WRIGHT MOVES ON

Posted on April 28, 2010 by Eddie

Category: Observations

I must admit that I find it hard to understand how anyone could leave Durham Cathedral (the finest building in the world), but Bishop Tom Wright has announced that he will be leaving his post as Bishop of Durham to take up a post at St, Andrews University. You can find the official press notice here. It includes this paragraph:

> *Announcing his move, Bishop Tom said, â€˜This has been the hardest decision of my life. It has been an indescribable privilege to be Bishop of the ancient Diocese of Durham, to work with a superb team of colleagues, to take part in the work of Godâ€™s kingdom here in the north-east, and to represent the region and its churches in the House of Lords and in General Synod. I have loved the people, the place, the heritage and the work. But my continuing vocation to be a writer, teacher and broadcaster, for the benefit (I hope) of the wider world and church, has been increasingly difficult to combine with the complex demands and duties of a diocesan bishop. I am very sad about this, but the choice has become increasingly clear.â€™*

Doug Chaplin expresses a frustration that I share that it seems impossible to to combine the role of Bishop and scholar in this day and age:

> *When entirely pragmatic considerations drive academic theology out of the pastoral ministry something has gone wrong. The Churchâ€™s seminal theology was produced in large part by scholarly bishops. Think Athanasius and Augustine. Or, less ambitiously, just go back 120 years when Westcott succeeded Lightfoot as Bishop of Durham and Hort preached at his consecration. Is such a time now unimaginable, never mind impossible?*
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> *I think it is, and that, it seems to me is a matter for deep regret.*

For myself, I stand amazed at anyone who can produce both the contextualised,Â pastoral theology as The Cross and the Colliery and the academically rigorous The New Testament and the People of God. Clearly Tom Wright had the ability to be both a pastor and an academic, it is sad that they rigours of modern life seem to render the twin roles so difficult. However, if his new role in St Andrews means that he will have the time to write more, then I, for one, will be grateful.

Meanwhile, the last word on the subject has to go to the Ship of Fools twitter feed:

> *Bishop, 62, gives up the day job to settle in golfing town...*