

Christian Foundations

Books for Today

THE launching of a comprehensive series of paperbacks under the auspices of the Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion was undoubtedly an ambitious venture. The idea, however, first mooted at a meeting of the Church of England Evangelical Council, gripped the imagination of a number of leading evangelicals. A small literary committee was formed and began to meet in the home and under the chairmanship of John Stott, Rector of All Souls, Langham Place, and joint honorary secretary of EFAC. The scheme was boldly formulated for the publication of a series of books, each some 20,000 words in length, to be produced at two-monthly intervals and extending over a period of years. As authors, competent evangelical scholars were to be invited to contribute incisive and thoughtful monographs on the important issues facing, and in some cases dividing, the Church today. As readers, the great multitude of intelligent laymen and laywomen, so many of whom are concerned and frustrated over the Church's lack of vision and authority, and the wide segment of the clergy who long for a ministry that is positive and dynamic—these certainly, it was believed, would be prepared to give a fair hearing to the case for evangelical Anglicanism when presented in a frank, unambiguous, and scholarly manner, especially as the planners were convinced that evangelical Anglicanism at its best is synonymous with classical Anglicanism at its best.

And so the series was launched under the general title of *Christian Foundations*. The well known London publishing house of Hodder and Stoughton encouraged the project with enthusiasm and undertook to publish the book. Philip Hughes, Editor of *The Churchman*, agreed to serve as General Editor of the series; and more recently, following his appointment to a professorial post in America, Frank Colquhoun, Canon of Southwark, has consented to join the London committee and to share the editorial responsibilities with him.

The project is now moving full steam ahead. By the end of this year the first ten titles will have been published. These are, in order of appearance (the sub-titles are given in parenthesis):

Confess Your Sins (The Way of Reconciliation) by John Stott,
But for the Grace of God (Divine Initiative and Human Need) by Philip Hughes,

The Body of Christ (A New Testament Image of the Church) by Alan Cole,

Called to Serve (Ministry and Ministers in the Church) by Michael Green,

After Death (A Sure and Certain Hope?) by Alec Motyer,
God has Spoken (Revelation and the Bible) by James Packer,

God and Mammon (The Christian Mastery of Money) by Kenneth Prior,
Christ's Ambassadors (The Priority of Preaching) by Frank Colquhoun,
Sex and Sanity (The Christian View of Sexual Morality) by Stuart Babbage, and
Old Faith, Young World (The Church and the Challenge of Youth) by David Winter.

Other books now in preparation cover a wide and important range of subjects, including the debate with Rome, intercommunion and the open table, the missionary task in the modern age, the ecumenical situation, the doctrine of the atonement, ecclesiastical architecture, the practice of prayer, Christian assurance, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, evangelism, the Church and the child, the baptismal controversy, eucharistic sacrifice, the significance of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, and the relevance of the Old Testament today. Many other themes are under discussion, and among prospective authors the names of James Atkinson, John Taylor, James Hickinbotham, Gervase Duffield, Leon Morris, Stephen Smalley, John Cockerton, Broughton Knox, Desmond Hunt, Bishop Chandu Ray, George Goyder, Alan Stibbs, Tony Capon, and Geoffrey Hart may be mentioned.

These names represent a wide range of experience in widely separated areas of the Anglican Communion, and they represent also the younger rather than the older age group. They are names which should give confidence that their respective assignments will be executed responsibly and with authority. The reception accorded to the titles so far published has, indeed, been gratifying and the sales have not disappointed the most optimistic hopes.

Should it be asked whether there is really a need for so extensive a series of paperbacks, especially in view of the fact that there is already a considerable amount of literature covering many of the themes projected, written by evangelicals and used in evangelical parishes all over the world, the answer is that there is nothing comparable to the *Christian Foundations* series with respect both to its scope and to its topicality. It should be emphasized that each book is a part of the whole, and that the aim is to give an evangelical exposition of virtually the entire field of church doctrine and practice, particularly in those areas where there is debate or controversy. To achieve this end a team of contributors, each qualified to write with authority on his subject (in some cases with the aid of preliminary research by specialist study groups), had to be selected and to work in close co-operation with the editors and the organizing committee. Moreover, much of the existing evangelical literature is written primarily for evangelicals; whereas the *Christian Foundations* books are addressed to the Anglican Communion of our day, in all its diversity and even, at times, disunity, and beyond that to the Church at large, with the hope of convincing the unconvinced and speaking, with humility, to all who are willing to listen.

"In these books," writes Archbishop Hugh Gough, the Primate of Australia and President of EFAC, "Anglican evangelical scholars address themselves to themes, theological and practical, which are of

vital significance for the Christian Church. They do so in a manner which is scriptural, contemporary, and, of course, evangelical. Though directed to the Anglican situation, the outlook is not narrowly limited to Anglicanism. These books have a truly catholic scope, and accordingly they can speak with clarity and also charity to those on either side of Anglicanism and, indeed, to many who at present are outside the fellowship of Christian believers." *Christian Foundations* is no reactionary campaign for the *status quo*, but a call to fellow-Christians, in these turbulent years, to rediscover the one sure foundation upon which new structures and new assessments can be securely based. The sponsors of the series express it in these words: "The planning of the series is aimed at the recovery of the dynamic witness, the fellowship in worship, and the victorious living of the New Testament Church". Ours, in other words, must be that dominical and apostolic foundation upon which alone God builds His Temple.

The timing of this announcement coincides with the appearance of the first titles in the American edition of the *Christian Foundations* series, which is being published by the Westminster Press of Philadelphia and which marks an important further stage in the realization of the objectives of this literary project.

Note: *Christian Foundations* may be ordered through local book sellers or direct from the publishers, Hodder and Stoughton, Limited, St. Paul's House, Warwick Lane, London, E.C.4, or, in America, the Westminster Press, Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107, U.S.A. The British price is 3s. 6d. each and the American price \$1.25 each.

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This is like the foundation of Christianity, the core of our beliefs, and what sets us apart from other religions that are of the Book. If you disagree with this then you are fundamentally disagreeing with Christianity. I know homophones like to scream at us that we and ours live in sin and we're going to Hell for it but really?