

## **ABOUT LIFE: That's worth living and lasts forever**

*David Mansfield*

*A Review by Ken Godwin*



This is very much an 'Australian' book - the author talks about the outback, surfing, the Snowy Mountains, the Three Sisters, and so on. At the same time the reader is systematically faced with the Jesus of John's Gospel and the relevance of incidents in that story to situations we all have to face today. The book is so up-to-date that September 11th 2001 is even referred to. Therefore, to read it now, rather than put it on the bookshelf for a later date, is my advice.

David Mansfield, the author, is a 'man of the cloth', but also a very adventurous cleric who has a real rapport with the present generation. This review is not a chapter by chapter summary of the book but a carefully re-constructed synthesis of its content to make you want to read it yourself. It addresses questions like 'trust', the reasons why Jesus appears at a wedding, how we can possibly confront suffering without the cross, why there are so many offering 'no end of advice' to us these days. And many other perspectives and snapshots.

The way Jesus handles the woman caught in adultery is nothing short of beautiful in Mansfield's writing, and the lessons he draws from our Lord's friendship with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman bring the facts right up-to-date. He shows too, how physical things like light, water, bread and even walking, have terribly important spiritual implications. It all makes one realise that it is not just a doctrine that John brings out, but in order to live life to the full, we need 'to go straight to Jesus'. Certain things are inevitable and there is a need for confidence as the inevitable things are faced. The world cries out for justice; the resurrection will bring that. People want security; only the fulfilment of the promises God makes through John's Jesus, can bring real security. The subject matter of the book demands (though this sounds too harsh!) a response.

To finish with a delightful passage for me, Mansfield refers to a studio experience 'before a live audience and viewers all over Australia' when 'Witty' broke into a flow of questioning and asked the chat-show host about the resurrection. 'Witty' is Bishop Howell Witt, whose autobiography is a tonic I am presently reading, and the Bishop, according to Mansfield, said to the host, "When you are interviewed by the Lord, he will say, What do you think of me?...and your life will depend on that moment." It's the same for you and me.

Buy the book, you'll not be sorry.

*Available at Koorong Books, Waymouth St, Adelaide*