**Conscientious Objections: Thoughts on Living
as a Baptist in the 21st Century - Part 2**
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V. THE MENTALITY OF COMMUNITY

I spoke in the previous talk of the organizational option - a root paradigm of behaviour - which is available in time of uncertainty and crisis. It is an attractive option mainly because it holds out an illusion of certainty, and the promise of a clear future, and, because of the social context out of which it arises, it holds out the prospect of success. That is part of its appeal, but one must ask whether it is well-founded. There is something comforting in structure. Like the Psalmist we can:

Ps. 48:12 *Walk about Zion, go all around it, count its towers,*
13 consider well its ramparts; go through its citadels, that you
may tell the next generation 14 that this is God, our God
forever and ever. He will be our guide forever.

But in the noise of our processions and celebrations, we can drown out the voice of the prophet who speaks of betrayal of the city to the enemy, and its ultimate destruction. Inside the walls we do not catch glimpse of the Pilgrim people of God who never stay in the city for any length of time, but are called to that *better country, whose builder and maker is God* (Heb. 11.16), and who think no more *of the land they left behind*. (vs. 15). They know that to stop and to build the Babel tower is to invite confusion.

We have a rich, sometimes disturbing history as Baptists. I lament the lack of knowledge of that history among contemporary Baptists. But a people truly conscious of their history is never a proud people. It knows there is too much in its past both for good, and for bad, so it can never be arrogant. For an alternative to the organizational mentality which has permeated our church thinking I want to take us back almost four hundred years to the beginnings of Baptist expressions of faith. Remember the question I asked previously, How can we live in the present as people with a past? And unlike so much modern rejection of history, I think we can learn from it, and be nourished by it. But first a warning.

A. Avoid the Teleological Fallacy

Now what on earth is that? It is a phrase coined by the late historian Moses Finley, who understood it to be the appropriation of the past, often without regard for context and full content, for some cause in the present. It is a matter of hermeneutics. He put it this way,

'*It consists in assuming the existence from the beginning of time…*
of the [modern] *writer's values…and then in examining all*
earlier thought and practice as if they were, or ought to have
been, on the road to this realization; as if men [sic!] *in other*
periods were asking the same questions and facing the same
problems as those of the [modern] *historian and his* [sic!] *world.'*[1]

David Lowenthal, a historian of culture, speaks in simlar categories of the distinction between 'heritage' and 'history'. He suggests that 'heritage' is an appropriation of the past for modern concerns, and not an honest way of letting the past speak for itself.

Even the perpetuation of the name 'Baptists' for our contemporary church institutions, whatever their shape and purpose, is an example of such a use of 'heritage', because it assumes certain things about the present's relationship to the past, the most insidious being an unbroken line of

continuity. Lowenthal suggests that a strong impetus for 'heritage' is the uncertainty of the present - maybe the 'crisis' I spoke of in the previous talk. *Beleaguered by loss and change, we keep our bearings only by clinging to remnants of security.*[2] The past, our past, is not always benign. Lowenthal also speaks of history as the antagonist of the historian, always forcing the historian to rethink and reshape her vision of the past. The advantage of heritage over history is that it purifies the past. It scrapes the buildings clean, tidies up the streets,[3] and beatifies its heroes. On the other hand, the advantage of history is that it keeps people aware of the light and the shadows, of the campaigns and the failures, of the saints and the sinners.

For modern Baptists who long for peace in all walks of life, it is a sobering thought to contemplate the percentages of Baptists in Cromwell's New Model Army. For modern Baptists with a Puritan wish there is a challenge in the sprinkling of high-living, wealthy men of London in the late 18th and early 19th centuries who patronized the arts and the good life, and who were also Baptists. For Baptists who pride themselves on an 'educated clergy', there is a dark side to the history of our educational institutions in Upper Canada, which has yet to be fully told. For Baptists who express a love for the marginalized and under privileged in our society, it comes as a sobering thought that, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in December of 1941, in Western Canada only one Baptist pastor rose to his feet to protest the panic-driven and racially inspired internment of Japanese Canadians. So, all this is to warn us against simply using the past as a source of comforting and confirming platitudes about our present concerns. This is all too common. It also warns us against thinking that the present is always the intended offspring of the past, in other words, that what is is what was intended to be. This is always a danger for too many religious historians, and the sure sign that this is happening is the use of clichés in talking about the past. John Kent, former Professor of Theology at the University of Bristol in England, developed this theme in his controversial book, *The Unacceptable Face*.[4] In it he offers the following advice:

> *If religion is to serve, rather than to seduce mankind, we*
> *need to examine its historical record, its unacceptable*
> *face, much more critically than has been done by either*
> *the ecclesiastical or the social historian.*[5]

So, with that out of the way let us look back at our past at the early days of Baptists.

B. The Modern Freedom Debate

A favourite theme which has surfaced over and over again in Baptist debates over the past two, or three decades, is the question of soul-liberty, the freedom of the individual conscience. It has been particularly prominent in the debates within the Southern Baptist Convention, and has also found echo in some debates in Canada. Now, let me make a very strong point right at this stage. I am not against freedom of conscience. Those of you who know me well, know this. I do not wish to downplay its importance. What I wish to do is put it in context. I think there are excellent historical and social reasons why, especially since 1985, the notion of soul liberty has found a prominent place in our churchly vocabulary, especialy among the so-called 'moderates' of the Southern Baptist Convention, and among groups like the Gathering, the Alliance and the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship. This, I believe to be right and proper. I think there are also excellent historical and social reasons why the notion of soul liberty is now under attack from people like Albert Mohler, current President of the Southern Seminary at Louisville, and his fundamentalist colleagues. Mohler made these reasons very clear in his now notorious lecture in March at Louisville. He suggested that the notion of soul liberty undermines pastoral authority, and

destroys doctrinal purity. In other words, it is a question of control. I think a stress on the notion of soul liberty in the modern period is an appropriate response to theological bullies.

But, in this particular conflict of ideas, one gains little by shouting one's slogans at each other over the fence. When one moves into this conflict mode, which after all, is an extension of politics, then one is almost forced into a predetermined action-reaction mode. I think there might be an alternative.

If one goes by the documents of confession which early Baptists produced in the 17th century, it becomes clear that, in spite of its modern, contemporary popularity, soul liberty is not the primary concern of early Baptist thinkers and writers. It receives its clearest expression, not in the 17th century, but in the 18th century, and especially in North America. Now there are historical reasons for this. It was very much in the air. Again, let me stress I am not downplaying this topic, just trying to put it in context, because I fear we have lost sight of something else which was expounded earlier, which was to my mind equally as important.

The notion of the individual, as a *particular historical and cultural conceptualization of the person,*[6] had been let loose on the world in the Renaissance.[7] It was a given in political discourse at that time. It saw itself flourish in the culture of Renaissance Europe. This is the beginning of the great tradition of portrait painting. The music of the period, emerging from the papal ban on polyphony, now begins to experiment with that most radical of concepts, discord. Listen to the Pergolesi *Stabat Mater*. The political writings which begin at the close of this period and into the Enlightenment take the notion of the individual for granted. Read Spinoza, Hobbes, on to Milton, Rousseau and Kant, and many others. The very approach they adopt, that of offering a criticism of the status quo, presupposes a free mind to do these things. So individualism, and liberty of conscience is a given, even when Baptists begin in the early 17th century.

For Baptists as a manifestation of the people of God, the problem to be faced was not the nature of that individualism. Others had already done that. The problem they faced was, What kind of community can one create from such individuals, and not be part of a system of power and control through manipulation. The perpetual danger of organization and control is totalitarianism; the perpetual danger of individualism and freedom, is anarchy.[8] What I find in reading again the numerous Baptist confessions from the 17th century on into the 18th, nineneenth and twentieth centuries is a decisive shift in emphasis, precisely on this point. I think I detect one of the reasons for this shift. But first, let me offer a brief survey of these confessions to illustrate my point.

[1] In the so-called '*Short Confession of Faith*' of 1610, signed by thirty four colleagues of John Smyth, both women and men, the emphasis is on the nature of the community of faith and its righteous living.[9] Ten years later, John Smyth published his own personal confession, in which he states:

> *(12) That the church of Christ is a company of the faithful; baptised after*
> *confession of sin and of faith, endowed with the power of Christ.*
> *(13) That the church of Christ has power delegated to themselves of*
> *announcing the word, administering the sacraments, appointing ministers,*
> *disclaiming them, and also excommunicating; but the last appeal is to*
> *the brethren of body of the church.*
> *(14) That baptism is the external sign of the remission of sins, of dying*
> *and of being made alive, and therefore does not belong to infants.*
> *(15) That the Lord's Supper is the external sign of the communion of*
> *Christ, and of the faithful amongst themselves by faith and love.*

(16) That the ministers of the church are, not only bishops ("Episcopos"),
to whom the power is given of dispensing both the word and the sacraments,
but also deacons, men and widows, who attend to the affairs of the poor
and sick brethren.[10]

Here we have pictured an autonomous congregation of faithful, baptised believers, who are bound to their Lord and to each other *by faith and love*. Note the emphasis here, it is on the way the community is organized in addition to pastoral or priestly roles (administration of word and sacraments), to include as ministers those, both men and women, who *attend the affairs of the poor and sick brethren*. What is thus defined is the nature and quality of the Christian community. This had been clearly assumed in the confessions which preceded the Baptist ones, and which emanated from the Anabaptist (later, Mennonite) communities. These had spread across Europe. For these believers the notion of the community as the context for the 'obedient life' has had a strong history.

[2] The *Revised London Confession* of 1646, in articles 33 to 47, makes the same point. The church is a *company of visible saints...being joined to the Lord and to each other, by mutual agreement in the practical enjoyment of the ordinances commanded by Christ their head and king* (Art. XXXIII).[11] This is not so much a political stance - our group against the others - but a conscious effort on their part to shape the nature of the Christian community.

[3] The mid-17th century confessions, such as the *Confession of the Thirty Congregations* (1651)[12] , and the so-called *Midland Confession of Faith* (1655)[13] , which are Particular Baptist Confessions, stress the fellowship of the believers in local congregations, bound to each other and their Lord in mutual love and support through the sacraments.

[4] In the latter part of the 17th century, when there was a revival of English General, i.e. non-Calvinistic, Baptists, the same general emphases are detectable. The *General Standard Confession* of 1660[14,] especially Articles XV-XIX, the *Second London Confession* (1677, 1688), the so-called *Orthodox Creed* (1678) all carry the same stress.

[5] It is at the end of the 17th century, and particularly into the beginning of the 18th that the emphasis changes. The document produced in 1691, *A Short Confession or Brief Narrative of Faith*, that in 1704 on *The Unity of the Churches*, and the *Articles of Religion of the New Connexion* (1770), all concentrate now on doctrinal issues, and actually say little about the nature of the community.

[6] Between 1742 and 1833 there were several Baptist confessions that were produced in the American colonies, and the United States. The foundational American confession, the so-called *Philadelphia Confession*, adopted in 1742, was a copy, with small changes, of a British Calvinistic Baptist Confession published in England in 1689.

[7] In 1777, an important date, because it is now in the early stages of the American Revolution, a Primitive Baptist Association was formed in Kehukee, Virginia. They produced a statement of their common wishes and beliefs.[15] Most fascinating is that it is almost entirely a political document. It contains no statement on the nature of the Christian community in fellowship and ministry. Instead, it offers the political means for association, which mirror the demands of the political struggle going on between the colonies and England. In other words, they replicate on the small level, the Federalist impulses of the larger political scene. Implied in this, of course is an autonomy of the congregation and the individual members.

[8] Similarly, the ten articles of the Sandy Creek Association of 1816[16] contain no definitions of the nature of the Christian community, only the way in which they associate. The pattern is that of a federalist organization. The *Terms of Union* between the Elkhorn and Southern Kentucky

Baptist Associations, which was brought about in 1801, makes a brief allusion to mutual support, but it is subordinated to the more doctrinal matters (i.e. contractual matters) which enable the union of the two associations.[17]

[9] In the *New Hamp[shire Confession* of 1833,[18] the article on *The Gospel Church* (xiii) is reduced to a statement about the visible church being a congregation of baptized believers. That is, an aggregation of individuals. There is nothing stated about the nature of this community beyond that. Similarly, Article XV of the confession of Free Will Baptists, originally penned in 1848 and agreed to again in 1948, moves one step further to the church being defined as little more than a religious club of individuals who voluntarily associate *to sustain the ordinances*.[19]

[10] The statement of the American Baptist Association (1944) and that of the North American Baptist Association (1950) contain no exposition at all on the nature of the church. The so-called *Goodchild Confession* of the Fundamental Fellowship, adopted in 1921 concludes with the clearest statement of individualism, *We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone* [sic!] *in all matters of faith*.[20]

We have, in fact, come a long way from the mutual responsibility among the fellowship for faith and practice which is a common feature of the earlier confessions.

[11] What I find with later confessions, and especially those confessions which have been produced in the past decade or two, is a continuation of this shift in emphasis. The UBCAP statement which can be found on their Web Page begins, *Baptists believe that hope for the individual, the nation and the world is found in Jesus Christ and a personal relationship with him*. I think that, if you are familiar with the New Testament idea of salvation, there is a difference here. In the New Testament, salvation takes place e]v cristw ('in Christ'). This is a collective notion. In the section of the church in the UBCAP document we learn nothing of the nature of the church other than the regeneration of its individual members. The greatest stress is placed on 'Local Church Autonomy', which is a statement of the political relationship of the local church to others, in the same sense as the early 19th-century American Baptist Associational statements.

[12] In 1993 the European Baptist Federation, Division for Theology and Education produced a document entitled '*What are Baptists? On the Way to Expressing Baptist Identity in a Changing Europe*'. What to me is most surprising, and alarming, is that it contains no statement at all on the nature of the Christian community, other than it is a 'fellowship of believers' - a typical Enlightenment notion of statehood and voluntarism. The word 'church' appears a few more times, but with no explanation whatsoever. We are not even told, for example, that regeneration is necessary for involvement in the church, or membership in the church, however defined. We are told simply that it is necessary. What it does include instead is a number of statements on the responsibility of the individual Christian. An addendum did appear later, which talked only about the political relationship of the local church to others. Nothing more.

How can we understand these phenomena historically? Lining documents up and tracing themes and connections is not the way to interpret. We must try to see why and what the differences meant in their contexts. And more than that, we must ask the very important question, *From the production of a document, Who benefits?* Now I want to be a bit technical, but it is important for you to follow me. The early (original?) documents of the 17th century have a fairly clear historical motivation. Many of the early Baptist groups, as with the Anabaptists before them were suffering from discrimination and indeed persecution. Labelled as 'anabaptists' - which by the early decades of the 17th century had become a term of abuse - they sought to defend themselves in a series of statements of their orthodoxy, their understanding of the nature of the Gospel, and

the church. Where they differed from their detractors was mostly on this last issue. The motivation was to speak to the outside.

Here we are in the first stage of the movement from an oral group culture - which is immediate, face-to-face, and 'high context' - to a literate group culture. Here I am using the insights of a group of Cambridge anthropologists, under the leadership of Professor Jack Goody, who have sought to understand what happens when groups move from 'high context' to becoming document-bound. His books *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of the State*,[21] and *The Interface between the Written and the Oral*,[22] are most helpful, and I would suggest, essential reading for people who use documents in their work - such as pastors. Contrary to popular perception, it is this early, non-literate stage which is the most dynamic and flexible. It is certainly the most open, and the most immediate.

The documents written in the 18th century and beyond betray a decisive shift away from the contexts and concerns of the 17th century ones. You will notice if you read them that they are concerned primarily, not with self-defence, but with unity and conformity. Most of them form bases of union between associations, and eventually larger units, such as the statement of the European Baptist Federation's recent document. In other words, they are no longer used to persuade outsiders, but are used instead to create conformity within. At best they remain as rather fuzzy guidelines for faith and practice, at worst (as in the Southern Baptist Convention, for example) they becomes tools of coercion and control. As Goody states, *written formulations encourage the decontextualization or generalization of norms'*[23] They become something to which you give assent, rather than representing something to which you, as a person, belong. Certain orthodxies are thus created, and as Goody reminds is elsewhere, *The existence of an orthodoxy is an invitation to seek an alternative*.[24] It is worth noting the obvious fact that, as with larger societies, within the Baptist fellowship, the use of written documents in this decontextualised manner, the search for unification at a broader, national level, and the creation of a pantheon of officers with their titles and positions all coincided.[25]

So, from an historical point of view it is not correct to say that Baptists are not a credal people. That is what Lowenthal would classify as a rather romantic 'heritage' perspective. Some Baptists were, and as we observe in the last two decades, are becoming more so. 'Core Values' and 'Future Directions' documents, alongside 'ethical guidelines' are designed not to persuade outsiders, but to protect the centre, the borders and limits of an organization. In my reading of Baptist History, as we have become more and more unconsciously persuaded by the organizational model, this use of documentation in this manner has become much more common. It fits perfectly with Goody's analysis of the movement from an oral to a literate religion, or social grouping. Coincident with this interest, and paradoxically, the nature of the local Christian community has been placed on the back burner, or sometimes taken right out of the kitchen.

Now, here comes the crunch. It is this lack of concentration on the nature of the Christian community which has allowed us to be seduced by the 'organizational mentality' I spoke of earlier. If we do not know how to be, then we will become something other than the best we could be as Christians in community.

Now again, let me stress that I am not denying the notion of individual soul freedom. Today we do need independent-minded thinkers. What I am saying is that we need to create forms of Christian community which reflect the Gospel in its fullest expression, and which can encourage the kind of soul competency which was at the heart of the Gospel gatherings created in the 17th century by our early ancestors in the faith. At the heart of the Gospel, as we know as we have travelled through Lent recently, is what the Reformers called the *theologia crucis*, the Theology

of the Cross. Organizations, however well-intentioned, can never create this kind of living together. They are too self-protective, and for the reasons I gave in the first talk, too limited in imagination.

Now, granted that we are individuals, how then do we create community? This is something which political thinkers of the 17th and 18th century struggled with as well. Having unleashed this notion of the individual on the world, how do we create workable societies? Both Hobbes and Spinoza shaped forms of 'commonwealth' in answer to this question. Quite different forms, as it turned out. Aristotle, in his *Politics*, had argued that the form of the state followed the patterns of nature. There were those who, by nature, were intended to rule - the land-owning males of Athens. There were those who, by nature, were intended to be ruled - foreigners, slaves and women. Spinoza came to an uneasy form of democracy with the warning that in such a society the commonwealth had more to fear from its own citizens than from its enemies.[26] Hobbes reverted to a rigid, centralised hierarchy in his book *Leviathan*. But this was also the question Rousseau asked in his book *The Social Contract*, published in 1762.

> *The problem is to find the form of association which will*
> *defend and protect with the whole common force the person*
> *and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting*
> *himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and be free as*
> *before*. (p. 12)

The answer for Rousseau, and later for John Stuart Mill, was to introduce laws aimed at the protection of private property. But this is already based on a division within society of those who own and those who do not.

Let me use a musical parable. In the Gothic period of late medieval Europe, the dominant form of music was the chant, or on the popular level, the ballad. Whether sung by a chorus, or the lone baladeer, this music was one-voiced. All movement in the Gregorian chant is done in concert and almost automatically. Dangerous experiments with polyphony at the end of this period were banned by papal decree. But in the period of the Enlightenment, the individual asserted unique identity. Bach and Zelenka and their contemporaries experimented with an extension of madrigal, and created the fugue, and showed that dissidence did not automatically lead to discord. Dissidence could be accommodated, at least artisticaly. Now, if you listen to the opening *'Kyrie'* of Mozart's Mass in C minor, you will perhaps see what was possible artistically in answer to this question. There are in the opening bars at least ten lines of music for different instrumental and human voices. They move into the piece at different intervals like some grand fugue. Every one of those lines of music is different, each has its own voice, yet each contributes to the whole in such a way as to stun the listener with a great harmonic wash of sound. Mozart could do it with his music. The question is, Can we as Baptists do it with ourselves? Rousseau further stated, *the constitution of man is a work of nature...that of the state is a work of art* (p. p. 73 Book 3, ch. xi)

VI. COMMUNITY MENTALITY

It seems that in the final analysis, in response to our 'existing conditions', we do have a choice. Our 'root paradigm of behaviour' can be the organizational manager, desperate to put things in order, to strengthen the borders of the organization, control its entrances and exits, and manage those on the inside.

Or, we could seek to emulate our ancestors in the faith and strive to create communities which embody the Gospel in its fullest sense. To create those kinds of communities which embody that ideal of a *company of visible saints...being joined to the Lord and to each other, by mutual*

agreement in the practical enjoyment of the ordinances commanded by Christ their head and *king*. It seems to me we have a choice between systems and civility, between contract or covenant. These choices are put before us not that we may become more efficient, but that we may become what Christ would have us be. In the age of alienation, and dehumanising structures what greater need is there than for communities of caring, for places where the Cross is honoured, where obedience to Christ is fostered. We need to follow that messier path which is littered with the debris of human existence, and to respond to human needs, and to accept the human as we move along it. How would these communities look?

A. They would function at the micro-level - if you want the Baptist language for this, it is at the level of the local congregation, the Gathered community, and would not be distracted by demands of growth, whether implicit, or explicit. This, I know, is heresy in the modern age. Congregations are not to be regarded as the franchise outlets of the central organization. They can do much more than the central organization could ever dream of doing, and this is not because they are more 'efficient'. But rather because of the other qualities of the life of faith which they can foster, simply because they are contexts of care and concern. Rousseau was bold enough to state that democracy is impossible in large nation-states. *Every extension of the social tie*, he states, *means its relaxation; and, generally speaking, a small state is stronger in proportion than a great one.*[27] I would suggest that 'community' and 'fellowship' - most desirable - are simply not possible with thousands of people.

B. They would operate at the personal, and not the organizational level - in Baptist language, this is a corrollary of the Priesthood of Believers. The spiritual and physical welfare of the person, and not the organizational agenda, is pre-eminent. Again, this is something which an organization is unable to conceive let alone do.

C. They would generate their own levels of Mission and Outreach - and they do. As communities of caring they develop what one writer has creatively called 'porous borders' - completely antithetical to the organizational mentality which wants to know who is in and who is out. Thanks to the work in our church of Christopher Page, then Barry Morrison, and our current pastor, Barbara Bishop, we have a thriving student ministry in our congregation. They worship, they pray and they enjoy the enrichment of their Christian lives in our midst. But one spokesperson for the students at a recent church supper said the key to MacNeill being known on campus as 'the student church' is that we care. We feed them, we know their names, we look after them in times of stress. This provides the context in which Christian nurture becomes possible.

D. They would operate at the level of disengagement - in Baptist terms, at the level of the autonomy of the local congregation; but more than that. I have written extensively on this topic in an article which will be published later this year in a collection of essays from within the Context Group of Biblical scholars[28] Although 'disengagement' has a negative sound to it - due in part to its growing popular usage in areas like aging, and school drop-outs. It has a very positive side to it as well. It is the right to maintain a critical distance from any and all structures which would stifle the ministry of the local congregation, from those powers which would damage the fellowship by interference and manipulation.

VII. CONCLUSION

Many of us in Baptist life here and elsewhere were once part of communities in which we found encouragement, support, spiritual nourishment, a shared vision and a real sense of fellowship. Something happened along the way which shocked us. In the interests of political expediency, narrow visions of progress and growth, hands, arms, legs and sometimes heads were chopped

off. The politics of amputation became a reality, and moral and theological visions were lost. In the interests of a 'greater good' or 'better future' people were pushed aside, lives and careers were shattered, and the human dimension fell into the ditch. It is as though we were being told that the ends justified the meanness. Hannah Arendt has pointed out that the argument that harm be done in the interests of 'the greater good' or 'the better future' is the classic organizational and totalitarian lie.[29] She has also reminded us that a mass of atomised, and alienated individuals lends itself very well to authoritarian movements whose first symptom is the wish for order and organization.[30]

The Christian community of mutual enjoyment is characterised, on the other hand, by a boundless compassion. Which is, as I have said, the messier road. The Gospel writer Matthew, who is above all else the instructor of the community, makes a wonderful connection of the compassionate ministry of Jesus to an Old Testament prediction, in a remarkable context. At a time of hunger, physical deformity, blindness and despair, on the one hand, and in the face of the hostile looks and comments of the First-century 'organizational men', the scribes and Pharisees, he characterises the Jesus' actions as that of the servant (his root paradign of behaviour) who *'will proclaim justice to the nations, He will not promote e´riß (arguments that lead to war), norm will he raise a disturbing voice, for the sake of it, people in the streets will not notice him. Instead he will not break a bruised reed, nor will he douse the flickering candle.'* (Matt. 12.18). The passage from which this is taken goes on to depict the gentle leading of the servant who takes the blind by the hand, raises up the ground where it is broken and takes them into the light. (Isa. 42.16).

It would be this character, this flavour of community that I would hope for.

[1] M.I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1980, p. 17.

[2] David Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. 6.

[3] Few people have stopped to think what life was like in cities during the age of horse transportation. Enormous loads of horse manure in various stages of decay would have littered streets and paths, and caused enormous health problems, especially during the summer months.

[4] J. Kent, *The Unacceptable Face: The Modern Church in the Eyes of the Historian*. London: SCM Press, 1987.

[5] Kent, *Unacceptable Face*. 12.

[6] N. Rapport, 'Individualism' in A. Barnard, J. Spencer [eds.] *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. London: Routledge, 1996. 298-301.

[7] On the notion of 'individualism' see L. Dumont, *Essays on Individualism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986; S. Lukes, *Individualism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990; A. McFarlane, *The*

Origins of English Individualism. Oxford: Blackwell, 1970; B. Morris, *Western Conceptions of the Individual*. Oxford: Berg, 1991.

[8] As a useful tool of analysis of social options see Bruce J. Malina's adaptation of Mary Douglas's notion of 'grid and group' in his *Christian Origins and Cultural Anthropology*. Atlanta: John Knox, 1986.

[9] See W.L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*. Valley Forge: Judson Press, revised edition, 1969. 97-101.

[10] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 100-101.

[11] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 153-171.

[12] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. esp. 183.

[13] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 199.

[14] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 220ff.

[15] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 355-357.

[16] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 358-359.

[17] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 359.

[18] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 365.

[19] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 375.

[20] Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions*. 384.

[21] J. Goody, *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

[22] J. Goody, *The Interface Between the Written and the Oral*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Also to be read alongside these two volumes is Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991.

[23] Goody, *Logic of Writing*, 12.

[24] Goody, *Logic of Writing*, 22.

[25] I do not have the time or space at this point, but I would like to explore the different ways in which knowledge is acquired in oral and literate societies/groups, and how this affects the identity and self-understanding of the person. Goody has touched upon this in his *Interface*, see pp. 148ff.

[26] B. Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*, Ch. VI, Section 6.

[27] J.J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*. Ch. IX, Book 2 (p. 37).

[28] T.R. Hobbs 'The Political Jesus: Discipleship and Disengagement' in B.J. Malina, W. Stegemann [eds.] in *the Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels*, Minneapolis: Augsburg/Fortress Press, 2000 (forthcoming).

[29] H. Arendt, *Totalitarianism* New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1949, 44.

[30] Arendt, *Totalitarianism*, 21.

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