

“HUME’S HAPPENINGS”

1st December 2024

Barry Hume
P . O . Box 177
Launceston 7250
Tasmania , Australia

North Beach church of Christ

Greetings brethren ,

Thank you for your support , it is very much appreciated . Following is my report for **November 2024** .

ANDREW McKERIHAN .

Last month I reported on Andrew’s quadruple heart bypass operation , after which he returned from Hobart to Launceston and lived in our “brethren’s apartment” on the ground floor of my home for three weeks .

His younger sister (Margaret) arrived from Western Australia , whom Jackie and I met at the airport and then drove Andrew and Margaret to Andrew’s wonderful two bedroom rustic cabin in forest area about forty five minutes from my home .

Tuesday night Margaret drove Andrew to our home for Jackie’s weekly roast dinner , after which Margaret joined the Eastside members in our “midweek” Bible Class . She is not a member of the church , so it was a great opportunity for her to hear God’s word taught and discussed .

On Friday 29th November we drove to Andrew’s house and transported Andrew and Margaret to the airport for Margaret to take an 8 . 15 pm flight back to Western Australia .

ANDREW RETURNS TO OUR HOME .

During the last day of her stay at Andrew’s cabin Margaret convinced him that he was not recuperated enough yet to return to his home alone . Upon farewelling Margaret at the airport , Andrew returned with Jackie and I to our home and moved back into our “brethren’s apartment” .

He has agreed to live there until his doctor confirms he will be ok living alone again .

THREE PREACHER OFFER .

For several weeks I have been organising with Graham Wall , a young full time preacher from New South Wales , to preach a Gospel Meeting for us at Eastside in early February . Jackie and I have known Graham since he was born , and seen him progress in the church to becoming a fully supported preacher .

Graham phoned me a few days ago to say that he has been in discussions with two other preachers in mainland Australia about my home congregation (Eastside) and they are keen to visit us to meet in person the congregation they have heard so much about , not just from Graham , but also from the many mainland brethren who have spent time with us .

Graham enquired if Eastside would be receptive to all three preachers visiting us in February and conducting a “three preachers” Gospel Meeting”. Of course we agreed , and we are so excited about their impending arrival .

One of the preachers Graham will bring with him is known by every congregation in Australia because of his regular preaching of Gospel Meetings throughout every state of Australia , except Tasmania , the only state he has not preached in . We plan to change that .

The length of the Gospel Meeting and theme and subjects has not been decided yet , I will keep you informed .

BENEVOLENCE BASKETS .

It is getting near time for our next pair of “benevolence baskets” to be delivered . Each Tuesday evening when brethren come to our home for dinner before the 7pm - 8 pm Bible Class , they bring items of groceries and place them in two washing baskets .

When these two baskets are overflowing , Jackie covers them with colorful see - through paper , each with a card that says , *"From the members of the Eastside church"* (not from the Eastside church). This benevolence program has no connection to the Eastside treasury or work of the church , it is funded solely by the private contributions of individual members .

We then deliver them to the Principle of the school , who chooses two needy families to give them to . Jackie then buys two new baskets , places them in our lounge room where the brethren can see them , and the process starts again . Each year we get to present these two baskets three times (6 baskets) .

MY FOCUS THIS MONTH .

Apart from preaching each Sunday and teaching Eastside’s Sunday morning Bible Class , I spent considerable time researching and preparing initial lessons to teach when my current Sunday morning series (*"A handy guide to the Bible"*) is completed in about five weeks .

The new series will be a ten lesson series on , *"Becoming partakers of the Divine nature"* , based on **2 Pet 1 : 4 - 11** .

I also spent considerable time typing , photocopying , stapling and binding new Lesson Booklets for distribution around the world .

VISIT TO HILLWOOD MEMBERS .

This month Jackie and I drove twenty minutes to the apple orchard district called **Hillwood** , for Jackie to cut the hair of an 80’s year old married couple who are the last living foundation members of the **Hillwood football club** . My wife Jackie was a hairdresser (Beautician) for forty seven years .

In many past reports I have mentioned our involvement with this sporting club , and while Jackie has quit cutting people's hair (except mine) she still does it for special people such as this couple .

While the wife in this marriage has absolutely no interest in spiritual matters , the husband has approached me many times in the Hillwood Football Club and asked Bible questions . He has a very deep faith , having taught "Sunday school" to children for a number of years before meeting his wife , and he is the one person I have ever met who thinks , believes , speaks , and lives like a Christian , but is not a Christian .

Whenever Jackie and I visit him and his wife for their regular haircuts , I always ensure that I have my Bible with me because I know that while Jackie is cutting his wife's hair , he always takes me into another room and initiates a religious discussion .

His wife has always been one of the most wonderful , lovely ladies we have ever met , but sadly has always rejected any advances to engage her in spiritual discussions . We continue to pray for this couple and serve them at every opportunity .

After their haircuts they compelled us to stay and have lunch with them , during which the husband openly initiated spiritual discussions in the presence of his wife , who has never tried to publicly curb her husband's faith and desire to engage in Bible discussions .

He is always receptive to the truth , he knows the truth , but I suspect it is his non - believing wife who is his stumbling block to obeying the gospel .

SCHOOL ASSEMBLY .

This month Jackie and I received our invitation to attend the end of year (for grades 1 - 5) and grade six graduation assembly at the school where we meet for church services . This assembly is attended by state and Federal politicians , business leaders , prominent members of the community , and many parents and friends of the students .

Each year at this assembly , Jackie and I present an award each to a student , with the award winners and presenters listed in a nicely printed official program . Our awards in the program state , "*From the members of the Eastside church*" (not from the Eastside church) . These awards are not paid for out of the church treasury , but from private contributions of the Eastside members .

Every year at the assembly , some politician or business leader will ask the Principle of the school , "*What is the Eastside church of Christ , where are they located*" etc , and the Principle will introduce Jackie and I to the person and we have opportunity to tell them all about the church .

LESSONS TAUGHT BY ME AT EASTSIDE IN NOVEMBER .

Most of my Bible class and sermon subjects take several weeks to cover due to the nature of the Eastside members who need constant repetition , detailed explanations , and mutual discussions among brethren re personal applications of Biblical principles in their lives .

Also , I encourage members to ask questions re anything they do not understand or even something that is a side issue to what we are actually studying at the time . Thus it is very rare for me to ever complete a lesson in one Bible class .

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS .

November 3 - *"The canon of the Bible"* .
10 - *"The Old and New Coven"*
17 - *"The Old and New Covenants"* .
24 - *"The Old and New Covenants"* .

SUNDAY SERMONS .

November 3 - *"Satan's power is limited"* .
10 - *"Satan's schemes"* .
17 - *"How to resist temptation"* .
24 - *"Names of Satan"* .

MIDWEEK BIBLE CLASS .

November 5 - Viktor taught **2 Thess 1** .
12 - Viktor taught **2 Thess 2** .
19 - Viktor taught **2 Thess 3** .
26 - Viktor taught **Revelation 1** .

Following is a repeat of the items that form the basis of my activities each month .

REGULAR MONTHLY ACTIVITIES .

Set up school on Friday afternoons at 4pm for Eastside's Sunday meetings .
(it takes Jackie and I about one hour to clear out the classroom and set up our "church auditorium") .

"Friend day" lunch at our house for brethren and visitors after Sunday worship on the second or third Sunday in the month .

Midweek Bible Class : Continues to be at my house .

Study periods : Preparing sermons and Bible classes for Eastside's meetings .

Lesson booklets : Ongoing typing , photocopying , stapling , and binding of new and replacement booklets for requests , and for display at our church meetings .

Study packs : Ongoing photocopying , stapling , and packaging of these as time permits .

Letterboxing : Jackie and I make every effort to continue this project on a weekly basis , but often a lack of time does not allow this to happen .

Thank you once again for your wonderful support , please visit us if you ever get the opportunity to do so ,

Yours in Christ ,

Barry Hume .

CLERGY - LAITY SYSTEM AND RELIGIOUS TITLES

INTRODUCTION

A . USE OF "CLERGY" .

The religious world speaks of it's "clergy" and it's "laity", with the **Macquarie Dictionary** defining the word clergy as being, *"The body of men ordained for ministering in the Christian church, as distinct from the laity"*.

"Clergy" is used as a collective noun, and not applied to one person, but people are referred to as being a clergyman or cleric, as opposed to a member of the "laity" or common people.

The authority for such a practice as the clergy - laity system is either from heaven, or it is from men - **Matt 21 : 25** .

B . ORIGIN OF CLERGY .

This practice is an outgrowth of "Sacerdotalism", the doctrine that "ordination" confers special powers and rights on people, and elevates them above others to a position as mediator between man and God .

The Bible recognises no such distinction of God's people, so where did the "clergy - laity" system come from ?

Why are some people in human religious denominations given titles such as, "Father", "Reverend", "Minister", and "Chaplain" etc ?

DEVELOPED THROUGH A CHANGE IN LOCAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT

A. THE NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN.

The New Testament universal church was to be under one Head ruled by Christ only..... **Eph 1 : 22 - 23.**

Each local church was to appoint elders to oversee the spiritual welfare and work of the local church **Acts 14 : 23.**

Elders to be overseers over one local congregation only **Acts 20 : 28**
1 Pet 5 : 1 - 2.

The authority and responsibility of these elders is to be equal.

B. SOME ELDERS EXALTED.

In time, one elder in these local churches became exalted above the others, and was given the title of "Bishop", and the authority of these "special" elders was extended beyond just one local church to several, and these groups of local churches became known as a Diocese.

These "chief" elders began to regular meet together in councils that were called synods, and they made laws for the local churches.

This led to one of these special elders becoming recognised as the supreme "Bishop" (Pope of Rome), which led to the birth of Roman Catholicism.

These law making councils led to a "clergy" - "laity" distinction, whereby the "priest" was given authority that raised him above common people in the church.

A system of confession began in **1215 A.D.** in which instead of people praying directly to God, confession is made to a priest, who became the mediator, despite the fact the Bible authorises Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and man - **1 Tim 2 : 5.**

These human mediators then were honoured with religious titles such as "Father", and later as "Reverend", "Minister", etc, despite the fact that all of this system of Sacerdotalism is not authorised anywhere in the Bible, but is actually condemned by God.

C. DENOMINATIONS TODAY ?

All the other denominations have adopted this practice of the Roman Catholic church, thus they elevate men to positions above the common member of the congregation.

ROMAN CATHOLIC ARGUMENTS

TO MATTHEW 23 : 9

A . MENTAL GYMNASTICS .

Roman Catholics have a real dilemma when they come to **Matt 23 : 9** because they have adopted the practice of attaching the religious title of "Father" to their priests, so they have to engage in some mental gymnastics in order to get around this verse .

Following is how they try to justify their unscriptural position .

B . ARGUMENT ONE .

"Paul calls Timothy his child in the faith (1 Tim 1 : 2), indicating Paul considered himself to be Timothy's spiritual father, thus it is scriptural for our priests to be referred to as 'Father' by the members of his congregation".

MY ANSWER :

Paul called Timothy his "child in the faith" because Paul was instrumental in converting him, this verse is not bestowing a religious title on Paul, if it was, it would contradict **Matt 23 : 9**, nor can it be used to authorise religious titles today .

C . ARGUMENT TWO .

"Paul considered himself to be the father of the Corinthians"
- **1 Cor 4 : 15** .

MY ANSWER :

One must be begotten to be "born again", and the power to beget is the gospel, the word of God . Paul preached this to them, he begot them to new birth, there is no hint that Paul is desiring to be called "Father" - **Jn 3 : 3** **1 Pet 1 : 22 - 23** .

Note what he said in **1 Cor 3 : 6** . Was he seeking to be addressed by the religious title of "Farmer Paul" ?, of course not !

Likewise, he was not seeking to be called "Father" when he said ,
"I became your father through the gospel" .

But it is just as logical to call him "Farmer Paul" as it is to call him "Father Paul" .

D. ARGUMENT THREE .

"The word "Father" in **Matt 23 : 9** must not be taken literally , because you would not be able to refer to your biological dad as your father" .

MY ANSWER :

Jesus said it, so it must mean something, He is using this word in either a fleshly or spiritual sense, and to determine which sense He is referring to, we must simply allow the scriptures to tell us (not some member of the Roman Catholic hierarchy).

The New Testament often uses the word "father" to refer to our fleshly parent (**Matt 15 : 4** **Eph 6 : 1 - 4**), so the only alternative that we are forced to accept is that in **Matt 23 : 9** Jesus is forbidding the use of an honorary, spiritual title .

Why ?

Because , "One is your Father , He who is in heaven" .

"Rabbi" and "Father" are mentioned here (**vs 8 - 9**), but religious titles such as "Reverend", "Doctor", "Minister", and "Chaplain" have been assumed by men since . But the truth is, all religious titles are condemned .

EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A MINISTER

A. DEFINITIONS .

Three Greek words are translated "minister" in the King James version of the Bible .

1. DIAKONOS :

"One who executes the commands of another, especially of a master, a servant, attendant, minister" - **Thayer** .

One who serves a king..... **Matt 22 : 13** .

A waiter at a feast **Jn 2 : 5 & 9** .

A civil magistrate **Rom 13 : 4** .

One who serves Satan **2 Cor 11 : 13 - 15** .

Jesus Christ **Rom 15 : 8** **Gal 2 : 17** .

A deacon **Phil 1 : 1** **1 Tim 3 : 8** & **12** .
 A female servant **Rom 16 : 1** .
 An apostle **2 Cor 3 : 6** **Eph 3 : 7** .
 One who teaches
 or who preaches **1 Cor 3 : 5** **Eph 6 : 21** .
 A follower of Christ **Jn 12 : 26** **Matt 23 : 11** .

2 . HUPERETES :

"Anyone who serves with his hands, a servant" - **Thayer** .

"Any subordinate acting under another's direction" - **Vine** .

An officer working for
 a magistrate or a court **Matt 5 : 25** .

A Synagogue attendant **Lk 4 : 20** .

An apostle **Acts 26 : 16** .

One who teaches or preaches **Lk 1 : 2** .

An assistant **Acts 13 : 5** .

3 . LEITOURGOS :

*"Denoted among the Greeks, firstly, one who discharged a
 public office at his own expense, then in general, a public servant,
 minister"* - **Vine** .

A civil ruler **Rom 13 : 6** .

An angel **Heb 1 : 7** .

Jesus Christ **Heb 8 : 2** .

An apostle **Rom 15 : 16** .

B . SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE DEFINITIONS ?

Each Greek word translated "minister" in the New Testament simply means , "servant" .

Diakonos - Servant (In relation to his work) .

Huperetes - Servant (In relation to his superior) .

Leitourgos - Servant (In relation to his public office) .

We have seen from the above scriptures how the New Testament uses the word "minister", thus there is absolutely no Bible justification to

call anyone "the" minister, in a special elevated sense with a religious title. Every Christian is a minister (servant) of Christ.

The word minister is not a bad word to use, but the religious world has created a special class of Christian (clergy) and refers to its public proclaimers as "the minister", leaving the impression that others in the congregation (laity) are not ministers.

This "clergy - laity" distinction is enhanced because most members of churches do not want to put in the time and effort to be Bible students, but are happy to allow the clergy tell them what is truth and error - **2 Tim 4 : 1 - 4**.

Knowledge of God's word has always been the responsibility of every individual follower of God, not just the "professional religionists" - **Hosea 4 : 6** **2 Pet 3 : 18** **1 Jn 4 : 1** **Jn 12 : 48**

Instead of placing faith in an unscriptural "clergy" to tell them what God's will is, every Christian should have the attitude of the Bereans, who listened to the inspired apostles, and then, "*examined the scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so*" - **Acts 17 : 11**.

C . WHAT ABOUT "REVEREND" ?

The English term "Reverend" only occurs once in the King James version of the Bible.

It comes from the Hebrew word "YARE", which is found 376 times in the Old Testament, but only once is it translated as, "Reverend".

In **Ps 111 : 9**, it is used as a descriptive term, not as a title, "*Holy and reverend (awesome) is His name*".

RELIGIOUS WORLD MISUSES

THE TERM "CLERGY"

A . THEIR ARGUMENT .

The practice of calling ministers of the sacraments "the clergy" comes from the Greek word KLEROS, which means lot or lots. Today we use the phrase, "*That is our lot in life etc*".

Some argue that the "Kleros" (clergy) have an allotted share or shares in life, that are assigned by God. They share a special relationship with God.

B . NOTE BIBLE TEACHING .

"Kleros" occurs in the following scriptures :

Matt 27 : 35 **Mk 15 : 24** **Lk 23 : 34** **Jn 19 : 24** -
"They divided His garments among themselves casting lots".

Acts 1 : 26 - "And the lot fell to Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven".

Acts 1 : 17 - "He received his portion in this ministry".

Acts 26 : 18 - "That they may receive an inheritance Among those who have been sanctified".

Col 1 : 12 - "Qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints".

C . SIGNIFICANCE FOR US .

There is nothing in the above scriptures, or anywhere else in the New Testament to indicate a "clergy" in any sense.

There is no verse of scripture that even hints that some Christians are the Lord's "lot" or He is theirs, any more than any other Christian.

In fact, in one verse, "Kleros" is used to designate what the denominational world calls the "laity" (those allotted to your charge) - **1 Pet 5 : 3**.

The desire for special notice is about as old as man,

James and John requested the two highest places of honour in the kingdom - **Mk 10 : 35 - 37**.

John refers to, "*Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them*" - **3 Jn 9**.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT **THE LAITY**

A . ALL CHRISTIANS ARE EQUAL .

One of the glories of Christ's New Testament church is the equality of all its members, the ground at the foot of the cross is level, "*you are all one in Christ*" - **Gal 3 : 27 - 29**.

The New Testament condemns clerical titles, the result of elevating men above others. Such affords them positions of dignity that is not shared by others.

God is no respecter of persons Acts 10 : 34 - 35 .

We are not to be either Jms 2 : 1 - 9 .

B . WHAT ABOUT PREACHERS ?

Some preachers do have inflated egos , and feel they deserve special regard , because they are public preachers , but it is a mistake to try to bring them "down" to the level of the laity .

Instead , we should be making every effort to elevate the level of the "laity" .

Every Christian is a priest (1 Pet 2 : 9) , preachers of the gospel . All Christians are ministers of Christ , or should be , so never say , "*I'm no preacher or minister*" , because you should be , there are many ways to preach God's word other than the pulpit .

CONCLUSION

A . ORIGIN OF CLERGY - LAITY SYSTEM .

The religious world has it's "clergy" and it's "laity" , with "Laity" referring to the common herd , and "clergy" being the powerful minority .

The clergy - laity system exists because people transfer their obligation to their "minister" , and this leads to the clergy studying the Bible for them , then representing them in prayer as their mediator , all of which is condemned in the scriptures - 2 Tim 4 : 1 - 4 .

B . WHAT ABOUT US ?

Jesus rebuked the pride and arrogance of the Pharisees , and His warning re the use of religious titles is just as valid today - Matt 23 : 1 - 7 .

We can show respect to men we admire , but to give them religious titles of honor that elevate them is contrary to the will of Christ .
