

Editorial – November 2016

Dear readers,

2016 has been a difficult year for a number of the editorial team of Crucible. Unexpected additional responsibilities and health issues have meant that generating this November edition has been a particular challenge. And so it is with a degree of satisfaction that we present this edition of the Journal.



CRUCIBLE
THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY

In the peer reviewed section, Andre van Oudtshoorn, using 1 Corinthians 13 as the example, proposes and answers the question, “How far can we move from the original purpose of the author within the original context of the Corinthians church, before we can be accused of ‘abusing’ the text?” His answer suggests a helpful hermeneutic as well as reaching conclusions about the character of love as envisaged by Paul.

Many believers have experienced the paralysing phenomenon of doubt. Dean Smith reflects theologically on the suffering that accompanies a crisis of faith. By using Fowler’s ideas, Smith is able to suggest that an epistemological crisis can actually be interpreted as the growing pains of personal development and maturity.

As a Practical Theologian it is exciting to also offer two empirical research-based articles about the Church in Australia in the Test-Tube section. Geoff Eggins, a Master of Arts graduate from Malyon College reports on his research into missionally focussed small groups. Drawing together theological, historical and survey resources he is able to identify the value of small groups in mission and make suggestions for their effectiveness.

Craig Tucker, a PhD student and church planter from Moore College reports on four different church plant/revitalisations in Sydney’s Inner West that took place in 2001-2016. He discusses the different models of revitalisation that were utilised and suggests that both the strengths of the renewer/planter and the particular characteristics of the incumbent congregation should be principal factors in adopting a particular approach.

Finally, in the Filter section we have three book reviews by Darren Cronshaw on three recent volumes by Australian sociologist, Hugh Mackay. Darren not only summarises the content of these books but is able to bring a distinct Christian perspective to them.

A reminder that we are looking at a themed issue of Crucible in May 2017. One of the most pressing issues facing our world today is mass migration. From the “boat people” debate in Australia to the refugee crisis in the Middle-east and Europe the world is struggling with some of the biggest mass migrations in history. It is timely for Australian Christians to articulate a contextual and theologically informed response to the issues of mass migration. Crucible invites articles and book reviews aimed at helping Australian Christians respond to this pressing issue. Biblical, theological, historical and Practical Theological approaches are encouraged. Transcripts for consideration need to be received by the end of March 2017.

Please extend this call for papers through your networks. Submission guidelines are available from: <http://www.crucibleonline.net/>. Please contact me, ian.hussey@malyon.edu.au to express interest or make enquiries.

We are also open to a college-specific edition in November 2017. If your college, or one you know, may be interested in undertaking this challenge, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks for your support of Crucible.

Ian Hussey

General Editor.