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**"THE BIBLE AS A PILGRIM WANDERING THROUGH
HISTORY"**

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By

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Faafetai Lava

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Table of contents	i – iii
Introduction	1 - 3
Chapter One: The orthodox view of the Bible in Society and the beginning of the Pilgrim Wandering	4 - 18
A. Bible Statistics	
B. What is the orthodox view of the Bible in Society	
B.1) Divine Inspiration –the human authorship of the Bible	
B.2) Jesus Christ is the Inspiration of the Bible.	
B.3) The Bible invites Rapport.	
B.4) Bruggemans's View – Bible and Society.	
C. The Canonisation of the Hebrew Scriptures.	
C.1) The History of the Formation of the Hebrew Scriptures	
D. Why did the early Christians also want a Scripture or canon.	
D.1) Apostolic message.	
D.2) The Situation of the Church.	
D.3) Jewish Tradition	
D.4) Our only Access to the Gospel is through the Scriptures	
E. The development of the Codex – precursor of the Book	
F. Attitudes of Pagans Towards Christians.	
G. How could the Bible journey in these social conditions?	
Conclusions	
Chapter Two: The Bible in the Middle Ages, Reformation and the Enlightenment.	19 - 42
A. The Bible in the Middle Ages	
A.1) Decline in City Life – the Rise of Feudalism	
A.2) Monasticism – preserving the Bible, Bible into action	
A.3) Early Version of The Bible – the Importance of Translations	
A.3.1 The Vulgate Translation	
A.3.2 The Gothic Transaction	
A.4) The Roman Church and the Papacy	

- A.5) High Medieval Western Christianity discovers the Gospels
 - A.5.1 The Discovery of the Gospels
 - A.5.2 The Laity know the Bible indirectly
- A.6) Anti-Jewish Reaction and Witch-hunting in the Middle Ages
- A.7) The Bible creates Universities
- A.8) The Bible and Medieval Law
- A.9) The Double Meaning of the Scriptures
- B. The Bible And The Reformation
 - B.1) Social context of Reformation
 - B.1.1 Religion
 - B.2) Martin Luther
 - B.2.1 The Biblical basis of Martin Luther's 'born again' experience
 - B.3) What is not Biblical is removed
 - B.4) Salvation by Faith, Priesthood of All Believers
 - B.5) Sole Authority of the Scriptures
 - B.6) Education for Clergy and the Laity
 - B.7) Two Views of the Canon
 - B.8) To be 'born again'
 - B.9) John Calvin
 - B.9.1) Presbyterianism
 - B.9.2) The Republic
 - B.10. The Bible and Puritan Revolution (1640 – 1600)
- C. The Bible and the Enlightenment
 - C.1) Pietism
 - C.2) John and Charles Wesley
 - C.3) The Contributions of Pietism
 - C3.1 Centrality of the Bible
 - C3.2 Missions
 - C3.3 Conversions and Holiness
- Conclusions

Chapter Three: The Bibles Influence in Samoan Society

43 – 58

Introduction

- A. The Samoan Village: The Birthplace of the Biblical culture and Christian Society in Samoa
- B. The History of Bible Translation in Samoa
- C. Examples of Biblical Influence on Samoan Culture
 - C.1 The Bible's Effect Upon Pastors Status In The Samoan Village
 - C.2 Biblical Influence On The Lauga Faasamoa – 'The Word of God in the Word Of Samoa
 - C.3 Samoan Cultural Understanding of the Samoan Christian Church Pastor. The symbol of Cultural Covenant (feagaiga)
 - C.4 The Names of Churches
 - C.5 Announcements and Appeals

The Bible As A Pilgrim Wanderer **iii** Through History

Introduction

- C5.1 Use of Biblical quotations
- C5.2 Restatements of Biblical expressions of faith and ethics
- C5.3 Identifying with the Biblical Community (Eg Israel in exile)
- C5.4 The subordination of certain cultural values in village communities to the service of the Christian gospel
- C5.5 Paraphrasing parts of biblical narratives and stories

Conclusion

Chapter Four: The Bible in the CCCS, Brisbane **59 – 80**

Introduction

- A. Brief History of the Congregational Christian Church in Queensland
- B. The Use of the Bible in the Samoan Congregational Christian Church of Brisbane
- C. Which books of the Bible or versus of the Bible are the most memorable and considered your favourites and why?
- D. The Youth Strategy
- E. Analysis and Conclusions
 - E.1 Which books or versus of the Bible do you refer to the most for a sermon and why?
 - E.2 Youth Strategy

CONCLUSIONS **78 – 80**

BIBLIOGRAPHY **81 – 85**

- ¹ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1964) 4.
- ² Gustafson Berthel & Philip Fensholt, *Key Words of the Gospel* (Liverpool: Christian Bookshop & Press, 1964) 65.
- ³ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* 178.
- ⁴ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* 178. Hill quotes in his *Christian Dictionary* (1972) and that, "whatever is a prime text to be understood in Christian thought... whatever is not of Christian Doctrine collected were showing the importance of labour. One of Luther's *Tablet* during the 1520s said: 'good righteousness will labour for his master without a wage here'. Luther also in 1520 wrote: 'Labour is the best of all things'." Hill reference.
- ⁵ Hill, Christopher, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* 178. Hill argues that the Reformation led to economic individualism, since it encouraged industry, savings, and investment. The individualism of the individual led to Christian individualism, the need to be a good citizen, a citizen who is a good citizen.
- ⁶ Rasmussen Heikki, *The Essential History of the Bible, A Christian's Guide* (London: New Page 1977).

The Bible As A Pilgrim Wandering Through History.

Introduction

Christopher Hill quotes an anecdote of an economic student who wanted a reading list for the economic history of England in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. The reply of the legendary economic historian, Jack Fisher was, 'If you really want to understand the period, go away and read the Bible'.¹

The word *economy* derives from a Greek term *oikeioi*, which derives from *oikos*, meaning 'house'.² The apostle Paul said that anyone who failed to look after his or her household was worse than a heathen (I Timothy 5:8). Paul was stating that any Christian who is not a proper *economist* in regard to looking after the welfare of his own family (or, household) is **not** a responsible person and should change his or her ways.

For Jack Fisher the English economy in the sixteenth and seventeenth century was good only if hard work was put in. Industry was needed, since '*wealth not well managed is subject to waste*'.³ Hill quotes sixteenth century critics in their emphasis between poverty and industry. It is not '*civility only*', wrote Joseph Hall, '*but religion bids us to good husbandry...what accounts can be given to our Good Maker, if we never look after our own estate?*'⁴.

The Bible affirms the right of private property and profit from labour. Such an economic system is based upon hard work, competition, and the risks of the marketplace. Hill quotes, Dod and Cleaver who reminded readers that God '*hath instituted the use of negotiation, market and exchange for the mutual benefit of both sides*'.⁵ Wealth is God's blessing upon the lawful use of labour and profit.⁶

¹ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* (London: Penguin, 1994) 4

² Hendrikus Berkhof & Philip Potter, *Key Words of the Gospel* (Liverpool: Charles Birchall & Sons, 1964) 65

³ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*. 159

⁴ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* 159 Richard Baxter in his *Christian Directory* (1673) said that '*idleness is a crime not to be tolerated in Christian societies*.' Milton in his *Of Christian Doctrine* collected texts stressing the importance of labour. Dod & Cleaver '*He that obeyeth God with a good consciousness, will labour for his master with an upright heart*'. Notice that all these quotes have a Biblical reference

⁵ Hill, Christopher. *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* 158 Furthermore the Reformation led to economic revivalism, since it encouraged industry, savings, and investments. This betterment of the individual led to Christian individualism, the need to better oneself, in order to contribute to the community.

⁶ Raisanen Heikki. *The Effective History of the Bible: A Challenge to Biblical Scholarship*. page 353.

This led to one of the defining characteristics of Protestantism, its work ethic. Hill quotes another seventeenth century critic Richard Sibbes who noted that Roman Catholicism maintained state idleness, as exemplified in the celebrating of 53 saints days throughout the year! ⁷

The influence of the Bible in society is hard to qualify and quantify. Nineham wrote,

'It (the Bible) is a message which demands conversion and faith. These are difficult to measure' ⁸

It is difficult to quantify, what part of the Bible, the New Testament, or the Old Testament, that has had the most influence through history. Raisanen⁹ calls this influence of the Bible the 'effective history' of the Bible. One could describe the impact of different texts; say the Decalogue or Romans 13. Another approach is the influence of various themes (like predestination). A focus on specific times and places: what texts or themes influenced the Carolingians in the ninth century or the Puritans moving to America in the sixteenth century. A balanced view would not be without the negative use of the Bible. There seems to be a lack of research for the Bible as a whole in this topic.¹⁰

The title of this thesis illustrates the methodology I am using to view the interface of the Bible and society. Phyllis Tribble wrote that the Bible '*is a pilgrim wondering through history to merge past and present*',¹¹ affecting and changing society. At the same time this merging of past and present contextualises and gives meaning to the Bible, '*on its way towards the future*'¹². The Bible is amendable to the context. Marianne Sawicki calls this the '*three dimensional aspect*' of the Bible through history.¹³ For Sawicki the universality of the Christian faith is not the fact it 'transcend' culture, but in its ability to penetrate and transform any culture.¹⁴ The word 'pilgrim' itself is found in 1 Peter 2:11 in the King James Version.¹⁵

⁷ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*. 160.

⁸ Nineham D E (ed). *The Churches use of the Bible. Past and Present*, (London, SPCK 1963) 28.

⁹ Raisanen Heikki. 'The Effective History of the Bible: A Challenge to Biblical Scholarship' *Scottish Journal of Theology*. vol.5.no 3 1992. Page 306.

¹⁰ Sawicki, Page 6, Raisanen Page 309. Nineham Page 28, are amongst the scholar that believe the Bible's influence is hard to quantify.

¹¹ Tribble Phyllis, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978) pp 1,4,7.

¹² Tribble Phyllis, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*. 202.

¹³ Sawicki Marianne. *The Gospel in History*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) 102 'as a definite message delivered by someone in the past, as interpretive tools for issues that arise in everyday living, and as a guarantee for the future of the individual and of the entire cosmos'.

¹⁴ Sawicki Marianne. *The Gospel in History*, page 111

¹⁵ King James Version 1 Peter 2:11 *'But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

¹⁶Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have

A Samoan historian Malama Meleisea¹⁶, called Christianity a 'missionary' religion. The missionary spirit began with the Apostles, especially Paul, who took as his personal mission, the task of carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles. It is this 'Pilgrim' spirit, a migrating spirit that is characteristic of the Bible through History. It is also indicative of a Biblical community to possess this pilgrim spirit.

The aim of this thesis, is to briefly glimpse at the effect of the Bible on society, as it wanders through history. I have restricted society mainly to the Western European society including the Christian community. Western Christianity has had the most effect on my own migrant society, the Samoan society. This is a big topic that this paper cannot do it justice. It is a holistic view that will highlight a few key points as the Bible wanders through History.

This thesis begins with an overview of the orthodox view of the Bible, its effect on Western Christianity and the impact on Samoan culture. My own contribution is to analyse the Bible's impact (if any) in the context of the Samoan community in the city of Brisbane, Australia.

obtained mercy. ¹¹*Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;* ¹²*Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

¹⁶Malama Meleisea Lagaga: *A Short History of Western Samoa*. (Suva:University of the South Pacific. 1987) 53

CHAPTER ONE

THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF THE BIBLE IN SOCIETY AND THE BEGINNING OF THE PILGRIM WANDERING

INTRODUCTION.

This chapter begins with statistics, which highlight the number of Bibles, and its distribution. We exam the orthodox view of the Bible, followed by a brief review of the formation of the Bible. Finally there is a brief analysis of the social conditions during the formation of the Bible.

A. BIBLE STATISTICS.

As of 1988, the entire Bible has appeared in at least three hundred languages. Portions of it have appeared in one thousand nine hundred languages; in 1988 alone twenty-five new languages were added.¹⁷ According to Mark Noll, in 1900 there were five hundred and thirty seven languages, which contained portions of the Bible. In 1980, this increased to one thousand eight hundred and eleven languages containing portions of the Bible. In 1985 it rose to one thousand eight hundred and twenty nine languages.¹⁸

The translation of the Scriptures is a significant feature of the expansion of Christianity since the 19th century.¹⁹ More languages and cultures have received the Scriptures during the 20th century than in previous one thousand and nine hundred years. .

This proliferation of Bibles is a result of the Bible Societies. In their World Annual Report, the United Bible Societies describes their worldwide distribution of the Bible or portions of it, for that year (November 1 1994 to October 31 1995). They distributed 17.7 million copies of the whole Bible, 11 million copies of Testaments, 27 million copies of portion of the Bible, 17

¹⁷ Jonathon Smith, (ed). *Harper Collins Dictionary of Religion* (San Francisco: Harper, 1995) 258.

¹⁸ J D Douglas, (ed). *New 20th Century Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge* (2nd ed). (Michigan: Baker Books, 1991). 80 According to Douglas, by 1985 the complete Bible had been translated into 293 languages and the NT into 618 languages. At the time of writing 544 translation projects were on their way.

¹⁹ Mark Noll, *Turning Points. Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* (Michigan: Baker Books, 1997) 309.

million copies of "New Reader Portions" and 452 million copies of "Selections" from the Bible!²⁰ However at the same time the United Bible Society acknowledges the fact that "*it is thought that nine out of ten Americans own a Bible, but fewer than half read it*"²¹ If one considers that the population of the United States is about 270 million, so there are approximately 120 million readers of the Bible. There is no other book that could even come anywhere close in readership.

The statistics show that the migration of the Bible is easier if it is translated. Translations brings the message into the lives of individuals, families and the larger social context. It becomes less of a foreign influence and can promote nationalism.²² The process of Christianisation is accelerated by the translation of the Bible into the vernacular.

These statistics illustrate the enormous effort and money required to translate and distribute the Bible. The Bible has been called a gift of God, to be used.²³ The importance lies not with what the translators brought with them, but the message they leave behind.²⁴

B. WHAT IS THE ORTHODOX VIEW OF THE BIBLE IN SOCIETY?

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2nd Timothy 3: 16-17)

I was quite surprised to read that some scholars such as John Barton²⁵ believe that Christians in general do not have the same reverence for the Bible, as do Muslims for the Koran, and the Jews for the Torah. The Bible is the number one best selling book in all of history. Yet the Koran is the most widely read book in the world. According to Barton there is a gap between Christian faith

²⁰ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe, *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* (Nashville: Nelson, 1998) 7

²¹ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe, *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 7

²² Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* 7 Hill mentions that the English Bible played a large part in English nationalism, by asserting the English language in a society dominated by the French speaking Normans

²³ Clark Pinnock, 'Formation and Canon of The Bible' *Holman Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville: Holmans, 1991).

²⁴ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe, *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written* 241.

²⁵ John Barton, *What is the Bible?* (London: Triangle 1991), 62

and the Bible, which is filled by doctrines and decrees.²⁶ Christianity is no longer a 'religion of a book', in the strict sense of that phrase, since Christians now believe in the Lordship of the living Christ and the reality of the Holy Spirit.²⁷ Moberly agrees when he writes '*Christian faith teaches that it is possible to know God through Jesus Christ...through the Holy Spirit, he is present in the lives of those who trust and follow him*'.²⁸

Why then is there a need for the Bible? Why did people like Tyndale, Huss²⁹ and others translate the Scripture even at the cost of their lives? Or why would generations of Hebrew scribes meticulously copy the Old Testament Scriptures, repeating and checking their work by letter, even counting the letters to ensure their accuracy?³⁰

B.1. Divine Inspiration – the human authorship of the Bible.

The answer lies in the belief that the Bible is the Word of God, thus necessitating its accurate transmission and its availability to people of any language.³¹ The word **canon** refers to a 'list or collection of books which were accepted as an authoritative rule of faith and practice'.³² The

²⁶ John Barton, *What is the Bible?* 62

Barton notes the Augsburg Confession for the Lutherans, the Westminster Confession for the Reformed Churches in Britain, and the Catholic Church Council decisions together with papal decrees have all contributed to the Christian faith.

²⁷ Hans Von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*, (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1972) 1.

²⁸ Walter Moberly, 'The Place of the Bible' *An Introduction to the Christian Faith*. (Oxford: Lynx, 1992) 119.

²⁹ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe, *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* (Nashville: Nelson, 1998) 216 John Tyndale who tried to translate the Bible into the vernacular was burned alive. John Huss who proclaimed that the Bible was the final authority, was also burned alive. John Wycliffe, who translated the Bible into English had his bones exhumed and burned anyway!

³⁰ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe, *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 217-219. Kennedy and Newcombe write that the 'the New Testament is far superior to other ancient writings when it comes to the time lapsed between the original manuscript (or autographa) and the earliest extant copy. For example, Caesar's Gallic Wars dates back to circa 60BCE, yet the earliest extant copy is from AD900, a span of nearly one thousand years. Plato's Tetralogies date back to circa 400BCE, but the earliest manuscript copy known is from AD 900, a span of roughly 1,300 years. And Homer's Illiad was written circa 900 B.C. The earliest manuscript copy is from 400B.C., five hundred years later. In contrast, the New Testament was written during the first century, no later than A.D.100, the earliest known manuscript that contains most of the New Testament dated to A.D.200, and there are fragments that date back as early as A.D. 125.. As far as the Old Testament script is concerned the discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls showed that the 'scholars determined that the manuscripts dated back to between 200B.C., and A.D. 200, making them the oldest in the world. When scholars compared the manuscripts they had been using (which dated from the eighth century) with the Dead Sea Scrolls, they were almost an exact match, meaning that the inspired Word of God has been faithfully preserved and transmitted through the ages to this present day!' (Page 219)

³¹ Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Text to Translation*. (Michigan: Baker Books, 1999) 34.

³² Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Text to Translation*. 25

books of the Bible are not authoritative because of an ecclesiastical decree or of being in the canon. Rather the books were recognised as having divine authority.

The Bible contains sixty-six books that are canonical by a significant portion of the Christian church.³³ All or parts of the Bible are also held to be sacred by other major religions.³⁴ The Bible has a universal message which is recognised beyond the Christian community. The Word of God transcends cultural and religious barriers.

To refer to the inspiration of Scripture and forget the human contribution, is what Stott calls the heresy of 'fundamentalism'.³⁵ Terence Fretheim³⁶ warns there are some passages that taken, as 'truth' seems to support child abuse (Genesis 22) and rape (2 Samuel 12). We can attribute this to human error, or the inadequacy of language, which Fretheim calls the 'sinfulness and finitude of the biblical writers...' Stott describes this as the 'double authorship' of the Bible.³⁷

*"...the double authorship of Scripture naturally affects the way in which we read it. Because it is the Word of God, we read it as we read no other book, humbly praying to the Holy Spirit for illumination. But because it is also the word of men, we read it as we read every other book, thinking about its meaning, and paying close attention to its cultural context, grammatical structure and vocabulary. Thus prayer and study, divine illumination and human investigation go hand in hand"*³⁸

11.3. The Bible invites Rapport

³³ John Schwarz. *The Compact Guide to the Christian Faith*. (Minnesota: Bethany House, 1998) 14 The Protestant Old Testament recognises thirty-nine books, the Catholic Old Testament contains forty-six books, (the fifteen books of the Apocrypha) and the Greek Orthodox Old Testament contains fifty books (the Apocrypha and I Esdras, 3 Maccabees, The Prayer of Manasseh and Psalm 151).

³⁴ John Stott, 'Scripture and Culture' *Bible in Our World* 76. The Jewish religion holds that only the Old Testament contains the sacred words of God, but the Samaritans, who broke away from the Jews, believe that only the Pentateuch constitute authoritative Scripture. The Moslems acknowledges that the Old Testament and the New Testament as earlier divine revelations.

³⁵ John Stott, 'Scripture and Culture' *Bible in Our World* 76 This way of reading the Bible means that the truth is there, and people must be made aware of it. People either refuse to take notice of God or are blinded by the temptations of evil. Stott writes that 'The emphasis is not on the transformation of truths, which were already in the minds and words of the prophets, but on the origination of truths, which were not there until God thought and spoke them.'

³⁶ Terence Fretheim & Karlfried Froehlich, *The Bible As Word of God. In a Postmodern Age*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998) 104-105

³⁷ John Stott, 'Scripture and Culture' *Bible in Our World* 79.

³⁸ John Stott, *Scripture and Culture in Bible in Our World* (Sydney: Bible Society in Australia, 1984) 76

B.2. Jesus Christ is the Inspiration of the Bible.

The Jews believe that the Old Testament had been given to them from God through human agents, as a faithful witness of the nations past and their hope of a glorious future. The early Christians who were familiar with Judaism viewed the Old Testament as their sacred Scriptures as Jesus often referred to them. The Christians saw their books of the New Testament as the fulfilment of the Old Testament, thereby taking on the same authority. The unity of the Two Testaments is reflected in the maxim of Augustine of Hippo, "The New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is manifest in the New"³⁹ The Bible marries the two witnesses. Jesus Christ is the inspiration for the Bible, so that '*whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*' (John3: 16). I like the way that Kennedy and Newcombe put it :

The Law give the foundation for Christ.

History shows the preparation for Christ.

Poetry expresses aspiration for Christ.

Prophecy proclaims an expectation of Christ.

The Gospels record the historical manifestation of Christ.

Acts relates the propagation of Christ.

The Epistles give the interpretation of Christ.

*Revelation describes the consummation of all things in Christ.*⁴⁰

B.3. The Bible invites Rapport.

The Bible is a standard, a measuring rod by which we judge our decisions.⁴¹ It was used by the church as a 'rule of faith' or the 'the rule of truth'.⁴² In the early Christian centuries, the New Testament in particular was used to assess Christian doctrines and to correct heretical sayings. The Bible preserved the central message of the gospel that faith in Jesus brings salvation. The implications are that the post-apostolic tradition and the apostolic tradition (represented by the Bible) were clearly not the same. The Bible guides church tradition, organisation, and law. Church tradition is not always worldly and wrong. Yet tradition is not always Godly and right either. This is why all traditions must be submitted to the corrective judgement of the Scriptures.

³⁹ Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Text to Translation*. (Michigan :Baker Books, 1999) 34

⁴⁰ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe, *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 6

⁴¹ Walter Brueggeman, *The Bible Makes Sense*. (Rev Ed.) (Minnesota:St Mary's Press, 1997) 125.

Jesus, provides an example of how the Scriptures are interpreted, in light of tradition.⁴³ He challenges any tradition that traps the spirit of the inspired word. For Jesus himself was highly critical of the Pharisees and teachers of the law. As Jeffrey wrote in his book, '*when later Jesus rebukes the scribes and Pharisees at length, he encourages the people to do whatever is actually taught them by these religious leaders out of the Law itself (Mark 23:2-3) while at the same time avoiding at all costs an imitation of the Pharisees own actual mode of life. That is, he refers them to the text of the Law rather than to its present mode of religious representation*'.⁴⁴

The Bible contains four Gospels. One of the main reasons for this is that the authors were writing to different communities and audiences.⁴⁵ For example Mark wrote to Christians suffering persecution in Rome; Matthew wrote to Jewish Christians that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah; Luke wrote to Gentile Christians that Jesus was the Saviour of the world; John wrote a theological reflection on the meaning of the 'Word became Flesh. This demonstrates interaction between Gospel and society.

This is what I mean when the 'Bible invites Rapport'. There must be dialogue between, the Bible and society. When Jesus criticised the Pharisees it challenges us, to view society (context) and the Scriptures as partners.⁴⁶ The message of the Bible has been described as unchanging⁴⁷. It is the response of society to the Biblical message which is crucial.⁴⁸ We should let the pilgrimage of the

⁴²F.F.Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*. (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1988) 18.

⁴³F.F.Bruce *The Canon of Scripture*. 28. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus begins his ministry by reading from the book of Isaiah 61:1ff in the synagogue of his hometown of Nazareth.

⁴⁴David Jeffrey, *People of the Book. Christian Identity and Literary Culture*. (Michigan:Eerdmans,1996) 49

⁴⁵John Schwarz. *The Compact Guide to the Christian Faith*. 39

⁴⁶Walter Brueggeman, *The Bible Makes Sense*. (Rev Ed.) (Minnesota: St Mary's Press,1997)123. Brueggeman writes 'the Bible is not an object for us to study but a *partner with whom we dialog* ...it requires that we abandon the thinking of it as a 'book' and regard it as a 'tradition' that continues to be alive and surging among us. Such a notion requires that we give up our self-notion as subjects who come unilaterally to the text. The text will continue to surprise us.'

⁴⁷David Jeffrey, *People of the Book. Christian Identity and Literary Culture*. 124. Jeffrey mentions Jesus familiarity with the text 'Do not think that I have to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished' Matthew 5:17-20

⁴⁸Hans Von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1972.)15 "The man who lovelessly and arrogantly seeks to hide from the manifest will of God behind formal detailed regulations such as the Sabbath commandment is acting directly contrary to the true meaning of the Law.... they hand on the double commandment to love God and one's neighbour...exegesis on this principle does not destroy the Law".

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⁴⁴ David Jeffrey, *People of the Book. Christian Identity and Literary Culture*. (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1996) 49

⁴⁵ John Schwarz. *The Compact Guide to the Christian Faith*. 39

⁴⁶ Walter Brueggeman, *The Bible Makes Sense*. (Rev Ed.) (Minnesota: St Mary's Press, 1997) 123. Brueggeman writes 'the Bible is not an object for us to study but a *partner with whom we dialog* ... it requires that we abandon the thinking of it as a 'book' and regard it as a 'tradition' that continues to be alive and surging among us. Such a notion requires that we give up our self-notion as subjects who come unilaterally to the text. The text will continue to surprise us.'

⁴⁷ David Jeffrey, *People of the Book. Christian Identity and Literary Culture*. 124. Jeffrey mentions Jesus familiarity with the text 'Do not think that I have to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished' Matthew 5:17-20

⁴⁸ Hans Von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1972.) 15 "The man who lovelessly and arrogantly seeks to hide from the manifest will of God behind formal detailed regulations such as the Sabbath commandment is acting directly contrary to the true meaning of the Law.... they hand on the double commandment to love God and one's neighbour... exegesis on this principle does not destroy the Law".

Bible in our society have free passage. In this way, we can compare the apostolic tradition with present society.⁴⁹

B.4. Bruggeman's View – Bible and Society.

Bruggemann describes this relationship between the Bible and society.

*'The Bible is not concerned with right morality, right piety or right doctrine. Rather it is concerned with faithful relationships between God and the people, between all the brothers and sisters in God's community, between God's community and the world God made. Faithful relationships of course can never be reduced to formulae but live always in the free, risking exchange that belongs to the promise of God. It is this kind of exchange rather than fixed absolutes that is the stuff of biblical faith.'*⁵⁰

I agree that the central concerns of the Bible are not flat certitudes but assurances that is characterised by risk and mystery. The truth of the Bible is never that of a correct answer but rather of a *'trusted memory, a dynamic image, a restless journey, a faithful voice'*⁵¹. This is a dominant motif of the Bible as it progresses through time. This 'migrating image' or 'restless journey' leaves society tentative in the relationship. It requires one to check with the Bible. Rather than closing out things in a settled resolution the Bible, explores new dimensions of faithfulness, new spheres of trusting.

*'They also expose our easy resolution, our faithless posturing, and our self-deception. If the Bible is only a settled answer it will not reach us seriously. For that reason the faithful community is never fully comfortable with the Bible and never has finally exhausted its gifts or honoured claims.'*⁵²

⁴⁹ Walter Moberly, 'The Place of the Bible' *An Introduction to the Christian Faith*, (Oxford: Lynx, 1992) 124. Moberly advises that we have nearly 2000 years of clarification and dialogue with the inspired word, and this provides great resources in both the positive and the false insights of the interpretation of the Bible.

⁵⁰ Walter Bruggeman, *The Bible Makes Sense*. 121.

⁵¹ Walter Bruggeman, *The Bible Makes Sense*. 121

⁵² Walter Bruggeman, *The Bible Makes Sense*. 122.

C. The Canonisation of the Hebrew Scriptures

There is still uncertainty regarding when the Old Testament canon was formed⁵³. The need for this written record is apparent. While in theory revelation might have been preserved by oral retelling, such a process has certain defects. Anyone who has played the game where each person whispers a story to the next person in the chain, attempting to repeat it as accurately as possible, knows the changes that can result in such serial retelling. Rumors are even more extreme forms of this phenomenon. An accurate and reliable source of truth requires preservation in written form.⁵⁴

The Hebrews required Scripture because it preserved the writings of their prophets and they believed that the prophet's messages came directly from God.⁵⁵ As Brevard Child wrote, '*the fixing of a canon of Scripture implies that the witness to Israel's experience with God lies not in recovering such historical processes, but is testified to in ... the biblical text itself*'.⁵⁶ The text bears witness to Israel's relationship with God. Furthermore, history is not the medium of revelation but rather the final form of the text. In this context Childs supports the hermeneutics, which is concerned, '*to illuminate what lies ahead of the text, not behind...*'⁵⁷ Brevard Child's definition, makes the text a pilgrim.

The basis for the concept of a Hebrew canon comes directly from Scripture itself. Wegner⁵⁸ cites three examples of the early influence of the Scripture. Wegner quotes G. C. Aalders, who points out three occasions in Israel's writings as having divine authority. The first is when Moses came down from the Mount of Sinai with the book of the covenant and read it to the Israelites; their response was '*We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey*' (Exodus 24:7). The second occasion was when King Josiah reads (2 Kings 23:3 cf 2 Chronicles 34:32) the book of the covenant that was found in the temple by Hilkiah (622BCE). The good King Josiah, initiated reforms upon finding this book of the covenant. The third occasion occurred when Ezra read the law to the Babylonian exiles who had returned to Israel. The people wept as they listened and renewed their obedience to the law, implying that they believed the words to be authoritative. (Nehemiah 8:9). The Scriptures then, were written that people should live according to them. It is

⁵³ Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Text to Translation* (Michigan: Baker Books, 1999) 23

⁵⁴ Dockery, David (ed) *Holman Bible Handbook*, (Nashville: Holman Publishers, 1991). Page 5

⁵⁵ Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Text to Translation*, (Michigan: Baker Books, 1999) 23

⁵⁶ Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament As Scripture* 76.

⁵⁷ Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament As Scripture* 76

⁵⁸ Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Text to Translation* 24

clear that the central emphasis of the Hebrew Scriptures is the law⁵⁹ and the prescriptions regulating Jewish life.⁶⁰

D.1. Apostolic Message.

C.1 The History of the Formation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Beginning with the kings of Israel (1020 BCE), the oral traditions were written down and collected and then, during the Exile (500 BCE), they were compiled and combined into books.⁶¹ Wegner suggests that following the destruction of the first temple there was a renewed emphasis on the collection and study of Scripture.⁶² For the returning Babylonian exiles the failure of obeying the Law resulted in their exile in the first place. The Law became the first book to be incorporated in the Scripture. This was followed by the Historical Books and the Prophets around 200BCE⁶³. The Writings were added around 100BCE. The general consensus is the final Hebrew canon – the books that were accepted by the rabbis as sacred or inspired Scripture – is thought by some to have been confirmed by a council of elders at Jamnia, the present city of Jabneh, around the end of the first century AD.⁶⁴ Wegner provides evidence that recent research suggests that the closing of the Old Testament canon occurred in the mid-second century B.C. instead of in the late first century.⁶⁵

The Jews, Protestants, Catholics and Greek Orthodox have different Old Testament canons that are different in the numbers of books. The Hebrew canon has twenty-four books, because many books are not divided.⁶⁶ The Catholic Old Testament contains fifteen books that are not in the Hebrew Scriptures, books such as Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees and Baruch.⁶⁷

D. 3. Jewish Tradition.

⁵⁹ Jeffery Sheler, *Is the Bible True ? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of Scriptures*. (San Francisco: Harper, 1989) 16

⁶⁰ Hans Von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*. 1 The Law (Exodus 24: 3-8) was immediately recognised as authoritative.

⁶¹ John Schwarz *The Compact Guide to the Christian Faith*. (Minnesota: Bethany House, 1998) 14.

⁶² Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Text to Translation* 35.

⁶³ John Schwarz *The Compact Guide to the Christian Faith*. 14.

⁶⁴ Sheler Page 18, Schwarz Page 14,

⁶⁵ Paul Wegner, *The Journey from Text to Translation*. 36

⁶⁶ John Schwarz *The Compact Guide to the Christian Faith*. 14. The book of Kings, Samuel and Chronicles are each one book. They are not split. Ezra and Nehemiah is one book, and the twelve Minor Prophets are one book.

⁶⁷ Jeffery Sheler. *Is the Bible True ? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of Scriptures*. 16. When the Reformation began, the deuterocanonical books were put into a separate section, between the Old and the New Testament, and called it the Apocrypha (from the Greek meaning "of questionable authorship or authenticity"). In some cases they were removed altogether, since the prevailing thought at the time was they were not in the original Hebrew Scriptures. When Jerome translated the Old Testament into Latin around 400 AD, he included these fifteen books with a caution that they were not to be given equal status with the canonical books in the Hebrew. Over time

D. Why did the early Christians also want a Scripture or canon?

D.1. Apostolic Message.

The early Christians required a Scripture to preserve the message of the apostles. The church's corporate life must be shaped by the gospel. By 'gospel' J.Packer⁶⁸ means the whole Christian message. The Oral traditions of the apostles would continue to be recited well into the second century.⁶⁹ As the eyewitness accounts of the gospel began to die, it quickly became apparent a written, more permanent record of the gospel was essential. This became the main criteria for canonicity, the *apostolicity* of the tradition. Where writing was held to come directly from an apostle of Christ, or arise from the circle or direct influence of one chosen personality by Jesus (for example the Gospel of Mark was widely held to derive from Peter's eyewitness reports) or to express in the pure form the message of the apostles about Christ.⁷⁰ This seemed to be the main reason for the formation of the New Testament.

D.2. The Situation of the Church.

The New Testament canon was also a response of the situation of the early church. The church required standards for worship and models for prayers, liturgies, and sermons. The church needed reading material for public and private devotion. The church needed a theological standard for responding to non-Christian critics and for adjudicating doctrinal disputes within its own ranks. It needed a set text to translate the gospel message as it moved out of the Hellenistic Mediterranean into the Latin west and then farther eastward toward Asia and north into Europe.⁷¹

D. 3. Jewish Tradition.

The Christian Scripture also came out of the Jewish tradition of reading the Scripture during worship⁷². As David Jeffrey mentions,⁷³ "*He who wrote no book, is above all to be considered as*

they were given equal status in the Catholic church and thus gave rise to distinctive Catholic doctrines such as purgatory, which comes from 2 Maccabees 12: 43-45

⁶⁸ J. Packer, *Truth and Power: The Place of Scripture in The Christian Life*. (Illinois: Harold Shaw, 1996)

⁷⁷ The facts of Jesus' life, death, rising, reign, and future return, his missionary commission, institution of the sacraments, and sending of the Spirit, plus the Old Testament facts forming the background, plus theological analysis, with ethical corollaries, of God's eternal plan of grace, his 'whole counsel' which has Christ and the church at its heart.

⁶⁹ Jeffery Sheler. *Is the Bible True ? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of Scriptures*. 18.

⁷⁰ Mark Noll, *Turning Points. Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. (Michigan: Baker Books, 1997).38. Noll mentions that the Book of Hebrews does not begin by announcing the name of its author retarded its full acceptance as Scripture, though the apostolic content of the book and the growing conviction that Paul was the author eventually won the day.

⁷¹ Mark Noll, *Turning Points. Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. 34.

⁷² Howard Vos., *Exploring Church History*. (Nashville: Nelson, 1994) 36

⁷³ David Jeffrey, *People of the Book. Christian Identity and Literary Culture*. (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1996) 44

a man of the book". In Luke 4:16ff, Jesus quotes the words of Isaiah, to justify his messiahship. Here is an example of the use of Scripture by Jesus. The Hebrew Scriptures have been 'interpreted' by Jesus, to identify who He is. Again Jeffrey mentions Matthew 5:17-20⁷⁴ to show Jesus familiarity with the Hebrew text. Faith in Christ and freedom from the Law, distinguished the Church from Judaism, and these had to be shown as 'scriptural.' If Christianity were to be justified against Judaism it had to have 'Scriptures of its own'.⁷⁵

The New Testament books are the prime witness to what Christ and the apostles taught. There are Heretics such as Marcion produced their own texts, supporting their own point of views. Scholars consider Marcion's text as a catalyst to canonisation⁷⁶. Marcion rejected the Old Testament, and included ten of Paul's epistles and a 'mutilated' gospel of Luke.⁷⁷ At about the same time the Montanists claimed continual revelation. The church had to respond to the heresy of the Montanist by claiming that revelation had ceased.

Many apocryphal works began to appear which were very close to the New Testament message, and claimed 'to fill in the gaps of the Jesus narrative'.⁷⁸ There was a need to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Roman persecutions called for a decision on the contents of the New Testament canon. The persecutions of Diocletian in 303CE hoped to eradicate Christianity from the imperial capital, by ordering the burning of all the Bibles in the city, along with any churches or houses in which they were found.⁷⁹ Therefore one wanted to be sure that the effort of preserving the sacred texts were authentic and genuine, as a great amount of blood was spilled for the cause.

Order had to be quickly established. In a written format, the Christian message is stored, and available to be "read by everyone". It must be stressed that the Apostolic period was the high-water mark of Roman peace and literacy. Koine Greek was the common language throughout the

⁷⁴David Jeffrey, *People of the Book. Christian Identity and Literary Culture*. 45 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets: I have come not to abolish but to fulfil. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished."

⁷⁵Hans Von Campenhausen, *The Formation of the Christian Bible*. 68.

⁷⁶Jeffery Sheler. *Is the Bible True? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of Scriptures*. 19, Marcion was an influential and wealthy member of the Roman church, who had fallen under the influence of Gnosticism. He also had become obsessed with the apostle Paul's teachings that because of Christ's resurrection, Christians are no longer under the Law of Moses.

⁷⁷Howard Vos., *Exploring Church History*. 36

⁷⁸Howard Vos., *Exploring Church History*. 36

⁷⁹Jeffery Sheler. *Is the Bible True? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of Scriptures*. 10.

Empire. By the end of the fourth century the New Testament canon for the church in the West was virtually set.⁸⁰ Apostolic connection, conformity to the rule of faith, and acceptance and usage in the churches had been the keys.

D.4. Our only Access to the Gospel is through the Scriptures.

The New Testament books are the prime witness to what Christ and the apostles taught. There are no other independent sources of any significance available.⁸¹ The fact that the apostolic tradition is canonical shows clear awareness that the post apostolic tradition and the apostolic tradition are not on a par, but that the latter must control and correct the former. Only that which is demonstrably rooted in Scripture, and which therefore we can be sure the apostles would have endorsed, can be held to belong to the gospel. As J Packer notes '*...the church, once formed, needs constantly to be reformed by the Bible*'.⁸² The New Testament acknowledges that society can be deformed, when reference is made to the '*principalities ...powers...world rulers of this present darkness...spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places*' (Ephesians: 6:12, RSV). Lapses into the deformity of misbelief and unbelief must be expected. The Bible's existence is a testament that such times will inevitably happen. For the Christian community to remain Christian the corporate life must be shaped by the gospel.⁸³

E. The development of the Codex – precursor of the Book.

One effect of the Bible was the development of the codex.⁸⁴ The universal form of a book in ancient times was the roll (Latin. Volume)⁸⁵. Papyrus rolls were made by gluing sheets of papyrus together. The codex proved a useful format for the Bible - because it was more compact and it permitted writing on both sides; it gave easier reference; and it was better suited to a collection of volumes. What ever may have been the reason for the adoption of the codex, this

⁸⁰ Jeffery Sheler. *Is the Bible True? How Modern Debates and Discoveries Affirm the Essence of Scriptures*, 20.

⁸¹ J. Packer, *Truth and Power: The Place of Scripture in The Christian Life* 78.

⁸² J. Packer, *Truth and Power: The Place of Scripture in The Christian Life*. 83-84.

⁸³ J. Packer, *Truth and Power: The Place of Scripture in The Christian Life*.

⁸⁴ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Ed 119 The codex or book form (*liber, libellus*) originated with binding wax-covered wood tablets together with rings or leather cords. Parchment replaced the wax tablets for some uses, including the first draft of liturgy works. Second Timothy 4:13 refers to 'books' (rolls, which might be Scriptures) and 'parchment' (*membranai*, which might be Paul's notebooks or perhaps Christian writings)

⁸⁵ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Ed 118 Writing was on one side only. The Jews wrote the Old Testament Scriptures to be kept in their synagogues on leather scrolls. These would unroll from right to left (since Hebrew is written that way) and for long rolls would be wound on two rolls

form proved providential for a 'library of sacred books', a canon, and Christians seem to have been mainly responsible for making it the standard in the book business. In contrast to the great predominance of codices in Christian literature of the early centuries, in the second and third centuries most pagan literature continued to appear on scrolls.

F. Attitudes of Pagans Towards Christians.⁸⁶

Christianity was first mentioned in the literature of the Roman upper classes in the early second century, a superstition (superstition; cf. Acts 25; 19). The most conservative elements in pagan society - the aristocracy and the rural peoples - proved most resistance to Christianity. Christianity initial success came from among the city dwellers. It was the cities that Paul targeted in his missionary journeys. The city area was always open to new ideas and to change.⁸⁷

Some of the central articles in the Christian faith were unacceptable to outsiders. To worship as Son of God a man crucified was, as Paul said, '*a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles*' (1 Corinthians 1:23). The idea of a suffering and dying Son of God was not foreign to pagan thought, but a crucifixion as a criminal did not meet with a favourable response. Paganism had no genuine doctrine of incarnation. In fact such a situation was repugnant, and contrary to all notions of divinity. The pagan society despised Christians, abandoning Greek religion, believing in the resurrection (immortality). Generally the afterlife was in terms of the immortality of the soul. The body was commonly thought of as a hindrance from which the soul must escape. To define hope in terms of a 'bodily' existence is not what the educated pagan wanted to hear.⁸⁸

G. How could the Bible journey in these social conditions⁸⁹?

The authority of ancient and sacred Scripture was appealing to the serious-minded pagans. The Bible offered evidence from antiquity through its claim to the fulfilment of biblical prophecy. The Bible made exclusive claims and demanded an exclusive loyalty. It combined high moral

⁸⁶ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Ed 556-559.

⁸⁷ Everett Ferguson *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Ed 571.

⁸⁸ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Ed 557.

⁸⁹ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Ed. 565-570 The popular ridicule of Christianity is seen in the graffito scratched on a stone in a guardroom on Palatine Hill near the Circus Maximus in Rome. The figure of a man with the head of an ass is shown hanging on a cross. Nearby another man raise this hand in a gesture of adoration, and the inscription reads, 'Alexamenos worships his god'. Jews had been charged with worshipping an ass, and this was here transferred to Jesus. It conveys strongly the idea of how contemptible the idea of a crucified Lord was to pagan thinking.

standards with religious faith. The Bible espoused a social cohesiveness that provided material security and psychological support. The Bible contained observer accounts of a promised deliverance from the power of demons, fate, and magic as well as redemption from sin and guilt. The Bible offered reports of salvation to all classes and conditions of persons.⁹⁰

The huge interest in religion made the passage of the Bible easier. The numerous competing religions of the Roman Empire, testified to the religious interest of the time. Competition was not altogether a negative factor. This illustrates the spiritual hunger of the times. Many people were dissatisfied with the moral condition of society and with the available religions. This made the journey of the Bible easier. This situation varied greatly with different people, in different localities, and in different economic and social situations. Christianity's very diversity testifies to the enormous appeal that some of its aspects had and to the spiritual energy it brought.

The Imperial cult religion was strong on organization but weak on religious content. The Imperial cult also suffered in that it was 'Roman' and not a truly universal religion. The Bible provided a basis for Christianity to advance: a firm belief in the truth of the Christian religion, universalism, brotherly love, charity, vitalising force of self-government in a bureaucratic world, and ability to organise.⁹¹

CONCLUSIONS

The dominant theme in the formation of the Bible is dialogue between God and society. This dialogue is analogous to the Old and New Testament. The New Testament is a fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament. The formation of the Old Testament gained impetus after the Babylonian exile, when the Jews wanted to reestablish dialogue with God. The fact there is a

⁹⁰ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* 2nd Ed 581. From A.D. Nock *Conversion* (Oxford, 1933) 210-211 A.D. Nock sums up the advantages of Christianity this way, 'The success of Christianity is the success of an institution which unities the sacramentalism and the philosophy of the time. It satisfied the inquiring turn of the mind, the desire to escape from Fate, the desire for security in the hereafter; like Stoicism it gave a way of life and made man at home in the universe, but unlike Stoicism it did this for the ignorant as well as for the lettered. It satisfied also social needs and it secured men against loneliness'

⁹¹ Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* 2nd Ed 582. Nilson, *Greek Piety* (Oxford, 1948) 183 Celsus a philosopher in his book *True Doctrine* also shared the above views of Christianity. He was critical of their emphasis on faith at the expense of reason. Also Christianity was appealing to the unprofitable members of society, weaklings, women and slaves.

Their injunctions are like this. 'Let no none educated, none wise, none sensible draw near. For these abilities are thought by us to be evils. But as for anyone ignorant, anyone stupid, anyone uneducated, anyone who is a child, and worthy of their God, they show that they want and are able to convince only the foolish, dishonourable and stupid, and only slaves, women, and little children... He asks, 'Why on earth this preference for sinners!''⁹⁰

canon is an awareness that the post-Apostolic society is not on par with Apostolic message. Jesus uses the Scriptures to criticise the Pharisees, who do not truly represent this Bible – Society relationship.

The Pilgrim begins its journey. It has an important message of hope. It is a pilgrim that is the **only** recorded witness that contains the teachings, the life, death and resurrection of Christ. Because it is officially recognised as such, it needs to dialogue with society. In the process of this dialogue it is able to transform and reform what has been deformed by a lack of discourse. The pilgrim contains the Word of God. This is the pilgrim, which begins the journey.

As a consequence a large number of landowners returned to their country estates. They turned these estates into independent economic, political and social structures, which were self-administered. The large-scale landowners took parts of the *forum*, *curia*, and *templum* with them to their estates; they became independent rulers. These independent estates were easily defended and so began the *feudal* system, a pattern of decentralised economic, social, and military organisation. In return for protection by a local strongman, the people on the land gave him money, produce, and service, becoming vassals. In this context how was the Bible going to wander?

A.2. Monasticism – preserving the Bible, Bible into action.

Monks embraced the simple rural life-style.²² The early Christian community in Acts 4: 32-35 encouraged monasticism.²³ The indirect effects of such texts have been immense, as monasticism

²² Marianne Sawicki, *The Gospel in History* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) 148. 'Evidence of literacy of Europeans in the seventh century comes not only from the scarcity of books composed at the time, but from books which bear identifying marks rather than signatures'.

²³ Carl Velez, *The Medieval Church: From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the End of the Reformation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997) 14. The influx of Christian missionaries from the East and North of the Western Roman Empire had destabilised the social infrastructure that the Romans had established in the West. The sack of Rome in 476 AD (considered the beginning of the Middle Ages) not only weakened the language and culture, but it symbolised the decline of city life. Under Emperor Diocletian, urban life deteriorated and a clergy, indeed it was considered shameful for one to be cut off from the city.

²⁴ Carl Velez, *The Medieval Church: From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the End of the Reformation*, Page 14. This was because many who embraced Christianity, only did so because it was the accepted part of

CHAPTER 2

THE BIBLE IN THE MIDDLE AGES, REFORMATION, AND THE
ENLIGHTENMENT.

A. THE BIBLE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

A.1. Decline in City Life – the Rise of Feudalism.

The Bible as a pilgrim faces a problem in the early Middle Ages. The Bible was created in a period of high literacy, under Pax Romana. The best reception of the message of the Bible is in the city. The society in the early Middle Ages is characterised by high illiteracy⁹² and a decline in urban centres.⁹³ The city was the centre of administration (the *curia*), the economy (the *forum*) and the religious and cultural life (the *templum*). The surrounding countryside was administered from this centre. This accumulated wealth made the city a prime target for barbarian invasions.

As a consequence a large number of landowners returned to their country estates. They turned these estates into independent economic, political and social structures, which were self-administered. The large-scale landowners took parts of the *forum*, *curia*, and *templum* with them to their estates, they became independent rulers. These independent estates were easily defended and so began the *feudal* system, a pattern of decentralised economic, social, and military organisation. In return for protection by a local strongman, the people on the land gave him money, produce, and service, becoming *serfs*. In this context how was the Bible going to wander?

A.2. Monasticism – preserving the Bible, Bible into action.

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⁹² Marianne Sawicki. *The Gospel in History*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) 148. 'Evidence of illiteracy of Europeans in the seventh century comes not only from the scarcity of books composed at the time, but from deeds which bear identifying marks rather than signatures'.

⁹³ Carl Volz, *The Medieval Church. From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the Eve of the Reformation*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997) 14. The influx of Germanic tribes from the East and North of the Western Roman Empire had destabilised the social infrastructure that the Romans had established in the West. The sack of Rome in 476 AD (considered the beginning of the Middle Ages) not only introduced new languages and cultures, but it symbolised the decline of city life. Under Graeco-Roman values, urban life determined one's identity. Indeed it was considered shameful for one to be cut off from the city.

⁹⁴ Carl Volz, *The Medieval Church. From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the Eve of the Reformation*, Page 14. This was because many who embraced Christianity, only did so because it was the accepted part of

became an enormous cultural force. Strangely enough monastic life suited feudalism (Divine intervention perhaps?). The barbarians, who were streaming into the Roman Empire, knew nothing of city life and state administration. They identified more with the feudal system, and became absorbed in this social structure. The interface of the Bible and society started in the world of the monastery.

Literacy declined because there was little need for it. Literacy became associated with the clergy, - hence clerical duties. Practical skills such as farming and fighting assumed more importance in the early Middle Ages.

The monasteries took over the religious role (*the templum*) of this 'feudal community'. The monasteries became a repository of learning and the need to read and write became important. Monasteries were the conservatories of learning and the centres of missionary and philanthropic work. The monks were the writers, preachers, philosophers, and theologians of the age. On a negative basis 'they headed the Inquisition and persuaded multitudes to participate in the Crusades'⁹⁶.

The Bible played an important part in the evangelisation role of the monks. For example Boniface would write to England for more copies of the Bible. Pope Gregory II would advise him to use both testaments to convert the Germanic pagans.⁹⁷ Western monasticism was shaped principally by Benedict of Nursia (480-550) who established a Rule for all Western monasticism.⁹⁸

society. Monks saw Christianity as being too secular, and real spirituality could only be achieved by removing one self from the community. 'By doing so, the monks served as the vanguard in the church's efforts to evangelise the scattered pagan and barbarian population of Europe'.

⁹⁵ Heikki Raisanen, 'The Effective History of The Bible: A Challenge to Biblical Scholarship?' *Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol.45 no.3 1992 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992) 319. Acts 4:32 *Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.* ³³ *With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.* ³⁴ *There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold.* ³⁵ *They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.* ³⁶ *There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement").* ³⁷ *He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.*

⁹⁶ Howard Vos, *Exploring Church History* (Nashville: Nelson,) 71 It should be remembered that Luther, Erasmus, and many other critics of the papacy had monastic backgrounds. Long is the roll of great leaders of the Middle Ages who came from the monastery or were associated with it. It includes such famous names as Gregory I and Gregory VII, Richard and Hugh of St. Victor, and Bernard of Clairvaux.

⁹⁷ Carl Volz, *The Medieval Church. From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the Eve of the Reformation*, 46.

⁹⁸ Carl Volz, *The Medieval Church. From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the Eve of the Reformation*, 16.

"There were three principal activities, the first being the work of God, which referred to worship to be held

A.3. Early Versions of The Bible – the Importance of Translations.

The early church recognised the importance of translating the Bible into other languages.

Wegner writes that

*'...history has shown that when persecution and heresy come, those who have the Bible in their own language are better equipped to resist it. Church history confirms that in areas such as Egypt and Syria, where the Bible was translated into the languages of the common people at an early stage, the Muslim conquest in the seventh century was not able to wipe out Christianity. But in areas where there was no translation (as with the Berber people in North Africa) hardly a trace of Christianity is left'*⁹⁹

Bruce Metzger mentions that,

*'By the year 600, the Gospels had been translated into only eight languages. By the time of the Reformation, there were Bibles or portions of it translated into only 33 languages - out of a total of about 6000 languages! It was discouraging to see how slow the church was in providing translations of the Holy Scriptures.'*¹⁰⁰

A.3.1 The Vulgate Translation

It was in this social context that the Bible was to continue its journey in the early Middle Ages. The official Bible in the West was the Vulgate, which was a Latin translation of the Greek Septuagint.¹⁰¹ It played an important role in Western Europe for about one thousand years.

7 times a day (Psalm 119:164). A second daily obligation was that of spiritual reading which was directed toward the spiritual growth of the monks. In time this would expand to include the copying of manuscripts. The third activity was manual labour, which occupied from seven to eight hours a day. Such an activity was nothing short of a revolution in common attitudes, for it elevated the idea of honest labour as a virtue, which in late-Roman times had been performed mainly by slaves. The Benedictine Rule does not mention the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. These are assumed.

⁹⁹ Paul Wegner *The Journey from Text to Translation*, (Michigan: Baker Books, 1999) 251-56 The Armenian Bible is one of the earliest translations of the Bible around the fifth century, after the Armenian priest Mesrop developed the Armenian alphabet. Likewise the Egyptian (Coptic) and Ethiopic Bibles or portions of it were already translated between the fifth and sixth centuries. Hence in these three countries there is still a Christian community in the midst of Islam.

¹⁰⁰ Bruce Metzger, 'From The Apostles To You', *Christian History*, vol.13, no.3, 1994 p40

¹⁰¹ John Schwarz, *The Compact Guide to the Christian Faith*. (Minnesota: Bethany House, 1998) 22. 'From the Latin vulgatus which means 'common' or 'ordinary' language. The Vulgate became the Bible of the Western church until the Reformation. It became the basis of Catholic translation until 1943.

During the Reformation, when people needed the Bible in their own tongue, the Latin Vulgate was used to base their translations. The Latin Vulgate introduced words like 'justify' or 'sanctify' which reflects a more legalistic mindset than the philosophical Greeks. Nevertheless the Bible in the Vulgate in Western Europe became a Bible for priests and scholars. In general the laity were illiterate and only knew the Bible only indirectly.

A.3.2 The Gothic Translation.

In the West the Gothic translation was important in the migration of the Biblical message. The Goths became a force in the 4th – 5th centuries.¹⁰² When Augustine of Hippo had heard that the Goths had sacked Rome in 410 C.E., he was relieved that they had already been Christianised, or else Rome's fate would have been much worse.

Ufilas converted the Goths and invented the Gothic alphabet.¹⁰³ Ufilas was hospitable to Arianism, which denied the divinity of Christ. Wegner notes that in a translation of Philemon 2:6, reference is made to the pre-existent Christ in terms of being *galeiko guda* ('similar to God') whereas the Greek *isa theo* should have been rendered *ibna guda* ('being in very nature of God'). Under the influence of Ufilas the Goths adopted Arian Christianity. This made the Goths theologically different from 'Catholic' Christianity. The warlike nature of the Goths forced Ufilas to leave out books such as Samuel and Kings when he translated the Old Testament.¹⁰⁴ These books tended to have narratives of Israel's battles with their enemies. Lynch supports this viewpoint, in that the German and Celtic tribes 'identified with the Hebrews, who subdued rival nations and conquered the Promised Land'.¹⁰⁵

A.4. The Roman Church and the Papacy.

The church in Rome became the dominant institution in Europe. It claimed that Peter, the 'chief' of the apostles (Matt, 16:18), had passed on to the subsequent bishops of Rome his authority as Christ's vicar or representative on earth. In the fifth century the church began to call the bishop of

¹⁰² Marianne Sawicki. *The Gospel in History*. 102 and Paul Wegner *The Journey from Text to Translation*, both agree that the Goths were the dominant force in Europe in this time.

¹⁰³ Marianne Sawicki. *The Gospel in History*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) 102. This is a positive aspect of the Bible. Ufilas used about two-thirds Greek letters, the rest were Latin letters as well as elements of Old German runes (oldest known German alphabet) to create the Gothic alphabet, primarily as a means of translating the Bible for the Goths.

¹⁰⁴ Paul Wegner *The Journey from Text to Translation*, 256

¹⁰⁵ Joseph Lynch. *Religion within the Middle Ages* in *Christian History* Issue 49 vol.15. no.1 1996 page 11.

Rome the pope, from the Latin *papa*, meaning 'father'. The Bible therefore was protected in Rome. The Greek Orthodox Church did not accept the pope as the head of the church. It viewed all bishops as equals, of whom the pope was 'first among equals', but not supreme.

A.5. High Medieval Western Christianity discovers the Gospels.

A.5.1 The Discovery of the Gospels.

The Old Testament between 500-900 CE was very popular. Early medieval clergy were inspired by the Old Testament references to incense in worship, anointing with oil, tithing, and strict observance of the Sabbath. Christians in the High Medieval Ages read the New Testament filtered through their warlike cultures and the Old Testament imagery. The apocalyptic judgement in Matthew 25: 31-46, with the vision of the end times, and the separation of the just and the unjust, held the early medieval imagination. These apocalyptic themes seem natural when one takes into account constant invasions of this time period.

After the Viking invasions ended in the eleventh century, Western Europe became urbanised and more literate. Under these conditions, Europe discovered the Gospels, which resulted in a deep religious change, comparable to the Reformers' discovery of the apostle Paul in the 1500s.

A Gospel-based faith fostered an emotional spirituality that flowed through society. The religious (monks and nuns) priests, and laity yearned to learn more about Jesus, his mother, and his apostles.

This new emphasis sparked the creation of two orders. When the church had become too secular, Francis of Assisi and Dominic of Calaruega took Jesus' words literally in Matthew 19:21¹⁰⁶. In the early 1200s a new form of monasticism was created by Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) and Dominic of Calaruega (1170-1221). The friars or 'brothers' tried to imitate literally the life of Jesus and his apostles. They were deeply moved by Luke 9:3-6 the passage where Jesus send out the Twelve to proclaim the kingdom of God, taking '*nothing for the journey – no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic*'. They dressed, in coarse garments with a rope tied around their

¹⁰⁶ Heikki Raisanen, *The Effective History of The Bible: A Challenge to Biblical Scholarship?* 319
 (²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money⁷ to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.")

waist preaching. The best preachers drew large crowds and stimulated explosive reactions of repentance and religious exaltation.

Unlike monks who lived behind monastic walls, the friars worked in the world. Their energy and creativity enabled them to teach at universities, manage investment funds to provide poor girls with a dowry for marriage. They even went out as missionaries to Muslim countries and even to the Far East.

A.5. Anti-Jewish Reaction and Witch-hunting in the Middle Ages.

A.5.2 The Laity know the Bible indirectly.

The revival of the New Testament also resulted in Anti-Jewish reaction: Matt 27:24ff the Jewish David Scholer¹⁰⁷ writes that the vernacular translations flourished during the High Middle Ages. I find that hard to believe. The vast majority of Western Europe was illiterate. Only the wealthy could afford a Bible. Scholer says in the same article that the cost of a Bible 'might easily amount to a priest's whole yearly income'.¹⁰⁸ The medieval church did not object to Bible translations; by the early 1500s, there were Bibles in most European languages. But the Church opposed the work of Wycliffe and Tyndale because these translators criticised the church.

Even the illiterate had means of learning more about biblical stories. Lynch mentions the biography of Margery Kempe, a woman who lived in this period of the Middle Ages. Margery Kempe gained religious experience from readers, confessors, and preachers. In her autobiography, she wrote of one priest "He read to her many a good book of high contemplation and other books, such as the Bible with doctors commentaries on it"¹⁰⁹

This Gospel-based faith disrupted centuries-old patterns of Christian behaviour. Hearers of Gospel stories began to emphasis their literal details and meanings – and act accordingly. For centuries, only monks and nuns embraced Jesus hard sayings by abandoning wealth, sex, family, vengeance, pride, ambition, and the like.

¹⁰⁷ David Scholer, 'Did You Know', *Christian History*, vol.13, no.3, 1994 p 2. 'Since Latin was a barrier for most people, vernacular translations flourished – not only of the Gospels but also of the Psalms (which were believed to have been written about Christ)

¹⁰⁸ David Scholer, 'Did You Know' 2

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Lynch, 'Religion with a Human Face' *Christian History* vol.15, no.1, 1996 p 10 'Margery's main source of Gospel knowledge came from preaching. She loved sermons. In the late Middle Ages, with an increasing demand for more biblical knowledge came a surge of interest in preaching, especially preaching that spoke to people personally.'

But as the Gospel revival spread through society, some lay people, including Margery Kempe, believed they too were called to observe the hard sayings as best they could. For example at one time, Margery and her husband took vows of chastity. The church had no theological reasons to object to this trend, but it had difficulties with some of the practical consequences – e.g. husbands leaving their wives and families for the sake of pilgrimages, and wives unilaterally taking vows of chastity¹¹⁰

A.6. Anti-Jewish Reaction and Witch-hunting in the Middle Ages.

The revival of the New Testament also resulted in Anti-Jewish reaction. Matt 27:24ff the Jewish people ask for Jesus' blood upon their children; John 8:44 non-Christian Jews have the devil as their father. This set a dangerous precedent for the Jews. They refused to acknowledge that God would reveal Himself in the flesh, but only through the Torah. Secondly Jews believed that salvation comes through righteous living and faithfulness to the Mosaic covenant. There was a growing anti-Semitism amongst the Christian society as a whole. This led to persecution of Jews. During the crusades the Jews became targets of retribution, especially in Germany. Hundreds of Jews were slaughtered.

The witch-hunt in Christendom had its necessary biblical origins in the New Testament belief in demons and in the Old Testament condemnation of the sorceress (Exodus 22: 18).¹¹¹

A.7. The Bible creates Universities.

The medieval universities had their origin in the cathedral schools. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge became a training ground of educated churchman.¹¹² The universities grew into independent entities as the towns grew into cities. As the cities attracted new wealth so the universities attracted the ancient learning that was trickling back into Europe. It introduced a new approach to knowledge itself one that was experiential. This approach was welcomed by the universities but not at the older monastic schools. The application of new methods of

¹¹⁰ Joseph Lynch 'Religion with a Human Face' *Christian History* 12

¹¹¹ Heikki Raisanen, 'The Effective History of the Bible: A Challenge to Biblical Scholarship' *Scottish Journal of Theology* vol. 45 no 3 1992 303-324.

¹¹² James Mitchell (ed). *History and Culture 1*. 2nd Edition. (London: Michael Beazeley, 1979) 195

investigation and analysis to traditional texts and practises resulted in the systematic theology, which was the crowning achievement of the thirteenth century's ministry of the word.¹¹³

A.8. The Bible and Medieval Law.

The Byzantine emperor Justinian I (482-565 C.E.) stands out for his use of the Bible to undergird the Roman law.¹¹⁴ Like many important documents in Western history it begins in the name of the Saviour.¹¹⁵

Professor of history Norman Cantor writes that the *'Justinian Code was the most highly developed system of laws in the early medieval world; it is the basis of many of the legal systems of modern Europe'*¹¹⁵ Kennedy quotes Israel Drapkin who expresses the importance of the Bible in the formation of the Justinian laws.

*"This Codex is indeed the cornerstone of jurisprudence: the Napoleonic Code was modelled directly on it; in Germany the Roman law was applied...until 1900; and even the English 'common law' has many roots in Roman judicial principles"*¹¹⁶ The significance of all this is simple: the Bible undergirded Justinian's Code of laws. Justinian's Code became the main legal source book for the Middle Ages¹¹⁷. It also became the foundation of Western law thereafter. Thus the Bible is at the root of the West's legal system.¹¹⁸

The Bible laid the foundations and principles upon which the Magna Charta (1215) was framed. It begins by acknowledging God.¹¹⁹ An important by-product was the creation of trial by jury. Usually King John would often accuse a man and then order the magistrate to find the man

¹¹³ Marianne Sawicki. *The Gospel in History*. 208.

¹¹⁴ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* (Nelson: Nashville, 1998) 47. He codified all Roman laws since 450 B.C.E. This work was divided into the Digests (decisions of jurists), Constitutions (edicts, decrees, and letters), Institutiones (a manual based on Gaius from 200.C.E) and the Novellae or laws of Justinian himself.

¹¹⁵ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 49. "In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ...to the youth desirous of studying the law...having removed every inconsistency from the sacred constitutions (Imperial Laws)...like sailors crossing the mid-ocean, by the favour of Heaven, have now completed a work."

¹¹⁶ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 50.

¹¹⁷ James Mitchell (ed). *History and Culture* 1.142

¹¹⁸ Carl Volz. *The Medieval Church. From the Dawn of the Middle Ages to the Eve of the Reformation*. 26

¹¹⁹ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 52. "John, by the grace of God...in the presence of God, and for the salvation of our souls...and unto the honour of God and the

guilty! Joseph Wapner states, that the biblical verse that influenced the introduction of trial by jury was Leviticus 19 verse 15: "*In righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour*"¹²⁰ Specific biblical conditions have been applied in legislation, such as the Anglo-Saxon Law Book of Alfred the Great which was based on the Golden Rule and the Book of the Covenant.¹²¹

A.9. The Double Meaning of the Scriptures.

Augustine had taught, it was not the letter which counted, but the contents. This introduced the allegorical method of interpretation, which at times, produce profound and beautiful things, which when used in the sermon, might exhort comfort or at times startle the congregation. But the truth came through with difficulty.¹²² A few advocated a literal, historical and grammatically responsible explanation of the Bible, but they formed a small minority.

Because the general feeling was that it was necessary to find the hidden meaning of the Scriptures, the authority and leadership of the Church, alone could reveal the deeper the meaning. The Church was the only qualified interpreter of the Bible! Its key position in matters of teaching authority was not at all preposterous in a society where Church and Bible, Christianity and civilisation, theology and science were entirely absorbed in one another. Thus a dome of tradition and Church teaching covered the Bible.

B. The Bible And The Reformation.

'Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the Pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound to the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God, I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience' (Martin Luther: Diet of Worms 1521)¹²³

B2.2 The Biblical basis of Martin Luther's "born again" experience.

advancement of Holy Church... That the Church of England shall be free, and have her whole rights, and liberties..."

¹²⁰ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 53

¹²¹ Heikki Raisanen, *The Effective History of The Bible: A Challenge to Biblical Scholarship?* 318

¹²² John Schwarz *The Compact Guide to the Christian Faith* 36

¹²³ Mark Noll. *Turning Points. Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity.* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997) 154.

B.1. Social context of Reformation.

In the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries there was a renewed interest in classical civilisation and an increased respect for literature.¹²⁴ This interest was restricted to scholars and artists. It rarely reached the laity. The invention of printing, the growth of great publishing houses, the development of an international book trade, characterised this period. According to Mitchell¹²⁵ he estimates that '*perhaps two million copies of classical texts circulated in Europe between the invention of printing and the year 1700.*' Interest also in the study of Greek and Hebrew enabled scholars to read the classics in the original languages. The renewed emphasis on ancient languages led many to the Scriptures. The Bible was the most influential book of the sixteenth century.¹²⁶

European society and economics were in flux. Feudalism was on the decline and was largely extinct.¹²⁷ Towns and increasing urbanisation went hand in hand with nation states. A new middle class built around financial and commercial ventures, began to challenge the landed nobility for social recognition.

B1.1 Religion.

The religion of Europe was in a condition of decay. According to Howard Vos,¹²⁸ the evils of the church were many – simony, economic oppression, the purchase of salvation through indulgences, immortality of many of the clergy, and so on. The wave of secularism that engulfed Europe during the fifteenth century affected all levels of church life: the parishioners, lower and higher clergy, monks, and even the successors of St Peter. The decadence of the church led to numerous calls from within for its reform.

B2.Martin Luther.

B2.1 The Biblical basis of Martin Luther's 'born again' experience.

¹²⁴ James Mitchell (ed). *History and Culture* 246.

¹²⁵ James Mitchell (ed). *History and Culture* 247

¹²⁶ D.E. Nineham (ed) *The Church's Use of the Bible, Past & Present.* (London:SPCK, 1963) 73

¹²⁷ James Mitchell (ed). *History and Culture* 247

¹²⁸ Howard Vos, *Exploring Church History* (Nashville: Nelson,) 83.

The Reformation proper began when Martin Luther posted up his disputation against indulgences in Wittenburg on 31 October 1517. Martin Luther's protest that divided Christendom came out of a religious experience.¹²⁹ Luther pursued the ways a monk was taught to find God: prayer, practical discipline of good works, and the intellectual path of reason. According to Atkinson,¹³⁰ the more Luther pursued these known methods the more distance God seemed to him 'so far indeed as to be positively hostile'. Luther had found Romans baffling because he took 'the righteousness of God' (Romans 1:17, RSV) to be God's retributive righteousness judging sin (cf. Romans 1:32; 2:5). Then he came to see that in Paul's usage in Romans this phrase really means 'that righteousness whereby, through grace and sheer mercy, he justifies us by faith'. It was this recognition that he is recall, 'I felt myself to be **reborn** and to have gone through open doors into paradise'.¹³¹

B.3 What is not Biblical is removed.

The Reformation represents clearly the interaction of the Bible and society. If practises and institutions were not found in the Bible, the Protestant community rejected it. The worship of saints, the adoration of Mary; sacraments other than Baptism and the Lord's Supper (the only two clearly instituted by Christ); the celibacy of priests; the use of holy water, rosaries and shrines; and the Latin Mass were all rejected by the Protestants. It was a protest against the sale of Indulgences (written "pardons") to shorten one's time in purgatory, which concerned Luther, as he saw no scriptural basis for these indulgences.

B.4 Salvation by Faith, Priesthood of All Believers.

According to Cairns Protestantism is marked by belief in, salvation by faith alone, and the priesthood of all believers. The priesthood of all believers did not mean, that believers were to be their own priests.

*'Rather Christian believers were to be one another's priests within the community, mediating the word of God and the grace of God to fellow members of the church as the people of God: as Luther explained the key chapter of the New Testament on this concept is 1 Peter 2.'*¹³² Jaroslav Pelikan elaborates on this, 'that to carry out this spiritual priesthood, lay people who

¹²⁹ James Atkinson 'Martin Luther', *An Introduction To The Christian Faith* (Oxford: Lynx, 1992) 309

¹³⁰ James Atkinson 'Martin Luther', *An Introduction To The Christian Faith*. 309

¹³¹ J. I. Packer, *Truth and Power: The Place of Scripture in The Christian Life*. (Illinois: Harold Shaw, 1996) 86.

¹³² Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Reformation of the Bible. The Bible of the Reformation*. (Dallas: Yale University Press, 1996) 47

were engaged in everyday vocations needed to be able to read and understand the Scriptures for themselves, without the interposition of clerical authorities'¹³³.

B.5 Sole Authority of the Scriptures.

The sole authority of the Scriptures connects these two points. The insistence on the authority of the Bible, led to 'repudiation of the authority of the church'.¹³⁴ The Bible was superior to the decrees of councils, the writings of the Fathers, and Papal bulls. Luther could see the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church, which placed more importance in the church doctrines over the faith and practise espoused in the Bible. It was 'back to the basics', for the Reformers. There was a need to translate the Bible into the vernacular, in order to fulfil the previous two doctrines of Protestantism, of salvation by faith, and the priesthood of all believers.

Luther's belief in the vernacular translation is highlighted in the 'original' language of the Old and New Testament. According to Luther the 'medium of languages' ¹³⁵ is how the Bible 'migrated' to Luther's Germany, from Hebrew/Greek origins, to the Latin Vulgate. To Luther this pilgrimage of the Bible should continue in the German language. Historian Will Durant recognises the impact of Luther's Bible translation on Germany. Luther's Biblical translation 'inaugurated German literature and established the New High German of Upper Saxony, as the literary language of Germany'.¹³⁶

Luther's popularity and his views had a profound effect on the German people. When Bishop Edward Foxe, returned to England from his visit in Germany, he told a Convocation in 1537:

*'The lay people do know the Holy Scriptures better than many of us, and the Germans have made the text of the Bible so plain and easy with the Hebrew and the Greek that many things be understood without any glosses at all than by all the commentaries of the doctors'*¹³⁷

Argula von Grumbach's¹³⁸ biography illustrates elements of the Protestant emphasis on the layperson, the priesthood of all believers, and the vernacular Bible. It was unusual for women to

¹³³ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Reformation of the Bible. The Bible of the Reformation*. 48

¹³⁴ Earle Cairns, *Christianity Through the Ages* 351.

¹³⁵ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Reformation of the Bible. The Bible of the Reformation*. 48

¹³⁶ Will Durant, *The Reformation: A History of European Civilisation from Wycliffe to Calvin: 1300-1654*, vol. 4 of *The Story of Civilisation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957) 368-369.

¹³⁷ Netherlands Reformed Church, *The Bible Speaks Again* (London: SCM Press, 1969) 86

¹³⁸ Peter Matheson, ed. *Argula Von Grumbach*. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995) 14-15

she speak out in defence of a student who was forced to recant the teachings of Luther. She criticised the intolerance of the civil authorities, which seemed to be going against the very ideals of the Reformation. Her favourite passage Matthew 10 shows the Spirit of the priesthood of believers in that

*'Every Christian, whether man or woman, has a duty to confess the faith, however painful or difficult it may be.'*¹³⁹

Her bravery to challenge the authorities symbolised the Reformation Spirit for individual choice. Argula shows her deep knowledge of the Scriptures, something that surprised her critics.¹⁴⁰ As a layperson and woman she did not receive any formal training in the Scriptures. This suggests that the Scriptures were a popular topic outside the normal church orbit. Luther's opinions on the need for laypeople to read the Bible might have also come from observations of his community.

B.6 Education for Clergy and the Laity.

Luther's right hand man at Wittenberg was Philipp Melanchthon (1497 – 1560). Melanchthon (the 'teacher of Germany') established primary and secondary schools for the laity and clergy. The Reformation also led to the interest in the empirical sciences, which ironically in the Enlightenment began to challenge the authority of the Bible.

B.7. Two Views of the Canon¹⁴¹

Martin Luther, noted that the Medieval Church make sure that the Bible could, never correct its status and position. The majority of the laity was uneducated, and depended on the authority of the clergy, for biblical interpretation¹⁴¹. The Papal order had stressed the importance of tradition over Scripture. This led to Martin Luther remind people of the authority of the Scriptures, and that all church traditions, should be tested under the authority of the Scriptures. The Reformation would never have succeeded if the Bible not replaced the Pope as the ultimate spiritual authority.

1. The Bible and God's Word created the church.	2. The church created the Bible
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Arsacius Seehofer trial began when the local Bavarian university authorities saw the Lutheran views as counterproductive, to the programme of state building and alliance with the Pope. As a student of the University of Ingolstadt Seehofer was seen as the disrupting the social order with Luther's views.

¹³⁹ Peter Matheson, ed. *Argula Von Grumbach*. 38-39

¹⁴⁰ Peter Matheson, ed. *Argula Von Grumbach* 27.

¹⁴¹ Paul Wegner Paul, *The Journey from Text to Translation*. 121. To have the Bible translated generally posed a threat to the established church, which feared losing power over the people and the revenues from such practises as indulgences. When 'commoners' read the Scriptures there was a fear that they would misunderstand and corrupt the teachings of the Bible that are espoused by the church. Wegner notes that the Middle Ages showed that keeping the Bible in a language that only the educated could understand did not keep the traditions pure and free from error.

The Reformers argued that the church typically went against the 'plain sense' of the Bible, and that reform could only come, if people began to read the Bible without the filter of tradition.¹⁴² God not the church created the canon of Scripture. God inspired the books and moved the church to receive them for what they are. Packer¹⁴³ puts this in perspective *'The church no more created the canon than Newton created the law of gravity. Recognition is not Creation'* The church must never see itself as the author nor lord of Scripture, but as a servant of it. The sale of indulgences, corruption of even the church, is what occurs if the church takes precedence over the Bible.

The Word of God should not be hidden or controlled in any other way. Churches must promote individual and corporate dialogue with the Bible; to foster group discussion; to sponsor clear translations and expositions; and to bring the Bible to bear on theoretical problems and practical decisions alike. Society serves the wandering pilgrim best, by using the Bible as the ever-relevant handbook of authentic discipleship. As Packer notes *'Any congregation in which Bibles are not in worshippers hands at services, nor used as the focus of attention in sermons, nor studied as a main activity, has cause to be ashamed of the poor quality of its discipleship'*.¹⁴⁴ By responding to the Bible's message with faith, the society walks with God. This Biblical dialogue often fosters criticism. Barton calls biblical criticism a *'child of the Protestantism spirit'*.¹⁴⁵

B.7. Two Views of the Canon¹⁴⁶

The Protestant and Roman Catholic views of the Bible.

Protestant	Roman Catholic
1.The church recognised the Biblical books as inspired texts.	1.The church authorised the Bible.
2. The Bible and God's Word created the church.	2.The church created the Bible
3. The Bible alone is inspired.	3.Bible and church tradition are authoritative.
4.Revelation has ceased.	4. Revelation is continuing

¹⁴² John Barton, *What is the Bible* (London: Triangle, 1991) 66

¹⁴³ J. I. Packer, *Truth and Power: The Place of Scripture in The Christian Life*.87.

¹⁴⁴ J. I. Packer, *Truth and Power: The Place of Scripture in The Christian Life*.88.

¹⁴⁵ John Barton, *What is the Bible* 66

¹⁴⁶ Internet.20th August 2000

5.The Apocrypha is not accepted as inspired.

5.The Apocrypha is accepted.

B.8 To be 'born again'.

Catherwood¹⁴⁷ writes that Protestantism was returning back to the New Testament model of early Christianity. Here the key verse is what Jesus says to Nicodemus in John 3:16; unless you are 'born again' you cannot enter the kingdom of God. Christian conversion became a matter of choice. You *choose* to be a Christian or God *chooses* you. (Calvin's view). Making someone go to church against their will does not make their outward conversion valid. As the old saying goes, '*a man persuaded against his will is of the same persuasion still*'¹⁴⁸

True faith is the result of 'inward change'. Christianity by this token is the consequence of an essentially voluntary act. It is, in the words of Lamin Sanneh, the 'triumph of personal faith'. Inward change, personal faith – these are not things that can be brought about by external force.

B.9. John Calvin

John Calvin himself was deeply indebted to the Bible. Calvin made major contributions in education and church government. He encouraged the importance of universal education. In that way, the priesthood of all believers could be realized. Calvin founded an academy for Geneva's children, believing that all education must be fundamentally religious. The city's university grew out of the academy, linked to evangelical preaching and offering an education comparable to the finest in Europe. Some have called the University of Geneva Calvin's "crowning achievement."

B9.1 Presbyterianism

The representative form of church government Calvin developed was organized so that basic decisions are made at the local level, monitored through a system of ascending representative bodies, culminating in a national "general assembly" with final authority. At each level, power is shared with the laity, not controlled exclusively by the clergy or administrative officials. In

¹⁴⁷ Christopher Catherwood, *Why The Nations Rage*. 197-198

¹⁴⁸ Christopher Catherwood, *Why The Nations Rage* 202

emergencies the local church can function without meetings of the upper-level bodies; in the midst of a hostile culture the church cannot be destroyed by silencing the minister. As a result, Presbyterianism was able to survive, even flourish, under adverse conditions. It experienced severe persecution in Holland under Spanish occupation, in France (except during brief periods of toleration), in England under Queen Mary, in Scotland, in Hungary, and elsewhere.

B9.2 The Republic.

In the sixteenth century new social institutions emerged to replace the deteriorating ones that had once held medieval civilization together; many of the new institutions were influenced by Calvin's model on church government. Calvin's ideas on church government also influenced political theory in the West.¹⁴⁹ Presbyterianism influenced the American pattern of government. Whenever Presbyterianism has gained dominance, it has produced a republic. The American government is a republic. Presbyterianism allows the congregation to vote for Presbyterian elders. The congregation has the right to govern the church. This is what happens when the electorate to rule the country votes representatives in. Because of the key role Presbyterianism and thus Calvinism, played in the founding of the United States John Calvin was called by one scholar 'the virtual founder of America'.¹⁵⁰

Calvin also reintroduced the Augustine belief in the sinfulness of man. The Bible approves the creation of government by God's law. A government instituted by law is a republic. Society ruled by man, is on its way to sinfulness. This is because Calvin believed in the depravity of man. Therefore democracy is among the worst forms of government!¹⁵¹

Protestantism and the centrality of the Bible meant the end of a universal church, under the domination of the Catholic Church. It created various Protestant denominations, in Europe. The Lutheran church dominated Germany and Scandinavia. Anglicanism became the state church in England. Calvinism had great influence in Switzerland, Scotland, Holland, Bohemia and Hungary.¹⁵² The Bible migrated in the Reformation, via the ideas of Calvin.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution*, 2.

¹⁵⁰ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution*, 2.

¹⁴⁹ Brian Armstrong, (Dr). 'John Calvin' *Who's Who in Christian History*, (Illinois: Tyndale Press, 1995)

¹⁵⁰ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 86-87

¹⁵¹ James Kennedy & Jerry Newcombe *What if the Bible Had Never Been Written?* 63.

¹⁵² Earle Cairns, *Christianity Through the Ages* 349.

¹⁵³ Earle Cairns, *Christianity Through the Ages* 353.

B10. The Bible and Puritan Revolution (1640 – 1660)

Collins calls the English Revolution the first of the so-called great revolutions¹⁵⁴. The Puritan or the Radical Revolution, for a brief 20 years, Puritans controlled English society.¹⁵⁵ The revolution was important because it had no ideological forebearers, such as Marx for the Russians, or Rousseau for the French Revolution. 'The Bible in English was the book to which they naturally turned for guidance.'¹⁵⁶ It was a revolution, which the American Revolution looked to, in its fight against the British.¹⁵⁷ When the monarchy was finally re-established, many of the Puritans left England, and took their brand of religion, to the Americas. The Puritans were Calvinistic. The Bible migrated with the Puritans to America.¹⁵⁸ The Puritans reintroduced Aquinas' view that the fourth commandment about the Sabbath belongs to the moral law. Jesus day of resurrection should be kept as the Sabbath of rest.¹⁵⁹ Most English speaking countries have followed this until recently.

C. The Bible and the Enlightenment

The Enlightenment wrote Immanuel Kant, is mankind's emergence from immaturity¹⁶⁰. It is the determination not to be bound by the dogmas and customs of by gone ages. It was an age dominated by man's reason.

Protestantism of the Lutheran and Reformed churches is dependent upon the theology of Augustine of Hippo (354-430). Humanity is completely corrupted by the Fall. A human being cannot establish a right relationship to God by practising any form of virtue¹⁶¹. Human beings

¹⁵⁴ Jacquelin Collins, "English Revolution," Microsoft (R) Encarta. 1994 Microsoft Corporation. Copyright (c) 1994 Funk & Wagnall's Corporation.

¹⁵⁵ James Packer, 'The Puritans' *An Introduction to the Christian Faith*. (Oxford: Lynx 1992) Puritans maintain the divine truth and authority of the Scripture. It was contrary to the Anglican view that the Bible gave only general guidelines and principles. Packer calls them Calvinistic, in that 'nothing which is not sanctified by the Bible, whether in thought, conduct...can please God, with its corollary that no individual must do anything which ...the Bible, cannot approve.' 314 'It generated new political and religious ideas and because it extended the English tradition that the government's power should be limited. Cromwell, the leader of the Revolution established nonconformity (refusal to submit to the established church) as a way of life in England that has lasted to the present.

¹⁵⁶ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*. 8.

¹⁵⁷ Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution*. 8.

¹⁵⁸ Vonderlack, Robert 'Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658)' *Who's Who in Christian History*.

¹⁵⁹ James Packer, 'The Puritans' *An Introduction to the Christian Faith* 314

¹⁶⁰ Colin Brown, 'The Enlightenment', *An Introduction To The Christian Faith* (Oxford:Lynx, 1992) 316-318

¹⁶¹ Roy Harrisville & Walter Sundberg, *The Bible in Modern Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 28 To believe in such a heresy is Pelagianism – the arch heresy of the Western tradition

require divine grace to live. This grace does not reside in humanity. Nature and grace are opposites. To live rightly necessitates the direct intervention of God¹⁶²

The Enlightenment was marked by the conviction that by the light of reason human beings could find true happiness quite apart from the "props" of revealed religion. The Christian doctrine of original sin is wrong. It was historically conditioned¹⁶³ The progress of humanity disproves this assertion. Salvation must be redefined as nature and grace and are not opposites. Thirdly, a human being is capable of perfecting the good life here on earth. Human beings are not subject to fate but hold the future in their hands. Finally an essential component of human progress is freedom itself. This is freedom from ignorance, superstition, and especially 'the arbitrary oppression of the constituted social authorities. This is the doctrinal crisis that faced the West, the clash of the Augustinian worldview and the Enlightenment.

In France, scholars such as Voltaire, under the influence of Enlightenment ideals, subjected the Bible to scurrilous satire. As Catherwood mentions in his book¹⁶⁴ the French Revolution was the culmination of the Enlightenment. Up to the French Revolution what had gone before was seen as monarchial, feudal and oppressive. Liberty, equality and fraternity were the ideals of this Revolution ' Religion was abolished from the heart of national consciousness ' ¹⁶⁵ France had no king. The Bible was dethroned. Robespierre, the leader of the Revolution executed thousands in his efforts to create the first atheistic state. He established a 'cult of the Supreme Being'. People no longer ruled in the name of God, but in their own name, in theory at least. Soon the revolutionaries were killing themselves. Ideology had no longer liberated but enslaved the masses. Ironically, a Revolution that overthrew a King ended up with an Emperor, Napoleon. Continental Europe in the early 1800's would remain restless until the Battle of Waterloo.

C.1 Pietism.

The Bible played a crucial role, in stemming the tide of liberal theology¹⁶⁶ that resulted from the Enlightenment. The greatest challenge to the skepticism of the Enlightenment came from the

¹⁶² Roy Harrisville & Walter Sundberg, *The Bible in Modern Culture*

¹⁶³ Roy Harrisville & Walter Sundberg, *The Bible in Modern Culture* 30.

¹⁶⁴ Christopher Catherwood *Why The Nations Rage*. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997) 24.

¹⁶⁵ Christopher Catherwood *Why The Nations Rage*. 24.

¹⁶⁶ Paul Enns, *Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1989). The tenets of liberal theology include the following.³¹⁻⁹ Emphasis on human reason and experience: religious beliefs must pass the tests of human reason and the findings of science; and Christianity must be adapted to the modern world. The Bible is not an infallible, authoritative book: it is a record of the experiences of others; and it has exemplary but not dogmatic value. There is no

Pietism movement, in 1675. In 1675 **Phillip Jacob Spener** published the manifesto of the Pietist movement, *Pia Desideria* (which means *Pious Wishes*). In this book Spener called for a return to a true, living faith based upon the reading of the Bible and the priesthood of all believers. Spener emphasized the importance of the new birth and the living out of the Christian faith in deeds of love and mercy. Spener's associate and pupil August Hermann Francke¹⁶⁷ put into practice what Spener had called for.

August Hermann Francke (1663-1727) was a devout Lutheran and outstanding professor of Biblical studies. Francke soon became a leader at the new university of Halle, and he made it the centre of Pietism. The University of Halle became a centre for the training of evangelists and missionaries. He also supplied the first Protestant missionaries to India. Francke set a good example in his classroom by praying before and after his classes and by speaking to his students to study the Bible carefully and to join the prayer groups at the university.¹⁶⁸

The most famous of Francke's follower's was Count Nickolaus von Zinzendorf, as leader of the Moravians and a pioneer in the mission movement.¹⁶⁹ A Lutheran nobleman, Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, embodied the Pietist movement and provided a refuge for the persecuted Moravian Brethren. The Moravians carried out evangelistic and missionary enterprises, being amongst the earliest of Protestant missionaries, previously the domain of the Catholics. Most Pietists remained within the Lutheran church where they hoped to serve as a leaven within the stale Christianity of their day.

C.3.1 Centrality of the Bible

distinction between natural and supernatural: distinction between God and nature, man and animals, Christ and man is played down; the logical result of this view is pantheism.

Liberalism was an optimistic view of life that lost its influence as a result of World War I, and through the advent of a new approach to religious beliefs called Neo-orthodoxy.

¹⁶⁷ Terry He met Spener in 1688 and became an enthusiastic Pietist. Forced to leave the University of Leipzig because of his pietistic views, he eventually was called to pastor a church near Halle and also to teach at the new University of Halle.

¹⁶⁸ Terry Francke established a number of institutions to minister to the needs he observed. These included seven-day schools in the town of Halle, a free boarding school for poor children, an academy for the sons of noble families, a teachers' college, a Bible college, a pharmacy, a bookstore, a printing press that published religious literature, a Bible society, an infirmary, and a home for widows and indigent persons.

¹⁶⁹ Terry In 1734, the Lutheran Church ordained Zinzendorf, and he planned to make his Moravians a fellowship within the larger Lutheran Church just as Spener had done. However, the Lutheran leaders opposed this. Reluctantly, Zinzendorf became the Bishop of the Moravian Brethren. This tiny denomination began sending missionaries all over the world, and Zinzendorf made trips to America and England to organize the work. A true Pietist, he devoted his whole life to heart religion and pure living.

C.2 John and Charles Wesley

Both John and Charles Wesley, leaders of the Methodist movement in England, were deeply impressed by the Moravians. Following John Wesley's "heart-warming" experience at Aldersgate on May 24, 1738, he gave himself to a ministry of fervent preaching and evangelistic work. He later described the experience that had changed his life. When he was refused permission to preach in the parish churches of England, Wesley declared, "The world is my parish." His *Journal* records his remarkable ministry as a traveling evangelist, covering more than 250,000 miles in the cause of the gospel. The source and authority for his entire message was the Bible, though tradition, reason and experience were not neglected.¹⁷⁰ One of Wesley's great contributions was his organisation of Methodist societies and his insistence on discipline in the Christian life. John Wesley's first "little society" reflected this influence by its rules:

He also showed great compassion for the poor and oppressed peoples of England. Some scholars have claimed that Wesley's success in offering hope to the poor masses of Britain prevented a violent reaction in England such as happened during the French Revolution. The French Revolution had destroyed the Pietist movement on the continent, or stifled its progress. However the isolation of the British Isles, and its influence on North America, helped to develop the Pietist ideals, initiated by Spener.

C.3 THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PIETISM¹⁷¹

C.3.1 Centrality of the Bible

The Pietists believed that a return to reading the Bible would revive the cold sermons and appeal to the emotions as well as to the mind. Pietists emphasise the need to respond to this message of the Bible.

C.3.2 Missions

The Pietists made an important contribution to the development of Christian missions. The Pietists, especially the Moravians, were the earliest of Protestant missionaries. Gary Sattler writes that Pietism "was a prime mover in sending theologically trained people for the express purpose of evangelising other peoples in non-Christian cultures." The Moravians established mission

¹⁷⁰ Donald English, 'Methodism and Evangelical Revival', *An Introduction to the Christian Faith*. (Oxford: Lynx: 1992) 319.

stations in North America, Greenland, Labrador, The British West Indies, Central America, and Africa.

C.3.3 Conversions and Holiness

The Pietists focused on experiential aspects of Christianity in contrast to the Lutheran emphasis on abstract formulations. These doctrines provided the theological underpinnings for the awakenings and revivals of the 18th and 19th Centuries. Indeed, Theodore Frelinghuysen, the preacher who initiated the Great Awakening in the Middle Colonies of America was a Pietist from Germany.

Conclusions:

These are some of the ways that the Bible has influenced society, in particular Western society. The Pilgrimage of the Bible in the Middle Ages began in a time of instability and illiteracy. How can a written book make an impact on an illiterate world? It is the response of the faithful to the message of the Bible that carried the 'Bible' to the illiterate. It is as Bruggemann says in chapter one that *'...the Bible highlights the faithful relationship between God and the people, between all the brothers and sister's in God's community, between God's community and the world God made...'* Therefore in most cases the Bible moved in to these rural areas, not as a book, but in the actions and the way of life of the monks and their missionaries. The monk's Christian lifestyle exemplified the faithful relationship between God, God's community and the world God made. The monastic life became an island of order, in a sea of chaos.

It was coincidental perhaps that the monastic lifestyle suited the feudal system of social organisation. The move from cities, the self-sufficiency of the monasteries, and the running of the monastery by an Abbott, mirrored the feudal society. Whenever the monasteries were set up they took the Bible with them. Thus the Bible could be copied and read within the monasteries. The local lord protected the monasteries, not only for the religious role it played in the community, but it became an oasis of literacy in a desert of illiteracy. Rural areas were most resistant to the Bible and the message. The barbarian people were mainly rural people. The monasteries were thus ideally situated in the heart of pagan territory, ready to transfer the Bible to these pagans.

If the Bible was translated into the vernacular, this would facilitate the migration of the Bible. Hence the immense significance of Ufilas translation of the Bible into the Gothic language. The warring Goths took the Bible with them, in campaigns as Arian Christians. In other words the Bible rode with the Goths during the Gothic invasions.

Monasteries themselves became targets as they accumulated wealth from wealthy landowners, - often to receive monastic blessings. Hence one can say, that the Bible and its message were carried each time a monastery was attacked. It is little wonder that the Old Testament became popular in the early Middle Ages. Many of these barbarian invaders could identify with the narratives of Israel's search for the Promised Land, and the Israel's military campaigns against its neighbors. Even Ufilas tried to delete these narratives when he translated the Bible for the Goths, to lessen the warring character of the Goths.

The actual writings of the Bible became an initiative for law and order. Hence Justinian's use of the Bible to organise Roman laws, was crucial to his Byzantine Empire. One can say that these laws were one of the reasons for the longevity of the Byzantine Empire. For it was the Byzantines that took the full brunt of the Muslim invasions in the Middle East. It acted as a buffer for Western Christianity to develop.

In the High Middle Ages Western Christianity was returning to the city way of life, and becoming more settled. Invasions were less frequent when the Vikings began to settle down. Commerce was creating a middle class. There was also a shift from the Old Testament to a revival in the New Testament, especially the Gospels in this time. This led to the Franciscan and the Dominican orders, which tried to emulate the life of Jesus. The Bible was now migrating through commerce and through these wandering friars. Unlike the monasteries, which tended to be stationary, the mendicant friars carried the Bible to other parts of the Western world. The revival also initiated anti-Jewish feeling. The cathedral schools became universities. Commerce brought with it new ideas, especially the scientific methodology.

The Bible became one of the foundations on which the Reformation was founded. It seemed that society had not maintained the faithful relationship with God. There was much corruption by the Papacy, highlighted by the sale of indulgences. This and many other practises had no Biblical basis. The centrality of the Bible influenced Calvin's theology, giving rise to the Presbyterian Church model, and thus the idea of a republic. Calvin reminded society of the Augustinian view

that people, are sinful. The Reformation wanted the Bible to take the lead in guiding if not the world, then at least the Protestant world.

This is exemplified in the English Puritan Revolution of 1640-1660. This revolution had no ideological forbearers such as Marx or Rousseau. The Bible in English was the book to which they naturally turned for guidance. When the monarchy was restored the Puritans moved to America, to practice the Calvinistic way of government. It was not until the American War of Independence, that the Puritan Revolution ideals were revived. Many of the Americans were brought up in Puritan communities. So it was not surprising the English Puritan Revolution, with its emphasis on the Bible, served as the archetype for the American Revolution. The Puritan influence created the United States of America.

In the two views of the Bible, the Protestant view fits well with the definition in chapter one, '*the belief that the Bible is the Word of God...*'. The Catholic view is that the church community created the Bible. The Catholic view is a restrictive claim; it attributes the formation of the Bible to the 'Catholic Community'. It asserts that the church created the Bible. This claim is true, in that '*early Christians required a scripture to preserve the message of the apostles...standards for worship and models for prayers, liturgies, and sermon...a theological standard for responding to non-Christian critics...etc*'. One can connect the two views by saying that the Protestant view is the continuing migration of the Word of God, creating a church need for the Bible. It is analogous to Phyllis Tribble's idea of metaphors migrating within the Bible. The Protestant view is closer to the Biblical concept of Scripture. (All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 2nd Timothy 3: 16).

The Bible in the Enlightenment.

The brief account of The Enlightenment is marked by the power of man's reasoning. This convinced the society of the Enlightenment that the past had prevented the truth from being revealed. Since Christianity and therefore the Bible was the dominant institution, it was criticised by Voltaire. The French Revolution with the Reign of Terror, and subsequent Napoleonic Wars showed the folly of removing God from society. A new type of theology was coined, 'liberal theology', where religious beliefs must pass the tests of human reason and the findings of science.

The Pietist movement called for a return to a living faith, based upon the reading of the Bible and the priesthood of all believers. It initiated the Protestant missionary movement. More importantly it influenced the Wesley brothers, who were concerned with the Anglican Church in England. The Wesley's have been said to prevent a similar Revolution happening in England. At least in England Christianity was seen as helping society. All this could be traced to the importance of the Bible at the heart of Pietism. This was to have the same effect in America and is the basis of the revivals. The effects of the Pietisms can be seen on the television evangelical programmes that come out of America.

For the 'interpenetration' of the Biblical world and the Samoan cultural world, one has to look at the Samoan culture. In understanding the Samoan cultural context, we are better able to appreciate the interaction of thesis (the Bible) and antithesis (Samoan Culture) to produce the synthesis that is our present Samoan Biblical world. In Ioka's terms it is modern Samoa characterised by a biblical culture and a Christian society.

4. The Samoan Village: The Birthplace of the Biblical culture and Christian Society in Samoa.

To study the impact of the Bible in Samoa is to simultaneously study Samoan culture and Samoan religion, which have always been one and the same and cannot be studied apart, one from the other.

Hove described the Samoan society as 'malietua'. By this Hove refers to the localised power of the Samoan society in the village environment.¹⁵² Malietua calls this village-based system 'a unitary system of dispersed power'¹⁵³ while the village was autonomous in its own decision making with regard to its own welfare, there was a mutual relationship with neighbouring villages. Thus each village belonged to a sub-district. These sub-districts formed the seven districts of Samoa.¹⁵⁴ As Garret writes, there were virtually autonomous rural villages linked by obligatory unifying custom, the *fa'a Samoa* (the Samoan way) and a single language.¹⁵⁵ Samoa

¹⁵² Daisy Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Samoa and New Zealand* Unpublished PhD Thesis, (Otago University of Otago, 1993) 1-12.

¹⁵³ K. R. Hove, *Where the Waves Fall: A new South Sea society from first settlement to colonial rule* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993) 230.

¹⁵⁴ Malama Mafalea, *Change and Adaptation in Samoa* (Honolulu: Middle East Research Center for Pacific Studies, 1986) 1-2.

¹⁵⁵ Portia Lina'ane, *Samoan Christianity and Samoan Politics 1830-1899* Unpublished Master Thesis (Suva: Pacific Theological College, 1993) 17. According to Lina'ane there are 7 districts. However the majority view, is that of six, the district of Tu-e-fale is largely ignored. These are Apia, A'ana, Faimauga, Falekekeke, Faleata, Faleolo, and Apia (A'ana).

¹⁵⁶ John Garret, *To Live Along the Shore: Christian Origins in Christian Samoa* (Suva: University of the South Pacific, 1985) 173.

CHAPTER THREE

The Bible's Influence in Samoan Society.

Introduction.

One way to understand the Bible's influence in Samoan society is offered by Ioka in his thesis.¹⁷² Ioka speaks of the 'mutual interpenetration of the Biblical world and the Samoan cultural world'. Both entities the Biblical world and the Samoan cultural world became symbiotic in nature. For one to appreciate the 'interpenetration' of the Biblical world and the Samoan cultural world, one has to look at the Samoan culture. In understanding the Samoan cultural context, we are better able to appreciate the interaction of thesis (the Bible) and antithesis (Samoan Culture) to produce the synthesis that is our present Samoan Biblical world. In Ioka's terms it is modern Samoa characterised by a biblical culture and a Christian society.

A. The Samoan Village: The Birthplace of the Biblical culture and Christian Society in Samoa.

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Howe described the Samoan society as 'nucleated'. By this Howe refers to the localised power of the Samoan society in the village environment.¹⁷³ Meleisea calls this village-based system 'a unitary system of dispersed power'¹⁷⁴ while the village was autonomous in its own decision making with regard to its own welfare, there was a mutual relationship with neighbouring villages. Thus each village belonged to a sub-district. These subdistricts formed the seven districts of Samoa.¹⁷⁵ As Garret writes, these were virtually autonomous rural villages linked by obligatory unifying custom, the faa-Samoa (the Samoan way) and a single language.¹⁷⁶ Samoan

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¹⁷⁴ Malama Meleisea, *Change and Adaptations in Western Samoa* (Christchurch : MacMillan Brown Center for Pacific Studies, 1988).1-2

¹⁷⁵ Featunai Liua'ana, *Samoan Christianity and Samoan Politics 1830-1899*. Unpublished Masters Thesis (Suva: Pacific Theological College, 1993) 17 According to Liuaana there are 7 districts. However the majority view, is that of six, the district of Itu-o-fafine is hardly mentioned. These are Atua, A'ana, Tuamasaga, Faasaleleaga, Itu-o-tane, Itu-o-fafine, and Aiga I le Tai.

¹⁷⁶ John Garret, *To Live Among the Stars. Christian Origins in Oceania*. (Suva: Oikoumene 1985) 125

society since 1830 has for many centuries preceding political independence, lacked national unity and instead has been marked by village factionalism. It is likely therefore, that religions of early Samoans were as varied as the cultural practices of the individual villages, which in turn were politically autonomous. Samoa's conversion to Christianity was not from paganism or heathenism, but from the rather gradual change of cultural growth and development. Unlike Tonga, Hawaii, and Rarotonga, worship was not institutionalised. Rather worship was part of the social and political way of life in Samoa.¹⁷⁷ It was not a separate institution but an integrated component of the Samoan vision of their world. As Moore wrote, 'in general, the energy of Samoans has been directed into other arts such as oratory, singing, architecture, weaving and tattooing.'¹⁷⁸ Moore was referring to the lack of temples in Samoa compared to Eastern Polynesian communities.

Howe observed that many Samoans were attached to their villages. If the Bible was to dialogue with Samoan society it had to hit the heart of the society, the village.. But the missionaries did not have the numbers, so a need for Samoan training institution was required.¹⁷⁹ This led to Malua Theological College, at Malua. The abundance of Samoan trained pastors familiar with the culture, made the acceptance of the Bible more tolerable.

Respect for age and property and for the constituted authority, which Samoans already upheld brought no problems when early missionaries proclaimed such ideas. In essence little that was fundamental in Samoan culture was changed with the introduction of Christianity. So as Inglis has quoted, 'To Samoans their culture is god-given and also god-begotten. When John Williams arrived with the Christian gospel, this was also God – given, and God begotten.'¹⁸⁰

B. The History of Bible Translation in Samoa.

The history of the Bible in the Pacific can be traced to two overlapping events. The first is the Missionary Movement from Great Britain which produced translations of the Bible. In the case of

¹⁷⁷ D J Inglis, 'Reasons for the acceptance of Christianity in Western Samoa in 1830' *Dialogue on Religion: New Zealand Viewpoints*. (Wellington 1977) 12.

¹⁷⁸ Albert Moore, *Arts in the Religions of the Pacific. Symbols of Life*. 1995. 133.

¹⁷⁹ K R Howe, *Where the Waves Fall. A new South Sea Islands history from first settlement to colonial rule*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991) 241.

¹⁸⁰ D J Inglis, *Reasons for the acceptance of Christianity in Western Samoa in 1830. Dialogue on Religion: New Zealand Viewpoints*. (Wellington: 1977) 13

Samoa, the London Missionary Society¹⁸¹, and its missionaries set the work of distribution, and translation of the Bible in motion.

The second important event is the 'Bible Society Movement' that served as the instruments in publishing the translations.¹⁸² The British and Foreign Bible Society, set standards for both written and spoken Samoan. It was this Bible society, which made Robert Louis Stevenson describe the Samoan Bible as, 'not only a monument of excellent literature, but a desirable piece of typography'.¹⁸³

The missionaries that took the Gospel to the Pacific came from new Protestant Societies, with the vision of the world-wide dimensions of the Christian message, which made the nineteenth century into what Latourette has called 'the age of the most extensive geographical spread of Christianity'.¹⁸⁴ Literacy became the key for understanding the Christian faith. Since the Reformation, Protestantism became known as the 'religion of the Book'. The Puritans placed a strong emphasis on the Bible for they believed it was the 'voice for the voiceless'.¹⁸⁵ One of the impacts of the Evangelical Revival in England was the giving of literacy to a large proportion of the population.

The London Missionary Society brought the Gospel to Samoa in 1830, when John Williams, left six Tahitians and two Cook Islanders at key points on the various islands.¹⁸⁶ The first Methodist missionary to Samoa arrived in the island of Savaii in 1828.¹⁸⁷ By the time of John Williams

¹⁸¹ Malama Meleisea, Lagaga. *A Short History of Western Samoa* (Suva: University of South Pacific, 1987) 53. The London Missionary Society was founded in England in 1795, by a group of Christians of various 'non-conformist Protestant denominations'. The Society did not aim to set up a particular denomination, but rather to establish a church determined and suited to the local conditions. The first missionaries were not ordained ministers but lay missionaries and skilled tradesman. The Congregational Church differed from most other churches since the congregation, rather than bishops and ministers determine church government.

¹⁸² Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, (Melbourne: Australian College of Theology, 1984) 1

¹⁸³ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 1

¹⁸⁴ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 1.

¹⁸⁵ Faatutituli Setu, *The Ministry in the Making A History of the Emergence of the Ministry of the Church in Samoa 1830-1900*. Unpublished Masters Thesis. (Suva: Pacific Theological College, 1988) 77

¹⁸⁶ Featunai Liua'ana, *Samoa Christianity and Samoan Politics 1830-1899* 72. The LMS set its sight northward to Samoa from Tahiti. Fiji was out of the question because of its proximity to 'Tonga'.

¹⁸⁷ Ernst Manfred, *Winds of Change. Rapidly Growing Religious Groups in The Pacific Islands*. (Suva: Pacific Theological College, 1994) 171

second visit in October 1832, 50 Samoans at Leone on Tutuila had already become Christians, and were wearing a piece of clothe around their arms to distinguish themselves from the others.

The Wesleyan mission in Tonga abandoned Samoa in 1839 and returned 18 years later. Likewise the Catholic mission did not arrive before 1845. Hence the London Missionary Society dominated the religious scene in Samoa for some time.¹⁸⁸

When John Williams visited England in 1834-1838, he aroused much interest, and this resulted in the despatch of a band of missionaries. They included George Pratt and Samuel Wilson who arrived in Savaii in 1835. Rickard regards George Pratt as making the greatest contribution to translating the Bible into Samoan.¹⁸⁹ Likewise Garrett praises Pratt.¹⁹⁰ Pratt and Wilson's missionary work set the foundation for the arrival of new LMS missionaries.¹⁹¹

The London Missionary Society in the Pacific employed literacy as a way of spreading the Gospel. The experience of the mission in Tahiti had confirmed this methodology. Wilson translated the Gospel of Matthew. The translation of the Gospel of Matthew was a bonus for the five permanent missionaries, who were sent. The missionaries regarded the translation of the Bible into the local language as essential to their mission¹⁹². Even the first Gospel printed in Samoan, although very imperfect, was seen as a step in Christian conversion¹⁹³. Before this they prepared an abridgement of the Gospels and Acts, 'as a sort of initiation to the more important work of more thorough translation'¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁸ Ernst Manfred, *Winds of Change. Rapidly Growing Religious Groups in The Pacific Islands*, 171.

¹⁸⁹ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*, 136. He had laboured in Samoa for 31 years, and died in Sydney, in 1894, aged 77 years. In the conclusion to Ricard's chapter, on the Samoan translation of the Bible, Samuel Whitmee, a colleague is quoted as saying, 'Mr Pratt was a specialist. he was a born linguist, and he faithfully used and cultivated his special talent in the service of Christ. ... The translation, and then the revision of the Samoan Bible, was the great work of his life. to this he devoted almost daily attention for many years, with the result that the Samoans have a Bible which, as a classic is, an will be to them very much what the Authorised Version has been in England.

¹⁸⁹ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*, 118

¹⁹⁰ John Garret, *To Live Among the Stars. Christian Origins in Oceania*, 125 His written works on grammar, a dictionary and the final form of the Samoan Bible were largely influenced by Pratt

¹⁹¹ Featunai Liua'ana, *Samoan Christianity and Samoan Politics 1830-1899* 124

¹⁹² Featunai Liua'ana, *Samoan Christianity and Samoan Politics 1830-1899* 126, In 1836 Heath, Hardie, William Mills, Alexander Macdonald, A W Murray and George Barnden arrived. One of the missionaries, Archibald Murray described the Gospel as 'an immense advantage to have a Gospel in print...welcome both by ourselves and the natives.

¹⁹³ Featunai Liua'ana, *Samoan Christianity and Samoan Politics 1830-1899* 125

¹⁹⁴ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*, 118

Printing of the Bible translations began on July 18, 1839.¹⁹⁵ It produced 5000 copies of John's Gospel. A book called *O le Tala I Lotu Eseese*, which means 'A talk about different religions'. This was designed to explain to Samoans the other Christian denominations that were beginning to come into the field. Some criticised the book as an attack on the Catholics. (Lotu Pope).¹⁹⁶ This was followed a year later by the *O le Sulu Samoa*, or 'The Samoan Torch'. This monthly magazine is still published. *Ole Sulu Samoa* served to keep the adherents informed of the developments of the church. Both these magazines reinforced the confidence of the Samoan people in the true faith brought by the L.M.S. Literacy became a device to strength the people's faith and confidence in the L.M.S.

The first full portion of the Scripture to come from Stair's press consisted of 5,000 copies of the Gospel of John in 1841. Mark and Luke, translated by Alexander Macdonald who had joined the mission in 1837, followed this.¹⁹⁷ The book of Romans followed, prepared by Thomas Heath, in 1842. The book of Acts was also translated in 1845. 10,000 more copies of Luke and Acts had to be printed to meet increasing demands.

Great care was involved in the translations.¹⁹⁸ George Turner himself sat on the committee for 29 books of the Bible, and was well acquainted with the manuscript of the other 37 books. He bears witness that 'every book of our Samoan version of the Scriptures was got up with all the care and sacred regard for accuracy'.¹⁹⁹ Nisbett and Pratt were also preparing the whole Bible for the press; they toiled for 12 hours daily over a period of 361 working days.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. According to Rickard, on the arrival of the LMS brig *Camden*, John Williams brought a large contingent for the different fields in the Pacific. Only three were for the Samoan sector, but one was John Stair, a printer from Wiltshire. 119

¹⁹⁶ Featunai Liua'ana, *Samoan Christianity and Samoan Politics 1830-1899* 87. In 1839, Captain Wilkes, commanding an American expedition remarked that 'the sole object of this tract was to prepossess the minds of the native against the missionaries of the Papal church, in case they should visit these islands.

¹⁹⁷ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 121

¹⁹⁸ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 123. Murray is quoted as saying that it became standard procedure that after the translation, the manuscript had to be submitted to a committee of not less than three colleagues, appointed by the a general meeting of the council. Murray described it as tedious, sitting with Samoan informants "for nine hours a day, five and half says a week". Three weeks was the general time of checking the translations, sometimes extending to five weeks. For reference they used the Septuagint, Vulgate, and the Polynesian versions already published-Hawaiian, Tahitian, Rarotongan and Tongan.

¹⁹⁹ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 124.

²⁰⁰ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 385.

Murray's aim for him and his collaborators were 'to secure accuracy...we ponder over the word of life, striving to give it in its purity...' ²⁰¹ To achieve this, they had to access to many different versions, as well as to commentaries. Having determined the original meaning, they then tried to express it in good, idiomatic Samoan, relying heavily at this stage on their informants. When the task was finally completed, they believed it to be 'free from all obsolete words and phrases' and therefore 'far plainer in this respect to a Samoan than our English version is at the present day (1861) to many of our own countryman' ²⁰².

On August 25, 1846 the committee was able to announce to the Bible Society that the,

'translation of the New Testament into the Samoan language, including a revised translation of Matthew, is now completed, and we may add, that its possession is eagerly sought by the people' ²⁰³

The committee wished to proceed with the Old Testament as quickly as possible, beginning with Psalms.

Archibald Murray, who recorded Turner's letter, left Samoa in 1870 to take up work in the Loyalty Islands, and later in Papua New Guinea. Reviewing his thirty-four years of service in Samoa he wrote:

"In 1830 Samoa was a heathen land. With all its natural beauty and loveliness it was a land of darkness... Now the darkness is past and the whole land is covered with light, even as the waters cover the sea, and to a great extent the people have received the light and walk in the light – not a single heathen remains. Every village has its house of prayer and its pastor, and every child...is being educated, and a fair proportion of the people give credible evidence that they are on their way to better life. What has wrought the mighty change? The Bible has done it; God's own book has done it. Man's part has been a very subordinate one. He has only drawn aside the veil if we may so speak, and instrumentally caused the Light to shine which as wrought the marvellous transformation. God be praised for the Bible! Ever may the Samoans continue to be a Bible-loving and a Bible-reading people so shall their future be glowingly bright and happy and in increasing numbers they will pass on to that land where even the Bible will be no longer needed,

²⁰¹ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 393.

²⁰² Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 121.

²⁰³ Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 124. When printed, each of the four Gospels and the Acts had been bound separately in stitched pamphlets, and the Epistles similarly, in groups according to their size. The translators then divided themselves into four committees for further revision of the

*for the Author of the Bible Himself is the all-sufficient and the everlasting light. To His name be all glory, world without end. Amen*²⁰⁴

In 1888 a deputation from the Directors of the LMS visited Samoa and reported "*Young people in Samoa are better acquainted with the Bible than the average Sunday School scholars in England, and Samoan's knowledge of the Bible in very many cases has changed the heart and lifted the old pagan life to a level of conscious communion with God*"²⁰⁵

This is supported by Garret, who saw that literacy in Samoa came through the Bible.²⁰⁶

The Bible also introduced Christian moral standards to regulate Samoan life. Non-Samoan observers interpreted the changeover from old ways to the vigilant policing activities of missionaries and pastors. Garret affirms that '*local people logically followed their matai in willing acceptance of the new tapu system implied by study of the Bible*'.²⁰⁷ Restraints on traditional Samoan activities such as long hair, sexually charged night dances, bare breasts, and introduced intoxicants were gradually reinforced. Brutal punishments for small offences were also abandoned. The new laws were based on the Ten Commandments, with Sabbath observance strictly enforced.²⁰⁸

The Bibles influence was now being felt on the Samoan culture. Literacy had become a key to conversion. Yet at the same time the Samoan culture retained its identity. This retaining of the Samoan culture was essential, as it did not make Christianity a foreign influence. The fact that you could read the Bible made Christianity more welcoming. The Bible and Samoan society formed a symbiotic relationship, as the Bible wanders through Samoan history. This relationship is expressed in three common expressions,²⁰⁹

- 1) Na va'ava'alua mai lava le Talalelei ma le Aganuu talu le amataga.

whole NT, and when completed, the entire version was rewritten and the manuscripts were sent to London to be printed by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

²⁰⁴Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 134-135. Since writing those words, Murray was able to return to Samoa for visit after an absence of seventeen years. He discovered that, during the seven years ending December 1887, a total of 8,784 Bibles had been distributed, on an average of 1,093 per annum. Murray believed every boy and girl among the 30,000 Protestants would want to buy one.

²⁰⁵Raymond Rickard, *In Their Own Tongues: Bible Translation in The Pacific to 1918*. 136.

²⁰⁶John Garret, *To Live Among the Stars. Christian Origins in Oceania*. 124.

²⁰⁷John Garret, *To Live Among the Stars. Christian Origins in Oceania*. 124.

²⁰⁸John Garret, *To Live Among the Stars. Christian Origins in Oceania*. 125.

The Gospel and the Samoan Culture have always been two boats in mutual operation since the beginning.

1) *E mamalu le Talalelei ona o le Aganuu.*

The Gospel is respected because of the support of Culture and its rootedness in Culture.

1) *E mamalu lava le Talalelei ona o le Talalelei a le Atua.*

The Gospel has respect and dignity because of its being the Gospel of God.

C.Examples Of Biblical Influence On Samoan Culture.

In this section I will be looking at the effect of the Bible on Samoan Culture and some of its customs.

C.1 The Bible's Effect Upon Pastors Status In The Samoan Village.

The Bible when it was translated into Samoan created within the village scene a new elite group. The traditional priests or the taulaitu were replaced. The status of the matai which was previously unchallenged now could be questioned. This change made it possible for the elevated status of the pastor, and hence the influence of the Bible in society, to dominate the affairs of Samoan society. In fact it reinforced the existing status quo, albeit in a Christian way. The translated portions of the Bible and biblical literature were probably the earliest form of written Samoan to be widely circulated amongst the people. These translations became the predominant way to literacy. Secular education, was largely provided by church schools up until the 1950's.²¹⁰ By 1840, only 10 years after the missionaries landed in Samoa, some 10,000 or nearly one third of the estimated population at the time could read.²¹¹ The pastor became the interface of the Bible and society in the secular field of public education and the religious field of Sunday worship. This double-edged sword maintained and elevated the status of the pastor in the eyes of the Samoan community. The oral tradition of the Samoan culture, was slowly transformed into a new written 'tradition', where the Bible was the premiere mode of literacy and the pastor its main interpreter.

²⁰⁹ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 13

²¹⁰ Karen Ioka, *Secondary Education in Western Samoa: Development in the English Curriculum, 1960-1990s* Unpublished MA Thesis, (Otago: University of Otago, 1995).

²¹¹ K R Howe, *Where the Waves Fall. A new South Sea Islands history from first settlement to colonial rule.* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991) 238.

C.2 Biblical Influence On The Lauga Faasamoa – “The Word Of God In The Word Of Samoa”²¹².

According to Faamatuainu Tui, the Lauga Faasamoa, (literally Samoan Speech) is the “living soul of the Samoan people”²¹³. The Lauga Faasamoa is an instrument of ‘unity and orderliness’²¹⁴. This is conveyed in the ‘Fa’alupega’ (a type of ceremonial address for a village).²¹⁵ It is the mode of acknowledging the place of a village or family in the overall structure of Samoan society. It is not so much, where the village is in the hierarchy, - although it is an important element depending on the skill of the orator -, but to acknowledge that the village is part of a greater whole.

This is what Aiono Dr Tagaloa means when she says that ‘aganuu (culture) in Samoa, views life in a holistic way.’²¹⁶. This definition of aganuu, fits well with the purpose of the lauga Faasamoa. The lauga Faasamoa unifies the neighbouring villages the way a written law would unify a community. At a time when there was no written mode of communication, the oral tradition served as the premiere mode of transmitting information and social order. The Faalupeaga linked the villages as a unified system and maintained orderliness in the Samoan community. The village is the birthplace of Samoan Culture and this is acknowledged in the Lauga Faasamoa. It is no wonder that Dr Ioka calls the lauga Faasamoa, the ‘Word of Samoa’.²¹⁷ or the ‘stone tablets’²¹⁸ of the Samoan community.

Therefore the Bible’s influence upon the lauga Faasamoa, indicates the importance in this ‘unity and orderliness’ of Samoan society. The Bible has ‘interpenetrated’ the Word of Samoa and thus the culture of Samoa.

²¹² Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 19.

²¹³ Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 20.

²¹⁴ Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 21 The “Samoan Speech” involves the recognition and status of villages, within the Samoan community.

²¹⁵ Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 20. which according to Fa’amtuaunu Tui is the ‘ceremonial style and address of an individual, village, or district’

²¹⁶ Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 4.

²¹⁷ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 19.

²¹⁸ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* 24.

Since the Lauga Faasamoa is an important part of maintaining the order in Samoan society, the pastor's sermon also played an equally important part in the oral-orientated Samoan community. The Lauga Faasamoa, as spoken by the chief, became the 'Word of God' in maintaining a 'biblical culture and Christian society'²¹⁹ in Samoa. However the Lauga of the pastor became the source of the authority of the Lauga Faasamoa. The pastor's Lauga provided the 'fresh' word of God, in the village environment.

The Lauga Faasamoa (Samoan Speech) can be divided into five sections²²⁰. The Bible has influenced all the five sections of the Lauga Faasamoa. We shall consider two examples:

The 'Thanksgiving section' ('faafetai') acknowledges the '*Grace and Wrath of God*'²²¹. It gives thanks to the role that the Biblical God plays in the unity and orderliness of Samoan society. This acknowledgement suggests two important things. The authority of the lauga Faasamoa gradually came to be understood to come from the Biblical God. Secondly, the 'ethical content' of the lauga Faasamoa espouses and promotes Christian values.

The second example of the influence of the Bible on the Lauga Faasamoa, is the history making events, called 'Taeaos' ('mornings'). In a modern day Lauga there are always three historic Taeaos of the Gospel, '(the days of arrival in Samoa of the Christian missions of the London Missionary Society, the Methodists, and the Catholics)'²²². The greater tendency is to mention the Gospel Taeaos, as these are the 'only historical events worthy of remembrance as Samoa progresses towards the future'²²³.

²¹⁹Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 25

²²⁰Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* 21 Fa'amatuainu subscribes to seven sections. Tanuvasa subscribes to five sections. Danny Ioka follows Tanuvasa's designations, which include the following 1 Folasaga (introduction) 2. Ava 3. Faafetai (Thanksgiving to God) 4. Taeao (literally means 'morning') 5. Paia (Dignity of the sacred names and titles of the Faalupega)

²²¹Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 22.

²²²Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 22.

²²³Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 22. In addition there are often extensive use of biblical quotations and allusions in other sections of the Lauga. This reflects the depth of biblical 'influence' into the 'Word of Samoa'.

²²³Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 28. It is illustrated in the family of Pili. Pili's daughter Toluafefe, was the 'feagaiga' of her brothers. She was not allocated an active cultural role for being a female in the context of a 'warring Samoa', and

C.3 Samoan Cultural Understanding of the Samoan Christian Church Pastor. The symbol of Cultural Covenant (feagaiga)

One of the pastor's designations is the 'faafeagaiga' or 'the symbol of the covenant'. The covenant or the 'feagaiga' is also found in traditional Samoan culture.²²⁴ It is deeply rooted in the ancient history of Samoa, and has a family orientated significance.

The LMS introduced the pastor in place of the priests and prophets of ancient Samoan religion, as the mediators with the unseen world. They were honoured as men of God; in exchange for their preaching and conduct of worship they received traditional gifts on an impressive scale.²²⁵ Further more the church was seen as a covenant or 'partnership' between God and the two most important leaders of the village the pastor, and the matai.²²⁶ It is testament to the power of the feagaiga concept in Samoan culture, that the LMS missionaries became self-supporting very early in its development.²²⁷

The most significant of covenants was that of 'King' Malietoa Vainuupo's acceptance of Christianity and promised care for the LMS missionary pastors and teachers. Malietoa's dying 'testament', to have only God as king of Samoa, is another example of the influence of the Bible on the Samoan society. This statement tried to dispel the constant quarrelling and fighting among the chiefs for the covenanted titles to achieve the position of ta'iafa (symbolic leader of Samoa) in Samoa. For Malietoa the Christian God, is the way towards unity and ultimately peace for Samoan society.

The 'ta'iafa' now assumed a divine status, in which no human could achieve. In other words the symbolic leader of Samoa was God of the Christians. The church pastor became the symbol of the feagaiga or the allegiance with the Biblical God. The church pastor became the only culturally recognised mediator between Samoans and God. This announcement was another contributing factor in the Biblical influence of Samoan society. The church pastor eventually achieved the status of the eternal symbolic reminder of this cultural decision to accept the Christian Gospel.

was therefore offered protection, by her brothers. But in the light of consultative process, when the wisdom of her brothers was found wanting, Toluafe became active in the decision making process. Because she was the feagaiga, she was offered respect.

²²⁵ John Garret, *To Live Among the Stars. Christian Origins in Oceania.* 124.

²²⁶ John Garret, *To Live Among the Stars. Christian Origins in Oceania.* 125.

²²⁷ Manfred Ernst, *Winds of Change. Rapidly growing religious groups in the Pacific Islands.* (Suva: PTC. 1994) 167.

The Samoan pastor is called the Faafeagaiga. The pastor symbolises the historical promise by the Samoan culture to be always the people of God.

Another designation of the pastor in Samoan society is the 'Aofa'alupega'. If the faalupega captures the unity of Samoan society in the oral tradition, the 'Aofa'alupega' or as Meleisea puts it 'a new kind of sacred chief'.²²⁸ So what made the village important in the overall holistic approach of the 'fa'alupega' is now transferred to the pastor.²²⁹

C.4 The Names of Churches.

Danny Ioka's thesis illustrates the Biblical influence in the naming of village churches. The church in the village is a physical monument of 'the spirit of Samoan culture to erect for the Kingdom of God in the village an earthly vessel for the eschatological community of faith'.²³⁰ This may explain why so many overseas Samoan congregations insist on building a church, as a 'host to the power of the spirit of God'.

Some church names signify important dates and events associated with the arrival of the missionaries in Samoa. The church in the village of Safune is named '*The first morning of the Enlightenment of Samoa*'.²³¹ Some church names adopt general references to places of worship and specific names of Temples of the biblical community or some of their parts.²³² Some church names prescribe what the Church stands for in relation to this witness to the work of God and some of its most characteristic benefits.²³³ Quite a number of church names express what the Church offers in relation to the grace of God.²³⁴ Some church names literally adopt biblical

²²⁸ Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 33.

²²⁹ Danny Ioka, , *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 33. The consequence of such a status, means that the pastor is 'entitled to receive the best service and ultimate respect in the village. In the Samoan cultural and religious mind, 'what the village does to the pastor is done to God...as the visible ambassador of the Divine Will'.

²³⁰ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 41.

²³¹ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 42. It commemorates the arrival of the first missionaries to the shores of Samoa.

²³² Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 42. The church in Fagasa is named 'O le fale o le Atua' (The house of the Lord).

²³³ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 59. The church in the village of Levi, is simply 'The Temple'. The church in the village at Salani is called 'O le Ana e sili ona Paia' (The Holy of Holy).

²³⁴ The church in Paia is - O le Fofoga'aga o le Filemu. (The Proclaimer and Proclamation of Peace). The church at Fa'ala Palauli is - O le Nofoa O Le Alofa. (The Seat of Love).

²³⁴ The church at Vaiala is named - O le Sulufaiga o le Ola Moni (The Refuge for True Life). The village of Nu'uuli - O le Ala I le Ola (The Way of Life). The village of Fagatogo the church is called O le Ki I le Malo o le Atua (The Key to the Kingdom of God).

references to the self-revelation of God.²³⁵ Some churches embody vital biblical concepts, biblical expressions of faith or biblical ideas, objects and events connected with biblical stories of faith, and the divine name, which is self-revealed in the Bible.²³⁶ One church name came about due to a supernatural event that was interpreted by the parishioners as a divine incident²³⁷.

The names of the village churches express the influence of the Bible and the arrival of the Christian mission. Other names illustrate the direct influence of a Biblical culture and a Christian society. In particular, the major themes illustrate the works, hopes and promises of the gospel.

A unique feature of the Church names is they do not celebrate any human person or Church saint. This suggests the power of the biblical word, over anything of secular significance. It can be also interpreted as a single-minded loyalty and commitment to the biblical faith, and the Christian task. It shows a clear awareness of the distinction between faith and culture.

C. 5 Announcements and Appeals.

The announcements and appeals of the churches to their parishioners, uses biblical literature, as propaganda, for contributions to the church. It is directed at fellow Christians (in some cases other churches). It highlights the Christian fellowship among villages. All the villages are now bonded by Christian fellowship. The theme in these announcements is that if the elected community does God's work, God will always provide. Let's look at some examples of the Biblical influence of these church announcements.

C.5.1 Use of Biblical quotations.²³⁸

²³⁵ The church in the village of Asili and Asaga is called Peteli (Bethel). This biblical place is further specified in the name of the church in the village of Matautu Falelatai – O Peteli O le Fale O le Atua (Bethel is the House of God)

²³⁶ The church in the village of Lotofaga is – O le Lupe o le Taeao (The Pigeon of the Morning) which may refer to the pigeon released by Noah in the story of Genesis or it could refer to the favourite food of Samoan chiefs usually caught in the morning.

²³⁷ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* 60 The church in the village of Papa Puleia is called – O le Fetu Lele mai le Lagi (The Flying Star of Heaven). It refers to a shooting star that fell on the centre of the foundation of the church on a night the villager were working to build their church. The name expressed the village belief that they actually received a supernatural divine blessing to encourage the village in their work of building the village church.

²³⁸ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* Church of Malie

A slightly different variation of this feature is to attach theological explanations or meanings, and to suggest their practical applications though for the benefit of the village owning the notice.

Church of Laulii:

'We are parts of the Body of Christ, brothers in Christ. 'Peace be within you walls, and security within your towers!' (Psalms 122:7) You shall love your neighbour as you do to yourself' (Luke 10:27)

C.5.2 Restatements of Biblical expressions of faith and ethics.²³⁹

This illustrates the skilful use of biblical expressions of faith, parts of narratives, phrases, ideas, and references to other parts of the Church liturgy like hymns. **Church of Mataufu:**

'It is finished . The prayer of David is now ended...to our families, this notice is different. It is not a voice of one who's weary and is calling for help. But it is a declaration, 'It is finished'. I am small but able, because I have put my heart in it... (I only intend for you) to see the work I have done for the worship of our children to the Eternal King. Come free (with nothing); do not attempt to bring anything. The strength of my bow is enough and is maintained since my hands have been strengthened by the Hands of the "Strength of Jacob". I do not say this to suggest that the work is beautiful and is worth seeing. Let someone else praise you but not from your 'own mouth'.

C.5.3 Identifying with the Biblical Community. (Eg Israel in exile)²⁴⁰

This announcement identifies Samoan Christians with believers of biblical communities of faith. In this announcement, the Church of Saolufata adds the sense of everyone being members of the

'Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob (Isaiah 2:36). Your freedom it is that which is agreeable and shall make your heart content. 'But as for me and my family, we will serve Yahweh' (Joshua 24:15)

²³⁹ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* Church of Lepuiai Manono.

In this announcement, the Church of Lepuiai Manono is fundraising to renovate the village church. It appeals to the Christian concept of communal love to assist in these renovations.

"Remember the saying of the Lord which forever glitters from the Bible like a treasured-stone (Diamond) or like a Pearl in its full glitter. Love one another... (John 15:12). Love is to bind everything together in perfect harmony according to Paul. (Colossians 3:14). Love is not a thing of the mind, but of the heart – heart applied – Brothers as the waves of the Achaean Sea were breaking Paul saw a glittering wrist waving. Come over to Macedonia and help us...Where is Macedonia? Here in Lepuiai."

²⁴⁰ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* Church of Lalomanu.

Lalomanu village in the July-August issue of 'O le Sulu Samoa' in 1932,

This same notice is an example of the complete identification by the village Church community and all members of the village inside and overseas with the Old Testament Jewish community during the Babylonian Exile and the rebuilding of the Second Temple. As the notice has it –

'....The Brethren in Babylonia, we are building our second Temple...'

biblical community. It substitutes the name of a biblical place for its village name. This is seen in the biblical expression, 'Israelite'. This practise of identifying Samoan Christians as true Israelites reflects one of the clearest examples of the mutual interpenetration between the Biblical world and the Samoan cultural world.

Church of Saoluafata

'I am inviting and calling in the Macedonian voice – now to Saoluafata and help (Acts 16:9-10). The prayer heaven admires is – It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)... Hope that ...all Israelites will meet in the near future in their dearest city of Jerusalem'.

C.5.4 The subordination of certain cultural values in village communities to the service of the Christian gospel²⁴¹

Church of Lufilufi in their opening of their church in 1950.

*'.... As the usual place of residence of the highest Chiefs 'The Tuiatua's', it is now built for the second time the throne of the Almighty. All the true people of Lufilufi living in the four sides of Samoa and the farthest place, sleep with anticipation [a proper plan of action] like the man from A'ana. May you have the true village heart and loyalty of the Judahites as it was in the young man Nehemiah who lived at Susana [Susa] – LOVE, GET UP, COME, HELP'*²⁴²

C.5.5 Paraphrasing parts of biblical narratives and stories.²⁴³

Another feature of the skilful use of biblical references. This is based on the assumption that readers are well informed about the Bible, which was generally the case for most Samoans in

²⁴¹ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*

²⁴² Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* 'O le Sulu Samoa'; February 1951

²⁴³ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* Church of Satalo. Dedication of its church in 1947.

'If this notice shall come to your attention, do not go the other way like the Levite and the Priest, but may you have the loving Spirit of the Samaritan'(Luke 10:29-37)

The 'Announcement and Appeal' by the Church of Mautu Apia for its church dedication in 1952 is marked by its use of biblical examples of female loyalty and liberating love for one's people. The example of Esther is used together with a feminine reference²⁴³ in the book of 'The Song of Solomon'. Reading the notice conjures up a romantic kind of sentimental piety. The most notable feature, is the logic of the thought that links the different biblical references and unity to its intended purpose:-

'I adore you I do not stir up nor awaken my love until she pleases. [But] please, I desire to stir you up and awaken you my dear in Samoa and overseas. Look at Esther in her dignified dwelling with King Ahasuerus, she did not think highly

'O le Sulu Samoa 1951

those years, from the 1900' to 1950's. One example of this is the village church at **Matautu Lefaga**, in its announcement for the dedication in 1947.²⁴⁴

'We hope the fellowship of brothers will be a day of joy like the good oil on the head of the priest. Like the coolness of the dew from the mountains (Psalm 133).

The Biblical influence in the naming of the Church therefore illustrates the interpenetration of the Biblical world and the heart of Samoan culture, - the village. This results in creative use of Biblical materials whether as direct quotations or as restatements or paraphrases. In this sense the Bible is more than a pilgrimage through history to merge past and present. It is also appropriated as the literary embodiment of the inspired past which the present utilises to cultivate the future.

Conclusion

The interpretation of the Bible, is essentially a 'Cultural Hermeneutic of Human Experience'. This is clear in the identification of the cultural religious world and present experience, with their equivalents in the biblical community. It thus involves the continuities and similarities of human experience and culture within a holistic and overarching belief in the 'Reality and Oneness of One God'. Mostly through the role of pastors who were responsible for writing Church 'Announcements and Appeals', there is an enriching of the Samoan language and expressions by the literature of the Bible. This broadens the horizon of the Samoan mind, to create new worlds of meanings, values, and cultural progress within the Samoan cultural world. In the Samoan mind, the biblical God is also Samoan, and the Samoan language is one of God's many languages [speeches] in God's universal reign. Furthermore, through this aspect of Church Announcements and Appeals for village church development, the successful inter-penetration of the biblical world and the Samoan cultural world [or society in general is most clearly illustrated. And it is also shown to have originated from the birthplace of Samoan culture and Samoan Christianity -the village.

of her exalted status, but she saved and liberated her people the Judahites... There are three ways of life, but the best way is Love.'

²⁴⁴ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand* 'O le Sulu Samoa 1961'

Chapter Four.

THE BIBLE IN THE CCCS, BRISBANE.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will briefly outline the founding vision of the establishment of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa. This is important as this gives some background in the formation of the C.C.C.S overseas. This is followed by a brief history of the Congregational Christian Church in Brisbane. Finally I will look at the use of the Bible in two Samoan Congregational Christian Parishes, in Brisbane.

The beginning of the Samoan Congregational Church in Australia, is a natural extension of the migration of Samoans to New Zealand. In many ways the establishment of the C.C.C.S. in Australia, involve the same motives as the establishment of the C.C.C.S. in New Zealand.

According to Ioka²⁴⁵ the C.C.C.S. in New Zealand began as a *Settler Church*. The founding vision incorporated a need to realise the ideals of a transplanted Samoan Christianity. This was linked for a need to control the religious life, development and future of the CCCS in New Zealand. Ioka, writes that one of the main concerns for the founding vision is *'the existential death of a people occurs when there is a loss of language, of culture, and a corruption of worship.'*²⁴⁶ The need for independence comes from the background of the founding vision. From the multi-cultural background of the Pacific Island Congregational Churches, from which the CCCS was a breakaway movement, many of the cultural values of Samoa were compromised for the sake of 'multi-culturalism'. Samoan cultural values such as sitting when eating, or waiting for older members and chiefs to eat first, were not part of other Polynesian customs. This tended to offend some of the Samoans, and they became concerned that the worship of God, Samoan style would also lose its solemnity.

According to Ioka, it became the hope of the Samoan Churches overseas and hence *'the C.C.C.S. in New Zealand, would preserve a way of life which is a functional symbiosis of Samoan culture and Samoan Christianity, and one which would always be life giving to Samoans'*

²⁴⁵Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, (Otago: University of Otago, 1995) 214

*outside Samoa, and for Samoa, their homeland.*²⁴⁶ This hope is already shown in the beginnings of the branches of the CCCS. in Hawaii and U.S.A., and in their requests for links to the CCCS. in Samoa. The CCCS therefore became a counter-culture in its views of New Zealand society. This is further elaborated by Ioka,

'the C.C.C.S. was also envisaged to cater for this necessity by becoming the fortress to preserve Samoan migrants, especially the young, and also the New Zealand born children of the C.C.C.S. from the corrosive acid of other uncouth cultures. According to Fuimaono :-
*"In these countries there is a need to protect the sons and daughters of the Church from other bad customs and cultures, and also our treasured customs which seem fading in these countries of the white people".*²⁴⁷

This genuine concern became focused on two aspects. Language and the urgent need for meaningful worship. These became the two vital aspects of the cultural foundation of the Samoan Church. The inseparability of these two needs in the founding vision was perceived to be necessary not only to maintain proper and holy worship, but for the general well-being of Samoans and their various communities in New Zealand.²⁴⁸ It is against this background that the C.C.C.S. church in Brisbane began.

A. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN QUEENSLAND.

The migration of Samoan Christianity from New Zealand to Australia is a natural extension of the migration to New Zealand. It is not the aim of this paper to explain the formation of the CCCS in other states of Australia. The general pattern of migration of the CCCS begins in Sydney, New South Wales, then to Melbourne, Victoria. Brisbane, Queensland is the third state in which the C.C.C.S. is established.

²⁴⁶ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 214

²⁴⁷ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, Appendix IV, (xi)

²⁴⁸ Danny Ioka, *Origin and Beginning of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Aotearoa New Zealand*, 214

This migration is firstly the search for *Paradise* for a better future for migrants themselves and for their families in Samoa. Secondly and more relevant to the Brisbane context is that where ever Samoans are, there is a need to go to church. The influence of the CCCS in the history of Samoa is such that Sunday worship is an integral part of being Samoan.

The beginning of the Congregational Christian Church in Queensland can be traced to the year 1983 when the Reverend Urika Saifoloi started the first Congregational Parish in the Brisbane suburb of Bardon.²⁴⁹ The Congregational Church then moved to Goodna in Brisbane in 1986.²⁵⁰ In 1987 Reverend Urika Saifoloi was forced to leave due to the illness of his son, which required an operation that could only be done in Melbourne.²⁵¹ The Congregation was then led for time by deacon Laititimalu Fuimaono, while Reverend John Wheeler was asked to conduct communion on a monthly basis. A Samoan Presbyterian pastor the Reverend Sami briefly led the Congregation. Unfortunately the relationship between the congregation and the Reverend was strained, which eventually led to the resignation of Reverend Sami. The Congregational Christian Church then split into two Congregations, Brisbane and Ipswich in 1988.

Reverend Samuelu Tuiai in August 1988 became the designated minister of the Brisbane Congregational Church. Reverend Kerita Reupena became the ordained minister of the Ipswich parish, based in Dinmore in September 1988.²⁵² Both these ordinations brought a measure of stability to the formation of the Samoan Congregational Parish in Brisbane. In March 1989 a third parish was formed in Logan City. On 30th September 1989 the Sub-District of Queensland was established and officially recognised by the General Assembly of the CCCS in Western Samoa. In June 1993 a fourth parish was formed in the suburb of Sunnybank. This church was to later change its name to CCCS South-West Brisbane. Laititimalu Fuimaono was again responsible for establishing the South-West parish. As up to the year 2000, another seven parishes were added. These parishes grew out of a need to 'establish a Samoan church' and a 'place for

Church of Samoa.

²⁴⁹ Interview with Reverend John Wheeler January 12 2000. Reverend Wheeler is the clerk and Media Contact person of the Queensland branch of the Congregational Federation of Australia. It is a member of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and serves mainstream Congregational churches in New South Wales and Queensland which did not join the Uniting Church in 1977 (The Uniting Church brought together the Methodist Church and large proportion of Presbyterian and Congregational denominations.)

²⁵⁰ Interview with Reverend John Wheeler January 12 2000. Reverend Wheeler notes that the Samoan Congregational Church used the premises of a Presbyterian Church. Unfortunately differences between the Presbyterian and the Congregationalists (the Presbyterians did not like White Sunday) and the first minister, left the Church leaderless. Reverend Wheeler conducted Holy Communion for one year, until Reverend Samuelu Tuiai took over in August 1988.

²⁵¹ Minute Book of the Queensland District of the Samoan Congregational Christian Church of Samoa.

²⁵² Minute Book of the Queensland District of the Samoan Congregational Christian Church of Samoa.

Sunday worship". The average number of families in each parish ranges from five to twelve. Most of the families work in blue-collar jobs.

The increase in the number of Congregational Samoan Christian parishes is partly due to increased migration, to the Sunshine State (Queensland)²⁵³. The warm climate, and the slower pace of life are attractive features of Brisbane. For many Samoans the chance to get away from New Zealand, and the duties associated with the faaSamoa (the Samoan Way) way of doing things, is one of the main reasons to settle in Brisbane. Job opportunities and cheaper prices are also attractive features of Brisbane. But the real issue lies in the establishment of a church as not only a part of the Samoan cultural heritage, but to assist a migrant community to settle down.

B. THE USE OF THE BIBLE IN THE SAMOAN CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF BRISBANE.

This section involves asking two pastors (to be known as F1 and F2) and their wives (to be known as FW1 and FW2) in their use of the Bible. This is then followed by the way the Brisbane parish use the Bible for their youth. F1 and FW1 is chosen as a sample because :

- 1) 20+ years experience in the ministry
- 2) Founders of the Christian Congregational Church of Samoa in Brisbane

F2 and FW2 is chosen as a sample:

- 1) 5 + years experience in the ministry.
- 2) Founders of the Christian Congregational Church of Samoa of South-West Brisbane
- 3) F2 is the Secretary of the Queensland District of the Christian Congregational Church of Samoa.

The rationale for this sample is based on the following criteria:

- 1) listening and observing discussions or debates during the Christian Endeavour meetings.

²⁵³ Population Flows: Immigration Aspects. (1997) Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. Canberra. Page 45. Queensland is the second most preferred destination of overseas visitors to Australia after New South Wales.

- 2) listening to the prayers and sermons during Prayer Fellowship (Au Leoleo) or other special services. (Fathers/Mothers Day)
- 3) resolving conflicts of interests or disputes.
- 4) listening to the different points of views raised during church meetings.

Both pastors and their wives were asked the following questions:

- 1) Which books of the Bible or verses of the Bible are the most memorable and considered the favorites and why?
- 2) Which books of the Bible do you refer to the most for a sermon and why?

C. WHICH BOOKS OF THE BIBLE OR VERSES OF THE BIBLE ARE THE MOST MEMORABLE AND CONSIDERED YOUR FAVOURITES AND WHY?

REPLY FROM F1

"¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2nd Timothy 3:16-17)

'For those who live outside of Samoa, for example in Australia, we can never forget the Bible. This Book we all want to listen for advice and assistance to comfort us. As the book of Psalm reminds us it is the light upon our path.

The Bible is the very Spirit of God. It is useful for teaching us righteousness, so that we are worthy in front of the presence of God, and we are able to practise righteousness regularly. This is the way we attain happiness in the church when we listen to the teachings of the Word of God. We also obtain wisdom to worship God. The Bible teaches you and me the wisdom and truth till old age, just like Solomon. We know that life is obtained from faith in Jesus Christ. Because the Bible brings the spirit of God. There is a time we only think of ourselves, but we must teach and hold onto the wisdom (of the Bible) so that we can appreciate God so that all our work is works of righteousness. With this spirit of caution and alertness I can never forget Who I worship and the place I was born.' (F1)²⁵⁴

²⁵⁴ Translated from a written transcript from F1, 17th September 2000 1

²⁵⁵ Translated from a written transcript with F1 on 17 September 2000 2

'As a congregation we should work together, in order that the Church should grow. Working together is a defining feature of a living Church. One of my favourite passages is taken from Ephesians 2:10.

¹⁸*For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. (Ephesians 2:10)*

'I used this verse in my opening sermon to my congregation. The key word is 'planned'. This verse reminds us of the promise (or the plan) of God to renew or revitalise us through Jesus Christ – His Church. That promise requires us to participate in the Church activities. It is a covenant. We need to forget the things that divide us as a congregation, and fulfil the promise and the destiny of the Church. It is the hope of the Samoan community, that the good things offered in Queensland is somehow fulfilled by participation in the Church.' There is a plan that God has for the congregation 'but we must work together, this is the essential reason for existing'. The need to work together with one mind and one spirit, in Jesus Christ, gives hope and is an important theme for the congregation²⁵⁵.

REPLY FROM FW1

'There are two reasons that interest people in using the Bible. Firstly, people are happy to discuss the Holy Bible. They are pleased to show what they know of the Bible. This is shown in the Christian Endeavour Fellowship (Au Taumafai. When somebody has their turn to explain their Bible verse, they are happy to search, study and explain their particular Bible verse. This seems to be the one time there is a definite interest in the Bible.

There are many whose most favourite books is Proverbs. They are always keen to know what the meaning of this Proverb and this Proverb is. But the most keenly sort out question, from any explanation of a verse, is what benefit do I obtain from this.

²⁵⁴ Translated from a written transcript from F1. 17th September 2000 1

²⁵⁵ Translated from a written transcript with F1 on 17 September 2000 2

I truly believe that there is no one who is not happy about the Bible. Everyone wants to read the Bible, and follow the Bible, because it is where we obtain blessing. We all want the best out of life, if there is anyone who is not happy with the Bible, he/she have not read it properly or they do not understand the Bible. If you read the Bible clearly, the meaning becomes clear, and it is easy to appreciate the Bible, and use it everyday.

I truly wish for the Bible to create, because it cannot be of use for this generation and my life. The Bible to me tells that Jesus has the power to heal us physically and spiritually – by driving out demons.’ Father’s instruction, and do not reject your mother’s

teaching: Proverbs 1: 8

REPLY FROM F2

The book offers guidance in such a precise and crisp form that there is no real ‘The books I considered favourites are Psalms, Proverbs, Matt, Mark, Luke and John. My reasons are as follows ‘:(F2)

much more room for interpretation and application by the reader. Such interpretation is most evident during services such as the

PSALMS

‘Psalm 23 is the most memorable. In fact, it is not uncommon for many Christians to have memorised this psalm from a very young age. It has been used in song. It is used often during funeral services, as it is a verse which calls us to draw strength from God. As many of these Psalms give praise to God and remind of what we should be grateful for, they have been turned into song and used as hymns during services as well.

the followers. He heard them, the people He slept with, ate with, performed miracles with

PROVERBS:

‘There are many useful and relevant verses in this book which the ordinary person can relate to. So much so, they can apply these to every day life today. These applications are just as relevant today as they were in the days when the Bible was first written. You need only read one verse in Proverbs and it will provide you with enough ‘food for thought’ to ponder about and apply to whatever situation you desire. The verses are not only short but simple. Because of this, they are easily remembered. They come to mind and are recalled with more ease than other verses. This is what I think makes PROVERBS most appealing to most church members, in particular the youth. They arouse a lot of interest because of their relevance to modern life as we know it.’

1 Samuel 15:22 “to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams” 22

These poetic words hit at the heart of the matter. Obedience to God is the highest virtue. Sacrificial offerings matter only if the worshiper’s heart is right before God

For inspiration

Happy are those who find wisdom, and those who get understanding for her income is better than silver, and her revenue better than gold.¹⁵ She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her.

Proverbs 3:13-16

For instruction

Hear, my child, your father's instruction, and do not reject your mother's teaching: Proverbs 1: 8

'Also, the entire book offers guidance in such a precise and crisp form that there is no real need to comprehend characters, processes, geographies, and customs. The elimination of such requirements of understanding leaves much more room for interpretation and application by the reader. Such interpretation is most evident during services such as the Au Taumafai and Junior Youth sessions and no matter how short and simple a verse may be, it is amazing how differently it may interpreted by various sectors of the church'.

MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE AND JOHN

"These books are most popular with the members of my church because they are Accounts of Jesus' life on earth from people who were there: Jesus' closest companions, the followers He hand-chose, the people He slept with, ate with, performed miracles with and what better accounts could you get than from these same people. In particular, John, who is well known as being Jesus' favourite disciple. This is what makes these books so popular. Also, because they tell the story of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection. The epitome of Christianity. It is the most well known biography of any time and of any one.

Other memorable verses:

Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning, God made heaven and earth."

This verse is most memorable because it is the opening line of the greatest book ever written !

1 Samuel 15:22 " to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams" 22

These poetic words hit at the heart of the matter. Obedience to God is the highest virtue. Sacrificial offerings matter only if the worshiper's heart is right before God

Psalm 121 : ¹'I lift up my eyes to the hills from where will my help come?' ² My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

"We turn to God for help."

Proverbs 31:10 'A wife of noble character who can find, she is worth far more than gold'.

"A memorable and popular verse used especially on Mother's day ! Funnily enough, there is no comparative verse commonly used for fathers."

Matthew 5: The Beatitudes

John 11:45 Jesus began to weep.

"The shortest verse in the Bible, with a big impact. We usually associate crying as a sign of weakness. It surprises us to think that Jesus, Son of the Almighty Father, would cry."

2. Which books or verses of the Bible do you refer to the most for a sermon and why?

REPLY FROM F1

¹³"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."²⁵⁶ (Matthew 5: 13-16) F1

'Another popular verse that I usually emphasise in my sermons is that of Matthew 5: 13-16 the 'salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world'. This is often used in reference to Ephesians, 2:10 and answers the question why we need to work together?'²⁵⁷ In essence we need to work together –in Christ - because we are the salt and the light of the world.

Verse 13 reminds us of how important we are, in the eyes of God. Despite our own perception of ourselves, we can make a difference in life. Despite our failings, our duty as Christians

²⁵⁶ Interview with Pastor, on 17th July 2000.

²⁵⁷ Interview with Pastor 29th August 2000.

makes us important to God. This verse is used to encourage communal effort in the pursuit of righteousness. It takes very little salt to change the flavour of food. Likewise our individual effort for the sake of God, no matter how insignificant for us does make a difference. The emphasis is, maintain Christian family values, and strengthen our faith in God no matter what the circumstances are. The true taste of life can only be known in God and with God, through Jesus Christ.'

Verse 14 was used to show the importance of setting a good example for the rest of the Congregation. This was an appeal to the Sunday school teachers and the Youth leaders to be good role models for their students. It was a common verse in times of the inter-Church games, where rivalry and the will to win sometimes takes over sportsmanship. A good Christian sportsman should exemplify sportsmanship. Winning is not important. What is important is trying your best, and enjoying yourself. This shows to other churches the way to play sports. There should be no 'sledging' between teams. We should congratulate other teams in their success, and enjoy the feeling that we tried our best in the games. This was especially important when the youth were involved in the teams, and it was important to set a good example for the youth. Actions most of the time speak louder than words.'

REPLY FROM F2

'In the composition of my sermons, I use books from both the Old and New Testaments. From the Old (Testament): - Genesis; Exodus; Deuteronomy; Nehemiah; Job; Psalms; Proverbs; Isaiah; Jeremiah; Hosea; Zechariah;

The reasons for my choices are the call of God to His people and their vocation, together with the response of those called, and people's behaviour, and work together, God's everlasting love for His Chosen people; and their response to such love, are all outlined in these books.

From the New (Testament): - Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Romans, Act, Corinthians, Ephesus, Timothy, Peter, and Revelation.

The reasons for my choices are based on the fulfilment of Gods love for the whole entire world as prophesised by the prophets in the Old Testament. This is good news for everyone that we are no longer slaves under the bondage of sin but we are completely free by this great act of God. These books of the Bible contain the teachings of Jesus and

stories about His healing power. Not only that, but they contain the parables of Jesus which are very related to the situations of the peoples everyday lives and these stories are extremely useful to the members of the church as Christians. Above all, the story of Jesus death and resurrection to take our sins opens the door for true believers to the eternal life. This is the gospel or the good news we are proclaiming, as it is prophesied by the prophets in the Old Testament.

It is my belief, that to understand the Bible fully, one must read it, re-read it and keep reading it on a regular basis. This familiarity will then open the doors, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to a fuller and truer understanding of the Bible²⁵⁸.

REPLY FROM FW2.

It is interesting to note also, the women's perspective on most popular books in the Bible. I have noted that of all the sermons conducted during women's fellowships within my congregation, the sub-district of Queensland (PULEGA), the district of Australia (MATAGALUEGA) and the General Assembly (FONO TELE) in Samoa, together with special occasions such as Annual Combined services (eg: Pacific Women's Day of Prayer & Women's world day of Prayer etc?) the book of Ruth is the most commonly used. The next most used is Esther. These two books are so popular with women, because of the heroine's status. In Samoan culture, the role of the female is as the subordinate, the lesser half. Some may disagree with this, but I believe, our culture and our religion are closely associated, if not intertwined. The very name for the minister's wife, FALETUA, and its derivation is evidence of this. So, to have such heroines (been) highlighted in the Bible, not only to have their stories told, but also to be honoured with their very own books! That is the appeal. Mind you, in this day and age, although the role of women has and is still changing, the Bible cannot be re-written. Therefore, reference by women- will always be made to these two books, and hence their heroines.

FINAL COMMENT:

The verses that are most commonly used:

1. That strengthens the emotions of the people's need for help

Psalms 23; Psalms 36:8; Psalms 46: 1-3; Psalms 119: 10ff; Jeremiah

²⁵⁸ Transcribed within interview of F2 29th August 2000.

31: 25; Isaiah 35

Matt 7:7; Matt 11: 28-30

2. Concerning the love of God for His people

Exodus 13: 21; Exodus 14: 13-14; Joshua 4: 5-6; Psalms 8: 3-4

Psalms 115: 12 ff Isaiah 53;

John 1: 1-5; John 3 & 16; Romans 4: 16; Romans 8: 12ff

3. That reveals blessings for firm believers

1 Sam 1: 11; 1 Sam 18: 7; Psalms 103; Psalms 121; Psalms 125:

1ff; Isaiah 40: 30-31 Isaiah 65: 23;

Matt 21: 22; John 3: 16; Romans 5: 8; 1John 4: 10

4. That show how people should behave

Genesis 45:24; Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 8: 10; Ruth 1:16-17; 1 Sam

15:22; 1 Sam 26:25; Proverbs 3:13; Proverbs 31:30; Ecclesiastes 7: 1 & 7;

Matt 5:1-14; Matt 7:18; Matt 9:17; 1 Corinth 1: 11ff; 1 Tim 3:8; 2 Tim 2: 3 & 5; 2 Tim 4: 5; Titus

1: 7; James 3:17; 1 Peter 2: 5

5. That reveals God's call

Exodus 3:1-14; Genesis 12:1ff; Genesis 32:26; 1 Kings 19:9; Isaiah

6:8; Jeremiah 1:5

Matt 10:16; Matt 28: 19-20; Acts 9: 5-6

6. That reveals the supremacy of God

Job 1:21; Psalm 8; Psalm 103; Psalm 115; Psalm 139; Songs of

Solomon 12:1;

Mark 4:39; John 1:15; Acts 8:21; Matt 21; Mark 11: 1-11; Luke 19:28

7. Displays the healing power of Jesus

Matt 20:30; Mark 10: 46-52; Luke 18:35-43; Mark 2: 1-12; Matt

9:1-8; Luke 5: 17-26; Mark 3: 1-6; Matt 12: 9-14; Luke 6: 6-11

of the Rock, and the places of Jesus ministry. This made an immediate impression on the

²⁵⁸ Transcribed written interview of F2 29th August 2000

8. Tells the parables of Jesus

Matt 21:28ff; Mark 4; Luke 8:4-8 & 9-18

D. THE YOUTH STRATEGY

The Youth Strategy implemented by the Brisbane Sunday school from 1992-1995 to assist the youth in Biblical studies. This caters for those youth who have finished Sunday school, and usually have nothing else to do in church. It is designed to keep the youth ACTIVE and INTERESTED in the Church, via the Bible. The English and the Samoan Bible was used. The lessons were conducted in English as many of the literature that was consulted were in English. It was also the most comfortable language for many of the students in the class.

History is used to provide relevance and 'proof' in the stories of the Bible. Visual aides (slides, maps, comic picture books, and videos) were indispensable to create an impression and an impact, more so than the usual oral and written format of instruction. It was also designed to appeal to their logic and make concrete what is constantly been told to them about the Bible. Nearly all the used materials came from the Catholic Resource Centre at Dutton Park, Brisbane. It is available free of charge and is borrowed for a weekend or a week at the very latest. It is the author's hope that it will be continued, modified and improved upon in future years.

Since the Bible involved Biblical lands and is essentially about Jesus, there was a need to provide background to the Bible. It was important to show the youth that there are places in the Holy Land, in the present time that commemorates the Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus. Maps were an integral part of the lessons. These range from political maps to geographical maps that showed the topography of the Holy Land. These maps gave a holistic outlook and helped picture the cultures and paths of civilisation. There was some criticism about this method. Many were saying that we were not reading directly from the Bible. But our observance and knowledge of the Sunday school youth, found that their knowledge of the Bible and the main events were practically memorised. There had to be 'concrete' approaches to make what they learnt at Sunday school 'real'. What was required was to show the society that the Bible had created or the society that the Bible refers to. The Sunday school then borrowed maps, colour pictures (reconstruction of the temple complex) in the time of Jesus and coloured slides (with accompanying explanations) of the Holy Land. These slides showed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Dome of the Rock, and the places of Jesus ministry. This made an immediate impression on the youth. Some of their typical responses were:

'I never knew those places existed. It was good to see the place where the Temple used to stand and the place that Jesus was buried.'

*'I enjoyed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. I was able to see where Jesus was buried.'*²⁵⁹

"The part that freaked me out was the church over the traditional place of the crucifixion."

To see the slides of the Holy Land, questions their faith. This is good because at the same time it strengthens their faith. Their search for answers is at the same time searching for the meaning of their faith.

As Chapter Three has shown, the interpenetration of the Biblical world and the Samoan world is most evident, when the slides, videos, displays of the Holy Land are shown. Not only the youth but also the older members of the congregation were impressed with the slides. It is as if they were seeing the Biblical World that is the basis of Samoan Christianity. They would ask questions like:

'How come the place of Abraham's burial in Hebron a Muslim Mosque?'

'Why wasn't the Dome of the Rock destroyed by the Crusaders when they captured Jerusalem?' (Many of the older members of the congregation refer to this as the temple)

'Why give the keys of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to a Muslim?'

The people in general are a visual people, where visual aides make more of an impact than, purely the written word. Comic strips were used to illustrate common stories from the Old Testament. Maps were such an important part of this strategy, for it enabled students to visualise the area and associate this with time. Maps gave a holistic view of the Bible.

The Youth Group used the classic work *The Bible as History*, by Werner Keller²⁶⁰ to appeal to the logic of the students. Although dated, it provides historical reasons for the major stories of the Old²⁶¹. This book gave historical evidence for many of the events they have been memorised in

²⁵⁹ Interview with former Sunday School students 1993-94.

²⁶⁰ Werner Keller, *The Bible As History*. (Oxford: Lion Publishing, 1991). This is modern edition of the 1952 book by Werner Keller. It has more colour photos of the places of Biblical interest.

²⁶¹ Werner Keller, *The Bible as History*. For example one of the reasons Werner Keller gives for the pharaoh of Egypt making the Hebrews slaves in Egypt, was the likelihood that under the time of Joseph the Egyptians were under the yoke of the Hyksos conquerors. By the time of Moses the Egyptians had successfully rebelled against the Hyksos. Since the Hyksos looked on the Hebrews favourably, the Hebrews were considered enemies and enslaved. This makes a logical (and therefore memorable) biblical event more reasonable.

Sunday school. What are needed are further examples of the power of the Bible in world history.²⁶²

E. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Brisbane in the years 1989 – 1995 there seems to be a two-pronged strategy in the use of the Bible. The use of the Bible in the Brisbane context takes into account the role of audience. There is foremost the family audience aimed at consolidating the faith of the family. Secondly, the youth audience, which tries to make the Bible, a relevant and 'real' scripture in the turbulent world of Samoan youth. This awareness necessitates the two ways of presentation of the Bible. In the first instance the public domain of the worship service. Secondly the more personal and friendly environment of the Sunday school class.

Which books of the Bible or verses of the Bible are the most memorable and considered your favourites and why?

In the public domain of worship, F1 shows a concern for the migrant Samoan in Australia. His most memorable verse is 2nd Timothy, which shows the reason for relying on the Bible as a guide. This dependency on the Bible is crucial for the lives of migrants. If the Bible is divinely inspired then the migrants faith upon the words of the Bible, will lead us to life, and inspiration to make the right choice, and the right decisions. (*For those who live outside of Samoa, for example in Australia, we can never forget the Bible. This Book we all want to listen for advice and assistance to comfort us.*) F1 shows the strong Biblical faith of the older generation Samoans and the link with culture. (*I can never forget who I worship and the place I was born*). This is the classic example of the 'interpenetration of the Biblical Culture and the Samoan world. Notice also the need for correct and proper worship for God (*'that we are worthy in front of the presence of God'*). This suggests the founding vision of the CCCS in New Zealand, and the concern for meaningful worship. This might have something to do with the fact that F1 was a pastor of the C.C.C.S. in New Zealand for 12 years.

²⁶² Interview with Sunday School Teachers in Brisbane Congregational Christian Churches of 1992-93 The materials obtained were from the Catholic Resource centre. They provided audio-visual material, and maps to provide a historical and tour-guide approach to the Bible. The Bible was treated as a historical book, one in which events were real.

F1 stressed the need *'to work together'* in his second passage Ephesians 2:10. This is linked to the verse *'so that we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.'* (Ephesians 2:10b). There is a definite plan that God has for us (the migrants). There is an underlying theme of a migrant people working together in the church to fulfil God's plan, and God's promise. This seems to be one of the underlining themes in the use of such verses. The shock of a new community, a new way of life, a new language, brings with it isolation and a search for direction. A Biblically based culture uses the Bible as a source of comfort and especially direction. Hence the use by F1 of Psalm in describing the Bible as *'a light upon our paths.'* God's word is the light, but here F1 focuses on the Bible as the light. This is reinforced in the reply of FW1 when she says *'...People are happy to discuss the Holy Bible. They are pleased to show what they know of the Bible. This is shown in the Au Taumafai. When somebody has their turn to explain their Bible verse, they are happy to search, study and explain their particular Bible verse. This seems to be the one time there is a definite interest in the Bible.... But the most keenly sort out question, from any explanation of a verse, is what benefit do I obtain from this'.*

The last couple of words highlight the need for direction. When one reads between the lines, these words are a portent reminder of the vulnerability of the migrant in a foreign land. It highlights the shortcoming of culture to provide the answers. But it also shows the reliance on the Bible to supply answers. It acknowledges the universal influence of the words of the Bible and the limited influence of culture. The words themselves have power to alter their lives for the better.

In other words when culture (a Biblically influenced culture) fails to provide the answers to a migrant people, it is the Bible they naturally turn to. There seems to be a hunger, for answers and direction from the Bible upon reading these replies from the pastors and their wives. It highlights the That is what makes them so memorable.

Success is another key issue. F1 warns that if the congregation is to succeed, it must forget the differences and fulfil the promise of God (*'the promise (or the plan) of God to renew or revitalise us through Jesus Christ – His Church. That promise requires us to participate in the Church activities'*.)

The most memorable verses and books for F2 are centred on six books. Two from the Old Testament (Psalms and Proverbs) and four from the New Testament (The Synoptic Gospels and

John). F1 has narrowed down the most memorable verses to just a few key verses. It may have proven to be the most useful verses over the long period of time of his ministry and have answered (some of) the issues of a migrant culture. These verses have had the most impact for F1's congregation.

F2's choice of Psalms is indicative of the worship mentality of Samoa. Many of the Psalms – or at least the theology – is put to song, and have become a regular part of the C.C.C.S. liturgy. Yet the very first verse from Psalms that is quoted by F2 is the often memorised and the well-known Psalm 23. This chapter of Psalms offers hope and comfort to the migrant community of Samoans. It could also be a legacy of the missionaries to Samoa in their own journey into the unknown.

Proverbs short and simple one-liners are indicative of the popularity to F2. They are thought provoking (*'Proverbs... will provide you with enough 'food for thought' to ponder about*). F2 notes that Proverbs appeals to the youth (*This is what I think makes PROVERBS most appealing to most church members, in particular the youth. They arouse a lot of interest because of their relevance to modern life as we know it.*). Proverbs is very simple and can be interpreted without a historical critical approach. As F2 points out the appeal of Proverbs is that there is *'no real need to comprehend characters, processes, geographies, and customs'*. Yet F2 admits it is surprising the number of interpretations that a verse may have. This is most evident when there is a 'lotu Au Taumafai' (Christian Endeavour) or a Youth Service. A good sign, of the use of the Bible is that if it initiates debate.

F2 mentions the Gospels as being the most memorable books and this is understandable considering that this is the core of Christianity. The two verses mentioned are the Beatitudes and Luke 11:45, when Jesus wept. The Beatitudes serves as a guide and a reminder to Christian virtues. Luke 11:45 is often a verse quoted in Samoan Christianity because of its brevity and the fact that Jesus demonstrates his humanity.

E.1 Which books or verses of the Bible do you refer to the most for a sermon and why?

F1 makes use of Matthew 5:13-16. The two main points in these verses found in verse 13 and verse 14, salt and light. Or to put it another way, preservation and illumination. Verse 13 raises the self-esteem of a migrant community. It instils meaning, when the cultural values of the

adopted nation are so much different from Samoa. It reinforces the need to preserve not only the culture, but to persevere with the Christian heritage of the forebearers.

It is plainly evident, that the Samoan Bible plays an important part in the lives of Samoans, when Verse 14 for F1 highlights the need to set a good example within the congregation. F1 would lead by example. Whenever there was church work to be done, - such as gardening or mowing the lawns - F1 was usually the first one there.²⁶³

F2 uses books from the Old and New Testament. The books in the Old Testament illustrate to F2 the response of the people to God's call. The people of Israel serve as an example for his congregation.

FW2 shows the male bias of the Bible. The book of Ruth is the most common book used by the Women's fellowship meetings. This is followed by the book of Esther. FW2 believes that the status of women is 'as a subordinate' in the Samoan culture. The fact that there are two books that feature women makes them 'heroines' in the eyes of FW2. FW2 acknowledges that the times are changing and there is a greater recognition of women's roles. Yet FW2 admits that it cannot change the picture that the Bible paints about women. The Bible is unchanging.

E.2 Youth Strategy.

The Youth strategy tries to make the Bible appropriate for the youth. It has broken from tradition and incorporated the use of the English Bible. This is because the literature that is often referred to is in English. More importantly English is also the language of the contextual world of the youth, the language they confront and dialogue with the Brisbane context.

Samoan culture believe they are a Biblical society. Hence the duty, to go to church. Samoan's are aware and identify with the Bible. Yet the youth, brought up by the more powerful force of Western Anglo Culture, often do not feel this biblical identity. Ioka's thesis is vitally important for the Samoan youth so they can appreciate the Biblical basis of the Samoan culture. The Youth strategy is important to show the Biblical society as a historical reality. It is a difficult matter to recreate this Biblical world. This is what the Brisbane Youth Strategy attempted to do. The youth

²⁶³ Observations of F1 made by the author. Many times when work was scheduled to start at say 6.30am in the morning, F1 would be there at 6.00am. Sometimes the work would be nearly done, before anyone else arrived.

in a Western Anglo culture, must realise the Biblical basis of the Western Culture, in order to feel they are part of a Biblical culture.

It is plainly evident, that the Samoan Bible plays an important part in the lives of Samoans, when the dominant language is Samoan. The Samoan language is so heavily indebted to the Bible, that it can hardly be separated from worship. Language is one way of leading one to Christianity. The 'domestication' of Christianity, to produce a distinctive Samoan Christianity, encourages Samoans to go to church. This is part of the appeal of the Congregational Churches, since it was this denomination which contributed much to the Christian and biblical culture of Samoa.

If the Samoan way or the 'faaSamoa' is viewed as a 'system of dispersed unity', with each village being autonomous, then the churches outside of Samoa, are free to respond to the problems of their particular context. There is always the danger when Christianity is so intimately intertwined with culture; that culture itself becomes the object of worship. Hence the vital step adopted by the Brisbane Church to break away from Samoan culture, to attempt to understand the Biblical roots of Western Anglo culture. The positive response of slides of the Holy Land is indicative of the need to understand the foundation of one's 'culture'.

The Samoan culture is what draws the people to the church. The Bible seems to be an 'appendage' to the culture. It is here that the role of the pastor is crucial. The pastor must create the 'fresh word' of the Bible and make it answer or inspire the congregation. The Samoan culture cannot answer the questions of the Brisbane context alone. This is the fallacy of putting the culture first. More inspiration and exegesis is needed from the Bible. Here we have a dilemma where the context is different. I propose that the Samoan culture has hindered the interpenetration of the Brisbane context with the Bible. Rather it was hoped that the Samoan culture would be the interface between the Brisbane context and the Bible. Somehow it was hoped, that the Samoan culture would introduce the youth to the Biblical world. It was up to the youth to use this Biblical world to form and reform their context.

Marianne Sawicki mentions in her book, that *'the Christian communities care for the physical well-being of their members was one of the essential activities through which the gospel took effect and transformed human lives in the first century of the church's existence. Jesus had laced human need above the observance of cultic laws'*²⁶⁴ This is the challenge that the Samoan Church face.

²⁶⁴ Sawicki Marianne. *The Gospel in History. Portrait of A Teaching Church. The Origins of Christian Education.* (Paulist Press: New York, 1988) 83.

CONCLUSIONS

The introduction of the paper began with the Bible's influence on the economy. In the beginning of chapter one John Barton offered a view that Christianity did not have the same reverence for the Bible as Muslims and the Jews. This somehow belittled the significance of the Bible for Christianity and society. To get a glimpse of the effect of the Bible, one had to go through time, in order to possibly see the effects of the Bible. Hence the title of the paper 'A pilgrim wandering through history'.

Chapter one has shown that the Bible is the Word of God and it involves a human agent, as a witness and as an instrument of this interaction. We saw that the Old Testament has verses, that paint God as anything but benevolent. Such examples are Genesis 22, the sacrifice of Isaac, which would be identified today as child abuse. Another example is 2 Samuel 12. These examples can be attributed to 'human finitude'. Since the Old Testament covers a long and ancient time period, we should be aware that cultural interpretations had been subject to cultural change, with the changing of time. Yet the very fact that we acknowledge this 'fundamentalist error', we acknowledge that one of the defining features and use of Scripture is it interacts with society.

This interaction with Scripture is found in the New Testament. Jesus acknowledges and uses the Scriptures to make people aware of the false use of this interaction symbolised by the Pharisees. So from the very beginning the theme of dialogue between society and the Bible is a dominant one. Hence the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament is captured in Augustine of Hippo's statement 'The New Testament lies hidden in the Old, and the Old Testament is manifest in the New'.

The Bible was formed in a world of high literacy, (Koine Greek) and relative social stability. Yet in chapter 2, the pilgrimage of the Bible enters a world of illiteracy and chaos. From 497 CE (Fall of Rome) to the beginning of the Reformation (1517) a span of a thousand years, the pilgrim enters a world in which seemingly it was not designed for.

Chapter three illustrates how the Baroque society is a Biblical Society. The use of the journey through the Middle Ages is made possible by translation into the vernacular of the invading barbarians, or those cultures fortunate enough to receive a translation. The Gothic translation spread the message of the Bible during their campaigns. Translations into Armenian, Georgian, Syriac and Coptic (Egyptian), preserved the Christian community, even after the conquest of Islam.

Monasticism became another way the pilgrim of the Bible was able to reach society. Monasteries were usually situated in rural areas.²⁶⁵ This suited the feudal lifestyle of the barbarians which was characteristic of the Middle Ages. It was the rural areas which were most conservative and resistant to the message, and therefore the pilgrimage of the Bible. Here the dialogue between the rural community and the Bible is expressed in the actions of the monks. 'Action speaks louder than words.'

The monasteries became centres of literacy, and this fostered the development of schools. Unfortunately since the clergy were mainly literate, the church became the interpreter of the Bible. This interpretation by the church created decisions that had no Biblical basis. The selling of indulgences is not found in the Bible. Worst still was the persecution of the Jews, especially during the early crusades. The Inquisition led to witch hunts, and deaths of Tyndale and Huss, who saw the corruption of Church. The Church became corrupt and society followed. This led to the Reformation, which reminded people of the importance of the Bible.

The Reformation placed the importance of the Bible over the traditions and doctrines of the church. The Bible is the only source of the message of Christ that is available. For this reason it should be an integral part of any society.

The Enlightenment placed the emphasis on human reason. The legacy of the Middle Ages, where the church corrupted the message of the Bible, was again to surface. Many of the scientific discoveries had disproved what the Medieval church had taught. This scepticism spilled over to the Bible. The French Revolution with its cult of the 'Supreme being', and its atheism, is the culmination of reliance upon human reasoning. There is no liberty and freedom without God.

The pilgrimage of the Bible continued in the Pietist movement, with its emphasis on the Bible. This led to the Methodist movement, which many considered saved England from a similar fate to the French Revolution. It led to revivals, which occurred also in America and England.

One can say that America's power symbolised the Biblical basis of its founding fathers. Many of the Puritans that left England after the monarchy was restored, migrated to the American colonies, for religious freedom. It set up the Calvinistic system of church and eventually a Calvinistic system of government.

Chapter three illustrates how the Samoan society is a Biblical Society. The use of the Bible introduced literacy and the Biblical way of life. The elevated position of the pastor within the village is due to the pastor's status as the legitimate interpreter of the Bible in the Samoan language. The pastor symbolised the covenant between God and people of Samoa. Malieto's

²⁶⁵ Roy Harrisville & Walter Sundberg, *The Bible in Modern Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) 28

covenant that the Biblical God should be the 'king' of Samoa illustrate Malietoa's hope for a peaceful Samoa.

This Biblical world of Samoa was transplanted overseas in New Zealand and Australia. It highlights the interpretation of the Biblical World and the Samoan world. Language and culture have a symbiotic relationship with the Biblical World. Hence where ever Samoans go, they are compelled to go to church. It is part of their identity. The hope for the church in Brisbane, is that the Samoan culture introduce to those Samoan's in Brisbane, the Biblical World.

The Word of God is restless. This paper has shown that the Bible does have significance where ever it has journeyed, with society. Barton knew that the Bible could never be read like the Koran or the Torah. These communities claim that they have found their "promised land". The Bible is still migrating taking society where God wills. The journey with the Bible is epoch making and history making. The improvements in science have largely come about because of the Reformation and the Enlightenment. But we are warned that if society goes it alone, with out God, then the sheep without the Shepard is easy prey for sin. The Bible keeps us from sin, or sin keeps us from the Bible. The Bible is important because it is as Harrisville and Sundberg wrote in reference to human kind:

*Human beings are pilgrims on this earth. They are travellers on a confusing, chaotic, and perilous journey. They are in a desperate search for their proper home. A Christian knows that there is no rest until one rests in God*²⁶⁶

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