not necessarily right for another. That had left her with many grey areas. 'Things that are said in the Bible: I often wonder how I can cope with them, and how does it apply to my life.' She had always believed that to marry a divorced person was adulterous. Now that there was a

possibility of re-marriage for Margaret herself she was not so sure. 'I have great conflicts over things like this. I don't know what is right and I don't know what is wrong.' Her son's marriage had broken up. 'You know it's not until it actually hits you and comes into your own personal life that you begin to feel there are grey areas and you have to allow people to make decisions for themselves.' Experience, she affirmed, had made her less dogmatic.... 'definitely'.

Areas 3-6: perceptions of God, Authority, and Theodicy.

Margaret tended, she said, to talk more to Jesus than any other of the Trinity. She communed with him much of the time; she talked things over, as with a person sitting with her."That chair is where I've asked Christ to sit and listen to me....or (when I'm in a hurry) it's 'Lord get me out of this mess'."There was a moving account of her recourse to the Bible when her husband suddenly died:

> I was going through the Bible, trying to find something to read that would help, and I came across where God would take care of the widows and orphans and that really appealed to me because I felt so deserted. I said to God: 'If you don't keep this one Lord, don't ever expect me to keep my word either.' I wept buckets...and I got up from the floor and I felt so fantastic that I had a complete session of praise with God for nearly half- and- hour. I just couldn't believe that it wasn't God there telling me: 'You will be

alright,but it might take time' ...that's what really sustained me through all this time.

Margaret wanted more outward expression of this 'praise' in public worship. She would like, she said, to see people being taught to praise...then a certain sense of freedom would come into them and they could express their worship in a more fulfilling way. "And if they get hooked on praising God like that, the walls of Jericho will tumble down within their own lives as well. And I believe that because I do it."

Areas 7-10: altering the Church,teaching, ordination of women, unity:

There was enthusiastic support for the ordination of women: because 'it's like a marriage within the Church', and because there were those who would not or could not talk to a man, and because it had been her own experience that she had been able to minister alongside her husband and 'enter homes he could never get into'. The family analogy worked where ecumenical things were concerned as well: the divisions, though they shouldn't really be there, were like individual families within which we related. It was the attitude towards one another which counted, and the divisions were not the problem. She admitted, however, that this could be just an easy way of covering the flaws.

In preaching and teaching there should be more 'where do you stand?': more challenge. Mandy, our evangelical deaconess, did

this rather better than I did, she admitted. An awful lot of Anglican vicars trod the easy path. They sat on the fence, instead of standing up to be counted.

> I don't know why, because if they are for Christ they must be for Christ and state what Christ has done for them and give living experiences from their own life and testimony and things like this.

Areas 11 & 12: political and personal views:

Margaret was proud of Mrs Thatcher because of her achievement as a woman. She was over-criticized simply because she was a woman. Many of the criticisms were unjustified. As far as National Health was concerned we should be made to look after ourselves a great deal more. The suicide rate was high in Scandinavia because there was no will to fight and work: everything was taken care of. Living was actually about fighting for the will to live.

Margaret was a trusting person, who often knew that she was being taken for a ride, but risked the consequences and didn't worry. She saw herself as someone who took risks, finding in them the kind of challenge which drove her on. When things were uncertain she 'backed up very hard against God'.

COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON MARGARET'S INTERVIEW

There was plenty in this interview which made it clear that I was indeed talking to an Evangelical. Characteristic were the stress on a personal relationship with Jesus; on an identifiable conversion experience; on praise and expectation in prayer 'so that the Walls of Jericho will tumble down within their own lives'; on the need to challenge people about their faith and what it means for them. The criticism of this particular church and its vicar was undisguised and offered quite freely and without hostility. All that was contained within my fore-understanding and was unsurprising.

The sense of any strong identification of me with her late husband did not occur. What was present was the recurring emphasis on the family as a model and on the importance of the woman's autonomous role in society generally. Thus the family was the model for approving the place of the woman in ministry ('it's like a marriage within the Church') and to some extent for justifying church denominational divisions ('like individual families within which we relate'). This also accounted for her preference for the Family Parish Communion service, where other evangelicals (see chart) preferred non-Eucharistic worship.

Here was an evangelical who, whilst not abandoning her evangelical commitment, had been much affected by the experiences she had been through. Because she had been a member of the Plymouth Brethren and then a Baptist, there were aspects of fundamentalism she could not accept. Widowhood and her own son's divorce had modified her stance over re-marriage and the

absoluteness of morality. The very un-evangelical word 'grey' had crept into her vocabulary.

I sensed some conflict and contradiction between the Thatcherite ideology and this profoundly compassionate personality. Someone who had personally been so deeply wounded, yet clearly not embittered, could only talk uneasily about letting the poor care for themselves:

> It does seem that there are an awful lot of people in this country that are very well off...I don't see why they should be so well off while there is so much poverty and unemployment in our own country.

Thus, in all, I found that whilst Margaret's was a modified kind of evangelical Christianity, nevertheless her beliefs and attitudes illustrated well some of the characteristic stances of the evangelical. The basis of this particular kind of certitude lay in the nature of the encounter with scripture. It is to the Bible that the evangelical has recourse in times of sorrow or joy. It is with the Bible that the evangelical must wrestle when doubts and questions arise.Margaret's words: 'Things that are said in the Bible: I often wonder how I can cope with them' illustrate well the dilemma for evangelicals whose reason or experience have led them beyond the limits of a simple view of the Bible's authority.

INTERVIEWS WITH THE OTHER EVANGELICALS:

The three other evangelicals I interviewed were all women: Carol and Lyn in my youngest age group: Marjorie in the oldest group. Here there was no stated preference for the Parish Communion Service: 'any' service of worship was appropriate: though in fact three out of the four did attend the Parish Communion regularly. All four, unlike the Anglo-Catholics, emphasized the importance of change and development in views. In particular Marjorie felt that she had successfully adapted to the ceremonial practices of a non-evangelical church; but it was growth which had to occur. Carol:"You should always be developing and improving and learning, because you can't ever know everything....if you read a passage in the Bible three-hundred times you'll see it different every time". The Church needed to be more 'challenging' (that word cropped up many times) , less conventional, helping people on their personal journey of faith. It needed to be clearer with its message: Marjorie said: "I have felt that any non-Christians or nominal Christians coming (to a service) might not find anything especially helpful...I feel that they wouldn't understand....but then the Church of England is rather like that".

There was a consistency about the perception of God: God was personal and present and near. The focus was on the man, Jesus, although Lyn wanted to stress that her very personal image of God was a gender-less one. In every case it was the Bible which was

the source of authority. Marjorie: "..daily readings which I do, and something lights up, and you follow it up,...and if you're with anybody you're really in fellowship with you discuss it and learn from them." Evangelicals sought this special fellowship with other truly converted Christians. There was a sense (occasionally judgemental and exclusive) that not all who came to church were Christians. Carol: "I don't think the Spirit's allowed to move in the church...'cause too many people just sit back on their laurels and think: 'Oh well, that's it, I'm a Christian'...I suppose it's complacency more than anything."

Tragedies and disasters were, except for Carol, not to be blamed on God. God still loved, was still to be trusted, through all things. God understood, where we failed to understand. But Carol:"I get quite angry..and then at times I think 'I shouldn't be doing this'....I wouldn't say it stops me believing, but it makes me ask questions, if that makes sense." It did indeed make sense, and highlighted the tension evangelicals could experience where they refused to ask such questions, or felt it to be inappropriate. "You just have to pray about it", said another.

The evangelicals wanted more teaching, more authority, more challenge from their church. The teaching should be about Jesus and firmly rooted in the Bible. It was not a matter of dogmatic preaching but (Lyn and Carol) 'allowing us to work it out for ourselves'.All were in favour of the ordination of women. Lyn saw that there was a 'great loss of talent'. All favoured Church

unity in some degree, though Marjorie favoured letting each church develop its own traditions: which we should all try to understand and value.

There was no consistency in political matters: two favoured the Thatcher government, two did not. But all four felt themselves to be risk- takers. Carol was both a risk-taker and ambitious; Lyn admitted she was reckless as well as ambitious; Margaret was a passive person who took risks all the time; Marjorie spoke of 'taking risks in faith' , whilst seeing herself as a passive kind of person. Certainly there was no inhibition in evangelical Christianity as it was here demonstrated, in thinking of oneself as taking risks: perhaps Marjorie best characterized the stance of the evangelical when she spoke of 'taking risks in faith'. Unless you did this you would not grow, would not develop as a Christian. If you too no risks it was a clear indication that your faith was lacking and you were being insufficiently challenged.

FINDINGS IN TERMS OF OTHER KEY VARIABLES:

Findings according to gender(see Appendix G,charts 11-13)

Interviews took place with 18 women and 12 men, broadly reflecting the higher proportion of women than men in the congregation with which this study is concerned. This is not a quantitative study, but it is worth commenting on differences and similarities which emerged, whilst bearing in mind the disproportion in numbers. 80% of the women felt that the basis of authority lay in the clergy and in their preaching. Only 40% of the men felt it to be so, preferring discussion, reasoning, or the total context of a church service.

Three-quarters of the women felt that their views and beliefs had changed or developed over the years: one quarter that they had remained the same. 60% of the men had 'changed' and 40% had remained the same.

Faith was perceived as a journey or a pilgrimage by 30% of the women, whilst 50% saw it in more static terms. For half of the men it was a journey, and for the other half of them it was something static.

God was perceived in human or physical terms by half the women; as abstract by the others. 50% of the men expressed a physical concept of God, and 50% an abstract one. 45% of the women were 'worried' or 'concerned' about reconciling evil with a God of love. Only one of the men expressed concern.

How should the Church teach and deliver its message? One third of the women wanted more dogmatic teaching and preaching. 45% of the men wanted this. 65% of the women specifically did NOT want more dogmatism. There were 50% of the men who felt the same.

65% of the women were happy about changes which had taken place in their church, and the same proportion of men. One third of the women disliked the changes, as did 25% of the men.

The ordination of women was confidently supported by 65%of the women, and by 56% of the men. 18% of the women opposed it, and 16% of the men.

There was enthusiasm for further efforts towards unity with other churches from 18% of the women and from 8% of the men. 45% of the women admitted indifference and 56% of the men likewise.

How did these church members feel about Mrs Thatcher and her government? 78% of the women were opposed to her and 56% of the men. 30% of the women supported her and 40% of the men.

50% of the women were risk-takers. 25% of the men saw themselves as such. 24% of the women thought that they were 'cautious' , as did 60% of the men.

Findings by age:(see Appendix G, charts 1-5)

The respondents are grouped as:

a. those under 45 (13)
b. 45 to retirement (5)
c. the retired (12)

The numbers in each group are a recognition of the proportion of the congregation they represent. Thus the largest proportion are presently either under 45 or past retirement age.

Changes in views or beliefs: a.10 b.5 c.6 - the greatest change having occurred the the middle-age group and the least among retired people.

Faith is a pilgrimage or journey: a.5 b.5 c.2 - again, and predictably from the previous result, this view prevails among the middle-age group, and least among the elderly.

Perception of God in human, personal, or physical (non-abstract) terms: a.5 b.3 c.6. (This is a difficult one to assess, since those who think in traditional Trinitarian terms often think of God in the abstract and yet of a personal Jesus. For some, especially evangelicals, the person of Jesus is the main focus of thought about God and the one to whom prayer is addressed.)

Authority residing in clergy or their sermons: a.7 b.2 c.6. The positive result seems high (more than half) in the youngest group; perhaps unexpectedly low among the elderly. This may reflect, in general terms, some loss of the clergy's credibility among elderly people and relate also to their greater reluctance over change in the church (see below). The younger people have, many of them, attached themselves to this church relatively recently, and in response to things which they find that they like. However, there are many other factors: evangelicals look first to the Bible; catholics and traditionalists look to the liturgy, to the services as a whole (cf Towler: op cit).

Concern about suffering and a God of love: a.9 b.0 c.0. Here there is a remarkable contrast: it is a matter of concern to three-quarters of the youngest age group, but the traditional answers seem to satisfy all members of the remaining groups.

Three of the middle group seemed to have thought about it particularly: four of the oldest group. But the youngest group seems far more aware of the issues and less prepared to accept the answers given. (It also seems likely that this latter group has been less subjected to the given answers: few could have experienced the kind of Sunday School education described by Jack (see above).)

Alterations in the church - changes to physical arrangements or worship and those who favour them: a.11 b.5 c.4. This is a predictable result, with the younger members mostly in favour (all but one). The middle-aged group, less predictably, is totally in favour; of the elderly the majority 'prefer things as they were'. Not all were as extreme, though, as Jack (see above) who opposed all change on principle.

More dogmatic religious teaching: a.0 b.3 c.8. The youngest group unanimously favoured a spirit of discussion and enquiry, and, whilst seeming to favour sermons, did not wish to be preached at. A high proportion of the middle and elderly groups felt they would be helped by more authoritative teaching and less raising of questions.

Those in favour of the ordination of women: a.9 b.5 c.5. Thus the majority of the youngest group, all the middle group, and a minority of the elderly, favour this. The result accords closely with that (above) of the attitudes to change, and this would, of

course, be a very substantial change. It is possible that the resistance to change is a more significant factor in opposition to the ordination of women that people are either aware of or prepared to admit.

Supporters of the Thatcher government were: a.0 b.1 c.9. This suggests that a significant shift may be occurring in the political allegiances of those now attending church. What might indeed have been termed the 'Tory Party at prayer' has become, in both middle and younger-aged groups,' opponents of the Tories at prayer'.

Who were the risk-takers? a.6 b.3 c.7. This was a high proportion of the elderly, and reflected, in some cases, an ideological commttment (eg. evangelicals taking 'risks in faith'). Perhaps a surprising number of the young saw themselves as cautious, though one admitted to being 'reckless and ambitious'.

Findings by desire for authoritative/dogmatic teaching:(see Appendix G, charts 14-16)

a.those wanting it (11)

b.those rejecting it (16)

Views or beliefs have changed: a.7 b.12

Faith is a journey: a.3 b.8

Perception of God in human or personal terms: a.7 b.4

Concerned about suffering and a God of love: a.0 b.10

Things changing in the church not favoured: a.5 b.1

Ordination of women favoured: a.5 b.12.

Support Thatcher: a.7 b.1

Self as risk-taker: a.5 b.8

5. CONCLUSIONS

The above findings indicate a complex and varied pattern of belief and uncertainty about belief in the parish concerned.The interviews with James, with Dorothy, with Margaret and with Jack are selected so that by a detailed analysis this complexity may be illustrated, and so that light may be cast on the nature of some of the encounters and attitudes within the parish.

The challenge to presuppositions;

Towler (1984) described the 'ideal-types' emerging from his study of the 4,000 letters received by Bishop John Robinson after the publication of 'Honest To God' (Robinson 1963). Of special relevance to this study were the 'conversionist' type and the 'traditionalists' (see above) for Towler found that these manifested an especially high degree of certitude in their claims and their responses. These types were represented respectively in my study by the interviews with Margaret and those associated with her in the evangelical group, and by the interviews with Jack, and those associated with him in the traditionalist group. Towler contributed substantially to the fore-understanding of each case, and I have shown in the 'Findings' chapter that many

of his observations were noted and confirmed in the course of this study.

In some instances, however, pre-suppositions were challenged. Jack seemed, in many respects, a 'hard-case'-traditionalist, predictably opposing change in whatever respect or degree it occurred. Towler had observed:

> The whole corpus of beliefs, practices and values have about them the quality of the sacred. There can be no question of degrees of belief in this type of religious attitude: it is all or nothing. (Towler: op cit p.93)

Despite his subscription to this ('...recall any changes for the better? - no, I can't!') Jack emerged as being strongly in favour of the ordination of women in a way which would necessarily imply some substantial changes to familiar patterns:

> Communion and all that sort of thing: there's no reason why they shouldn't, is there?....I mean, I don't see why a woman can't put over her point-of-view from the pulpit.'

I also noted, in the case of Jack, an unexpected support for black people in Britain, and for assistance for development in the Third World.

Michael, likewise a strong traditionalist, with thirty years as church-warden behind him, also confounded some expectations. There was a sense, upon which I have commented, in which his vision intruded upon and modified his traditionalism. There was a need to 'forward God's Kingdom'. Change was therefore, under certain circumstances, acceptable: 'if it brought the Church to the people'. Both Michael and Doug, another of my traditionalists, supported the ordination of women.

Presuppositions were challenged by the evangelical/conversionists as well. Towler wrote of these:

> We must be clear that this is religious conviction at its very strongest: it is not an opinion, or a religious preference, but a certainty about the way the world is....(op cit p,43).

Margaret clearly related to the ideal type of the conversionist, as I have shown, and yet daclared: 'I have a lot of grey areas, and a lot of questions'. Hard events in her own life and in the life of her family had demanded that questioning and uncertainty be allowed, yet without diminishment of her faith, it seemed. Experience, however, had made her less dogmatic, as she affirmed. Similarly Carol, despite her strong evangelical stance, was able to be disturbed by human suffering through tragedies and disasters. She admitted to becoming angry. It didn't stop her believing, she said, but 'it makes me ask questions'.

If it is the case that pre-suppositions about traditionalists and conversionists were challenged: that they did not always reject change or refuse to admit doubt or uncertainty, then there were also such challenges from the Anglo-Catholic quarter. Dorothy, staking her claim for 'dogmatic teaching' at St Andrew's and declaring that 'a sin is a sin', nevertheless observed:

> Circumstances do alter situations. I think it's very difficult...to draw the line. I think I've become more tolerant: that might be it.

I have shown above (p.172) that there were other ways in which Dorothy modified expectations about the attitudes of a hard-line Anglo-Catholic.

In the liberal/progressive group came pre-suppositions about an openness to change, a questioning attitude, a lack of dogmatism, and a wariness of authority. It came as a surprise, therefore, to hear James declare:

> I can't stand wishy-washy views: feeble, weak-minded, liberal, pusillanimous, pedestrian (views).

It was a surprise, also, to find someone who so obviously valued his own intellectual and critical skills, admitting to an apparently almost total failure to apply much reason or reflection to his religious faith or practices. I have noted that other aspects of the fore-understanding about James were also

wrong (p.146 above): the interesting and un-orthodox ideas about God did not materialize. (He professed himself, at the end of the interview, most disconcerted when I had asked about his understanding or concept of God.) The anticipated strong support for radical change in church structure, layout, or worship did not develop, either.

Can one generalize from the results?

The questions arises: how generalisable are these findings?, and what are the strengths and weaknesses of the approach? For reasons which have already been discussed (p.116 above: the heterogeneity of religious people, their refusal to fit into religious categories, etc.) this field is one where questionnaires and statistics seem more than usually unsatisfactory. Thus the decision was taken, as outlined in the chapter on Methodology, to attempt a qualitative study,to examine and to endeavour to gain insight into the thinking and the belief-world of certain individuals. These individuals conform to the model supplied by the group to which they profess to belong in important respects, yet to gain privileged access to their thinking by means of detailed interviews is to understand that in other respects they do not conform. Where a person's life and experience has been brought to engage with their world of religous belief and practices, then that life and that experience will modify the claims, will distort the typology, and ultimately

will defy the attempts at classification. To discover this is to recognise that the seemingly enormous gulfs between different types of believers are bridgable. People are not simply impacted irrevocably in their particular corners. There are reasons why they stand where and as they do, and those reasons therefore are capable of being shared and understood by those who hold a different position. This conclusion is, I believe, a generalisable one. To explore the inner, as well as the outer world of people's religion,is to find both inconsistency and individuality.

It is to invite the possibility of mutuality; the capacity both to work and to worship together in open acknowledgement of the differences.

Varieties of Certainty and Doubt:

This study has considered those who, on the one hand, stay close to what has been described as the 'stable state' (Robinson: op cit), holding fast to the assurance given by dogma and the various forms of authority which assert that dogma. It has considered those people, on the other hand, who admit (or even relish) doubt, and for whom religion is much to do with reflection and the raising of questions and uncertainties.

Clearly there are many degrees of certainty and doubt, and there is therefore a need for a framework of description which can

distinguish the differences: for example, there exist among those I interviewed: aggressive certainty (Jack), quiet assurance (Marjorie Binns), willingness to entertain other views (Peter), the holding of beliefs strongly but tolerantly (Josie), the capacity to suspend judgement (Elizabeth), of being tentative whilst living by a certain value-system (Tim), of being extremely uncertain what to believe (Sue), or of doubting to the point of scepticism (Sally). All these and other varieties of certainty and doubt are represented in this study.

In the concluding chapter of 'The Need For Certainty' (Towler op cit) Robert Towler offers such a framework of description and understanding. We had a need to maintain a delicate balance between the desire for stability and the desire for change. Novelty and stability belonged together. One or the other might predominate in the values embraced by a particular person or culture, but neither was tolerable without the other. There was comfort in order and there was exhilaration in change,but each was necessary, and most of the time they existed together in a continual and almost imperceptibly alternating rhythm. There was a sense, however,in which change was natural, and a stable order was not. There was, Towler reminded us, nothing in our individual lives, in nature, or in human societies which was not changing all the time.Time itself would be meaningless, were it not that it marked change. Nevertheless the need for a secure framework remained a pressing one. In practice we were able to live in the flux of daily change because it followed certain predictable

patterns. Our dependence upon order became apparent when life was thrown into chaos. Disorder continually broke through. Thus people discovered frameworks of understanding to assist them in accepting the unpleasant shocks when they came. A religious view, in particular, saw a world more orderly and more surely ordered than the eye unaided by such a view. Such order and regularity promoted a feeling of security. Discipline and authority as under a restrictive political regime were accepted not in order to create a better world, but because it was more comfortable: a return to the security of childhood. Religion was characterised by its orderliness.

Towler argued that the need for certainty was also manifested in the search for meaning. This was closely related to order, and religious belief averred that there was indeed a purpose at work.

The search for order and the search for meaning might both lead to a religious view being held with certainty. And here Towler suggests a possible framework for understanding the varieties of certainty and doubt. It might be, he says, that the extent to which certainty was claimed for religious believers depended upon the extent to which a person needed order and certainty, for reasons of temperament or circumstance. Towler went on to distinguish between certainty and faith. Faith suggested trust,confidence, reliance and hope (as demonstrated in the quiet assurance or the tolerant strength of belief in some of those I interviewed). By contrast, certitude suggested a rejection of the

search for knowledge and demonstrated a need to believe that something was the case (as Nazi Germany wished its citizens to believe that 'Aryans' were intrinsically superior to 'non-Aryans', or the Republic of South Africa that whites were superior to blacks). Doubt was an intrinsic part of faith; certitude demonstrated the need to escape from doubt.

Towler's framework of description allows us to see how many degrees there may be on the scale from doubt to certainty, and offers a possible explanation for the differences 'of temperament or circumstance' which will attract those who are conventionally religious to one or another particular typology of belief.

Relevance of the conclusions to the life of a parish church:

To a vicar who is concerned that a parish church be used as a gathering place both for those who are confident about their Christian beliefs and also by those who are trying to make sense of belief, the results carry a positive weight. Here is a community made up of widely differing stances (both religious and secular) and many levels and degrees of commitment. As such it has been described as a 'community of disagreement' (Alan Billings: private communication 1986)).

The disagreement does surface: we have noted that the detailed arrangements for worship can be matters of great weight and passion for some; of indifference to others. The classic divide of the Reformation over the human condition and the means of salvation is present on the one hand in the evangelical call for a challenge to personal conversion, and on the other in profound reverence for the sacred mystery of the bread and wine.

It is easy to provoke disagreement: a weighted sermon opposing the ordination of women to the priesthood, perhaps; an overstatement of support for homosexuals which offends both the Biblical morality of the evangelical and the sensitivities of the traditionalist. Non gender-related references to 'men' are objected to by the feminists, whilst traditionalists find such changes to the written word irritating and unnecessary. Preachers who refer to 'us Christians', or who either insist on telling people what to believe or assume that they all already know what they believe are a great offence to many who have come with open or enquiring minds.

In this study has emerged both the passionate desire ('lust'- Towler op cit) of some for certitude and the stubborn refusal of others to remove the question marks or quench the spirit of perpetual enquiry.There are those who think they are right and those who know that they are. There are those would say with Bultmann 'Though I were to find his bones it would make no difference to me' , but in the sense that they still could profess neither conviction nor commitment. Indeed, then, the potential for disagreement is enormous.

But this study is also based upon a community. It is reasonable to describe it as such because all do agree to use the same building, belong to the same (and therefore be the same) church. Most attend the same service on a Sunday, and it is hard to think of anyone who is so alienated as to be excluded totally from any particular occasion or gathering. All recognize and receive ministry from the same staff, and there is no group as such who would not regard that staff as their friends as well as their pastors. It is also a community because disagreement can be aired and explored in meetings and in conferences, where members of all groups would naturally be present.

Value and implications of the study in the sphere of pastoral ministry:

The study was intended as a pastoral tool, in order to make possible a more effective parish ministry. (There are also implications which are relevant to a wider area of concern and ministry, which I shall briefly comment upon.) In this final section of the thesis, then, the attempt is made to illustrate some of the ways in which the endeavour has been valuable for continuing ministry among those in the parish where the study took place.Whilst it would certainly not be appropriate for every pastor working in a parish to undertake research of this nature, I am clear that my own work has been assisted and facilitated by it, and also that any endeavour by clergy critically and qualitatively to review, to assess and to evaluate their field of work is enormously valuable.

a) working with Anglo-Catholics as a minority group within a church community: The interviews with Dorothy, Marjorie, Noel, Nell, Ron and Joan provided the opportunity to encounter their theological and other perspectives in some considerable depth.

Dorothy's emphasis was, as has been shown above, on safeguarding catholic tradition, on knowing Christ in the receiving of Holy Communion, and on the importance of personal discipline in matters of religious practice. Alterations, then, to the form of services or to the interior layout of a church would always run the risk of interference on at least one of these levels. Discipline might be eroded. Reverence might be lost. Catholic tradition might not be safeguarded. Ecumenical priorities should lie primarily, if not exclusively, with Rome. 'Teaching' and the need for teaching is often referred to by Dorothy: this means, when clarified, teaching in matters of catholic faith, doctrine and spirituality, and in the ritual and liturgical 'reasons why'.

Marjorie also described (catholic) tradition as 'precious'. She had considered that her beliefs had never altered and that there should be more dogmatic teaching, with fewer questions raised.

Noel's emphasis was on preserving the sense of reverence and mystery, Nell's was on moving within the tradition, and Ron's was on maintaining catholic tradition. The preferred service of worship was Holy Communion for all members of this group.

Thus temperatures had risen for example over the installation of the new nave altar. What was at stake? With the tremendous emphasis this group placed on the sacrament of Holy Communion, on appropriate

reverence, including especially reverence in the actions concerning the bread and wine of Communion and the receiving of Communion, and the spiritual and liturgical traditions surrounding it, there was anxiety over the removal of the opportunity to use the original altar at the East end of the church. Its raised and distant position had emphasised the otherness of God, the 'Lord I am not worthy', the ultimate unapproachableness of this mystery, the holiness of the occasion. The holding to catholic tradition had been expressed, for these members, in the remoteness of the priest, in the locating of the mystery of a divine presence with him in a 'holy of holies'. Could it be other than irreverent that all and sundry could now approach the new altar; that the people now passed it without even bowing? 'And genuflection has all but disappeared', Dorothy complained: 'There has been a loss of reverence'.

Yet the retro-chapel was immediately welcomed by these members, and they use it a great deal.It has given them a new proximity to the place, at this East end of the church, where the bread and wine of the Communion are kept 'reserved'. Removing the choir from this area, though an assault on tradition as such, has nevertheless meant giving it back to these people. Several members of this group have made a transition from attendance at the main (nave altar) service on a Sunday morning, to the earlier (retro-chapel) service. Despite encouraging an unwelcome division in the pattern of Sunday churchgoing this has allowed this minority to feel the mystery of the occasion as they need to experience it.

The close encounters with the members of this group throughout the study led to a general strengthening of my relationships with them. It enabled me to see the human face of this particular focus of reaction to developments and changes in the church, as well as to increase my understanding of why some things were opposed and others welcomed. Irritation and frustration in me gave way to a far deeper and more sympathetic understanding of their position and the nature of their complaints and response. This could clearly to some extent be achieved through adequate studies in Church history and catholic theological tradition. But the strong bonds of good relationship and affection with the members of this group is undoubtedly in part due to the research: to the interaction with the members and to the understanding of one another which we were able to gain through the interviews: to the time and opportunity which were given these participants to express themselves and above all to be listened to and heard.The latter is an important by-product of the qualitative research encounter which must not be overlooked in this pastoral context.

b) <u>working with evangelicals as a minority group within a church community:</u> What seemed important here was to enter into the evangelicals' special and particular relationship with scripture. Liturgical matters, debates about the ordering of a church's interior: these and other matters of great concern to the Anglo-Catholics were not of primary significance. But the focus on Jesus Christ and the relationship claimed with him is primary, and is sustained through an expressed need for a constant study of the Bible, for 'fellowship' with other believers, and through prayer which is addressed to and

focussed on him. This was made very clear in the interviews with Margaret, Carol,Donald and Marjorie.

Shortly after I had completed the interviews for this study the church concerned was made available to ten local primary schools so that they might, on Divali Day, and in the course of various local observations of One World Week, enter into the celebrations of this great Hindu festival. Accordingly, and after a long period of preparation in the schools, displays were set up, and a whole range of creative activities was presented in the church: dance, mime, cookery (Indian style), painting, clay lamp-making, and so on.

It became clear in the succeeding days that the occasion had been monitored by one local evangelical, a recent comer to our congregation. A network of other like-minded Christians was contacted, and the ensuing correspondence and debate involved the bishop, two local M.P.s, the press, local head-teachers and teachers and multi-cultural advisors, and many others. A torrent of evangelical displeasure, indignation and anger had been released. It has to be said that the opposition came exclusively from evangelicals, and also that those evangelicals represented among the congregation and in this study expressed only moderate concern. Nevertheless, the qualitative research experience of entering into the thought and belief world of this group proved absolutely invaluable in handling a potentially very explosive and difficult situation. At one stage legal action in the ecclesiastical courts was proposed by a local

evangelical councillor, together with a suggestion that the church now needed to be re-consecrated.

In order to handle the hostility, the potential for division and breakdown in relationships and the personal hurts consequent upon such an outbreak of religious feeling there was a need:

(i) to understand the evangelical's stance in relation to other world religions and the issue of the uniqueness of Christ

(ii) to comprehend how scripture will be used (selectively) to defend these claims and to make others appear to be mounting an attack on the integrity and the fundamental truth of the Christian faith

(iii) to be familiar with the paramount role of the church building for evangelicals as a location for (solely) Christian prayer and encounter with Jesus Christ

(iv) to have grasped the theological basis of the evangelical's claim to know salvation through Jesus Christ, and how this will increase the sense of exclusivity and of the need to be untainted by contact with unbelievers, except when endeavouring to convert them

(v) above all to be in a positive relation to and dialogue with the minority group of evangelicals, so that there is sufficient trust for difficulties and differences to be sorted out

(vi) perhaps, with hindsight, not to embark on specific activities in such a mixed community, that sensibilities are going to be so strongly aroused, at least without counting the cost of doing so first!

The encounters with the evangelical members who formed a part of this study opened up all these possibilities and awarenesses to a greater or a lesser degree, and made the task of damage limitation, reconciliation, and subsequent learning considerably more possible and effective.

c) working with traditionalists as a minority group within a church community: This was a parish church which had been in dialogue with its traditionalist members for many years. My predecessor-but-one (together with the increasing number of church members who sought renewal and change) had successfully replaced pews, and the related tradition of reserved seating, with chairs and a more flexible and open use of the church building. Traditionalist opposition to changes or reforms in the liturgy had at that time been too great to be overcome. My predecessor had successfully introduced the new (1982) Service Book on Sunday mornings but been defeated by a rallying of traditionalist opposition (much of it from outside the church membership itself) to the introduction of a nave altar and to the exchanging of the 'Peace' in the course of the Holy Communion service. (Ballot forms intended for churchgoers had, I was informed, been distributed widely throughout the town.) I had been able to see in the introduction of the nave altar and the exchanging of the 'Peace', but experimentation with alternative forms for a declining 'traditional'

Sunday Evensong had been overwhelmed by traditionalist opposition.The removal of the choir to its new position had been only narrowly approved, though subsequently accepted without any further complaints or opposition.

Here there has clearly been a potential for considerable difficulty and divisiveness within the church community. There is an ever-increasing need to understand and to accommodate the traditionalist point-of-view as these members become greatly outnumbered by a steady influx of newcomers, and as they themselves become older and decline, relatively speaking, in numbers.

There were a number of insights and benefits to be gained from undertaking this study among representatives of the traditionalists at this church. Having in mind Towler's observation that belief for the traditionalist meant to 'cherish and hold dear', I was able to explore at close quarters what this actually meant. Reasoned argument was at its lowest ebb here, as when Jack, whilst admitting that the change to a later time-of-service was a help to older people, simultaneously protested that 'no changes were for the better' (p.152). Reason did indeed not overcome the cherishing and holding- dear of the very familiar. The following points were clarified for me in the course of the dialogues with traditionalists:

(i) Arguments frequently disguised as historical ones (that which, it was claimed, had 'always been the case') were in fact about that which was subjectively familiar and comfortable: most frequently about

recollections of the way things had been during the youth of the respondent.Thus at no time did any of the traditionalists wish to consider how the church interior might have been or looked before major alterations and re-building occurred in the 1870s, though those changes were undoubtedly far more radical than any visible changes taking place today. It thus becomes clear that an important pastoral tool in working with traditionalists is to explore with them how it was in their own earlier years: what it meant to them then to go to church and to engage in worship and its surrounding activities. (It was after I had listened to Jack, one of my severest traditionalist critics, speaking about this area of his life, that he suddenly volunteered to share with me a tape-recording of speeches made about him on the day of his retirement.) Since the period of this research his hostility and opposition have not been maintained, and he and the other traditionalists have been uncomplainingly loyal and friendly. (Jack's wife has begun to come to church again.)

(ii) There has been a strong 'proof of the pudding' element in the continuing responses of the traditionalists. Michael had commented,in his interview, on the increased numbers attending the services (in the mornings, at least). He had linked this with his notion of 'forwarding God's Kingdom', and it had vindicated a number of the changes that had been made. Michael perhaps has a firmer grasp than the others of the fact that there is little point in cherishing and holding dear that which is in the process of decline and ultimate disappearance, and without doing anything about it. He has recently quoted figures which have reminded others, traditionalists among them,

of the relatively tiny numbers of churchgoers there were fifty years ago at St.Andrew's. Traditionalists are responsive to this kind of argument, especially, perhaps, if they hear it from among their own ranks. Clearly a significant reason for the muting of opposition to change from the traditionalist ranks is due to the sense that growth (whether or not that alone is consonant with the values of the Kingdom!) and not decline or dissolution is the order of the day.

(iii) The qualitative research process does not admit of confrontation, but by its very nature of understanding, of listening, of relating, and therefore also most probably of concession. The concessions have clearly been an important part of the process of change and the acceptance of change. Thus my predecessor-but-one had removed the pews, but conceeded that he could not change the liturgy. My predecessor had changed the liturgy,but conceeded that he could not have a nave altar. I had taken responsibility for introducing the nave altar, but conceeded that traditional Evensong must remain. It becomes clear, from these encounters with the traditionalists, that concessions to their perceived needs are of vital significance. I did not have the sense that change was impossible for them to bear: the contrary was the case. But the awareness that their feelings had been acknowledged, and that 'not all had been lost' was most important. Some of their battles needed to be won.

(d) <u>working with a progressive majority in a church community;</u> This group within the study was clear about its preference for the Sunday morning Parish Communion Service. Little strong support would be

found here for preserving (or altering) a traditional Evensong or for considerations affecting the Anglo-Catholics' preferred 'early' service. The characteristic outlook was of flexibility, doubt and questioning, toleration, rejection of extremes, a desire to learn, and a wish to experience what had been claimed as truth. All this stood in contrast to the evangelicals' claims to Biblical authority, to the Traditionalists' holding to that which was dear, and to the Anglo-Catholics' endeavour to safeguard catholic tradition in the church. Faith was perceived by these members and described in terms of a 'corporate journey', a 'personal pilgrimage', 'something which evolves', as requiring a less convention-bound Church, as being about an encounter (first of all) with other people. Thus scripture and tradition were in some sense subordinate to the desire to persue truth through reason and personal and corporate experience. There was also a strong preference in this group for 'leadership from the back', for a clear emphasis on developed lay ministry (especially with a need to develop this among women) and shared decision-making. Clergy were to offer an 'enabling' ministry and learning was best done through 'discussion', 'by raising questions', 'in non-didactic ways', through 'care and support', 'not by the book','undogmatically', and by 'exploring rhymes and reasons'.

It was important to have these latter aspirations set out, in the course of the interviews, and to recognize how directly they stand in opposition to the expressed needs of at least two of the other groups (Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals) for 'more teaching'; indeed it was important to be able to clarify the different meanings being given by

members to the word 'teaching' and the demand for it. The Evangelical means recourse to the Bible: constantly, through the exegesis of its text, to be taught its truth as the word of God. (Progressives could be encouraged to give much more priority to the study of scripture; Evangelicals would never, on the other hand, accept a scaling-down of this priority.) The Anglo-Catholic also demands 'teaching': and s/he means that there is never enough explaining of the ritual side of things, nor of the importance of sacramental tradition within the Church. (Progressives and Evangelicals will accept and even welcome a certain amount of this, but then it will become highly irrelevant to the task in hand, as they have construed it.)

As these differences become clearer, in the course of such a study as this one, the pastoral implications can be seen to emerge. If the Progressives are strong, and increasingly predominant within the one community, and if the views of the Vicar as appointed leader of that church community are most in sympathy with these views, then great care has to be taken. There will be a need to care for those whose views can increasingly easily be marginalized. The Traditionalists can be dismissed as belonging in the past, and having nothing important to bring or to contribute from that past.The Evangelicals can be disregarded as Bible-obsessed fundamentalists, who live not in the real world of multi-cultural pluralism and the greyness of difficult and ambiguous moral decisions, but in a pious and archaic cultural world of two thousand years ago, with nothing to offer from their urgent insistence that scripture be taken more seriously. Anglo-Catholics can be relegated to those services and occasions where they

feel at home and where their eccentric ritual observances may be carried out to their hearts' content. In all these cases the minority group's members may ultimately be 'unchurched' by progressive attitudes, and what was a parish church may take on the exclusive characteristics of a sect, ready only to serve the interests of its own preferred members. Once again, then ,the Church-of-England 'game' has been played: we are this or that sort of church. 'If you want something different you must go somewhere else.' The pastoral implication here is that this game must not be played in the name of 'progress', any more than in the name of anything else that the Church of England happens to represent. Moreover, where it is pointed out to those who consider themselves to be the Progressives that they have the capacity to do such a thing it becomes their clear wish to be more inclusive, and more open to those with whose style of membership they disagree.

(e) implications relevant to a wider area of concern and ministry: Further pastoral implications from this study are suggested by the fact that any endeavour to understand differences within a congregation, in the sphere of conventional religion, will also be relevant to the task of working with differences which exist between congregations.This would be true, notably, in the ecumenical field: and the attention of many pastors and church members is taken up with the task of ecumenical relationships. One of the anomalies of the Church of England is clearly that it contains within it pretty well the entire spectrum of theological positions which can be adopted by Christians. Thus, to come to grips with the co-existence, here, of

Anglo-Catholics, Traditionalists, Evangelicals and Progressives, is to be dealing with the same issues which confront the ecumenist. How does s/he live and worship with members of neighbouring churches where there has been a history of ignoring one another, or of sharing a little common ground without ever coming to grips with the real differences: those issues which are to do with the interplay between scripture, tradition and reason, their relative prominences and the differing approaches to them? It is these considerations which, following the pursuit of this study, have led the congregation concerned to engage in a formal ecumenical agreement with the neighbouring churches, and to take more seriously than ever before the task of ecumenical relationships, and the difficulties which are involved in them. If those difficulties (and possibilities) already exist within the congregations (and certainly between the congregations) of Anglican churches, then there already exists a ready resource of experience for dealing with the issues which arise between different churches.

Dogma, authority, and religious reflection: the sense of the need for any or all of these will continue in the various members of this parish, and many other parishes like it. The conclusion of this thesis could be construed then as a plea, both eirenic and ecumenical, that all such needs be taken seriously, be articulated and be thoroughly understood: and that it is the task of the vicar-turned- researcher to equip himself for that task.

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A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX A: THE WINDSOR STUDY

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES THE CHURCH FACILITATE PERSONAL GROWTH?

(Fifteen interviews with people about their sense of whether or not the Church facilitates personal growth.)

1. Way in to the interview

How far back does your contact with the Church go? (with any church?). How were you brought into contact? Was there a time when it first started to mean something important to you? (or when it ceased to mean anything important for you?)

2. Continuity in your life

Do you view life as a steady growth? (Note where they think growth takes place usually - at work? in relationships?) (Have you ever gone backwards, in your view?)

Or have there been leaps forward - perhaps one in particular? If so was the Church responsible? Especially if there has been a leap forward have you been able to fit together the bits of your life? Do you reject, condemn, devalue, severely judge, your earlier life? Do you believe God perhaps does this, concerning you?

3. Specific areas for growth - Change

Discover obliquely by asking about reactions to changes in or outside the Church how they have learnt to cope with change. Key Q: Has the Church given them any framework or model for accepting and welcoming change? Can they dialogue with the tradition?

4. Dependency

To what extent do they depend upon the Church in order to get through in life? e.g. on being known by name by the Vicar and knowing the Vicar? Oblique approach: how important is it to you that your Church should have a Vicar, and why? How would you feel if your Church had to be closed? Had

to be pulled down? What would it do to your Christianity? Would you be happy to worship in somebody's house?

5. Holiness and Sanctity (About the sense of being set apart for God

What does the idea of vocation mean to you? Do you have any particular sense of being called by God or having been called by God? How far should a Christian be different from the rest? What is a Holy person in your view? (Have you become more Holy through what the Church has offered you?

6. Crises

Have they had to face any major crisis in their life. Talk it through. Were there any resources from the Church to help? e.g. in making sense out of pain, suffering, evil - either personally or worldwide. (Theodicy). Were there people from the Church who helped?

7. Suffering and hardship in others and in the World

I want to get at their openness here to other people's needs. Questions about unfairness for other people and whether they are able to do anything about it. Neighbouring, looking after a relative, unstinting services to voluntary organisations, Third World, racial groups, hospital visiting, unemployment? Has the Church influenced or increased their normal openness to such problems? Have they found a sense of the Gospel to set people free?

8. Common Religion

Many - perhaps most - people have beliefs in God, efficiency of prayer, rites of passage, the afterlife, good and bad fortune, good and bad behaviour, acceptable and acceptable people etc. Has the Church changed or modified these beliefs? Do you still cross fingers, touch wood, wonder about Friday 13th? How do you think of the meaning of Holy Communion? How do you view intercessory prayer?

9. Coping with the darkness

This is 1984. Do you see the world as an evil place? Are people more bad than good or v.v.? Do you see yourself as more bad than good? Where does badness, evil, seem to you to come from? Do you blame the Devil? How do you cope with the shadow side of yourself? With sin? (Are you against it?)

10 Self and others

Explore the relative importance for them of: a) Close relations with other people b)Getting yourself "right" c) Getting Society put right (the kingdom of God as the seed growing within and also as something to be sought here on earth).

11. Facing doubt and asking questions

Do you see doubt as permitted for a Christian? Do you think it is common? Is the Church a place where doubt can be expressed? - faced up to? Do you wonder a lot about the meaning of life, death? (twice a week or twice a year) Have you ever asked a priest or minister questions about belief - either yours or his/hers?

12. Sticking with it

Have you found at any time in the past (let alone in the present) that your Church's policies, teaching, Vicar's personality etc are unacceptable to you? Are you inclined to a) grit your teeth? b) leave? c) argue? (key point: are you prepared to learn through struggle and to keep on learning when the going is difficult? Does religion have to be plain sailing or else you reject it?)

13. Awareness/Consciousness raining

Have you had any moments of really intense experience, moments of special awareness, times when the penny drops and the meaning of everything becomes clear? When God becomes real?

14. Emotions and their acceptance

Do you have to hold your stomach in in Church? Is the Church a place for expressing feelings and emotions i;n worship? Do such things have a place? Does the Church help us to explore, handle, our (often conflicting) emotions about ourselves, other people, God, tradition, renewal, certainty and doubt etc, etc? Is the Church a place with the means to accept you as you truly are? (sinner and saint?)

15. General Growth Question

Would you say that in any general sense the Church has helped you to grow as a person? - or has hindered you from growing as a person?

16. After switching off

What did you think about the interview - general reactions?

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire-approach to interviewing: tried, and rejected after pilot study. Found to be too restrictive, and the responses correspondingly limited.

SECTION 1 ATTITUDES

1. God A. Do you ever struggle to get an adequate picture of God in your mind? B. Is God more of a force, and awesome strength, or a person with whom you can be quite familiar?

2. Jesus A. Was Jesus unique for humanity? - of a greater significance, perhaps, than any other person in historay? B. Was he, in some sense, God?

3. Trinity A. Do you affirm this belief, or regard it as an irrelevant complexity? B. Have you ever tried to explain it to someone?

4. Human Nature A.Are we fundamentamentally good or bad? B.Should we be thought of as immortal souls? C. Do we need to be forgiven by God for some of the things we do? D. Is there any reasonable explanation for human evil? E.for pain and suffering? F.Are you puzzled or worried or is your faith challenged at all by their existence? G. Must one make a choice to turn away from sin?

5. Salvation A. Do you hope to be saved? B. from what? C. for what? D. by what?

6. Church A.Should the church play a role in national and civic life? B. in the inner city? C.Should the church be lively and active? D.Can we know about God from insights which are nothing to do with religion?

7. Prayer A. Does prayer work? B. Is it possible to heal people with prayer? C.Do you pray privately? D. Can one communicate with the dead? E. Are 'set' prayers best?

8. Judgement A.Is humanity improving or declining? B.Shall we be divided into good and bad at the 'end'? C.Did God strike York Minster?

9. Morality A.Has God given a set of absolute commandments? B. Which moral issue should top the charts for a Christian? C.How does one find out what God wants?

10. The Bible A.What is the Bible? B.Are there parts of the Bible which could well be excluded?

11. Affiliation A. Do you attend study groups or other activities to do with the Church? B.Are you a member of any Church-linked organization?

SECTION 2: CHANGE AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF

1. God A. Does your thinking about and picturing of God fluctuate? B. Do we need stimulating to think in new ways about God? C. Does the changed language of the A.S.B. help? D. Should the term 'men' be replaced by 'people' etc. - where that is what is meant?

2. Doctrine A. Should the creeds be re-written to suit modern thought and understanding? B. Should the Creed be said once at every service? C. Is Bishop Jenkins right to express doubt about some aspects of Christian belief? D. Did God strike York Minster?

3. Church A.Is it the task of the Church to safeguard the faith, primarily, or to search for meaning and truth in a confused world? B. Was the nave altar in St Andrew's easy or hard for you to accept? C. Are you in favour of the ordination of women? D.Have there been too many or too few changes at St Andrew's? E.Are church buildings a help or a hindrance to Christianity? F. Is all we do in worship provisional and temporary, so that we should be prepared at any time to do without it? G. What price would you pay for Church unity? H.Should St Andrew's have remained the parish church of Chippenham? I.Has anything at our church made you angry or disappointed you in recent years? J.Should the Church say what it believes and insist that people believe it?

SECTION 3:SOCIAL ATTITUDES

1. Has criticism of the police over inner-city violence been justified?

2. Would you like to see black people sent home?

3. Which of the present political leaders is best equipped to lead the country at the next election?

4. Has President Reagan contributed to the peace and stability of the world?

5. Should nuclear weapons be withdrawn without waiting for others to do the same?

6. Do you regard homosexuals with distaste, sympathy, indifference, or something else?

7. Should the emphasis in society be on freedom or on control?

8. Are men unfair to women?

9. Do you agree with those who advocate strong sanction against South Africa?

10. Are those who work for Greenpeace heroes or fools?

11. Is the attitude of our country and people to world development reasonable or selfish?

12. Should our prison system concentrate on punishment or reform?

APPENDIX C

(looking for Towler's 'ideal types': exemplarist, conversionist,gnostic, deist, traditionalist)

(This approach was also rejected because members had more to say than the style of questioning elicited.)

1.GOD: Do you think of God more as a creative force , or as in some sense like a human person?

2. JESUS: Is focussing on the person of Jesus the most important aspect of Christianity, ar are there ather even more significant priorities such as loving one's neighbour?

Was Jesus the divine Son of God, or the greatest man who ever lived?

3. THE TRINITY: Is it a help to express Christian belief in terms of the Doctrine of the Trinity, or does this confuse and complicate faith?

4. HUMAN NATURE: Is human nature fundamantally good or evil?

Are material things more or less important than the spiritual?

Must one make a choice to turn away from sin?

5. SALVATION: Does the notion of being saved make sense to you?

Is it important to work out one's views about heaven and the life to come?

Is salvation by Jesus alone?

6. THE CHURCH: Should the Church play a role in national and civic life?

Should the Church engage in political debate?

Should the Church's emphasis be on action or reflection primarily?

Do we know God from insights outside religion?

7. PRAYER: Is it possible to heal people by prayer?

Do you pray privately?

Can one communicate with the dead?

Are 'set' prayers the best?

8. JUDGEMENT: Overall is the world becoming a better place or not?

Do you agree with people who have claimed that God did strike York Minster?

Do you agree with people who have claimed that we shall be divided into good and bad at the end?

9.MORALITY: Has God given a set of absolute commandmants?

Is there any single moral issue which stands out above all the rest today, for Christians?

10.THE BIBLE: In understanding and interpreting the Bible, does historical and cultural context have to be borne in mind?

Could parts of the Bible usefully be excluded?

(There followed questions similar to those in the previous questionnaire.)

APPENDIX D

(Final pilot study with broad, open questions, and allowing follow-up with supplementary questions and freedom to explore the topic. The questions below were used as guidelines but not necessarily strictly adhered to. The last question, essentially frivolous, produced some interesting answers, but as it was not appropriate to ask it of everyone its usefulness was limited and the responses to it are not considered in the analyses.)

1. PRELIMINARIES: kind of church service most favoured, most helpful?

2. PAST RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT: Have your views and religious beliefs changed at all over the years?

Can you give me one or two landmarks?

Would you say that the institution of the Church conveys a sense of a journey,an adventure, a pilgrimage, to be undertaken?

Are there any particular ways that the Church has assisted you along the way?

3.SOURCE OF AUTHORITY FOR BELIEFS: Does any particular understanding or view of God seem especially to attract or interest you?

In determining what you believe fo you turn first to the Bible, or to your own experience, to Church teachings and sermons, or where?

Are there any aspects of the world as you find it which (challenge or) undermine your faith?

4. CRITICISMS OF THE CHURCH AS ENCOUNTERED: Do you find Church worship too tradition-bound, and are any changes you have experienced recently too few or too many?

Should the Christian faith be taught with more authority and assertiveness?

What do you feel about the ordination of women question? Are there any other issues to do with women in the Church?

Is Christian unity possible, and should we do more to achieve it?

Do you ever wish it were possible to express more religious feeling or fervour in church? What about personal feelings too?

Should the Church be more spiritual, other-worldly, or more down-to-earth and relevant?

What is the most helpful sort of sermon,for you? What do you look for?

5.DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT: Are you fairly content with things as you find them, Church-wise, or do you try to change things, or have you, for whatever reason, opted out?

Would you personally like to go further in some area of Christian belief/practice? - prayer, feeding the world, personal discovery, knowing the Bible, theology, saving souls, personal salvation, working for justice?

6. POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND PERSONAL ATTITUDES: Has Mrs Thatcher done a good job, generally speaking?

Is it true that our ability to compete in world markets must be our major priority as a nation?

Do we have our approach to defence and national security about right?

Are there problems in our hospitals or schools about which you feel strongly?

Are there any particular sorts of discrimination or injustice in our society about which you feel strongly?

Have the problems of the developing nations pressed you into any particular kind of response or action?

Where would you place yourself on a scale between, say, 'extremely ambitious' and 'very passive about what happens next'?

Where would you place yourself on a scale between, say, 'very trusting of others, credulous, inclined to accept whatever sounds plausible' and 'highly sceptical and suspicious of others' motives'?

Are you a risk taker? Where between 'extremely cautious' and 'I'll try anything'?

How do you cope with uncertainty? Where betwween: 'it makes me desperate, insecure, frustrated, ' and 'I enjoy it or welcome it as a challenging aspect of life'?

7.OPTIONS: If you were to be stuck in a lift with one of these people, with which would you prefer it to be? - Billy Graham, The Bishop of Durham, The Pope, Mother Theresa? (And which one would you like to push down the lift shaft?)

APPENDIX E

SOME CONSIDERATIONS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Teresa Hagan:"Interviewing the Downtrodden" (1976)

Hagan challenges much of the conventional wisdom about interviewing. Interviewing construed as an objective, eliciting device with principles drawn from the natural science paradigm is not tenable, and introduces gross distortions.
But when an alternative, phenomenological approach is adopted then the defects can be regarded as strengths and as a means of obtaining relevant data.
The natural science paradigm has caused many questions to be raised about the validity of interviewing: for example how to cope with time delays between an event and its re-telling; influencing responses with leading questions, and so on.Hagan wishes to see the interview as a "social encounter of a particular kind" (p.336).The researcher participates in the interwiew through the way the interview is carried out, and thus in constructing the data. What a respondent says is a result of shared meanings and expectations operating in the interview itself.Hagan rejects the positivistic picture of isolated individuals merely responding to each other in a controlled social context.

For Hagan the interview is not merely to "put flesh on statistical bones". It is "a main means of access to the respondent's life world".It aims to obtain rich and detailed descriptions of the respondent's own concerns, opinions and actions in his or her own words.The subjectivity of the researcher is "the very means of access to the meaning and themes which make up the qualitative description" (p.339).Hagan stresses that where interviewees are uncooperative, the researcher must reconsider the client's concerns, and his or her own relevance to them. "Rather than approaching respondents with what are thought to be technical and manipulative interviewing skills, there is a need for an open, genuine and sympathetic approach which treats the interview as a personal encounter.". An example of the way respondents do not treat the interviewer as an objective reporter is the frequent requests for validation: "I don't know if this is what you're after,but....." Answers are thus modified by what the interwiewer is understood to want. Hagan stresses that "value-free questioning does not arise as such, and it is more important to try to elucidate the respondent's viewpoint as understood by the researcher".

In conclusion Hagan's emphasis is that the researcher will be getting 'edited highlights' displaying what the person wants displayed. There will have been a reluctance to talk about things which are not socially praiseworthy, and it must not be pretended otherwise."The criterea and methods of the natural sciences cannot be applied unproblematically to the concerns of the social sciences which require their own appropriate modes of investigation."

RICHARD HYCNER: SOME GUIDELINES FOR THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA(1985)

Hycner seeks to sensitize the researcher to a number of issues in analyzing interview data. The first part of his paper consists of a number of guidelines for phenomenological research. The second part considers some of the issues involved.

Transcription of recorded interviews should allow for the noting of non-verbal responses and 'para-linguistic' ones. Margin notes might achieve this.We listen not to prove theories, nor merely for the literal words, but to discern the inherent meanings.In order to respond to the whole we must suspend our reaction to individual parts of the interview. We must 'bracket' our pre-suppositions. In seeking a sense of the whole attention must be paid to intonations, emphases, pauses and so on.Hycner recommends a rigorous process, a stage of going over every word, phrase, sentence, paragraph: seeking the literal units of general meaning.Statements from the interview are then selected according to their relevance to the research question.These are called units of relevant meaning. Are there clusters of units of relevant meaning? Is there a common theme? The importance of context, and of 'creative insight' on the part of the researcher is stressed. The overall aim is to reconstruct the inner world of experience of the subject.

Hycner lists a number of issues relevant to this type of research. Randomness may be challenged by the natural scientist: particular types of people may even have been sought for this study: those who have had the particular experience which is being investigated, or who are able to articulate it. But this research endeavours to illuminate human phenomena, not primarily to generalize it. Scientific randomness might keep the researcher from investigating 'in the depthful manner necessary' (p.15).The phenomenon must dictate the method.

May such results be generalized,then? Hycner maintains that "in the process of investigating the experience of (even) one unique individual we can learn much about the phenomenology of human being in general". There is a long and respectable history, even in experimental research, of studies done with a sample of one.Results, whilst not strictly generalizable, can be "phenomenalogically informative".

Questions are raised about the accuracy of this research approach. We shall be hearing a retrospective viewpoint, perhaps altered by time. But,says Hycner, even a concurrent account is filtered through the medium of language.And a retrospective account may allow the advantage of a fuller reflection on, and integration of, the experience. Confabulation is said to occur (filling out gaps of memory with invented material to please the interviewer). It can be argued, says Hycner, that this assists the

perception of the way the participant experiences and thinks he or she experiences the situation.

Hycner considers whether the researcher will subjectively influence the data. Like Hagan (op cit) he points out the particular kind of objectivity which is sought here. Objectivity means "trying to be as comprehensive as possible in responding to the whole phenomenon". Then is the method VALID: does it study what it intends to study? Hycner stresses the importance of this question. Validity checks can be built in: first with the participants - are the results valid for them? Then do they ring true for the researcher? They should also be evaluated by the research committee, and against the current literature: then finally by the scientific and lay community.

REPLICABILITY is an important aspect of research, yet there are bound to be differences between researchers. The results from another investigator will never be wholly different, though.The test is whether another researcher, adopting the same viewpoint as the first, could also see what the first has seen.

At the core of phenomenology, says Hycner, there is a deep respect for the uniqueness of human experience, constantly " instilling novelty and unpredictability into any attempt totally and comprehensively to capture the phenomenon of human experience".

PETER ASHWORTH: ADEQUACY OF DESCRIPTION - THE VALIDITY OF QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

If the argument that qualitative research delivers adequate descriptions is to be upheld, then this must depend upon the correctness of the research procedure. Peter Ashworth asks what can be done to produce non- arbitrary descriptions by means of qualitative research, and whose validity can be demonstrated. He offers the anti-positivist argument that people act for reasons which are meaningful to them, given their own definition of the situation they are in. Orthodox approaches to social research attach supreme importance to the rigorous testing of hypotheses, and for qualitative research the theory of interpretation - hermeneutics - provides a model of how understanding is reached and makes it possible to test the adequacy of descriptions.
Research procedure must include the fore-understanding with which the research is approached, the investigation, and the reflection on the initial approach.

Ashworth rejects the proposition that qualitative research is merely a preliminary to the (quantitative) research process (Smith and Manning 1982). That argument has to be undermined: what is being quantified? Is it

the stuff of which numbers are made? Rather, the meaning of a situation is a 'gestalt': a total configuration which cannot be broken down into distinct variables. Thus Gurwitch (1964) has drawn on Gestalt psychology to show "the interwoven structure of the field of consciousness" (p.4). Merleau Ponty (1962) expressed the view that the positivistic aspproach was naive and dishonest: taking for granted the aspect of consciousness, without specifically mentioning it (p.4). The search must be for the meaning of the situation for the person, in order to understand their activity. Qualitative method might indeed be appropriate where the meaning of the person's experience is of no interest at all to the researcher; otherwise not. Further, the data is predominantly talk, which is viewed in Ashworth's perspective not merely as a physical response to physical stimulus, but as potentially informative concerning the meaning of the situation. "The researcher/researched relationship is, thus, absolutely central to the research process" (p.5).

A discussion follows of validity and the need for adequacy-checks (by means of the hermeneutical circle (pp 6-19). How is it to be ensured that prejudices do not determine results? 'Hermeneutics' originally means the science of the interpretation of ancient documents: especially sacred ones. It has come to refer to the broad area of the interpretation of any text: eg. a dream in Freud's "Interpretation of Dreams"(1976).The hermeneutical model for checking adequacy entails fore-understanding, interrogation of relevant social phenomena, and reflection on the fore-understanding.

"Every seeking", said Heidegger, "gets guided beforehand by what is sought" (Heidegger 1962). Fore-understanding (pp 8-11) entails the recognition that researchers are not innocent of interpretative concepts. We choose interpretative models: and, at a less rational level, we demonstrate emotional and motivational fore-understandings. The researcher into dance-musicians and their audiences should declare that he is a jazz pianist (p 10). The black sociologist need not shy away from a study of racism because 'it would be too heartfelt' (p 10). Ashworth's own students all have significant personal involvements in the studies that they persue (p 10 footnote). Whether the researcher adopts the 'hermeneutics of suspicion' (like Freud) or the 'hermeneutics of meaning- recollection' (like Bultmann where his existentialist fore-understanding is used to clarify mythological ideas in the New Testament): in either case the approach of the researcher to the social world is profoundly important. These fore-understandings, Ashworth insists, should be as explicit as possible, and reviewed critically as to their "effectiveness in generating adequate descriptions or their role in risking the validity of the findings" (p11).

What then of the interrogation of relevant social phenomena (pp 12-18): this means data collection and interpretation? In sampling there is also a hermaneutic circle: fore-understanding guides research interactions(and tells us how far the interviews are giving us new insight and when to stop) and the interpretation of these interactions leads to revision of the fore-understanding, until such revision becomes rare, when the data-collection

may stop.
The distinction between interview and analysis is an artificial one: they should be intermingled. In the interview both researcher and researched present themselves, attempting to be seen as something or other, negotiating their identities. The relationship of the researcher to the group of which the researched is a member is of primary importance. Variables cannot be controlled (Hagan 1986) , and 'non-judgemental responsiveness' may be a denial of the genuine human encounter involved. Even so we are about more than the outcome of the prejudices of the interviewer. There will be constant scrutiny to detect what is actually going on. Psychoanalytically, there will be defence, transference, countertransference, resistance, and counterresestance going on (Schafffer 1983; Fordham et al, 1974). All encounters, as Ashworth points out, have their deeper dynamics (p 14).Is the researcher threatening...or nurturing? Striking a balance between the hermeneutics of suspicion and of meaning recollection may mean a balance between conflict and co-operation. Suspicion and conflict are relevant because there may be unwitting misinformation, evasions of the truth (ploys like literalness,silence...), lies (informants may need checking) and fronts (personal or group conventions about presentation concealing the true facts). Normal social procedures are therefore adopted which cope with conflict, and encourage collaboration.

In the interpratation of data there will also be this mix of suspicious (analytic) and meaning-recollective (empathic) interaction with the data. The one seek out obscurities and gaps in the interview data. The other feels and senses the situation the member is in. Both modes are necessary to interpretation.Wertz (1983) requires of the researcher immersion in the world of description, avoiding imputing the researcher's own views and expectations.There will be a dwelling in order not to pass by statements or activities without careful review. ("Why is this thought to be a proper response to that question?") Special 'enthusiasm' for the mundane is needed to understand what it means that this is a taken-for-granted reality in this member's thought world.There may be suspension of belief and intense interest where it is asked what kind of world this must be if this kind of viewpoint is adopted. And there must be a turning from objects to their meanings: to the life world of the person and the meaning of the situation.

Among the skills Wertz looks for in the researcher are the ability to see how things link together in this life world, to set the responses (existentially) into the context of the person's normal life, to notice recurrent themes and their meaning in the person's life, to detect the significance of moments of unclarity, and to enhance interpretation by using models of role, self, identity...as hermeneutic tools.

Finally Ashworth considers the third phase of the hermeneutical circle: reflection on the fore understanding. In terms of Heidegger's hermeneutics we are trying to show that the description of the social world we have achieved is "not merely a consequence of the prejudices which were brought to the research at the start"(p.19). Coherence itself will be an important measure of validity,but immeasurably strengthened where the fore-

understandings were open to challenge. "The key thing is explicitness in fore-understanding, and reflection at each point in the research, but especially at the end on the conceptual and other bases from which the work began" (p.19). Ashworth considers the proposals of Schutz (1962) and others (Harre and Secord 1972) for testing findings by going back and asking the members of the social group under investigation. This would not be appropriate, Ashworth indicates, where the hermeneutics of suspicion have been employed. Members reactions, Ashworth concludes, may be "valuable in certain circumstances - but need to be treated gingerly" (p.21). Appropriate also to some kinds of research is the proposal of Schutz that the researcher should be able to communicate with members of the researched group in a way which is natural and member-like, on the basis of the understanding reached in the research.

APPENDIX F

EXAMPLE OF AN INTERVIEW
THE INTERVIEW WITH JAMES

M The first question is to ask you what sort of church service you most favour? What kind of service to you respond to as opposed to those which perhaps leave you not particularly moved.

J I don't think there's any particular one, I think it depends on, on my mood. Um, which sounds a somewhat selfish reason for going, that you're going simply to sort of find something to match up with how you're feeling. Um, I mean I can just think back, to say I think perhaps three examples. And they are all totally different. Um, one would be the, the college chapel where there was a choir of obviously international repute and I just have never felt um, quite so uplifted, er, through the music really I think.

M I used to have to go to an adjacent college for that. Not yours.

J It's er, it's the only time I thought the roof was going to er, rise. And er, there weren't that many of us there. It was quite staggering. Um ... there and, and one has been here, on occasions, when er, in a sense it was really quite a quiet occasion on a, on a morning 10 o'clock and I think the readings had been particular, because sometimes the readings session, section of it is the bit I, is the bit I, if you like, hang onto throughout.

M Mmm. It's the variable bit isn't it?

J And it's the variable bit. Um, and there just seemed to be, there just seemed to be some fantastic readings with, somehow on that occasion, time in between to, to think about them, that on other occasions, now that's done and on we get, on to the next hymn and it, there was just really I suppose, I think it was the first, the first time there had been that built in, um, built in time.

M Is that more a sense of there being space than of actual thinking time, because surely there can't have been that much actual thinking time?

J So, space meaning ...?

M A sense that we are not rushing on.

J It was the sense that you were being invited to, to contemplate what had been said. Um, which I, which hadn't really ever happened before that somehow the ceremony had been so um, continuous.

M Yes. And the third example?

J Um ... well it, I think back to this village Lambton in um, Lincolnshire, where we used to go as a family, and, er, there, it was an extraordinary Georgian building, quite beautifully preserved and that you'd get twenty of us from this local village and that, I just remember um, somehow just the, just the um, the naturalness of it all, the fact that there you were and so that you could see through this perfectly er, framed Georgian windows, er, you could actually see from your

pew, because there were these locking doors, and I and my brothers would obviously fight or else have fits of the giggles as um, as the local farming types would er, would be er, would be er singing particularly, there was one bloke whose singing just couldn't, it just released the whole, giggles and just seeing the sheep grazing um at the same time

M Three very different sorts of worship, I'm just trying to think what that doesn't cover. I mean it almost covers the spectrum of Anglicanism doesn't it?

J I would think it does. I mean I, I have, I could, I s'pose I could think of three horrendous memories.

M Just as sort of briefly, that would be interesting, yes.

J And it would sort of show you the sort of line I take I think.

M Mmm.

J One was when I sang for Peter Jezzard in his choir in Bath briefly. St. John's Bath, was the church.

M Yes, I know of it.

J And I thought it was such a, a backward looking shrine to um, well principally we seemed to be worshipping, worshipping the man himself; the vicar himself. There were about twenty of us turned up to sing some really superb material and there were two in the congregation. And he used to dress up and have incense pouring out of every nook and cranny and I just, I just er, I can't remember whether Peter gave up because I think he was moving anyway, but whether one gave up because

Peter was disappearing or whether because I was just so, so shocked by that. And, I remember, I remember he told us to er he gave us specific instructions to go and demonstrate against the abortion bill and er, it really tied in with how I saw life.

M Er, the other?

J I remember was a, was a gathering of all the groups in Lincoln in the cathedral and I think I went back after a year at university and there was, there were two friends from the sixth form who, who'd joined and we gathered in the, in the group. Er, we met each other and we were asked to do a group work exercise and sit in circles, and pray, and it was, it was, I found, it was just a bit too on the CICCU side of things. We would sit in a cirlce and um, pray for God to do some really quite extraordinary things for them. But I felt very uncomfortable. And um, it was, I know now it was more an emotional outcome, an embarrassment than a, than an intellectual, though this is not how I see things, it was a, this is getting chummy in a way I, I don't feel, I don't feel like at this moment.

M And your third horror story?

J Oh dear I think I've been, I've been too clever I think.

M (Laugh) Tried to balance up too nicely! Ok, that, that'll do. Would you say that your religious beliefs have changed or developed at all over the years or stayed pretty consistant?

J (long pause) I'm afraid I would have to answer they've they've stayed consistently shallow. Um ...

M Well you made the value judgement, not me.

J They, they disappeared entirely for a time through laziness rather than through anything else. Um, they, I can remember the day of confirmation and I can remember the communion service for, the feeling of the communion service for three Sundays after being confirmed. And I, I have a very vivid memory of those four times um, but I, I'm afraid, looking back it was laid on a fraction too thick then. And so I have to, I have to regard that as, as a phase of a, of an enthusiam er, a somewhat unthinking enthusiasm.

M Has your experience of the Church been of a set up that encouraged great expectations in people? You know, has it led people to feel that there was somewhere to go if one were willing to try and um, take up one's bundle and go there? Or do you think it's, on the whole, an institution which says, just come and keep doing this and that's all they expect of you?

J Do you mean by take up the bundle, a more radical um, stirring um ... ?

M No, no. No, I was talking about really an inner journey rather than what one might do outwardly, as an expression of it.

J (long pause) Mmm, 'cause I think those, I might come back to the other one, the actual what one might do ...

M Mmm, Ok, yes.

J ... but um, I think it's always been presented as an inner as a challenging inner journey. I don't think I've ever got the feeling, you know, just turn up here every Sunday and um, and er, and er you'll be alright and everything will be statically the same. Um ... How, how you actually, convert that into change, I mean I, it .... I s'pose you're not, yes, it had been pretty passive. Because I mean you only make it, you only so of, turn it into a feeling for ourself and a, and a development of an idea of a growth in your own thinking if you're given a chance to, to spark the ideas off other people and um, sad, I think sadly, that has only, that, that happened far too late er, in my, in my own family, which of course was sort of inextricably linked, but somehow we, we were not encouraged to question and to do, to say outrageous er, critical things, at an age when we should have done. Um, get my younger, next brother down on this and I mean I think he and I both have occasionally groused that, that it was because there were very much younger children in the family as well, that we were, we were kept er, away from those topics. I remember even in, you know, the question of divorce was, was a question for um, mumbled secrecy between parents rather than ...

M Definitely not for the breakfast table.

J Not for the breakfast table. And yet, yet I don't consider that they were, my parents were entirely alone, among those, characterised by that. I think not having, possibly not having sisters ....

M How does that relate to an inner journey? That fact that one was not discussing the issues er, everything going on, meant that somehow one didn't kind of get into the deeper things?

J Mmm.

M Yeah.

J And, and that, um, there wasn't; there wasn't a foundation built up er, that um, somehow would be tolerable, would be understanding of, of internal change. Um, I mean undoubtedly the biggest strain was, was the return from university to, to home.

M Wasn't the understanding of the internal change because there was never any opportunity to articulate it?

J Yes.

M ... er, or because it wasn't expected that there would be such a thing as internal change?

J I, I think a little of the latter.

END OF SIDE ONE

J There were no, there were no church youth groups, there were no church um, discussion groups. So it was, it was you know ...

M And then you mentioned right at the beginning of this bit of discussion um, outward expressions of belief and, and um,

forms they might take and you wanted to say something about that.

J Well, I, I, I think that that is where ... that is where is has been a, a description of a passive, er, the message has been er, just turn up and it will be alright.

M Yeah.

J Um ...

M As opposed to ... ?

J As opposed to the, these are, these are the problems and this is what your expression of your commitment could actually do. You could actually, you could actually do something about them I think that is, that is, there are two factors in, in this one. One is a feeling now of, of a great sense of frustration that somehow, er, things could be shifted a bit more quickly than they are.

M You feel that here?

J No, I mean just that it, it's epitomised here I'm sure but it would be no different here than anywhere else where ... I'll just give a straighforward answer; every time there are intercessions, fine we can all pray for those who are nearest and dearest and, specific things that are personal, but any time someone says, um, Northern Ireland or The Grain Mountains, I feel like standing up and saying, "Well what are we going to do about it? Here we are, we're about 200 people we could actually do something now." Singing a hymn is going to do absolutely nothing about any of these things, and in half an

hour's time we're going to be quaffing a cup of coffee and we're going to be off, and here is somehow an opportunity missed. I don't know. I've just felt that on so many occasions.

M So your comment about there seeming to be too little opportunity to give expression to what we're claiming to believe or believe we should be doing that would apply just as much here as anywhere. I mean there, there really don't seem to be enough opportunities, you're saying that.

J Mmm. The um, I, I don't know what it is that's got in the way when I, when I was in the sixth form at school I went and er, worked in a psychiatric hospital. I did three, I did virtually the whole of the summer holiday once and um, week-ends. And I just don't see, I don't see myself doing it now. I was, I was doing things then that I just couldn't try to do now. Something has um ...

M Something about your level of altruism.

J Mmm. Very er, that, that has concerned me. There was, there was quite a, quite a, you know, I was quite good at that. It carried on, I mean I went and organised some um, did a lot of visiting at Fulbourne and the er, group there and er, it hasn't, hasn't carried on. I'm at, ... I'm, no I've never jumped at things like CND or um, an actual political party um, it would always, it would, it would be something small I think rather than a big issue like that.

M Have you got any particular picture of understanding of God that um, you tend to hang on to or that makes particular sense to you out of the enormous range of different possibilities?

J (long pause) No.

M Have you ever found yourself er, encouraged to explore that sort of area? I mean whether it was at confirmation time or before or since?

J (pause) No.

M No?

J I think um, I don't know whether it's saying, I don't know whether it's answering the, the first question the way, the way that's meant, it, it, certain ... I would say, I would, I would describe the closest senses of the work, the working of God would be in um, either, either through seeing the way others, certain other people have, have lived and behaved um, or in certain moments when I've been near to nature. It sounds pretty, I'm afraid it's pretty romantic and er sounds fairly romantically described, I don't, I don't feel very proud of those.

M But if you haven't explored very much um, sort of, concepts of God, is it because you've been impervious to the sort of prods to do so from language or imagery and symbolism or from individual people er, or is it because um, Graham Greene once said he left the Anglican church because of the paucity of the image, imagery and the poverty of the language. Um, which side is it d'you think of those? D'you think it's your imperviousness or there isn't something strong enough being offered.

J I wonder what he'd mean by image, by the imagery and the, and the, and the um, the heightened language. I don't know that an increase in symbolism would, would get to me.

M Well, he joined the Roman Catholic church, that's his solution.

J (long pause) I think in the end I'm, I, I s'pose I must be impervious to the language.

M As it affect those, that, that issue.

J Um, I can't tell what I'm saying 'cause I, 'cause I, I work quite a bit with languages but ...

M No, I think it's a fascinating thing that some people, when the word "God" crops up it produces a sort of jagged searing sort of question mark um, and, and all sorts of images flash across one's screen and for other people it doesn't do that um, and, and it doesn't mean that there is a question about their faith, they seem to operate differently. I, I've become very aware of that difference.

(pause) I just have, I think I, I, I just have to see it through other, through other people. It's um ... it's just the way other people have um, have, have expressed it that I hang onto, whether it be um, I remember a South African um, clergyman screaming at us because I know we were, we were all pretty complacent up at Lincoln, screaming at us about um, the difficulties faced in that country, and that, you know that was years and years ago. An I, and I, that would be a powerful image and that would mean um, you know, God, God is working with this person. I, I can then think of my grand-

mother who's now 96 and who's able to recite the psalms and who is exceptionally and practically devout, in a quiet way, and I, I think of her a lot. Um ... it's er, it's I suppose being aware of what the ... what the potentials are, what the er, the things are one could do, um ...

M Do you grapple at all or do you, are you forced to grapple with the problem with evil and suffering in terms of, you know the ideas of God that are put over in church or in the context of the Christian faith? D'you, d'you, does it jar at all that some of the things that happen; natural disasters, children dying, that sort of thing?

J I don't, I don't grapple with those sorts of things. Um, in fact, I mean I, I see a thing, I mean Vivian and I watching the news together, she will be um, intensely affected by something and er, I, I will not.

M But it isn't necessarily emotional, I mean that's one sort of reaction to it which can obviously have all sorts of repercussions internally but um, you don't find um, a clash in your thinking, why, you know, why does God allow this to happen. The question comes at me again and again from um, bereaved people especially if, with children ...

J I can't really say because my experience of that sort of suffering is pretty limited. I mean I don't feel I've grown up um, in that area very much.

M That was my next question, whether you've had any intense experience of suffering in your own life? Whether mental or physical.

J Um, no. I mean I, the, the worst that, the worst has been, has been the suffering in terms of Vivian and myself. I mean er, that's um, that's when I left Viv before ... I lost two stones in a term or something. The first time we (missing) but that was just because I was so aware of all the, there were all the sort of other, family who was behind us as well which .....

M Mmm. Mmm. Especially in a churchy family. Yeah. Does um, does the matter of doubt er, as far as religious belief or faith crop up? I mean d'you see doubt either as a, a problem or um, an inevitability or um ... ?

END OF SIDE TWO

M I was saying, what about doubt.

J Um, I'd say, at the moment it's a bit of an attraction, quite, I quite like the, the business of doubt. Um, I, I quite like exploring the meaning and seeing how, seeing how what, what things might mean and er, I, I you know, I think at the moment I s'pose I can't stick wishy-washy views. This what these feeble weak-minded liberal pusillanimous, pedestrian, I don't know um .... But I, I could never, I always had this admiration for those that er, at university or wherever, that would come out with, be, be solidly atheist and be er, and be, solidly atheist and be, er, produce all the arguments for atheism with, with the skill of a seasoned Socrates, knock you flat um, and um ...

M You should try teaching sixth form RE, but I expect sixth form English is not so very different.

J .. So, so I don't know, I don't consider doubt is a problem in that way. I think I'm the doubting, the doubting sort. And always will be and I'm sure that's what has kept me going in my job really.

M D'you think, do church people um, I've forgotten how I was going to phrase this now. Um, d'you think in a sense their capacity to doubt er, should be er, should be developed more?

J Oh, unquestionably. You just don't, you don't begin then to see, to see the um, well if you're not presented with, with a, you're not, the certainties can't be presented to you in such a way that um, you can come back knowing they're certainties. Um ...

M That being the case, are you presumably therefore not much in favour of authoritarian type or dogmatic teaching in church. D'you think that um, there should be a sort of questionning, questing sort of approach to the, the matters of belief, the content of belief? Or do you like to hear it taught with a bit of sort of punch and ...?

J Oh, there's got to be constant change and constant questionning.

M There's a thing called the Quinque Vault in the Book of Common Prayer um, which keeps telling you as it say this bit and that bit, "This is the catholic faith, without which we cannot be saved", and then it tells you a bit more and then it repeats that. Um, is that really what people ought to be hearing, or not?

J Well, it means, it means actually nothing at all in practice. It's like having a, a departmental syllabus that says, "We do this, this and this" and um, the actual reality on the ground is nothing at all like what is on the paper. Um, you know, it's, it's a set of totally banal, arid, um, highfalutin' .. Well, you know, a good deal of heated discussion has obviously gone at some stage into formulating them, into um, I mean a lot of arguments have gone into discussing these statements but they've got to be reviewed every time, and they've got to be shown to work, they've got to be shown to be, this is what is happening and because this is happening, because we think it's good, we can, we can say this is, this is um, this is what we want to happen, this is what we want to see happen. I sort of carried on that idea of the syllabus um, because I, I thought that, I mean ... hadn't struck me before but I think it does, um ....

M So even to the extent that really one p'raps ought to revise the Creed regularly?

J Oh yes, because unless you're going to have um, working parties or, um, unless you're going to have an annual, I use the same metaphor, inservice training to teach your congregation about the imagery and the er, the symbolism of it, it can't be, it can't be actively meant.

M Mmm.

J I, I mean the um, the story I've heard, I remember somebody coming up at the end of term and saying, "I don't think I can read any of these, I won't be a reader in er, church any more because er, you're using the new versions and I really only like the old versions, the Old Testament, the language is so

rich and, and ...." I could understand, comfortable, they were happy with it in a , in a totally sort of complacent reassured way, in the way that I collect. I have photographs of class play productions around me and I have some, a filing cabinet of memorabilia that are part of my pleasant um, you know, morale boosting, self-supporting um, part of me. They don't reflect who I am today. They don't reflect the um, the person who is me, who just over Easter did, did things and learnt things that have moved me on from the person I was before Easter. Um, you know. So when I come across something like the Quinque Vault I have to say, I have to say, "Oh, how pleasantly archaic!" How grateful I am that I studied Latin because I can actually understand this and I have to be grateful that I can. On the other hand, um, in terms of getting on in the world and er, daily existence, I mean I don't, we can't, we can't all sort of be um, I was going to say medics, we can't all be um, meditative, um, we can't, we can't all be er ...

M Yes, there's a level of reflectiveness that a lot of people can't attain, is that what you're saying?

J Right! There's a level of reflectiveness, there's, there's also I mean there are some who can make a business of it and who can, who can take time out and er, reach a level of intellectual um, ability that can take all that into context and cansay, "Ah!" you know, "but it is stuff that was decided at the conference at such and such in four hundred and thirty two and don't you see how it's still there and working today" But you need, you need to have, to have had hours and, and your life in a sense devoted to that type of ability to make it relevant. Um ...

M This may not be a different question but d'you find the Church as you now come across it too bound by traditions from the past um, and therefore struggling to change and develop and finding that because of those traditions it's very hard to do so? Or on the other hand d'you think there's a bit too much of an endeavour to change um, more p'raps than people can stand? Human nature can cope with?

J Mmm. I s'pose you have to, you have to divide up the different um, like directions, the Church is um, is pointing to if it's, if it's reduced to a, I say reduced to um, if one of its strands is to be, um, an instigator of social um, work and social help and helping your fellow men and, and the parables of helping those er, those less fortunate than yourself, then um ... then I think it, er, it's probably going along as best it, as best it can. Um, you know there you have to be working with the people you've got. It's a, I'm getting terribly confused on this one! Um ...

M You may learn more by being on the PPC!

J Can you rephrase that one at all? I mean, it's, it's got to um, I'm afraid in view, in view of the way other things are changing, there are certain areas where it has to play the game otherwise it becomes er, a very esoteric little um, a minor religion. I mean ...

M D'you sense a refusal to change, that's really what I'm asking?

J In the, in the nation, or in St. Andrew's?

M Well, let's say, let's say St. Andrew's er, in a sense my study is on this parish.

J Right. (pause) Yes, there's a, there's a fear of some, of opening doors and er, broaching issues that aren't, haven't, haven't been done, you know, things that haven't been done before, I think. I think, I mean it's um, incredibly more active though in terms of everyone else's involvement than other places I can think of. Um ... light years ahead of a lot of er, certainly more rural places.

M But so it should be with the range of people there are ...

J Yes.

M ... to do things. Um, let's do some snappy ones unless you feel there's something strong you want to say. Ordination of women: um, Yes? No? Indifferent?

J Definitely yes.

M Because ... ?

J Because I've never been convinced by any of the arguments um, that have been put forward. I can't see that the um, scriptural evidence is particularly um, vivid and it goes back to the point about change and um, the whole nature of society.

M And positively d'you see um, the possibility that women could offer things, er different things? Sometimes better things?

J Mmm.

M Church unity: something that ought to be worked for a lot harder than it is being, or better to coexist?

J Depends what you want to do with it.

M What would you do with it?

J If you want to, to um, you know, choose an issue and, and all fight for it, go ahead for it. If you want to try and thrash out some um, theological common standpoint I wouldn't, I wouldn't worry. That's a bit, probably a bit glib.

END OF SIDE THREE

M You said that's probably a bit glib.

J Well, when you, when you come down to the potential of a group of people um, fired by their worship to do something, then I, then I think that if you felt um, the different um, strands of their faith and the different language and the different rituals I s'pose, are pretty small fry.

M What to you is the most helpful kind of sermon?

J I like um, I like .... I'd like to think about that just a fraction.

M Mmm.

J Um ... I s'pose I'm thinking of the ones that have stayed with me and what, what they, what the ingredients were, um, and how long they, they stay ... I, I think they are ones, some are ones that include some very poignant, I suppose, examples of

human life. Um ... and the ones that tend to um, yes, I think it has to be ones that, that .... I was going to say, I was going to be quite rude here and say, I mean the sort of Sally Shaw, anything that sort of tells me about salvation and being saved is skirting, to me, such a vast issue that, er, to try and, you know, in ten minutes, Sunday morning, here you are I think, I think I've just heard too many sermons that try and, and discuss the whole of the purpose of creation er, when, when really, you know, we're, we're used these days to such professional presentation on television with all the help there. I think that's something that I'm er, at school I'm facing very much. Er, on occasion I know that I would, I thoroughly appreciate a scholarly, almost I suppose a historical, linguistic treatment of some passages that will explain things, those have been um, very good. Um, I mean, I thought last Sunday (if I could make a comment there?) I thought that the story of the Ugandan family and the metaphor of Spring around you, was quite fantastic. Um, and, and has stuck. Um ... that was very effective, I, this is going on forever but I just thought the hymn, um, I was just thinking, excellent um, some excellent images and metaphors here to be thinking about. Er, I do hope the next hymn isn't full of trite nothing.

M And it was.

J It wasn't actually, I thought. Did you, did you think ... ?

M Er, I ....

J ... it was a fourteenth century um, it was a fourteenth century one that mirrored almost identically, the pattern that you had adopted in your sermon of a very antithetical

pattern of um, life, death, er, through death to new life, as the family, the um, that it was written in sort of 1485 or something and I thought er, how extraordinary because here they had almost each verse was taking that same opposite.

M I think I did notice although I, I was, was having to do other things at the time; but yes, I think I was aware.

J But you see, that's all, that's all um, rather pleasant for me and um, enjoying the literary aspect of it, in terms of actually getting me to do something, it doesn't um, doesn't to much beyond um, beyond what's now.

M Has Mrs. Thatcher done a good job, generally speaking.

J (pause) . She's done, she's done quite a good job in terms of politicising a lot of people who I think otherwise might not have been. In terms of being proud to be in England as a result of her reign, not in the slightest!

M D'you think that the approach which we now have to defence and um, national security, weaponry and so on, is um, an appropriate one?

J It's quite lunacy um, lunatical or whatever ... Um ... and that's me speaking pretty, I know, I know I say that sort of ideologically and emotionally and idealistically. Every time I go home and discuss this with a, with a young brother who believes that we are right to have the nuclear deterrent, um, I am forced to, to, to retreat. Not to, to change my view but just to sort of think, because I realise I haven't given it as much sensible thought.

M Clearly you feel strongly about the way the schools and teachers have been treated in er, in recent times.

J Mmm.

M Um, p'raps therefore we don't need to pursue that. Discrimination, injustice in this society. Um, does any, does any of it stand out and trouble you in your little ivory tower over the church hall?

J Troubles. It certainly does. Mmm, I just can't um, er, it, the pictures ... I think, no, the biggest worry is, is the media presentation of it and, and the fact that we aren't educated at the moment to, to question that. And so we're fed very, very um, I think very extreme pictures of it and therefore our fear of it increases and therefore our, our wish to approach it is hampered.

M Yes.

J I'm convinced that um, the BBC at the moment is a, does an incredible disservice to, to all the issues somehow that it pretends to be um, it pretends to be quite concerned about.

M I couldn't agree more. ITV as well, though.

J Oh, very much, but, er, somehow the BBC has become ITVised um, deservedly so, so that we, you know, we get this view that St. Paul's in Bristol is an area that you would never dream of going. Um, and yet how, how do you begin to, begin to help those ... the two bits of tele that I saw over Easter, were um they were both along these lines and I, I thoutght they were quite outstanding. One was Don McCullum's, did you see that?

Pictures of, of impoverished Britain. I s'pose made worse on black and white tele but it was ... it was um, somehow made you, made you want to do a bit, well want to do a bit more than we're doing. I ... I think, I think with a bit of prompting I could but I know I've been a pretty sort of protected little greenhouse flower and er, haven't actually had much experience of the rough end of things. And yet, um, you know, I go back to that psychiatric ward and that was, that was I suppose some of the roughest er, the people I had to deal with, and you know, did teacher training and then was with the, with the classics applying for these places in um, independent schools to begin with. And then I took an incredible plunge and went to a comprehensive school and er, and yet it was you know, it was only in Bath! Exactly!

M (Laugh)

J Which wasn't exactly a great er, plunge to the, to the ...

M Darkest depths.

J The darkest depths. I just, I just feel so hypocritical about it all really 'cos I, I just er, I don't think we, I don't think anybody in Chippenham can talk about um, can get on a high horse about that sort of thing really. We just don't see it. I mean the, the other night, some long time ago, there was a kid in Chippenham who passed out, a girl passed out just outside in the Market Place. It was pouring with rain and her boyfriend was crying over her saying, "She's dead! She's dead! She's dead!" and they were both obviously, either drugs or drink had caused her to pass out in this way. I think as well they'd had a row and he'd hit her. Um, and, and you're absolutely right, I mean I don't, I don't know what, I don't

know how many of that sort of person is, is, Chippenham is producing. I suspect more and more, and I suspect um, I certainly don't sense much initiative at er, at school level to do much about it or to be aware of it. Um, it's, it's, you know, the ivory tower is a bit too apt I'm afraid

M And does the same thing apply with er, poverty on a world scale um, those sort of problems? The Ethiopian famine and, and so on, d'you find that that er, really slips past?

J (pause)

M In a sense the media handles that a bit more effectively, in terms of contacting us about it. Doesn't it?

J Yep. I ... I think I'm someone who is better at something that's within range and within my grasp not um, ... you know if I felt that I was able to do something to, to affect something locally or to affect something immediate I'd, I'd be happier than um, than sending £20 and um, it being a feeling, a vague feeling of doing something right.

M Dispersed among the natives was the phrase I had, the picture I got!

J Yes.

M Mmm. Where would you place yourself on a scale between say being extremely ambitious or being pretty sort of passively content with how things are and how things might be next?

J I'm fairly ambitious, I think.

M Mmm. And where would you place yourself on a scale between being very trusting of other people, credulous, or fairly sceptical and um, not inclined to take things at face value?

J Slowly, increasingly sceptical.

END OF SIDE FOUR

M Carry on.

J As a general principle, I mean the way I, I'm sure the way I react to people the first time is utterly credulous, and I just wouldn't, wouldn't get on and wouldn't um, I mean I'm fairly gregarious or whatever in, in my set up and I, I wouldn't get on if I suspected behind every smile there was a, a, some false um, serpent or whatever. But I, I'm just aware that in, in situations where I feel that I want to change something or I want to be responsible or I want to be, in charge but then er, it becomes more complicated. Political.

M Are you a risk taker? You said you weren't political. Are you a risk taker? Where are you between being extremely cautious or being prepared to try anything, wanting to try anything?

J That's a very tricky one because I think it, it gets, it depends entirely on what the, what the set up is. I'm, I'm, pretty sure, I mean it goes, let's go back a few questions to, to putting my toe in the comprehensive water, um, pretty low on the risk factor. Um, in that term, as it would affect me and my um, what d'you call it, your self respect, I mean you're feeling of status and security.

M Mmm.

J Um ...

M There was a "but on the other hand" coming up.

J There was a "but on the other hand" I know I've been described as quite lunatic on skis. Where I know I've gone down precipices wondering, "Will I come out of this alive or not?" Um, I, I, a rather reckless manic thing on that score.

M Mmm. I've done the same thing on a motorbike. Fairly equivalent.

J Yes. er, a daring that er, just occasionally I think comes out in other, in, in certain things. I mean, I know it's happened with certain um, I know it happened once with a particular play. Noone said it would ever come off and it was the best thing I've ever done. Um ... and I, I think I could have said at the beginning, "I don't know what it is. I, I'm going to take a risk" but it it's not the same as um, upping sticks and going to live in er, er, Uganda or Australia or giving up teaching. I mean, you know, the number of times last year I, amongst us, Vivian and I, "What can I do? I'll give up tomorrow. I'm not going to do it! I'm not going to another work of this sort of job any more. What can I do?" and then you know, the next day, I get some fantastic essays from my pupils ... !

M How d'you cope with uncertainty? This follows on really, doesn't it?

J Mmm.

M I mean, does it make you insecure and er, frustrated or, or do you find it a real challenge?

J Um ... I'm, I think ... I think outwardly er, I, I, I treat it as a bit of a challenge. Um ... though I, I've become increasingly aware that er, things like the um, things like my bronchitis are pretty closely allied to a particular psychological pressure at the time. Um, ... and er, that's um ... I get, I think, I think it's er ... fascinating question. I'd quite like to write on that one! Because I ... I know, I know I will allow, um, if I'm faced with an uncertain situation I will quite happily allow it to ride for um, for, for a long time. And er, Vivian there is extremely good at, at decisions But er, I sit and worry about that and er, because it will be it will be in the back! Gently churning away, producing whatsits I s'pose. And she will force a decision which um, I will um, I will recognise at the end as being right all along.

M I must feed these two interviews in and see if you're compatible.

J Yes.

M Right. Now, if one of these were to lead you to the top of the mountain which would you choose? Um, Billy Graham? The Bishop of Durham? The Pope? Or Mother Theresa? Which would you take as your guide?

J Oh undoubtedly, the Bishop of Durham.

M Why?

J Just er, an image of someone who would never stop asking why. I mean I don't know much about him but that's, you know, these are caricatures because I only know the Pope as a ...

M Another caricature

J A caricature of anti, anti birth control, squash fanatic or something, you know.

M And if you're assembled somewhere near the foot of this mountain and there's a crevasse, which one would you most like to push in?

J (pause) Um, understanding this to be a fairly sort of ...

M Yes.

J ... what it is. I would say um, Billy Graham.

M Mmm. Why?

J 'Cause I'm afraid life is er, this, this mountain is going to require a great deal more than um, a lot of hot air about salvation. Um, I will probably be blanching everything Billy Graham stood for but, again, the caricature impressions are that um, you know, if you, if you're stupid enough to go along to a big meeting and er, just be carried up, by a one-off emotion to, to buy a copy of the book and get it autographed um, you know, you're not going to really ...

M I thought they went forward for Jesus' autograph but maybe I've got it wrong.

J I wonder, yes.

M Or what's the difference? That's the end of the sort of questions that I've written down but did, is there anything I didn't ask that you sort of would have expected me to really? How did, how did it relate to what you were expecting?

J It was, it was fine. I think, I, I, ita helped me to um, articulate, I think it helped, I think it was a nice interview for discussing where, you know, what is the picture as you see it now. Um, and it, I, I don't feel, I didn't at any stage feel threatened. Um, but on the other hand, I felt, I think I think I've felt that I've skirted around. I know, I mean I know the moment I felt most uncomfortable was when you asked um, "What's your idea of God?"

APPENDIX G
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	CHURCH & POLITICS	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
TIM	VARIES	STAYED SHALLOW	Journey L.	Very hazy	Other people – discussion	doubt is attractive	is good	by poignant examples	Yes	not vital	Anti-Thatcher. Yes in x'n.	Risk-taker
JOSIE	PARISH COMM'N	MORE FLEXIBLE	Pilgrim L.C.	Trusted person	–	trust God	good if cautious	by discussion	Strong yes	more steadily	Anti-Thatcher. Yes in x'n	Risk-taker
SUE	PARISH COMM'N	MORE QUESTIONS + DOUBTS	Pilgrimage L.	Old man	Others – esp. clergy	worrying	good if becomes livelier	discussion is best	unsure	not sure	Anti-Thatcher. Probably.	Cautious risk-taker
NICK	PARISH/ FAMILY COMM'N	UNDERSTANDS MORE	Friendly L. place	Supreme person	Sermons + discussion	worrying	good + necessary	not by the book	Strong yes	not keen	Anti-T. Yes – in church	Not a risk-taker
SARAH	PARISH/ FAMILY COMM'N	–	Friendly L. place	Abstract power	Sermons	worrying	good done steadily	not dogmatic	Strong yes	not keen	Anti-T. Yes – in church	Not a risk-taker
VIV	PARISH COMM'N	NO – STAYED CONSTANT	Being together L.	Abstract	Clergy if not assertive	should trust God	some change is necessary	confident intelligent preaching	not keen	not vital	Anti-T. Yes – in church	Cautious

FINDINGS BY AGE: UNDER 45 (1)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DAVID	EVENSONG OR MONASTIC	CONSTANTLY EVOLVING	Private Search M.	Abstract - thro' art	NO authority NO dogma	Suffering God	to re-value trads.	only if quiet & thoughtful	indifferent?	not interested	Anti-T. No - in church	Careful. Quite ambitious
GILL	PARISH COMM'N	MORE QUESTIONS	Encounters people L.E.	Abstract	Meaty Sermons	worried & puzzled	too much trad.	questioning approach is best	strong yes	cautious	Anti-T. Yes - in church	Cautious. Passive
CAROL	ANY	YES - LEARNING DEVELOPING	As too conventional E.	Personal & present	Bible & people	angry with God	-	let us work it out	yes	let it happen	Anti-T.	Risk-taker. Ambitious
MARY	PARISH COMM'N	YES - NOW QUESTIONS	Place of respite L.	Vague	Sermons - doctrine not important	hard to reconcile	good to become less remote	not dogmatic	yes	(let it happen)	Anti-T.	No risks not ambitious
PRU	PARISH COMM'N OR MATTINS	YES - from trad. to experience	A community L.	Father fig. (own fr. died)	Discussion but feels inferior	need to learn to accept	need to progress	not dogmatic just rhymes & reasons	yes (inevitable)	Yes, but difficult	Anti-T. Yes - in church	Cautious
LYN	PARISH COMMUNION OR ANY	Yes - esp. thro' death experience	Shd. be more (L.E.) challenging & pilgrim	Genderless person	Bible Sermons Discussion	no problem	need more flexibility	open not dogmatic	yes (loss of talent)	Yes	Anti-T. Strong yes in xh.	Reckless & ambitious
SALLY	TRADITIONAL	NOT much	Structure for morality L.E.	Not 'out there'	Credibility depends on person	no-one to blame	should stay hypnotic	open approach	not significant	Not significant	Anti-T. Yes.	Risks & ambitious

FINDINGS BY AGE: UNDER 45 (11)
(continued)

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
THEA	FAMILY COMMUNION UNITES SO MANY	Much, over the years	Personal journey. more tenderness needed	Focus on Jesus	Bible + testimony	God still loves, thro' tragedies	if it leads to gtr. challenge	dogmatic, up to a point	yes	yes	Pro-T. NO	Passive. Risks.
PHILIP	Parish Communion	Yes, gradually	shd. be few - pilgrims	Personal father	Clergy. Church Times	Not acts of God	updating for clarity	more teaching + authority no bashing.	yes	yes, + cd do better	anti-T. Yes criticize government	Passive + cautious
MALCOLM	Parish Communion	Yes, thro' study	pilgrims on principle	old man in sky		No doubts not questions raised	in favour on principle	more teaching, authority + dismissing	yes, on principle	not keen	anti-T?	passive, but risks.
PETER	Parish Communion	Less black + white	corporate journey - strategy against individualism	abstract. immanent	intuitive thought + reason	not a problem. not close to suffering	revising + renewing of tradition	prefers questions to be raised	yes	not strongly	anti-T.	warwick the king-maker. Not a risker.
LIZ	Parish Communion	more tolerant less rigid + a/c	personal search, held back by tradition	avoids pictures. close being m. or f.	people. clergy. not just to church educate	God's power limited	not enough change	not didactic. to be cared for + helped to grow	strong yes	yes, + we avoid the issues	anti-T. yes	ambitious, but missed the boat. risks.

FINDINGS BY AGE: 45-retirement

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DONALD	Parish Communion	yes - move into liturgy	pilgrimage	abstract God; Jesus near	sermons to make you think	natural order + freedom necessary	glad of his new discoveries	questions. Jenkins is a breath of fresh air	cautiously in favour	not keen	Pro-T. Yes.	risk-taker; impulsive
MARJORIE BL.	Older versions of H.C.	Yes - broader minded	keep to the tradition	Christ in communion wafer	Communion. Bible. Discipline.	God can sort it out.	Has led to loss of reverence	More authority More teaching	Impossible	Yes - with Rome	Pro-Govt. Yes!	Not ambitious
MARJORIE Bi	Any from BCP	None	Spirit led	Father figure	Bible. Some sermons	They will be done	Tradition is precious.	More dogmatic. Fewer questions	Prefers not, but it doesn't matter	Yes - & easier than we think	Pro-Thatcher NO	(very accepting) passive
MARJORIE W.	BCP Evensong	own conversion & adapted to ceremonial	not clear nor challenging enough	Abstract God personal Jesus	Bible + African sermons	God knows more than I.	Place for new, but prefers old	more teaching eg. c. Jesus	yes	no, but must be tolerant	Pro-Thatcher No.	passive. risks in faith
NOEL	Any Eucharist	Yes - & ought to.	preserve of sacraments, reverence + mystery	personal father; mystical	sermons + lectures	not God's fault	if I agree	more teaching: doctrine + sacraments	only if single & very devout	only very cautiously	strongly anti-T. Yes	(cautious (insurance, engineer) no chances
NELL	Parish Communion (without children)	Yes - through hearing different p-of-vws.	tradition + moving on	personal: "a friend"	the faith of others	no problem. concentrate on the survivors	accepts it, rejects "as it was in the beginning"	more teaching: catechism	not sure: admits prejudice	-	pro-T. No	-

FINDINGS BY AGE: THE RETIRED (1)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DOUG	Older version of Holy Communion	Exactly the same	open building	person who is around	Bible read aloud. Common services	Never doubt God	No to all changes. Tradition + the familiar	not more dogmatic	"I like seeing women"	need more unity in our own Church	pro-T.? No.	trusting. ambitious. risks to survive
GEORGE	BCP Evensong	Exactly the same	Open building. Stick to traditions.	confused. human form	sermons. traditional framework.	no problem. "Shed German make you thinner." ?	Woo only one against moving the pews	not more dogmatic	It's a man's job.	"We're doing well in this town."	pro-T. No.	ambitious. self-made. risks in business.
VIC	BCP Evensong	Exactly the same	preserver of tradition	he's around	Bible stories. unchanged tradition	our own fault. control of population	too many changes. none for the better	more. tuition. anecdotal sermons.	yes.	yes, esp. with Methodists	pro-T. No	cautious. forthright. listener. no risks.
OLIVE		utterly. ex-Methodist. married an agnostic	gradually evolving tradition	abstract & nebulous	discussion. good sermons. experienced a vision	great treasury beyond doubting	for & again. It's above right.	not more dogmatic	strong yes— as woman doctor	we're trying hard. hard to resist —	anti-T. Yes. eg nuclear	Ambitious. Trusting. Risks.
RON	Older version of Holy Communion	None	keeper of Catholic tradition	abstract spirit	"what I was taught"	no problem. good can come	better in the past	more dogmatic. sermons on worship	impossible	yes: pow experience of unity	pro-T. No politics No social sermons	cautious. not ambitious. risks in business
JOAN	Older versions Holy Communion	None	Maintain tradition	Christ with me.	sermons	our fault, not God's	OK if within the tradition	more dogmatic: creeds or catechism	never. member of WAOW	yes: but we do enough	anti-T. too authoritarian.	trusting. worried. some risks.
MICHAEL	Parish Communion	"Strengthened"	Forward God's kingdom	"... is Jesus Christ	daily Bible reading	mainly our fault	she change to bring services to people	Simple, clear sermons, not authoritarian	Yes—despite problems for unity	Yes	No party politics. Not too controversial	Ordinary chap. No risks.

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGES IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MARJORIE BL.	Older versions of HC.	Yes – broader minded	Keep the tradition	Christ in Communion Water	Communion Bible & Discipline	God can sort it all out	Has led to loss of reverence.	More authority more teaching	Impossible	Yes – Rome is priority	(Pro-Govt) (Yes!)	NOT ambitious
MARJORIE Bi	Away from BCP.	None	Spirit-led	Father-figure	Bible & some sermons	Thy will be done	Tradition is precious	More dogmatic fewer questions	Prefers not but it doesn't matter	Yes – & easier than we think	Pro-Thatcher NO	(very accepting) Passive
Noel	Any Eucharist	Yes – & ought to	preserver of sacrament reverence + mystery	personal Father – mystical	Sermons & lectures	NOT God's fault	If I agree	More teaching / doctrine + sacraments	only if single & v. devout	Only very cautiously	Strongly anti-Thatcher Yes	Cautious. No chances
Nell	Parish. Eucharist (without children)	Yes – two hearing diff. points of view.	Tradition importance, + moving on.	personal: "a friend"	The faith of others.	No problem. Concentrate on the survivors.	Accepts it. Reacts "as it was in beginning"	More teaching: catechism	Not sure. Admits prejudice	–	Pro-Thatcher. NO	–
Ron	Quiet said HC.	None	Keeps Catholic tradition	Abstract. Spirit.	What I was taught	No problem. Good can come	Better in the past.	More dogmatic. Sermons on worship	Impossible	Yes – time now experience	Pro-Thatcher. NO. + no social sermons	Cautious NOT ambitious. RISKS in business
Joan	Quiet said H.C.	None	Maintains tradition	Christ with me	Sermons	It's our fault, not God's	OK if within the tradition	More dogmatic: creed + catechism	Never. Members of WATOW	Yes – but we do enough	Anti-Thatcher too authoritarian	Worried. trusting. some risks.

FINDINGS BY CHURCHMANSHIP:
ANGLO-CATHOLIC

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
JOSIE	Parish Communion	become more flexible	pilgrim	trusted person	-	trust God	good if cautious	by discussion	strong yes	move steadily	Yes (Anti-Thatcher)	Risk-taker
GILL	Parish Communion	more questioning	encounter people	abstract	meaty sermons	worries + puzzles	yes - too much tradition	by raising questions	strong yes	cautious	Yes (Anti-Thatcher)	Cautious Passive
PHILIP	Parish Communion	yes, gradually	should be a pilgrimage	personal as Father	clergy & Church Times	not acts of God	up-dating is necessary	more teaching but not bashing	yes	yes, + we ed. do better	Yes, to criticize government	Cautious + passive
MALCOLM	Parish Communion	yes, through studying	pilgrim: on principle	old man in sky	-	no doubts or questions raised	in favour on principle	more teaching, authority + discussion	yes on principle	not keen	Yes. Anti-Thatcherite	risk-taker but passive
PETER	Parish Communion	Less black + white	corporate journey. Strategy ag. individualism	abstract. immanent	intuitive thought + reason	not a problem. not close to suffering.	Trad. must be revised + renewed.	by raising questions	yes	not strongly	Yes Anti-T.	Warwick the king-maker. No risks.
LIZ	Parish Communion	More tolerant + less rigid	personal search: tradition inhibits	avoids pictures. close m. or f. being	good education, not just-in churches things	God's power is limited	NOT enough change	not didactic. thro' care + support	strong yes	yes, + we avoid the issues	Yes Anti-T.	Ambitious but missed the boat. A risker

FINDINGS BY CHURCHMANSHIP:
LIBERAL/RADICAL (1)

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
TIM	Varies	"Stayed Shallow"	Journey	very hazy	Others; discussion	doubt is attractive	is good	by poignant examples	yes	not vital	Yes Anti-Thatch.	Risk-taker
SUE	Parish Communion	more questioning + doubting	pilgrimage	old man	Others, esp. Clergy	does worries	good if it becomes livelier	discussion of everything	unsure	unsure	Probably. Anti-Thatch.	Cautious risks!
NICK	Parish Communion with max. children	understands more	friendly place	Supreme person	Sermons + argument	worries	good + necessary	not by the book	Strong yes	not keen	Strong yes. Anti-T.	No risks
SARAH	Parish Communion with max. children	-	friendly place	abstract power	Sermons	worries	good if done steadily	not dogmatic	Strong yes	not keen	Yes Anti-T.	No risks
VIV	Parish Communion	Stayed Constant	being together	abstract	Clergy if not assertive	should trust God	Some change necessary	Confident + intelligent preaching	not keen	not vital	Yes. Anti-T.	Cautious
MARY	Parish Communion	questions more	place of respite	vague	Sermons. doctrine not important	problem. hard to reconcile	good - makes it less remote	not dogmatic	yes	let it come	Anti-T.	No risks + not ambitious
PRU	P.C. or Mattins	from tradition to experience	a community	father figure	discussion but keeps interior	needs to learn to accept	we need to progress	not dogmatic: rhyme + reasons.	yes (inevitable)	yes, but difficult	Yes. Anti-T.	Cautious
SALLY	Traditional	Not much	A structure for morality	Not out there	Credibility depends on people	no-one there to blame	Shd. stay hypothetic	open approach	not significant	not significant	Yes Anti-T.	Ambitious + takes risks
OLIVE	Parish Communion with children exciting	utterly ex-Methodist married agnostic	gradually evolving tradition	abstract + nebulous	discussion. good sermons her vision	at reality beyond doubting	for + again. It's about right	Not more dogmatic	Strong yes, as within doctor	We're trying hard. many resist	Yes eg nuclear. Anti-T.	Ambitious Trusting Risker

FINDINGS BY CHURCHMANSHIP:
LIBERAL/RADICAL (11)
(continued)

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CAROL	~~PARISH COMMUNION~~ Any	Yes: learning + developing	As too conventional	personal + present	Bible + other people	angry with God	-	let us work it out: challenge	yes	let it happen	anti-Thatcher.	Risk-taker. Ambitious
LYN	Parish communion or any	Yes: esp. through death-experience	Shd be more challenging + pilgrim	genderless person	Bible sermons discussion	no problem	yes: we need more flexibility	open + non-dogmatic	yes - it's a loss of talent	yes	strong 'yes'. anti-Thatcher	Reckless. Ambitious
THEA	Parish Communion with children	yes, greatly	personal journey more tenderness needed	focus on Jesus	Bible + testimony	God still loves thro' tragedies	if it leads to gtr challenge	dogmatic up to a point	yes	yes + ddo better	No. pro-Thatcher	Risk-taker. Passive
MARJORIE W	BCP Evensong	own conversion, + adapted to ceremonial	not clear or challenging enough	abstract + personal Jesus	Bible + African sermons	God knows more than I.	place for new but prefers old	more teaching eg. c. Jesus	yes	no, but must be tolerant	No pro-Thatcher	Risks in faith. Passive
DAVID	Evensong or monastic	constantly evolving	for private search	abstract: expressed through art	no authority no dogma	suffering God	yes, to re-value traditions	only if quiet + thoughtful	indifferent	not interested	NO anti-T.	Ambitious realistic careful
DONALD	Parish Communion	yes - move into liturgy	pilgrimage	abstract + distant. Jesus near	Sermons to make you think	natural order + freedom: necessary	glad of his new discoveries	questions. Jenkins a breath of fresh air.	cautiously in favour	not keen	yes. pro-T. some reg.s.	risk-taker. impulsive
VIC	Evensong	Not at all	preserve tradition	he's around us	Bible stories. unchanged tradition	Our fault. Controls population	too many changes - none for the better	more tuition Anecdotal Sermons	Yes	Yes - esp. with Methodists	NO. Pro Thatcher	cautious forthright listens no risks.
OLIVE	Parish Communion with children exciting	Utterly Ex Methodist married agnostic	gradually evolving tradition	abstract + nebulous	discussion: good sermons Ker vision	gt reality beyond doubting	for + again it's about right.	Not more dogmatic	a strong 'yes' as a woman doctor	we're trying hard. many resist.	Yes - eg. nuclear. Anti-T.	ambitious trusting risker

FINDINGS BY CHURCHMANSHIP:
EVANGELICLAL

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DOUG	Quiet early Communion	stayed exactly the same	open building	person who is around	Bible (read aloud) Services	Never doubt God	No to changes. Trad + the familiar	Not more dogmatic	"I like seeing women"	Concentrate on unity in our church	No. pro-T. ?	Trusting. Ambitious. Risks to survive
GEORGE	Evensong	Not at all	open building Stick to traditions	confused. human form.	Sermons. Traditional framework.	No problem but "dead Germans make you think"	Only one against removing pews	Not more dogmatic	It's a man's job.	We're doing well in this town.	No. pro-T.	Ambitious. Self-made. Risks in business
VIC	Evensong	Not at all	preserve tradition	he's around us	Bible stories. unchanged tradition	our fault. controls population	too many changes. none for the better	More tuition. Anecdotal sermons	Yes	Yes esp with Methodists	No. pro. T. the peace is wasting peace	cautious. forthrigh. listens. no risks.
MICHAEL	Parish Communion	"Strengthened"	to forward God's kingdom	Is Jesus Christ	daily Bible reading	Mainly our fault	Shd. change, to bring services to the people	Simple, clear sermons. Not authoritarian	Yes, despite problems for unity	Yes	No party politics. Not too controversial	"Ordinary chap", no risks

FINDINGS BY CHURCHMANSHIP:
TRADITIONALIST

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF.
JOSIE	PARISH COMMUNION	MORE FLEXIBLE	pilgrim	trusted person	-	trust God	good if cautious	by discussion	strong yes	move steadily	Anti-T. Yes	risk-taker
SUE	PARISH COMMUNION	more questions + doubts	pilgrimage	Old man	Bible, esp. Clergy	worrying	good if becomes livelier	discussion is best	unsure	not sure	Anti-T. probably	cautious risk-taker!
SARAH	PARISH COMMUNION + children	-	friendly place	abstract power	sermons	worrying	good if done steadily	not dogmatic	strong yes	not keen	Anti-T. Yes-in church	NOT a risk-taker
VIV	PARISH COMMUNION	NO-stained constant	being together	abstract	clergy-if not assertive	should trust God	some change is necessary	contrasts intelligent preaching	not keen	not vital	Anti-T. Yes	Cautious
GILL	PARISH COMMUNION	MORE questions	Encountering people	abstract	meaty sermons	worried + puzzled	too much tradition	questions approach is best	strong yes	cautious	Anti-T. Yes	cautious. passive
CAROL	ANY	Yes-learning + developing	as too conventional	personal + present	Bible, + people	angry with God	-	leaving LOVE it out	Yes	let it happen	Anti-T.	RISK-taker. Ambitious
MARY	PARISH COMMUNION	Yes-now more questioning	place of respite	vague	sermons. doctrine not important	hard to reconcile	good: to become less remote	not dogmatic	Yes	let it happen	Anti-T.	NO risks. NOT ambitious
PRU	PARISH COMMUNION OR MATTINS	Yes-from head to experience	a community	father figure	discussion but keeps interior	need to learn to accept	needed: to progress	not dogmatic, just thinking it's easier	yes-inevitable	yes, but difficult	Anti-T. Yes	Cautious
LYN	PARISH COMMUNION OR ANY	Yes-esp. through death experiences	she be more challenging + DIALOGUE	genderless person	Bible, sermons + discussion	no problem	need more flexibility	open, not dogmatic	yes (lots of talent)	yes	Anti-T. Strong Yes	reckless + ambitious

FINDINGS BY GENDER:
WOMEN (1)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
SALLY	TRADITIONAL	Not much	Structure for morality	not come there	Credibility depends on person	no-one to blame	should stay hypnotic	open approach	not significant	not significant	Anti-T. Yes	risks & ambitions
THEA	PARISH COMMUNION WITH CHILDREN	MUCH CHANGED OVER YEARS	Personal journey. More tenderness needed.	Focus on Jesus	Bible + testimony	God still loves through tragedies	If it leads to challenge	dogmatic up to a point	yes	yes	Pro-T. No	Passive, Risks
LIZ	Parish Eucharist	Yes - more tolerant less rigid a/c.	Personal search, held back by trad.	avoids pictures close being m. or f.	not just churchy, educated people. Clergy.	God's power limited	Not enough change	Not didactic. It be cared for + helped to grow.	Strong yes	yes, + we avoid issues	anti-T. Yes	Ambitious but missed boat. A risker.
MARJ. BL	Older versions of Holy Communion	Yes - broader minded	keep to the tradition	Christ is symbolized in Communion water.	Holy Communion, Bible + discipline	God can sort it all out	No - loss of reverence + deterioration	More authority more teaching	Impossible	with Rome	Pro-Govt. (Yes)	Not ambitious
MARJ. Bi	BCP - all services	No - not at all	just trust the Spirit	Father figure	Bible + sometimes a sermon	thy will be done	tradition is precious	more dogmatic, not questions	prefers not, but doesn't matter	easier than we think	Pro-T. No	very acceptan. Passive.
MARJ. W.	BCP Evensong	Conversion. Adapted to ceremonial	Not clear nor challenging enough	presence everywhere + personal Jesus	Bible, + African Sermons	God knows more than I	place for new but prefers old	more teaching: eg about Jesus	Yes	No, just tolerance	Pro-T. No.	Passive. risks in faith
NELL	Parish Eucharist without children	yes-thro' hearing - diff. points of view	trad. is important but must move on	personal: "a friend"	experience of faith of others	concentrates on the survivors no difficulty	accepts change - rejects "as it was in beginning"	more teaching catechism	Not sure. Some prejudice	-	Pro-T. No	-
OLIVE	Parish Communion + children exciting -	utterly ex Meth. married agnostic	gradually evolving tradition	abstract + nebulous	discussion. a vision. good sermons	great reality beyond doubting	for + again change: about right	not more dogmatic	100% for: as a doctor	we're trying hard - many resist	Anti-T. Yes - eg nuclear issues	ambitious. trusting. risks.
JOAN	Early BCP Communion	no - a/c discipline + trad.	a/c trad. the most important	Christ with me	Sermons	It's our fault - not God's	changes OK, within the trad.	more dogmatic: Cred. Catechism	No member of WAOW	yes - ish we do enough	Anti-T. too authoritarian	passive trusts worries some risks

FINDINGS BY GENDER:
WOMEN (ii) (continued)

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
TIM	VARIES	Stayed shallow	Journey	very hazy	Others. discussion	doubt is attractive	to good	by poignant examples	yes	not vital	Anti-T. Yes.	Risk-taker
NICK	Parish Communion with children	understood more	friendly place	Supreme person	Sermons + discussion	Worrying	good + necessary	not by the book	strong yes	not keen	Anti-T. Yes.	Not a risk-taker
DAVID	Evensong or monastic	Constantly evolving	private search	abstract, thro' art	no authority, no dogma	Suffering God	to re-value traditions	only if quiet + thoughtful	indiff-erent	not interested	Anti-T. No.	Careful. Ambitious
PHILIP	Parish Communion	yes, gradually	Should be for pilgrimage	personal God - as father	clergy & Church Times	Not acts of God	Up-dating is necessary for clarity	more teaching - not pulpit bashing	yes	yes, + could do better	Anti-T. Yes: criticize governments	passive + cautious
MALCOLM	Parish Communion	yes, through study	pilgrim on principle	old man in the sky		No doubts or questions raised	in favour on principle	more teaching + authority + discussion	yes, on principle	not keen	Anti-T.? yes	passive but takes risks

FINDINGS BY GENDER:
MEN (1)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PETER	Parish Communion	modified. less black & white	corporate journey. strategy against individualism	abstract. immanent	intuitive thought & reason	not a problem. not close to suffering	revising & renewing of tradition is necessary	prefers questions to be raised	yes	not strongly	Anti-T. Yes	warwick the king-maker. Not a risker.
DONALD	Parish Communion	Yes. Now into liturgy	pilgrimage	a distant power but a close Jesus	sermons to make you think	natural order & freedom necessary	New discoveries Enthusiastic	Bp Jenkins questions a "breath of fresh air"	cautiously in favour	not keen	Pro-T. with reservations. Yes.	Impulsive. Risk-taker
NOEL	Any Eucharist	Yes, & ought to	preserve sacraments & reverence	personal father perceived mystically	teaching-thro' sermons & lectures	"It's not God's fault"	changes ok. if I agree!	more teaching on doctrine & sacraments	only for single & v. devout women	only v. cautiously	v. anti-T. (Yes)	cautious. no chances
DOUG	Early Communion	"stayed exactly the same"	open church building	person who is around	Bible read aloud & church services	Never doubted God	no changes. tradition & the familiar	not more dogmatic	I like seeing women	concentrate on unity ~~[illegible]~~ here first	(Pro-T.) No	was ambitious. trusting. risks to survive
GEORGE	Evensong	No	open church building & traditions	confused. human form?	sermons. traditional framework	No problem. "dead German make you think"	only one against moving the pews	not more dogmatic	It's a man's job	we're doing well in this town	Pro-T. (No)	ambitious self-made. risks in business
VIC	Evensong	No - despite becoming Anglican	preserve tradition	he's round about us	Bible stories & unchanged tradition	mainly our fault. controls population	too many changes: none for the better	more tuition needed. sermons with anecdotes	Yes in favour	yes - still prefers Methodist atmosphere	Pro-T. (No)	cautious. forthright. listens. no risks.
RON	Early Communion	No	catholic tradition	abstract. sense of spirit of God	what I was taught by my first vicar	not a problem. good can come	better in the past	more dogmatic preaching. sermons c. worship	impossible	yes - isn't, bless of pow experience	Pro-T. No, & no social sermons	not ambitious. cautious. risks in business.
MICHAEL	Parish Communion	"Strengthen"	to forward God's Kingdom	... is Jesus Christ	daily Bible reading	Mainly our fault	shd change to bring services to the people	simple clear sermons, not authoritarian	Yes - despite problems for unity	Yes	No party politics. Not too controversial	ordinary chap. No risks.

FINDINGS BY GENDER:
MEN (ii) (continued)

	SERVICE PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
THEA	PARISH communion with children	yes, greatly	personal journey	focus on Jesus	Bible & testimony	God still loves thro' tragedies	if it leads to gr challenge	dogma up to a point	yes	yes, + Cd. do better	Pro-T. No.	passive. Risk-taker.
PHILIP	Parish Communion	yes, gradually	Shd be for pilgrims	personal father	Clergy. Church Tims	Not acts of God	updating for clarity	more teaching + authority. no bashing	yes	yes, + Cd. do better	anti-T. Yes criticise governors	passive + cautious
MALCOLM	Parish Communion	Yes, thro' study	pilgrims, on principle	old man in sky	-	no doubts nor questions raised	in favour on principle	more teaching authority + discussion	yes, on principle	not keen	anti-T.	passive, but risks.
MARJORIE BL.	Older versions of H.C.	Yes — broader minded	keep the tradition	Christ in Communion wafer	Communion. Bible. Discipline.	God can sort it out	has led to loss of reverence	more authority more teaching	impossible	yes — Rome is priority	Pro-Govt. (Yes?)	Not ambitious
MARJORIE Bi	Any from BCP	None	Spirit-led	father-figure	Bible + some sermons	They will be done	tradition is precious	more dogmatic, fewer questions	prefer not but doesn't matter	yes — easier than we think	Pro-T. No	(V. accepting) Passive
MARJORIE W.	BCP Evensong	own Conversion + adaption to ceremonial	not clear nor challenging enough	abstract plus personal Jesus	Bible + African sermons	God known more than I	place for new but prefers old	more teaching eg c. Jesus	yes	no, but must be tolerant	No. Pro-T.	Risks in faith. Passive.
NOEL	Any. Eucharist	yes — + ought to	Presence of sacrament + reverence + mystery	personal father; mystical	sermons + lectures	not God's fault	if I agree	more teaching: doctrine + sacraments	only if simple + v. devout	only v. cautiously	strongly anti-T. Yes	Cautious. No chances.
NELL	Parish Communion (without children)	yes - thro' hearing diff. p-of-v's.	tradition important, & moving on.	personal "a friend"	the faith of others	no problem: concentrate on survival	accepts it. rejects: "as it was in the beginning"	more teaching: Catechism	not sure: admits prejudice	-	Pro-T. No	-
VIC	BCP Evensong	Exactly the same	preserve of tradition	he's around us	Bible stories; unchanged tradition	our own fault: control population	too many changes: none for better	more tradition needed: anecdotal sermons	yes	yes, esp. with Methodists	Pro-T. No	cautious. for liturgy. hesitant. no risks.
RON	older versions Holy Communion	None	keeper of Catholic tradition	abstract Spirit	"What I was taught"	no problem. good can come	better in the past	more dogmatic sermons on worship	impossible	yes: POW experience of unity	Pro-T. No politics No social sermons	cautious. not ambitious risks in business
JOAN	Older versions Holy Communion	None	maintain tradition	Christ with me	Sermons	our fault, not God's	OK if within tradition	more dogmatic: Creeds + catechism	Never. Men only WAOW	yes: but we do enough	anti-T: too authoritarian	trusting. worries. some risks.

FINDINGS BY DESIRE FOR AUTHORITY AND DOGMA: YES

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	SERVICES PREFERRED	CHANGE IN VIEWS	PERCEPTION OF CHURCH	PERCEPTION OF GOD	BASIS OF AUTHORITY	THEODICY	ALTERING THE CHURCH	RELIGIOUS TEACHING STYLE	ORDINATION OF WOMEN	CHURCH UNITY	POLITICS IN CHURCH	VIEW OF SELF
TIM	VARIES	STAYED SHALLOW	Journey L.	Very hazy	Other people — discussion	disbelief attractive	IS good	By poignant examples	Yes	not vital	Anti-Thatcher. Yes in Xn.	Risk taken
JOSIE	PARISH COMM'N	MORE FLEXIBLE	Pilgrim L.C.	Trusted person	—	trust God	good if cautious	by discussion	Strong yes.	move steadily	Anti-Thatcher. Yes in Xn	Risk-taker
SUE	PARISH COMM'N	MORE QUESTIONS + DOUBTS	Pilgrimage L.	Old man	Others esp. clergy	worrying	good if becomes livelier	discussion is best	unsure	not sure	Anti-Thatcher. probably	Cautious risk-taker
NICK	PARISH/ FAMILY COMM'N	UNDERSTANDS MORE	Friendly L. place	Supreme person	Sermons + discussion	worrying	good & necessary	not by the book	Strong yes	not keen	Anti-T. Yes-in church	Not a risk-taker
SARAH	PARISH/ FAMILY COMM'N	—	Friendly L. place	Abstract power	Sermons	worrying	good done steadily	not dogmatic	Strong yes	not keen	Anti-T. Yes-in church	Not a risk-taker
VIV	PARISH COMM'N	NO — STAYED CONSTANT	Being together L.	Abstract	Clergy if not assertive	should trust God	some change is necessary	confident intelligent preaching	not keen	not vital	Anti-T. Yes-in church	Cautious
DAVID	EVANGELICAL OR MONASTIC	CONSTANTLY EVOLVING	Private Searching.	Abstract - thro' art	No authority NO dogma	Suffering God	to re-value trads.	only if quiet & thoughtful	indiff-erent?	not interested	Anti-T. No - in church	Careful. Quiet ambitious
GILL	PARISH COMM'N	MORE QUESTIONS	Encounter people L.C.	Abstract	Meaty Sermons	worried + puzzled	too much trad.	questioning approach is best	Strong yes	cautious	Anti-T. Yes-in church	Cautious. Passive

FINDINGS BY DESIRE FOR AUTHORITY AND DOGMA: NO (1)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CAROL	ANY	YES – LEARNING DEVELOPING	AS TOO CONVENTIONAL E.	PERSONAL & PRESENT	BIBLE & PEOPLE	ARGUING WITH GOD	–	LET US WORK IT OUT	YES	LET IT HAPPEN	ANTI-T.	RISK-TAKER. AMBITIOUS
MARY	PARISH COMM'N	YES – NEW QUESTIONS	PLACE OF RESPITE L.	VAGUE	SERMONS – DOCTRINE NOT IMPORTANT	HARD TO RECONCILE	GOOD TO BECOME LESS REMOTE	NOT DOGMATIC	YES	(LET IT HAPPEN)	ANTI-T.	NO RISKS NOT AMBITIOUS
PRU	PARISH COMM'N OR MATTINS	YES – FROM TRAD. TO EXPERIENCE	A COMMUNITY L.	FATHER FIG. (OUR FR. DIED)	DISCUSSION BUT FEELS INTERIOR	NEED TO LEARN TO ACCEPT	NEED TO PROGRESS	NOT DOGMATIC (JUST THINKING & REASONING)	YES (INEVITABLE)	YES, BUT DIFFICULT	ANTI-T. YES – IN CHURCH	CAUTIOUS
LYN	PARISH COMMUNION OR ANY	YES – ESP. THRO' DEATH EXPERIENCE	SHD. BE MORE (LIFE) CHALLENGING & PILGRIM	GENDERLESS PERSON	BIBLE SERMONS DISCUSSION	NO PROBLEM	NEED MORE FLEXIBILITY	OPEN NOT DOGMATIC	YES (LOSS OF TALENT)	YES	ANTI-T. STRONG YES IN XN.	RECKLESS & AMBITIOUS
SALLY	TRADITIONAL	NOT MUCH	STRUCTURE FOR MORALITY	NOT 'OUT THERE'	CREDIBILITY DEPENDS ON PERSON	NO-ONE TO BLAME	SHOULD STAY HYPOTHETIC	OPEN APPROACH	NOT SIGNIFICANT	NOT SIGNIFICANT	ANTI-T. YES.	RISKS & AMBITIONS
PETER	Parish	LESS BLACK & WHITE	CORPORATE WORSHIP. STRATEGY AGAINST INDIVIDUALISM	ABSTRACT IMMANENT	INTUITIVE THOUGHT & REASON	NOT A PROBLEM: NOT CLOSE TO SUFFERING	REVISING & RENEWING OF TRADITION	PREFERS QUESTIONS TO BE RAISED	YES	NOT STRONGLY	ANTI-T.	WARWICK-LIKE KING-MAKER. NOT A RISKER.
LIZ	Parish	MORE TOLERANT, LESS RIGID & A/C	PERSONAL SEARCH INCID BACK BY TRADITION	AVOIDS PICTURES. A CLOSE BEING, M. OR F.	PEOPLE. CLERGY. NOT JUST CHURCHING EDUCATION	GOD'S POWER LIMITED	NOT ENOUGH CHANGE	NOT DIDACTIC TO BE CARED FOR & HELPED TO GROW	STRONG YES	YES, & WE AVOID THE ISSUES	ANTI-T. YES	CONSERVATIVE BUT MISSED THE BOAT. RISKS.
DONALD	Parish Communion	YES – THE MORE INTO LITURGY	PILGRIMAGE	ABSTRACT GOD; JESUS NEAR	SERMONS TO MAKE YOU THINK	NATURAL ORDER & FREEDOM NECESSARY	GLAD OF HIS NEW DISCOVERIES	QUESTIONS. JENKINS IS "A BREATH OF FRESH AIR"	CAUTIOUSLY IN FAVOUR	NOT KEEN	PRO-T. YES	RISK TAKER. IMPULSIVE'

FINDINGS BY DESIRE FOR AUTHORITY AND DOGMA: NO (11) (continued)