In the last thirty years the church has been caught up in a bitter debate about the ordination of women and now the question of the ordination of non-celibate homosexuals is on the agenda. Most evangelicals at first opposed the ordination of women and most evangelicals are now opposed to the ordination of homosexuals. They argued on the first matter that the Bible subordinates wives to husbands and explicitly forbids women to teach in church. For those who hold to the authority of the Bible, they said, that settles the issue. From the start, a significant minority of evangelicals took the opposing position, arguing strongly for equality of consideration in the home and the church and it may now be said with confidence, that on the world scene, the majority of evangelicals have changed their minds. They have become strong supporters for the equality of the sexes. This raises the question about the relatively new debate about homosexual rights, and in particular, the ordination of homosexuals who are not committed to celibacy. Will the same thing happen? Will evangelicals who are now strongly opposed to the ordination of non-celibate homosexuals slowly change their mind and accept this development? There are unquestionably similarities with the Biblical evidence. In both cases there are texts which speak negatively about women's equality and homosexuality. Evangelicals have been able "to explain" and thus side step the difficult women passages, why not the texts on homosexuality? Surely, also it may be argued, that both are human rights questions and all Christians should support every quest for human liberation.

The emancipation of slaves and women.
Many conservatives opposed to the emancipation of women, have claimed that feminism is a modern secular idea which trendy Christians have followed mindlessly. This is not true. The Bible itself has a liberating stand which has been seen from earliest times. Jesus spoke not one word about the subordination of women and much to the contrary. Even St Paul, whom some see as the father of Christian patriarchalism says some amazing things which point in the opposite direction. He insists that in bed husband and wife should respect each others rights (1 Cor 7:3-4); the same rules apply to men and women when a marriage breaks down (1 Cor 7:10-16); women can lead in prophecy and prayer in church (1 Cor 11:5); the leadership of the husband needs to be understood in terms of self denying service for his wife (Eph 5:23, 25) and that in Christ there is "neither male nor female" (Gal 3:28) - not meaning sexual differences are obliterated but transcended in Christ. To be "in Christ" is more determinative than anything else.

For long centuries the prevailing patriarchal culture blinded the eyes of men to these liberating texts, but in the struggle for the abolition of slavery in North America, from the 1830's onwards, this strand in the Biblical witness was rediscovered. The abolitionists noted that the slaveholders appealed to the apostolic texts which exhorted slaves to be obedient as an important plank in their "Biblical case" for slave holding - texts which usually followed after exhortations to wives to be subordinate. As the abolitionists
rejected the abiding force of the exhortations to slaves, arguing that they were only practical advice to slaves in a very different situation, they could not allow that the exhortations to wives were any different. This meant that in North America last century the quest for the abolition of slavery and the emancipation of women from the first went hand in hand. Over a hundred years before the secular women's movement of the 1960's emerged, which then drew in Christians, a very powerful Christian led drive for the emancipation of women existed. In "the first wave" of feminism, evangelicals, mainly from the traditions now embodied in the Uniting Church, were to the forefront.

One of the most vocal and possibly most influential emancipist was the great evangelist Charles Finney (1792-1875), who was ordained as a (new school) Presbyterian and later became a Congregationalist. He was at the forefront of the antislavery movement and pioneered the practice of encouraging women to speak in public at his rallies. He became the professor of theology at Oberlin College in Ohio and later its president. This was the first co-educational tertiary institution in the world. He worked closely with the Grimke sisters and the evangelist, Theodore Weld, the leading abolitionists of the day. In 1837 Sarah Grimke outlined her radical views on the emancipation of women in her book, *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes*. The two most important writings by Weld were, *American Slavery as It Is: The Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses* (1839) and *The Bible Argument Against Slavery* (1865). Both of these books were formative in outlining the right approach to this issue. In the first book Weld showed that slavery could not be considered in abstract, apart from its realities, as the pro-slavery advocates insisted on doing. Slavery was an horrendous blight on American life. Even if some Christian slaveholders were relatively humane the general practice was so terrible that they were compromised by being part of it. Slavery in North America degraded blacks, viewing them as second grade human beings; slaves were bought and sold like cattle; the children of slaves were regularly sold off leaving the parents distraught; the women were always open to sexual exploitation and terrible punishments were inflicted on slaves at the whim of their white masters.

In his second book Weld attacked "the Biblical case" for slavery. He offered alternative interpretations of key texts, emphasised the overarching grand liberating themes in Scripture which he maintained were primary, and argued that slavery in the Bible was something very different to slavery in North America. In ancient Israel slavery was not lifelong bondage, masters were constrained by very humane laws and colour was not a factor. This approach in putting the case for the emancipation of slaves was prophetic. Weld had seen that hard evidence describing the realities of slavery, an approach to the Bible which looked for the big picture, and an awareness that the social setting of the Biblical writers and that of people in another age was not necessarily the same must all play a part in any appeal to the Bible.

Others followed Weld's approach in arguing specifically for women's rights. They questioned the traditional reading of Scripture in regard to women and argued that the subordination of women did not make sense and was degrading. The Bible in fact did not support the permanent subordination of women and what is more women were just as intelligent as men, they had equal if not better verbal gifts, and they were quite capable of leadership. It was one big put down. Heirs of Wesley were prominent crusaders. B. T. Roberts, founder of the Free Methodist Church, authored one of the most radical of the
evangelical cases for feminism and in particular for the ordination of women. The Free Methodist Bishop, W. A. Sellew, pursued the same issues in his book, *Why Not?* published in 1894. A. J. Cordon, a Baptist evangelical, and the major force behind the founding of Cordon College, later to become CordonConwell Theological Seminary in New England, wrote a most persuasive case for the preaching ministry of women in the "Missionary Review" of 1894, which is still quoted to this day. But it was the Salvation Army, founded in England in 1865 by William Booth, an ex-Methodist minister, which went furthest in putting these principles into action. William's wife Catherine was a tireless advocate for the equality of women. In the 1850's she wrote extensively on the emancipation of women and authored a fifty page booklet entitled, *Female Ministry*. The Army was founded on the principle of parity between the sexes. The last major work, and I believe the best outline of the Biblical case to come from the first wave of evangelical feminists was written by the Methodist, Lee Anna Starr, and entitled, *The Bible Status of Women* (1926). This is a book still worth reading.

**What happened to this evangelical vision?**

Why is it that the evangelical inspired drive for social justice for the oppressed dried up? Why was it that evangelicals were, in the main, opposed to the civil rights movement in the 60's and the subsequent second wave of feminism? No doubt many forces played their part, but the profound changes in evangelical theology in this hundred-year period must be given pride of place. In the face of the growing acceptance of "higher criticism" in the second half of the 19th century and the resultant questioning of old certainties, evangelicalism in America became defensive and reactionary. The scholastic-Calvinist theologians of Princeton Seminary who had supported slavery as members of the old southern aristocracy, and because they could find texts to support it in the Bible, laid the groundwork for the change. In response to the new critical study of the Bible, they argued that every word in Scripture was literally the word of God. Whatever the Bible said, God said. This led them to suggest that the Bible was basically a set of timeless, transcultural, divinely-given propositions or statements, all saying much the same thing on any given matter. Thus Charles Hodge, possibly the most influential of the old Princeton theologians, argued that theology was simply a matter of gathering all the texts in the Bible on any subject and setting them out in order. On this view of the Bible and theology, if one or more texts could be found to support war, slavery, the subordination of women or anything else, that settled the issue. The clear implication was that historical tradition, reasoned argument, or experience had no part to play in the formulation of a theological position. Not surprisingly, evangelicals who by and large had accepted this position were in no place to deal with the second wave of feminism which erupted in the 1960's. They were caught on the back foot.

This theology led to the emergence of what came to be known as "fundamentalism". Many who assumed this reactionary stance, building on the Princeton view of the Bible and other influences, developed a theology of separate and distinct dispensations in God's dealing with the world, in which society had to reach an all time low before God ushered in the golden millennium. In this "pre-millennial" theology, working for social justice was discouraged. Making the world a better place would only delay the return of Christ! The world had to get worse before Christ returned to inaugurate the millennium. Preaching the gospel was what Christians should concentrate on doing. This theology completely cut the nerve of evangelical social reform, which had had such an excellent history. In the 1960's
this theology was alive and well amongst evangelicals and thus sensitivity to justice issues was weak.

**Evangelicals come of age.**

As the second wave of feminism began, evangelicals were in a state of transition. They were tentatively re-entering the world of theological scholarship, which demanded a more robust acceptance of the human element in the Bible, a more holistic approach to systematic theology, and a more aware and active social conscience. These developments created deep tensions between those evangelicals who felt all the old certainties were being abandoned and those who were pressing forward. The latter group broke with the old fundamentalism and began reformulating the evangelical position. They embraced a critical methodology in Biblical studies which forced them to recognise that much of the Bible was in narrative form (story) and dynamically diverse in what it said on many important matters. This led to a heightened interest in hermeneutics - how to interpret correctly what was once written and to rightly apply that teaching in another age.

The test case in hermeneutics became the ordination of women. Those still bound to the old Princeton view of the Bible were compelled by their proof-texting methodology and a-historical understanding of revelation to oppose equality of consideration for women in the home and the church. But from the first, there were evangelicals who saw what was at stake, the status of half the human race. They answered in the only way possible for those constrained by the prevailing evangelical view of the Bible, by arguing that every text their opponents quoted could be interpreted differently. The battleground became 1 Tim 2:11-12. The traditionalists insisted that here Paul gave authority to men and men only and forbade women to teach. This, they argued, was based on a transcultural once-given creation order, which made women "second". The early evangelical feminists, in reply, argued that Paul was simply combating some particular error, for example bossy heretical women teachers, and the supporting arguments which appealed to the creation stories were only illustrative. Such argumentation continues and many new insights have been gained by these exegetical efforts. But now, most mainline evangelicals building on the insights gained via the more general discussions on hermeneutics, have come to see that on its own, this methodology is inadequate. Exegesis alone cannot settle this issue any more than it could settle the slavery issue.

In the slavery debate, the abolitionist's distinguished between practical advice and eternal principles given in the Bible. In many ways they anticipated some of the conclusions reached by the more sophisticated debate about hermeneutics of recent years. This has concluded that we are to accept that on almost every matter the Bible gives varied answers to complex questions, for each author is speaking from and to a particular historical setting and addressing specific problems within a distinctive cultural milieu. We have always to work out what are the basic issues at stake and what is the primary drift of Scripture. But what the modern discussion of hermeneutics has added, is a recognition that we must distinguish between what the Biblical writer said and its meaning and appropriate application today. In handling the Bible responsibly, we must always ask two questions: "What did the original writer mean by these words?" And, "what do they now mean and how do they speak to us in a profoundly different social and cultural setting?" Often we will conclude that the original meaning and the present application is one for one, such as in the command “love your neighbour”. Sometimes we will conclude that
what is applicable, amidst the varied comments in the Bible on some matter, is what is most appropriate for our age, as with ministry in the life of the church. In a few cases we will conclude that the Biblical teaching on some matter no longer applies, such as with foot washing. Christians have, in reality, always made these distinctions. The discussion of hermeneutics has simply brought this out in the open and clarified the things. To recognise a distinction between what was once said and present day application does not mean the overthrow of the authority of the Bible, but it does mean the abandonment of the old Princeton view of inspiration and that answers based solely on proof-texting are always doubtful. If any one feels troubled by what I have just said let me make one other point. What must be noted is that eloquent affirmations about the Bible's authority, and possibly inerrancy, do not guarantee unity in belief amongst those who hold such views, nor necessarily result in theologically and ethically sound conclusions. The slavery controversy proves this point. In other words, the issues raised by the hermeneutical debate cannot be ignored. How to correctly understand the Bible and then apply its teaching to the complexities of modern life is not as straightforward as we evangelicals once thought.

As evangelicals have come of age, they have also seen that evangelical (systematic) theology, or doctrine as it is often called, is far more than the gathering together and ordering of texts. Three separate matters have to be distinguished: 1) *Exegesis* which aims to give the historical meaning of a text or passage; 2) *Biblical theology* which seeks to outline the overall thought of each contributor to the Bible - a descriptive exercise again focusing on the original historical meaning of what was recorded, and 3) *Systematic theology*, which aims to address the present and is prescriptive in nature. This discipline draws on exegesis and Biblical theology and on all other relevant information which may help answer any question troubling the church. If the church fathers had believed they were restricted to quoting texts to answer the fourth century Arians, who denied the divinity of Christ they would have not been able to settle the debate. The Arians had their texts as well. Athanasius and the other trinitarians who firmly predicated their faith on the Bible found they also needed the help of non-Biblical terms and philosophical categories to explain and clarify their position. If we evangelicals were entirely restricted to what the Bible said we could say little about many modern questions since the Bible does not specifically address them, eg drug taking, abortion, gambling, citizenship in a democratic society etc. What the evangelical theologian does in addressing such questions is listen long and hard to the Bible seeking to determine the direction in which it points in its varied relevant comments, note what Christians of the past and present have said on the matter, carefully analyse the issues, and then draw in all the relevant data which may help in making a reasoned and truly Christian response.

In many ways John Wesley anticipated this modern re-discovery of the nature of evangelical theology. I warmly commend to you Donald Thorsen's book, The Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience as a Model of Evangelical Theology, Zondervan, 1990. John Wesley was an evangelical without question, with a high view of the Bible, but he was not a fundamentalist who thought the Bible on its own could answer every complex question facing the Christian. Thorsen shows that Wesley's understanding of theology is basically what evangelicals are just beginning to realise is the right approach. The Bible is primary in the theological quest but reason, tradition and experience are all important contributing factors.
Now to homosexuality.
In the wake of these debates, the more theologically mature, hermeneutically aware, and socially sensitive evangelicalism of the 90's is better placed to address the current, theological, moral and ecclesial issue: homosexuality. It has the tools to work out a response and has done so, but because it does not give a black and white answer, a categorical yes or no, it pleases neither the liberals, who can only accept an unconditional yes, nor the conservatives, who all too often have a touch of homophobia, and who will only accept a categorical no.

The liberal Christian says that surely this is just another social justice question: We should not discriminate unfairly against anyone simply for what they are. Is not God's love universal? The conservative on the other hand says that the Bible condemns homosexual behaviour and that settles the matter. Between these two, what may be called ideological positions (because neither will consider the complexities of the issues at stake) the responsible and informed evangelical theologian seeks a more nuance stance. This must take seriously what the Bible says (though not taking every text as of equal importance), the historical Christian attitude (tradition), the realities of the homosexual life-style as described in the sociological and scientific literature, and exhibit a compassion for those who are discriminated against and suffer as homosexuals.

Let me then outline a possible hermeneutically aware, evangelical response to the issues raised by homosexuality.

1) First, we should readily admit that the nine passages (Gen 19:4-14, Judges 19:16-30, Lev 18:22,20:13, Rom 1:24, 1 Cor 6:9-10, 1 Tim 1:10, 2 Peter 16-7, Jude 7) that mention homosexuality cannot on their own settle the debate. Each one may be explained away, as D S Bailey first did in Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition (Longmans, 1955). Genesis 19 only condemns mob violence against a visitor which in this case included a homosexual assault. The references in Leviticus proscribe cultic homosexual acts. Paul is only condemning heterosexuals who involve themselves in homosexual intercourse etc. I do not think such "exegesis" is correct, as I will point out in a minute, but it reminds us that simply quoting texts never settles a theological debate, even among evangelicals. A solid theological case must be made which encapsulates what is fundamental in the varied and historically conditioned Biblical teaching and then relates this to a broader picture which includes other relevant evidence.

2) In approaching the Bible on this or any other issue the first question the informed evangelical theologian will ask is, "What is foundational or central on this or that matter in the varied and historically conditioned data given in the Bible?" Thus in this debate, we must ask what is fundamental in the Bible's teaching about human sexuality to which the isolated comments in the Old and New Testament on homosexuality might relate? Genesis chapters one and two, which in canonical revelation have eye catching prominence, set the agenda for all which follows in salvation history, and in particular for the relationship between men and women. Genesis 1:26-28 affirms the equality and polarity of the sexes and gives them the mandate to procreate the earth. Then follows the picturesque account of the aloneness of Adam, the proto-man, who is not truly man until woman stands by his side. This points to the God-given complementarity of the sexes and prepares for the
explanation of what is involved in marriage, "the cleaving together" of a man and a
woman and their becoming "one flesh" (Gen 2:24) - teaching which Jesus and Paul
reiterate. This suggests that rather than being passing, culturally conditioned comments,
the "negative" texts about homosexuality are the counterpart of foundational "positive"
Biblical statements about human sexuality and heterosexual marriage. If this is so then
homosexual relations breach this order because they are not sexually complementary and
are absolutely non-procreational, and as such cannot be part of God's perfect plan for men
and women. Before we leave the Biblical evidence three other observations are demanded.

a) The individual "negative" texts are in fact not as easy to dismiss as many have claimed.
Time does not allow me to exegete each passage in turn but I recommend you read either
John Stott's excellent discussion in Issues Facing Christians Today (Marshall, Morgan and
Scott, 1984, pp 301ff), or in more detail the recent book by T E Schmidt., Straight and
Narrow: Compassion and Clarity in the Homosexual Debate (IVP, Illinois, 1995).
Interestingly, possibly the most categorical rejection of the revisionist exegesis is found in
the detailed study by the homosexual scholar, Pirn Ponk, Against Nature? (Eerdmans,
Grand Rapids, 1993). He accepts without reserve that Paul teaches homosexual acts are
sin and are to be condemned. He simply thinks Paul is wrong!

b) We are to note that unlike slavery and women's emancipation there are no liberating"
texts re homosexuality. To quote the love of God for all is inadequate. The God of the
Bible is both a loving and a Holy God.

c) Unlike the comments about slaves or women, the comments regarding homosexuality
are always explicitly moral in tone. On this matter, quite distinctively, the Biblical writers
condemn certain acts, and only the acts.

3) In developing an evangelical response on this issue, we should accept and stress that
the Biblical writers know nothing of the modern distinction between homosexual
orientation and homosexual acts. The Biblical strictures all address homosexual acts, as
has just been noted. No one is to be unjustly discriminated against for their colour, social
standing, socio-sexual orientation, or gender - on this we all should agree. But surely we
should also agree that all can and should make moral judgements. The main question on
the table is a moral one. The two sides are both making moral judgements, not just one
side. One side argues that homosexual activity is morally acceptable, the other side that it
is not.

Since the Bible only condemns homosexual acts, this means, as we have already pointed
out, that there is an is intrinsic difference between the homosexual question and the debate
over slavery or the status of women. If there is a homosexual orientation then no one
should be unjustly treated for this reason, any more than for being left-handed or for being
born black or a woman. This means the homosexual debate in essence is not a "rights"
question but a morale question.

4) An evangelical hermeneutic should readily admit and stress, however, that our social
setting is very different to that of the Biblical writers and therefore the application of
everything in the Bible on this matter, or anything else does not necessarily apply one for
one. The Jewish Biblical writers lived in a theocratic state where the law applied to every
aspect of life. Individual rights or freedom to do one's thing were never considered. Thus adultery was both a moral sin and a public sin liable to stoning, as was sex between two men (Lev 20:13), or for that matter, consulting a spirit or the worship of gods other than Yahweh. In contrast, in modern Western societies individual rights and freedom are foundational to our common life. If we want our freedom to follow Christ we must allow others to follow Buddha. If we want to be free to speak against homosexuality we must allow others to differ from us. Thus in our culture, beliefs and morality are basically a personal matter, whereas law governs the common good. This means that while we may wish to argue that homosexual acts are immoral we may not wish to have our view enshrined in law - and I would even argue we should not. In other words the change in the social setting between the Biblical world and our own age demands at the very least a differing application of the comments regarding homosexual acts given in the Bible.

5) So much for the Biblical teaching, but we are not limited to this in developing an evangelical theological position on homosexuality, or on anything else. In theology proper all relevant evidence is significant. For the evangelical the Bible will be the most important source but not the only source. Tradition, for example, should not be ignored. On homosexuality the historical record is unanimous. The church across the ages has consistently rejected homosexual practice as sinful. Then there is the scientific data. This comes from researchers either taking a neutral stance towards homosexuality or supportive of it. Thus their findings are very important. They show that, 1) about 1%, or at the most 2% of the population is actively homosexual; 2) long-term exclusive homosexual unions are relatively rare. Most homosexual sex is casual and where extended relationships exist they are almost always short term and not exclusive, and, 3) homosexual activity has disastrous health consequences for those involved, HIV/AIDS being only the most catastrophic. (For a survey of this material see Schmidt, pp 100-130). In developing a response to the call for homosexual rights in general, and for their ordination in particular, this factual material must be considered and evaluated. It is not adequate to reject this information out of hand as many liberals do. Theology must deal with concrete realities not with wishful thinking, as Theodore Weld so eloquently insisted. The theoretical case for slavery was profoundly flawed because it did not face the realities of slavery as it existed in North America and so too is any case for or against homosexual rights which does not honestly face the social reality. It is all very well to argue that homosexuals in a committed relationship should be regarded in the same way as committed heterosexual relationships but what must be faced is that long-term exclusive homosexual relationships are exceptional. What is normal for male homosexuals is many fleeting sexual encounters. Such sex is condemned by virtually all Christian ethicists whether it is practiced by heterosexuals or homosexuals.

6) Nevertheless, a contemporary evangelical response to the homosexual question will make some careful distinctions. It will differentiate between, 1) public policy, 2) church life, and, 3) ordination. (1) In our secular and pluralistic society, as we have already argued, evangelicals, along with every one else, should be against the discrimination or unjust treatment of any minority. We may not agree with the behaviour of homosexuals, or the beliefs of atheists, but we should not seek the support of the law. If we do it could one day backfire on us. (2) But What about church life? Here I would argue that charity should prevail. We must emphasise that the church is the home of sinners. All who come seeking forgiveness and God's help are to be welcomed. Many homosexuals are crying
out for help and acceptance and it is a tragedy when the church fails them, as it so often does. Evangelicals need to hang theirs head in shame for some of the attitudes, words and actions of their fellow travellers in regard to homosexuals. We need not condone homosexual activity any more than bad temper, hypocrisy, or excessive drinking, but we can continue to witness to a God who loves us all with a never ending love, and is for-ever compassionate towards those who recognise they are sinners. (3) It is in the third distinguishable category where the evangelical must make a stand: the ordination of non-celibate homosexuals. The church has historically demanded that its ordained leaders be beyond reproach and particularly that they be the masters of their own sexuality. The truth of the matter is that the church cannot tolerate a leader who has numerous sexual liaisons, whether they be heterosexual or homosexual in nature. This rule is non-discriminatory. The reason why the behaviour of the church's ordained leadership is so important, is that it is public and it fulfils a modelling function. Pastors should reflect, in their life, the values of the Gospel. If a minister flagrantly denies by their actions what the Bible says, and what most theologians evaluate negatively, then this undermines their effectiveness and witness to Christ.

Here it need to remember that no one is automatically accepted for ordination because they think they should be. No group of people, nor any individual can claim the right to be ordained. Everyone who thinks they have a call to the ordained ministry must be assessed. Many factors should be taken into consideration as the assessors evaluate a person for acceptance to this public and church endorsed ministry: spiritual maturity, prayer life, psychological well-being, theological knowledge, relational abilities, communication skills etc. One important matter for consideration is personal behaviour. The question should be asked, "Does this person accept and seek to practice the Christian values clearly taught in the Bible and sanctified by almost two thousand years of Christian history?" If someone fails on this test, for example by rejecting in principle and practice the commonly held Christian sexual ethic, then the church should not accept that person for ordination. This policy should be non-discriminatory.

7) Present social realities must never determine theology but good theology never ignores the social context. Most congregations simply cannot tolerate an active homosexual minister. Community support for homosexuals is low and it is even lower in the churches. This attitude should not be endorsed without reserve, but things like the Sydney Mardi Gra certainly do not help. A church with a known non-celibate homosexual minister will manage, but many of the men, and most family groups, will leave. What the church needs desperately today in this very difficult age for the gospel, is leaders who are not only close to Christ and well versed in the Bible but also above reproach in every way, self confident, assured of their own sexual identity and having the confidence of all those within their charge. Good theology does not forget practical issues.

8) This leads me, in conclusion, to bring to the fore what I would argue is the ultimate test of a truly evangelical hermeneutic: "Does this or that enhance and further the gospel, the salvation found in Christ?" In the final analysis I would argue that opposition to slavery, the endorsement of the social equality of women, the affirming of individual rights in a modern Western society, the affirmation and acceptance of homosexuals within the life of the church, all capture gospel values and further gospel proclamation, but the ordination
of non-celibate homosexuals does not. In fact it detracts from and undermines the evangel
to which we evangelicals are committed.

Yes, some evangelicals were wrong about slavery last century, yes many evangelicals
were wrong in opposing the ordination of women in recent times, but no I do not think
evangelicals are wrong in placing a very big question mark over homosexual relations and
rejecting the ordination of non-celibate homosexuals. And what is more I do not think
there will be a major change on this matter for the reasons I have outlined.