



### **Playing the Man**

I'm going to be away for a couple of days this week as I attend to some personal family matters. Accordingly, I won't have time to prepare a reflection for you.

However, to give you something to think about, I'd like to offer to you [this link to an article](#) which is itself a meditation on the law of unintended consequences. The article is by the scientist and theologian Alister McGrath, and concerns his fellow scientist and prominent "new atheist", Richard Dawkins.

As many of you are aware, Dawkins and fellow "new atheists" like Christopher Hitchens have been prominent critics of religious belief, ascribing to religion all manner of evils. However, despite their initial impact and prominence, the aggressive style employed by Dawkins and co, as well as their penchant for launching personal attacks rather than discussing the issues, has not just alienated many people (including fellow atheists) from their cause, it has also prompted numbers of people to explore the possibility of faith.,

In other words, by playing the man and not the ball (to borrow a sporting metaphor) Dawkins has achieved the opposite of what he set out to do.

Rather than being a cause for gloating, however, I think Christians would likewise do well to reflect on this experience and ponder the ways in which we "play the man not the ball" and alienate others from the life of faith. In these

days of "outrage culture" when shouting angrily at one another instead of listening to each other appears to be the norm, it certainly bears thinking about.

### **Synod Newsletter**

The latest edition of the Synod e-newsletter is available. To read, [please click on this link.](#)

### **CPP Theatre News**

CPP Theatre Productions will be presenting their Annual Musical Show in October with performance dates **from October 6th to 14th** at the Mahon Theatre, Aquinas College, 46 Great Ryrie Street, Ringwood,

Bringing Charles Dickens' beloved novel to life, Lionel Bart's *Oliver!* will take you on a wild adventure through Victorian England, capturing your heart as well as your handkerchief. More details from their website, [cppcommunitytheatre.com.au](http://cppcommunitytheatre.com.au).

Blessings,

Brendan



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