

## EDITORIAL

This volume covers a variety of topics related to Melanesia: dreams, theological education, and pre-understanding. Each topic, in its own way, adds to the on-going discussion of applying God's Word in a Melanesian context.

In the first article, John Hitchen champions the need to develop a well-rounded contextualised theology of dreams for Melanesia. His article lays the groundwork for such a theology by exploring the role of dreams in traditional Melanesian thought, and then comparing his findings with the understanding of dreams found in Melanesian Christianity. Dreams are an integral part of Melanesian life, and, therefore, John's article is an important mile marker in the drive to create a contextual theology of dreams.

Kenneth Nehrbass, in the second article, examines formal theological education in Vanuatu. He provides the results of research he conducted at three institutions, in which he interviewed faculty and students, to garnish what each thinks should be the purpose of such education. From this, Kenneth puts forward what the schools are doing right, and the challenges they face, concluding his article with recommendations for moving the schools forward, in the cause of Christ.

In the final article, I explore the impact of traditional religion on Christianity among the Mulia Dani and the Urapmin, on the island of New Guinea. I synthesise, and build on the work of others, as I seek to show that pre-understanding influences the interpretation of scripture, and the practice of Christianity. The challenge, then, for each of us, is to moderate the role that pre-understanding may play in our practice of scripture.

Not everyone will agree with the conclusions reached by the authors. However, we hope that, as you grapple with the issues, the thoughts of the authors will help you grow in your understanding of what God's Word says to your life and culture.

Doug Hanson.