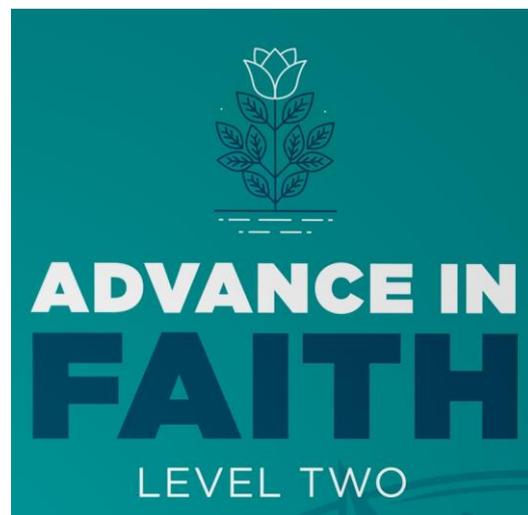


Moving Towards Riverview

Church History Part 2 – Week 6



Christianity in Australia

In early Colonial times, Church of England clergy worked closely with the governors. Johnson was charged by the governor, Arthur Phillip, with improving "public morality" in the colony, but he was also heavily involved in health and education.

For Australia church and religion have always been non-central to the development of the country. This is very different from the American experience where America was colonized for religious reasons.

Moving towards Riverview

Like all churches, Riverview did not spring fully formed from a vacuum but is the result of a long line of church history including much that we have been studying.

The Holiness Movement

Methodism had always emphasized the need for living a life of holiness, the need for the sanctification of a Christian's life. In both America and Britain this idea regained pre-eminence for many within the Methodist church and other churches.

Wesley claimed that God raised up Methodism to spread 'scriptural holiness' and taught that God roots all sin out of Christian hearts in this life, so that motivationally Christians become all love. 'Christian perfection', 'perfect love', 'entire sanctification', and in the 19th century 'the second blessing' and 'holiness' simply, were names given to this posited work of grace.

One of the Churches founded out of the Holiness Movement was the New Covenant Baptist Church. Essek William Kenyon (1867–1948).

Influenced by the Holiness Movement, and probably the New Thought movement Kenyon began to emphasize the idea of positive confession being the way out from under life's problems.

Kenyon wrote that Christians could make a "positive confession" to bring emotional and physical desires into being. "What I confess," he is purported to have said, "I possess."

Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements

Pentecostal theology has its roots in various aspects of 19th-century fundamentalism in America:

- holiness groups which taught that one could receive after conversion an experience of entire sanctification (see Methodist Theology), sometimes called the baptism of the Spirit, and an endowment of power by some key leaders such as Charles Finney, Asa Mahan (1800–89) and Phoebe W. Palmer (1807–87);
- the teaching of R. A. Torrey (1856–1928) and others who claimed that the baptism of the Spirit was a post-conversion endowment of power primarily for witness and service, not sanctification; the teaching of A. B. Simpson (1843–1919) and A. J. Gordon (1836–95) and others that divine healing was to be received by faith;
- premillennialism and the need to live in expectation of the imminent return of Christ taught by J. N. Darby, C. I. Scofield (1843–1921) and many others.

These streams all contributed to the ‘four-square’ emphases of Pentecostal preaching: Christ the saviour, Christ the baptizer in the Holy Spirit, Christ the healer and Christ the coming king.

Kenneth Hagin

Hagin’s emphasis upon the ‘faith message’ generated a grassroots movement known as ‘Word of Faith’. Denominationally independent, ‘Word of Faith’ churches have been established throughout the world, originating from the Rhema Bible Training Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Hagin has greatly influenced the charismatic community. The ‘Word of Faith’ movement has gained a life of its own, though it has not been without its critics. Hagin’s teachings have been fiercely attacked by some leading evangelicals, who have alleged that it contains heretical elements and components derived from non-Christian spiritual traditions. Others have suggested that ‘naming and claiming’ whatever one desires is dangerous and results from presumption, not faith.

Riverview Beginnings

1978/1979 - Brian and Val Baker, who were at the time living in New Zealand with their 3 children, to go to Rhema Bible Training Centre

USA. Here they are taught in the Word of Faith movement and doctrines.

Feb 1980 - They feel called settle in Perth and start a church in Brisbane Street Perth city.

1985 - The current building was purchased using overseas loans and with a group of families mortgaging their own houses to act as collateral.

July 1985 – The building was dedicated in by Kenneth Hagan and name of the church changed to Rhema Family Church (Australia).

April 1989 - Brian and Val Marriage broke up. Phil, and his wife Heather, became the senior pastors.

1996 – Church was asked to help come up with new name, Riverview.

2008 - Phil has a significant medical event which left him unable to continue in his role as senior pastor. Haydn Nelson, who was already a member of the staff, was asked by the Board to step in as acting Senior Pastor. Both Phil and Heather cease to be actively involved in Riverview because of Phil's medical condition.

2015 - Church is growing again the need to renovate the building becomes significant. In order to carry out the renovation the church's services would need to move out from the auditorium. In October 2015 this move occurred and Sunday services began at Curtin Auditorium.

Oct 2016 - Mover back to new renovated building as it is now.

October 2017 – Tim and Liezl Healy are appointed Senior Minister and Executive Minister respectively.