



# NEWSLETTER



**Macquarie  
Christian  
Studies Institute**  
presents

**Lost Ideals?**  
*The Struggle to be a  
Christian Lawyer*

27 March & 3 April  
5.30-9.30pm in the  
Sydney CBD

*featuring*

**Dr Robert Banks**

*Director, MCSI*

**Garth Blake SC**

*Barrister*

**Helen Blake**

*Counsellor*

**Stephanie Cole**

*Solicitor*

**Greg Hammond**

*Partner Mallesons*

*Stephen Jaques*

**Justice Keith Mason**

*President NSW*

*Court of Appeal*

**Paul McPhee**

*Solicitor*

**Dr Christine Parker**

*Legal academic*

**Robert Pelletier**

*Solicitor*

*for more details  
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or ring  
(02) 9850 6133*

## Who is your Advocate?

*This year's opening of Law Term address was presented by the Rev. Simon Manchester, the Rector of St Thomas' Anglican Church North Sydney. A summary of that address follows:*

The famous text in John's letter (1 John 2:1) "we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the Righteous" is a **surprising, sobering** and **saving** text – and sheds enormous light on our meeting today.

### 1. A surprising text

What sort of children need an advocate to speak to their father? (Imagine children at school saying "I'm seeing my father tonight so I've hired a barrister".)

This text reminds us that God is Father and Judge and unlike men here who can split their roles (to be father at home, judge at work) God is always Father and always Judge. We also see that our human legal system lives inside the divine legal system and that we who make decisions about people will one Day have God make His decision about us.

This theme that God Himself is a judge with a courtroom that we must enter one day runs right through Scripture.

### 2. A sobering text

The trouble with entering God's courtroom is that – according to 1 John 1:5 "God is light and in Him is no darkness". When we try to approach God we realise that His standard for fellowship is spotlessness – He will measure us by Himself not some average bloke of our choosing.

And we expect this standard of God (and heaven) until the crunch comes – say at a funeral – and suddenly we want God to be Father not Judge and acquit everyone we love. But there is no place for sentimental wishfulness in a responsible courtroom – least of all the Heavenly One.

And if God knows our full story and sees the cause of our opposition to Him and the effects in dishonesty, habits, carelessness and stubbornness what hope is there?

### 3. A saving text

Our hope is contained in this wonderful text.

We discover that Jesus is not just an Advocate with God the Father but also (1 John 2:2) "the atoning sacrifice" – someone who can present a watertight case for our acquittal because the penalty has been paid by Himself. When He died, He paid our penalty.

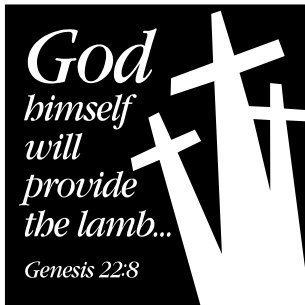
So God the Father provided the answer to God the Judge in the life and death of Jesus Christ. Our sin is justly penalised and punished but then mercy is held out to the person who welcomes Christ as Saviour. The question is whether you can say "**we**" (or better, "I") as the text does **and can include yourself among those who have called to Christ for help**. Who is the really smart member of the legal profession? The one who knows that he has a day coming in God's court and left to himself

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has a hopeless case to answer. He has welcomed the help of Jesus Christ as Advocate and perfect "sacrifice". Such a person can serve God well in this world and look forward to the Day when he will meet God – safely and spotlessly "in Christ".

But the legal man who knows he will face God the Judge and knows his own case is hopeless and who steers away from Christ from pride or prejudice, etc. is a fool. He of all men should be a Christian.

*A summary of the Opening of Law Term Address, St James Anglican Church, 3 February 2003 delivered by Rev. Simon Manchester.*



## OUR SENSE OF JUSTICE: EVOLUTIONARY ACCIDENT OR HARD WIRED?

*Part Two*

*continued from the last newsletter*

Justice Ken Handley AO, Judge of the Court of Appeal the Supreme Court of New South Wales,

Atheists believe that the Cosmos emerged as the chance outcome of the blind undirected laws of physics and chemistry, and that life emerged on this planet and evolved in the same way. They used to say that the Cosmos had no beginning because it had always been there, but this theory has been exploded in recent decades by evidence that it all began with the Big Bang.

The Bible opens with the words: "In the beginning", and for nearly two thousand years Christians believed that there was a beginning. Only in recent

decades has there been scientific support for this belief.

Cause and effect are universal phenomena in the physical world, in the natural order, and in ordinary life. However when we trace causes back we finally hit a brick wall. What was there before the beginning? Nothing or a first cause? It is entirely rational for Christians to believe that outside our physical world of cause and effect there is a first cause we call God. If there is no God there really should be nothing at all.

If we are the end result of the blind and undirected chance interaction of the laws of physics and chemistry, which can't make choices, how come we, as one of their by-products, can make choices? Since the laws of physics and chemistry are morally neutral, how come their blind and undirected chance interaction produced human beings with a capacity for moral judgment, and concerned with questions of justice?

If we test the blind chance hypothesis against ordinary experience and commonsense, we can only conclude that it is highly improbable. A stream cannot rise higher than its source and in the physical world you cannot get out more than you put in. You know the saying about computers, rubbish in and rubbish out.

Scientists have been trying to create life in the laboratory for over 100 years but so far without success. Optimistic forecasts at the start of the 90's that this would occur before the end of the century have not been realised. A scientific breakthrough could occur at any time, but if it did it would not disprove the existence of a creator God because that new life would have been created by other life according to a plan. In the meantime Christians are entitled to say that the theory that life emerged on this planet spontaneously and that blind evolution did the rest is unproven because, apart from other reasons, its starting point is unproven. You should not make the mistake of thinking that all scientists are unbiased in these matters. Shapiro in his book: "Origins: A Skeptic's Guide to the Creation of Life on Earth" 1986 wrote at p 130:

"Some future day may yet arrive when all reasonable chemical experiments run to discover a probable origin for life have failed unequivocally. Further, new geological evidence may indicate a sudden appearance of life on the earth. Finally, we may have explored the universe and found no trace of life, or processes leading to life, elsewhere. In such a case, some scientists might choose to turn to religion for an answer. Others, however, myself included, would attempt to sort out the surviving

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less probable scientific explanations in the hope of selecting one that was still more likely than the remainder”.

You certainly can't accuse Shapiro of having an open mind on the existence of God.

The Penguin Science series has published a book by Dawkins called “The Blind Watch Maker”, in which he defends the theory that the Cosmos and all life on this planet are the chance outcome of the interaction of the laws of physics and chemistry. Chance is the blind watch maker referred to by the author. However the belief that this is what happened has no more scientific validity in our present state of knowledge than belief in a creator God, and it requires just as much, if not more, faith. As a wag once said: “If you believe nothing, you will end up believing anything”.

This is not a new development. Three thousand years ago David wrote in Psalm 14: “The fool says in his heart there is no God”. Nearly two thousand years ago Paul, writing to the Church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:19), quoted God's message to the prophet Isaiah: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise” and added: “Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world ... for the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom”. More of that later. The sophisticated philosophical and scientific wisdom of “The Blind Watch Maker” is the ultimate foolishness. Contemporary philosophical arguments against deducing the existence of God from creation date back at least 250 years but they contradict our commonsense. Would you buy a watch from a blind watch maker? If not why would you buy this theory?

When we look at the physical creation we find that it functions according to laws which we can discover by scientific means. There is regularity and order down to the smallest particles of matter. It all hangs together. Our commonsense, without any need for a PhD, tells us that the Cosmos and life on this planet, like our watches, were the deliberate work of a creator and not the result of chance.

There is scientific evidence that our moral sense is centred in a particular part of the brain and if this is damaged the victim's behaviour will reflect different moral values. The internationally renowned Primatologist, Frans de Waal, in his book “Good Natured”, 1996 wrote at pp 217-8:

“... conscience is not some disembodied concept that can be understood only on the basis of culture and religion. Morality is as firmly grounded in neurology as anything else we do or are. Once

thought of as purely spiritual matters, honesty, guilt and the weighing of ethical dilemmas are traceable to specific areas of the brain”.

De Waal is not a Christian. We recognise that the moral side of our nature is connected with physical and chemical functions in the brain because persons who are significantly affected by alcohol or mind-altering drugs behave differently. Self control and moral inhibitions are progressively lost as intoxication increases. If our morality was simply the result of teaching and experience, you would expect it to be centred in the area of the brain concerned with memory, but this is not the case.

There is therefore scientific evidence that we are hard wired with the capacity to make moral choices, as Christians have always believed. Paul, writing to the Church in Rome, said that the requirements of God's law are written in our hearts (Romans 2:15). If we are simply physical matter, why should it occur to us that there is life after physical disintegration? Yet 3,000 years ago King Solomon wrote in the book of Ecclesiastes (3:11) that God has put eternity in our hearts.

The chimpanzee is our closest living relative and we have something like 98% of our DNA in common. Nevertheless there are enormous differences between us, and the mind of the chimpanzee is fundamentally different from our own (Mithen “The Pre History of the Mind”, 1996, p 16).

One of the most remarkable aspects of our minds is our consciousness or subjective awareness. Our minds can record and react to external stimuli, such as light or sound, and that we can understand. But they also generate ideas without external stimulation when we want

them to, as happens when we remember something or imagine something we have never seen or heard. Our minds can also make choices, initiate action, and can develop abstract ideas such as aesthetic beauty, goodness, compassion, love, duty, right, wrong and justice. Scientists do not know how the physical structures in our brains produce our consciousness, but evolutionary materialism seems an implausible explanation.

Chalmers, one of the leading thinkers in this field, who is not a Christian, has written (“The Conscious Mind”, Oxford, 1996 p 93): “No explanation given wholly in physical terms can ever account for the emergence of conscious experience”. Some atheist thinkers are still confident that a scientific, materialist explanation will be found, but it has not been found yet.

*Our commonsense, without any need for a PhD, tells us that the Cosmos and life on this planet, like our watches, were the deliberate work of a creator and not the result of chance.*

Even if scientists discover the physical or chemical processes which occur during our conscious experiences, this will not explain why those processes are accompanied by conscious experience. A lot of physical and chemical activity goes on in our minds without any corresponding conscious experience, for example during sleep.

There seems, in other words, to be dimensions to our mind which are not purely physical or chemical.

People believe that justice requires that the innocent be acquitted, and the guilty convicted and punished. Justice without punishment is a nonsense. Punishing wrongdoing involves identifying the relevant rule of conduct, making a judgment on what happened and why, and fixing the punishment. The hardest thing is to decide what happened and why.

Apart from justice, guilt and punishment, there is also mercy. This is a feature of many legal systems, including our own, which makes provision for leniency to be extended to first offenders and the young and gives the Judge a discretion on sentence. We recognise that justice and punishment rigidly enforced without any mercy could be intolerable. The Bible tells us as individuals to show mercy. The prophet Micah wrote (Micah 6:8): "What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God".

Many guilty people escape justice in this life because of the difficulty of determining what really happened and what motivations were involved. There may be no witnesses and even when there are the accused must be given the benefit of the doubt.

Our free will, our sense of right and wrong, our capacity to make moral choices, and our notions of justice and responsibility are all perfectly understandable if, as the Bible claims, we were created by a holy and just God in His im-

age. However the initial hard wiring is not enough. Like other hard wiring ours needs power to work properly, the power that can come to us from God. We need to know and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

The Bible has some remarkable things to say about human justice. Leviticus 19:15 has God saying to Moses: "Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favouritism to the great, but judge your neighbour fairly". Even more remarkable is the passage in Deuteronomy 1:16-18: "Hear the disputes ... and judge fairly, whether the case is between brother Israelites or between one of them and an alien. Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike".

These statements could not have been man made. Evolutionary ethics would not suggest justice for the weak and the powerless. Enlightened self interest would favour the rich and powerful over the poor and powerless, and the Israelite over the alien. We have here absolute and impartial standards of justice which were and are revolutionary. They certainly did not reflect contemporary standards in Egypt or other Middle Eastern societies three and a half thousand years ago. Even today many legal systems fail to meet these standards, yet we instinctively recognise their validity. Why is this so? Do they resonate with our hard wiring? What is the materialist explanation? The Christian explanation is that these statements came from God and reflect His nature, His commandment to love our neighbours as ourselves, and Jesus' golden rule that we do to others as we would have them do to us.

*Part Three will appear in the next newsletter but for those who cannot wait you can purchase the edition of Kategoria which features this article at:*

<http://www.matthiasmedia.com.au/kategoria/index.html>

**visit our new web address [www.lawyerschristianfellowship.org](http://www.lawyerschristianfellowship.org)**

### Membership Renewal for 2003

I would prefer to receive this newsletter by email in Adobe PDF format and my email address is:

I am willing to receive reminders and notices from the Fellowship by email and my email address is:

Enclosed is my cheque for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ being my membership fee for the 2003 year.

<b>Membership fees: Students</b>	<b>\$ NIL</b>
<b>Practitioners (under three years in practise)</b>	<b>\$ 20.00</b>
<b>Practitioners over three years in practise</b>	<b>\$ 45.00</b>

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