Editorial

Hebrews 11 is a hall of fame of God's people in the Old Testament. In this one chapter we are reminded of the great figures of the Old Testament and their faithful works in service to God.

The promise of salvation is made as early on as to our first parents. Evidence of faith in that promise is evident within the same family. It is traced through the Old Testament from Abel through to David and the prophets.

There are surprises along the way. Many stories of Joseph might be used as examples of his faith – his interpretation of the dreams, his fleeing Potiphar's wife, his rise to power in Egypt and reconciliation to his brothers. Yet another, lesser known story is highlighted. He 'at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.' This story doesn't excite as much as the others do. But it teaches us important truths of faith. It is lived to the end of life and rests in God's promise. It has concern for the fulfilment of God's word and directs others to that end.

The variety of characters in the chapter bring clarity to what faith is. It is a gift, by which God brings home his power of salvation. God's boundless grace is shown effectively in their lives. We can see that especially in Rahab's life. John Owen comments she was living in, 'that kind of sin, which of all others is the most effectual in detaining persons under its power. But nothing, no person, no sin, is to be despaired of, in whose cure sovereign, almighty grace is engaged.'[1]

After Rahab hears of how Israel was delivered at the Red Sea, she turns to the Lord in faith. She is wholly isolated from the covenant people in her community, yet her tactic to deter the Jericho king from the spies echoes that of the Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1:19. She, a Canaanite prostitute, a stranger to God's people; they were Hebrew midwives at the very heart of the covenant people, ensuring the next generation was safely delivered. Yet God did similar works through them. Though we know little of her circumstances afterwards, providentially she was brought directly into the very heart of God's covenant purposes, as we read in Christ's genealogy in Matthew 1.

Rahab's story is especially helpful for bringing the relative importance of faith in the Lord to light. So Owen comments again on this story, 'Although unbelief be not the only destroying sin (for the wages of every sin is death, and many are accompanied with peculiar provoca-

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[1] John Owen, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, ed. by William H. Goold, 7 vols (Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter), VII (1862), 178.

tions), yet it is the only sin which makes eternal destruction inevitable and remediless.'[2]

The stories and figures of Hebrews 11 remind us to observe faith in ordinary acts as well as mighty ones. God saves people from a variety of backgrounds and to perform a variety of works. God binds his people together. The chapter ends remarking on the unity of believers in Old and New Testament eras. There are shared beliefs and experiences. 11:3 perfectly describes the contrast of beliefs about the origins of the world today. Thus, while following the New Testament we live in the light of Christ's coming, faith continues to be 'the assurance of things hoped for, the convictions of things not seen.' As Jesus said, 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.' (John 20:29)

[2] Ibid., p. 179.

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The Rev Topping's paper was written for new students to read in advance of theological study as a preparatory exercise.

Theological Study: Keeping it Odd

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Talk about God is delightful and difficult. It is difficult in a world in which legitimate explanation does not include recourse to God.[1] That puts Christians on the defensive. So much of what Christians write these days in the West seems defensive – unduly methodological, halting, preamble, throat-clearing.[2] Apologetic is the mode of most Christian theologies. Apologetic theologies work to show a secular public that belief in God and the gospel is consistent with other kinds of knowledge and the perceived priorities and needs and desires of today. It is not so much that theologians make arguments or confessions about what is true; it is more that they want to demonstrate the meaningfulness of the faith on terms set by dominant systems of thought or current issues. Translation of the content of Christian confession into a more general idiom for broader appeal and availability and above all meaning is usually the apologetic project. The desire seems a sound one, indeed almost a missional one.

The irony is that while this strategy aims to demonstrate relevance to our 'cultured despisers,' it comes across as needy and, worse still, boring. At times it reduces all religion to the outward expression of inner feeling, a private matter out of public view and influence. It often gives the impression that Christians do not have anything to say or feel or think that a good atheist does not already grasp from affective delight, one of the multiple forms of authentic individualism, or current cultural causes. We imagine apologetic theology as heroic, edgy and courageous, when in fact it has become a more-or-less sophisticated act of conformity to the ambiance of moment. Christians often end up in a reductive-therapeutic-theistic fog when the solvent of relevance-to-the-moment and 'public'[3] norms of intelligibility dissolve Christian confession. Instead of the spicy particularity of the Triune God, who comes among us as Jesus to rescue us from ruin and effect the transformation of all things, we can get a saccharine, same-saying substitute. We aim at relevance; we get redundance.

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1 Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 2-3, 550.

2 Jeffrey Stout, *Ethics After Babel: The Languages of Morals and Their Discontents* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1988), p. 184.

3 The idea that there is a 'general public' is a problematic assumption. Even the phrase 'public norms of intelligibility' is not a way of speaking that has currency across multiple cultural publics.

This conformity is a problem for the church. It means that instead of expanding the imaginative register of our time and place, we appear to be serving up what everyone already knows better from elsewhere. Remember we live in a time when six of the seven deadly sins are medical conditions – and pride is a virtue. Philosophical systems, therapeutic expressions and cultural causes become the template into which Christian confession is pressed and the unique story of Scripture is denuded of its life-giving offer. Flannery O'Connor said, 'you will know the truth, and the truth will make you odd.' The delightful oddness of Christian theology is doped down when we get too anxious about providing answers to the questions of the time. Theology becomes uninteresting when we think of the Christian faith as answerable to an obligatory God-bereft picture of the world and its problems.

I suspect, instead, that a patient exposition of the content of Christian faith raises the most pertinent questions. The burning issues of the day arise from a gospel reading of the world. Christian relevance is best demonstrated in the prophetic tension that confession of the God of the Gospel creates with the times, systems of thought and causes that are in circulation. *Vive la différence* is a more faithful approach to theological endeavour in the light of the incarnation of the Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth. And strangely, the relevance of Christian confession to the 'situation' may be best demonstrated by the distinct sense-making contributions, the framing of where in the world we are, that Christians can make to cultural common life out the distinct shape of Christian confession.

In what follows, I want to address some of the intellectual and practical temptations that theology faces and detail some of the practices and convictions that might help hold us accountable to the odd particularity of Christian confession when we engage in theological study. The recommendation of these practices is rooted in the subject matter of theology: God. Just before that, I want to anticipate two objections. There are at least two things that holding ourselves accountable to Christian particularity, an unapologetic approach to Christian theology, does not mean.

First: this approach does not mean that we absent ourselves from inter-disciplinary study and engagement, from ad hoc borrowings and learning from various fields of endeavour and from joint-efforts with a series of conversation partners. Christians have always taught the faith in the language and thought forms of their time. It is not only unavoidable, it is desirable. We want to communicate the meaning of our confession. At their worst our predecessors got co-opted by the thought forms of the time and confused that with Christian confession. At their best, our forebearers in the faith bent those thought forms into the service of the grammar of Christian confession. They used the language and concepts

available in their day to make the same theological judgements the Bible does about God, and everything else in relation to God, in a language appropriate to their time and place. That's not translation; it is more re-description and reiteration.[4] It is *andenken*,[5] thinking the thoughts of Scripture after Scripture, a sort of intellectual-spiritual discipleship in which redeemed reason follows the story and provides commentary that always directs attention back to the story Scripture tells and never dispenses with the story for another system or idiom or ethos. Our mothers and fathers in the faith wanted to communicate to their contemporaries; and so, they bent and contorted language and concepts – 'they dug out of the mines of God's providence, which are everywhere scattered abroad'[6] – to serve faithful communication of the content of Christian confession. Fidelity to the system from which language was borrowed got subverted, in the best cases, to the grammar of the Christian story as Scripture tells it. Sometimes to get what the Christian message entails nothing less than conversion, detoxification and a senior seminar (catechesis) are required.

Second: holding to Christian particularity, even before audience engagement and internalizing the so-called public norms of intelligibility, does not inhibit Christian participation in public life. In the pluralistic society in which we live, we ought to look for partners as we witness to the reign of God and the coming reconciliation of all things through Jesus Christ. And we can do this with all sorts of humane movements of our time. People who do not share Christian convictions also work for the good of the world in ways Christians recognize as consistent with the faith Christians confess. Where we observe common cause or 'overlapping consensus'[7] around seminal issues or challenges, we share in the work in Jesus' name with our neighbours. People of other faiths and of good will have their own motivations and interests born of deep conviction, as do Christians. The motivations may not be the same but the commitment to the work of human fullness in specific instances will be the same.

And so, let's return to an inventory of the practices and convictions appropriate to engagement in theological study – in the broadest sense – that help fortify us against the temptation of dissolving Christian confes-

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4 See Cynthia Rigby, *Holding Faith: A Practical Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018), p. xix.

5 Paul Ricoeur uses this term to describe 'a call to reflection or meditation' in response to encounter with biblical discourse. See *Critique and Conviction: Conversations with Francios Azouvi and Marc de Launay*, trans. Kathleen Blamey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), p. 149.

6 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans., J.F. Shaw (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2009), p. 75.

7 Taylor, *A Secular Age*, p. 532.

sion into religious Esperanto. We can work these in any order since they are connected and overlap. There are at least five: 1) remember: theology is not anthropology; 2) engage in charitable reading; 3) adopt a teachable frame; 4) be alert: danger lurks in generalities (including this one) and; 5) before we speak (or write), we are spoken to by God.

THEOLOGY IS NOT ANTHROPOLOGY (OR SOCIOLOGY OR POLITICS OR ETHICS OR CULTURAL CAUSES, ETC., . . .)

This section heading is part of a longer phrase spoken by Karl Barth. He said that 'theology is not anthropology spoken in a really loud voice.'[8] The subject matter of theology is God, and then everything else in relation to God. Barth spotted a problem that is still very much with us. We start off intending to speak of God and then subtly but surely begin to transfer the weight to anthropology – our morals, our experiences, our causes. We even apply for grants to study the physiological and biochemistry of religious experiences and inquire after the social function of religion in descriptive fashion that focuses only on human actors and historical artefacts. These kinds of studies serve some good ends – the ends of moving beyond excavation to exegesis. They could matter to the theological exegesis of Scripture. However, excavation is not theology since attention here is not on God as the subject of the text and the active agent in interpretation, but the social world of a text's production.[9] The subject matter of theology is God. Theologians, while not unconcerned with religious experience and aspects of the ancient world, focus their attention not just on the generated but on the generative. We rivet our attention on the ways and works of the Triune God as these are revealed to us through Holy Scripture in the power of the Spirit and witnessed to in the history of the church's testimony. God is a difficult subject matter and so often the closer theology gets to the university, the more colonized by the 'immanent frame'[10] it becomes. Instead of Scripture study, we get biblical studies. Instead of theological study, we get religious studies. The defining feature of both moves is that it brackets God out of consideration in the interest of objectivity, which is really agnosticism as default position.

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8 Karl Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, trans. Douglas Horton (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957), p. 14. This phrase can be found throughout Barth's work.

9 Robert Alter notes that much biblical interpretation focuses on 'unscrambling to omelette' not tasting it. *The World of Biblical Literature* (New York, 1992), p. 133.

10 Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, p. 550.

Those who have been educated lately know that 'context is everything.' We post-moderns understand the situatedness of all work, all our interpretation, all our claims. We interpret Scripture and theological texts with agendas and in the light of problems of a time and place, which is as it should be. The trouble arises when we universalize from our context, get imperious about our interpretative vantage point and impress it on other people (by 'saming' them). This inhibits their opportunity to hear a word from God in their time and place and culture and give expression to the good-news as the people they are. Colonial impress has often led to imposition and violence on the part of those who would enforce their interpretation on the world. The later move is especially perverse when Christianity gets mixed up with the imperial aspirations of the regnant order and overrides the dignity and humanity of other people in the guise of paternalism.[11] These important recognitions have become central to much theologizing of the late 20th and early 21st century. They are now collectively, a point of departure and unfortunately, at times, they have become a destination.

One of the challenges that accompanies these observations is that we have so foregrounded context, the self-description and cultural place of readers and interpreters, that the subject matter of theology, God, is occluded. The self-description of the interpreting subject or subjects and their projects overwhelm the interpreted subject matter. We can end up studying lenses and not what is looked at. I think there are at least three doctrinal considerations which insert themselves into this hermeneutic alienation from the subject matter of theology.

First, while we are creatures and so located in history and time and culture with a variety of secondary identities, our primary context as the history of Christian confession teaches is 'before God' (*Coram Deo*).[12] Whatever the microclimate of our confession, we live before God, in the presence of the one who loves the world, who sent the Son for the reconciliation of all things, and who gives the Spirit of adoption and mission. That's our context.

Second, the fellowship of the saints extends through time and space in the power of the Spirit. We need to beware of so articulating our identity, our time, our culture, our church that we cut ourselves off from the interpretative fellowship of the saints, both the living and the dead. While other Christian communities through time and across the world now each have or had their own situation in which to confess, their language

[11] See Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Justice in Love* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2011), pp. 223ff.

[12] See George Stroup, *Before God* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2004).

about God is truth-intending, it gestures toward the God revealed in Jesus Christ, especially in praise and adoration. Catholicity implies that we approach them and include them, not to globalize Western church norms and struggles[13] but in a spirit of humility and teachableness with a willingness to repent for the error of our ways. None of us gestures in words and witness toward the triune God perfectly or without group-interest or error, sometimes serious and pernicious error; but that is precisely why we need to listen and speak with the church catholic.

Third, the church has a mission to witness to the reconciling action of God in Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit and so has something to say to the context. Douglas John Hall, in many ways a parent of contextual theology in Canada, has noted the perils of this good idea. He notes the tendency to treat context as fate, to reduce 'the context' to a single issue of cultural currency and to forget that the Christian message gives us things to say which might just challenge the context.[14] It may be that the relevance of the Christian confession to this time and place is its contrary message in the service of life. God enters our context to not confirm it, but to alter it, to reconcile and overturn it. The action of God in Jesus Christ creates a context, a new creation.[15]

ENGAGE IN CHARITABLE READING

When I was an undergraduate philosophy student, I was taught the principle of charity by Prof. Bernard Suits. He told us that before we begin a critique of someone's position, first we take the very best reading of the

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[13] See Kevin Ward, *A History of Global Anglicanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 308-15. When we do globalize North American norms and struggles, we are just as colonial as 19th century Christian mission, without the necessity to travel.

[14] Douglas John Hall, 'The Future of the Church: Critical Remembrance as Entrée to Hope', The Kenneth Cousland Lecture, Emmanuel College, University of Toronto, October 16, 2013. Alan Noble makes the point: 'A disruptive witness denies the entire contemporary project of treating faith as a preference.' *Disruptive Witness: Speaking Truth in a Distracted Age* (Downer Grove: IVP, 2018), p. 81.

[15] It is interesting how little this gospel consideration has figured into theologies that simply answer 'the context' as it is served up by non- or pre-theological depiction. Literary scholar Rita Felski notes the effect of powerful literature. 'If we are entirely caught up in a text, we can no longer place it in a context because it is the context, imperiously dictating the terms of its reception. We are held in a condition of absorption […] transfixed and immobilized by the work and rendered unable to frame, contextualize or judge.' *The Uses of Literature* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2008), p. 57.

position we subject to examination. Do not caricature or misrepresent another person's point of view or we end up shadow boxing with our own bad interpretation rather than offering a legitimate analysis of an argument. Professor Suits told me this principle is observed mostly in its violation.

Whole theological schools of thought have begun in response to a misrepresentation of the longer Christian tradition or aspects of it. For example, I have found critiques of an 'interventionist god' to be critiques of theologies of the past that, in fact, do not exist. I have not found a major Christian theologian yet that sets up a theology of creation so that God is estranged from the world God creates and therefore can only engage with creation as Creator by interloping. It is God's world, God is always already involved in it – God does not get all 'supernatural' from time-to-time. Islam, Judaism and Christianity agree – God is creating now, creation and providence are ongoing; the world is now and always 'upheld by the word of his (the Son's) power.' (Hebrews 1:3). All this to say, beware of mischaracterizing a position that is not your own. Take the strong version of what you read; do some historical study to inform your perspective for the sake of justice and charity. Check your interpretations against other interpreters. Talk to others in your class to see if your problem in understanding is, well, you.

If philosophers have a principle of charity, Christian readers should do likewise. We ought to interpret other people as our theological neighbours, whom we honour as creatures made in God's image, given to us by God for our learning and edification. We ought to linger with our neighbour's writing, as an act of love, to understand what they want to say to us. One way of thinking about interpreting those who have gone before us in the faith is as an act of 'communion with the saints.' Those who went before us, in different times and places, struggled with making sense of the faith in their circumstances, and while different from our own, there are always things to be learned, even if they fall into the errors to avoid column. When we interpret with imagination, however, often we observe analogues and precedents that are remarkably prescient for our place and time.

Lots of interpreters will emphasis distance; an imaginative interpreter seeking to learn for the sake of salvation and discipleship and praise sees proximity. Hilary of Poitiers (315-368) has things to teach us about the gendered use of language with respect to God. 'The Son was conceived in the womb of the Father,'[16] he says. By saying this he contorts what we

[16] 'On the Trinity', trans. E. W. Watson and L. Pullan, in Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, eds., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. ix, Second Series

know of biology so that we speak more truly of God and don't simply project maleness onto God. Marguerite de Navarre (1492-1549), the Sister of the King of France – Francis I, can teach us about the importance of theological conversation over 'ostentatious debates' – like those of Martin Luther and John Calvin – in conversational theological writings.[17] What shocks a reader of these documents and other authors from the past is not the historical gulf between then and now, but the incredible analogical relevance and immediacy of the past to the present through retrieval. Appropriation of what these friends in the faith teach us, requires humility, sustained attention, a teachable frame and a sanctified imagination open to a word from the communion of saints. We have got to be traditioned to be creative, formed to be transformative, or we repeat the slogans of the age in which we live and call that edgy.

A practical note: we are embodied readers so pay attention to your body when you read. Sometimes reading will make us feel uncomfortable. Your hands will sweat, your hearts start to race. Be careful not to give up when this happens. Worthy texts have a way of challenging what we have always thought. Learning sometimes involves dislodgement of long held ideas, and that's threatening. The defensive move is to throw up the safeguard of theory and use sophisticated tools to protect yourself. The more hermeneutics we learn, the greater the temptation. Instead, we should go for a walk and pray. Pray that in our reading we will be permeable to what we need to hear. It could be that an author is just wrong; it could be that we are being taught, even by God. And so, we try and identify what we read that produced this discomfort. At these moments we are discovering our theology. When cherished beliefs come under scrutiny, it is disorienting. We may need to read further to be charitable to the writer. Perhaps he or she has yet to address the other side of the point or go on to a thicker account of the matter. Or perhaps, we are being reoriented by means of what we are reading. Great texts have a way of doing that especially when and where God is or becomes the active agent by whom we are taught. We all start reading as people of a time and place and we think we know what matters and where in the world we are and what our life might mean. And now, now we encounter a new thing, a new reality, and we are recontextualized in the light of it, and we start to read the world, painful as it is,

(Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1994), Book 12, section 8, pp. 219-20. Kathryn Tanner, *Christ the Key* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 215.

[17] See for example L'Heptameron of Margaret, Queen of Navarre: Selected Tales, ed. Stanley Appelbaum (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2006). See also Carol Thysell, *The Pleasure of Discernment: Marguerite de Navarre as Theologian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 9.

in terms of the God about whom we are reading. It could be conversion, calling, deepening of the love of God. If we experience the grace of that kind of encounter when we are reading about God, give thanks.

ADOPT A TEACHABLE FRAME

The concept of a 'teachable frame' comes from John Calvin's commentary on the Psalms.[18] For Calvin, teachableness before the text of Scripture and other esteemed teachers is crucial. When we come to read the Bible and important theological texts, fully armed with inflexible preunderstanding, we miss the opportunity to be instructed and transformed. If reading is simply an opportunity for us to engage in criticism based on high-powered theory that is set, gelled and hardened (privileged), we will use every important text as an opportunity to hear ourselves think. Calvin's interest in prayer before the reading of Scripture, in a prayer he called the prayer for illumination, is a recognition of our need of God's help to open us up to what is strange and unusual in what we encounter in Scripture. It means that in our encounter with Scripture and in texts which are commentary on the Bible, we participate in dying and rising with Christ.

There are at least three problems encountered by students in seminaries and theological colleges where it comes to a teachable frame. One is that we are distracted with technology, constantly searching for external stimulation which makes us incapable of disciplined attention. Alan Noble writes; 'Living a distracted lifestyle does more than waste our time, it forms our minds, often in ways that are harmful for deep, sustained thought – the kind of thought so important to religious discourse.'[19] Noble, while by no means a Luddite, proposes community and individual practices, acts of discipleship, that grace our capacity for attention to God: silence, saying grace, observing sabbath, incarnate attention to the liturgy, all for the sake of stoking a disruptive witness in a distracted culture.

Another obstacle to a teachable frame is that professors can give students too much to read and, even when they do not, reading can be minimalist and consumptive. With the flood of compulsory readings coming, a theological student is liable to adopt a rather rudimentary threshold for what counts as reading. Eyes-passing-over-the-page is not reading. We as professors can subtly encourage the need for speed, which does not allow students to linger with the words, to contemplate formative matters

[18] Calvin, *Jean Calvin's Commentaries, Vol. 8: Psalms, Part I*, tr. by John King, [1847-50], at sacred-texts.com - <http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/calvin/cc08/cc08005.htm>, accessed August 16, 2018.

[19] Alan Noble, *Disruptive Witness*, p. 20.

offered in texts.[20] Texts will not resound and form the reader – contaminate a reader – where speed and extraction for research are the only goals in reading. If every text is simply strip-mined for papers, following a story or an argument for its formative potential is occluded from the outset. Resource-mining which glosses texts does not allow us to share in the interpretative fellowship of the saints.

The other temptation in reading the Bible and important theological texts is born of the state of the industry in literary and critical studies. Critical reading in the academy, where most students and professors are formed before they come to theological institutions, has almost exclusively come to mean 'suspicious' reading. We have all become aware that texts are located, that authors write from a point of view and we want to interrogate the moves being worked on us, the 'normative' worlds writers assume. Reading, on this approach, is equivalent to smoking-out authors and their interested points of view, detective like. It is less suspicious of interested readers who seem to operate from an immune transcendental standpoint![21] Suspicious reading as it turns out is not so much interpretation as diagnosis, most often of power moves on the part of the author. While this mode of reading has produced some interesting and helpful results, an increasing number of literary and educational theorists note how critical-suspicious reading estranges readers from the claims texts make on us. We end up speaking power to truth.[22] It makes us unteachable; aloof to what we are called to consider. 'Standing back' and even paranoia is the posture. Diagnosis and exposure are the goals. Affective delight and 'heroic pedagogy' are very often the motivation.[23] Lack of surprise – confirmation of strong theory – is almost always the result. Some literary scholars even ask, 'Is critical reading really reading at all?'[24]

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[20] See Deborah H.C. Gin and Stacy Williams-Duncan, 'Faculty Development: perk or priority', pp. 20-22, in *In Trust* (Summer, 2018), p. 20.

[21] Stefan Collini, *What are Universities For?* (London: Penguin Books, 2012), p. 83.

[22] Rowan Williams, *Faith in the Public Square* (Kindle Location 5380-5386). Bloomsbury UK. Kindle Edition, 2012. Williams writes, 'The cost of giving up talking of truth is high: it means admitting that power has the last word.' (Kindle Location 5389). See also Heinz Bude, *The Mood of the World*, trans., by Simon Garnett (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), pp. 13-14. Bude describes postmodernity's 'fear of truth' and 'fear of knowledge.'

[23] Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), pp. 6-7, 186-93.

[24] Michael Warner, 'Uncritical Reading', pp. 13-39 in *Polemic: Critical or Uncritical*, ed., Jane Gallop (New York: Routledge, 2004), p. 15.

I think the more devastating comment – we theological types ought to hear – is well-articulated by Rita Felski, who asks: 'Why – even as we extol multiplicity, difference, hybridity – is the affective range of criticism so limited? Why are we so hyperarticulate about our adversaries and so excruciatingly tongue-tied about our loves?'[25] In our vigilance against texts, we use the 'barbed-wire of criticism' to 'guard us against the risk of being contaminated and animated by the words we encounter.'[26] But that's what Christian readers want as we 'pour over the Bible' … 'in a state of reverence and joy.'[27] Critical-suspicious reading can render us impermeable to Scripture and theological teachers and texts that could instruct and form us.

For much of the contemplative Christian tradition reading is analogous to eating. Reading Scripture and important theological texts requires chewing, lingering and tasting so that the text is digested for nourishment. To use another metaphor, the serious religious reader becomes a 'resonant manifold' – a chamber in which the text sounds and resounds so that meaning echoes in our lives.[28] This way of putting it draws our attention to sensuous wholistic engagement with Scripture, theological texts and traditions.[29] Commenting on the sources from which John Calvin drew his understanding of reading the Bible, Wesley Kort, notes his use of monastic practices of *lectio divina*. This way of reading was designed to allow biblical texts to have their maximum effect on the reader 'even to be inscribed on the reader's body.'[30] Reading and hearing are acts of communion with God, first with words and concepts and images; *lectio* is inseparable from meditation, from prayer and contemplation. The Bible is, as one of Calvin's favourite authors, Bernard of Clairvaux, put it, 'the wine cellar of the Holy Spirit.'[31] By reading one receives the text with the palate of the heart. And because of God's agency by means of the Bible, Scripture reading is 'inexhaustible fecund' and 'intoxicating' such that the Bible, and formative theological texts, can never be discarded or dominated.[32]

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25 Rita Felski, *The Limits of Critique*, p. 13.

26 Ibid., p. 12.

27 Ibid., p. 55.

28 Paul Griffiths, *Religious Reading* (New York: Oxford, 1999), pp. 47-48.

29 See for example Shawn Wilson, *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* (Halifax, Canada: Fernwood Publishing, 2008), pp. 55ff.

30 Wesley Kort, *Take; Read: Scripture, Contextuality and Cultural Practice* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), pp. 19-36.

31 Griffiths, *Religious Reading*, p. 42.

32 Ibid.

Let me show you an example of how reading Scripture works for Basil the Great (330-379). Here is the beginning and the end of a sermon on Genesis. 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth' is the text on which he preaches. It is quite disorienting for us to listen to him instruct us on how to comport ourselves for theological study of Scripture and the ends toward which Scripture interpretation moves.

> What ear is worthy to hear such a tale? How earnestly the soul should prepare itself for such high lessons! How pure it should be from carnal affections, how unclouded by worldly disquietudes, how active and ardent in its researches, how eager to find in its surroundings an idea of God which may be worthy of Him!
>
> 'God created the Heavens and the Earth.' Let us glorify the supreme Artificer for all that was wisely and skillfully made; by the beauty of things let us raise ourselves to Him who is above all beauty; by the grandeur of bodies, sensible and limited in their nature, let us conceive of the infinite Being whose immensity and omnipotence surpass all the efforts of the imagination. [33]

The interpretation of Scripture, engaging with the doctrine of creation in this case, will require nothing less than the conversion of the interpreter. When a person takes up what is a holy enterprise, holiness is required. We are not worthy of this kind of familiarity with God's word and work; but can be made so. And Basil is not speaking about the acquisition of interpretative tools and hermeneutical prowess, of 'herding divine realities into the approved pens of dialectical arguments and critical studies.'[34] We need to shake off the uneasiness and anxiety that the false aspirations of the flesh and the twitchy multi-tasking 21st century world engender. This includes the affective delight of showing ourselves smarter than the 'interested' author, a critic of the naïve. Without freedom from carnality and disquietude, talk about God goes straight into the service of our personal projects, political aspirations and hardened ideologies. And then instead of loosing ourselves to the doxology and God's cause in the world, we praise ourselves and use God to promote career aspirations.

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[33] Basil, Translated by Blomfield Jackson. From *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 8. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/32011.htm>. *The Hexaemeron*, Homily I, 'In the Beginning God made the heaven and the Earth', accessed August 16, 2018.

[34] Mark McIntosh, *Divine Teaching: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), p. 3.

Basil insists that interpretation is hard work; it will require us to be 'active and ardent in our research.' This diligence, spiritual and intellectual, is in the service of finding ways of speaking of God that are worthy of God. Sanctified reason scans the world for ideas that do not diminish but extol God. Basil promotes passionate creativity that searches for analogical language worthy to express the eminence of God in ways that are congruent with the scriptural story. He knows the 'weakness of our intelligence' to 'penetrate the depth of the thought' in the Bible. But he also knows the power of the words of Scripture inspired by the Spirit to produce salvation in those who hear them. The goal of interpreting Scripture is not to display our genius, but to get caught up in the work of salvation by God. Learning Scripture, and theology, is to be taught by God about God.

Where real engagement with Scripture takes place, it moves interpreters to the praise of God. Here the language soars in glorification of God who makes all things, whose beauty is above all things beautiful and whose Being is no simple extension of sensible and finite things but is one-of-a-kind and surpasses all our attempts to speak of God. And yet, by visible and finite things we raise ourselves up to the invisible and infinite God. We get summoned to 'conceive of the infinite Being […] who surpasses all the efforts of our imagination.'

That's the exact space in which theology works: to conceive of the One who eludes our grasp with the very best analogical language we can muster guided by Scripture, taught by the church's teachers and empowered by the Spirit. This requires spiritual discipline and awed attention. And it is a task that is not in vain. Christians are not agnostics. We are enabled to speak of the infinite. The confidence to do so is grounded not in our abilities but in God's movement toward us: the incarnation. Stephen Pardue states the meaning of incarnation for speech about God: 'The Lord of heaven is in the habit of crossing boundaries, and thereby bringing fecundity where barrenness otherwise reigns.'[35] It is not within our natural grasp to speak truly of God. However, words can bear witness to God, in partial and clumsy but true ways accommodated to human capacity when they get enlarged by divine grace. Theological learning requires a teachable frame, so we are taught by God, through human teachers, and so that with sanctified intelligence we borrow language fit to extol God, which is the proper end of our learning.

[35] Stephen T. Pardue, *The Mind of Christ: Humility and the Intellect in Early Christian Theology* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015), p. 182.

DANGER LURKS IN GENERALITY

The Spanish-American philosopher George Santayana said, 'The attempt to speak without speaking any particular language is not more hopeless than the attempt to have a religion that shall be no religion in particular.'[36] The point is a crucial one in theological study. We can lose everything that makes Christianity, and other faith traditions, interesting by the quick move to talk about religion in general. People do not speak language in general. And so it is with religions. People are not religious in general, they belong to distinct traditions which embody and inscribe beliefs, practices and ways of disposing lives together.

It may be one of the lingering habits of modernity to move quickly to general categories so that particular things become instances of a class. This move can inhibit real surprise, unique practices and beliefs and odd features for purposes of classification and policing reality. I am not sure there is even such a thing as religion in general. There are religions, even religions that have some common formal features. However, as soon as we press into the language and structure and practice of a faith tradition, we begin to observe subtlety and uniqueness related to the local. We use general language to handle groups of things for the sake of communicative ease. That's impossible to avoid; it is a gift that helps professors name their courses and draw disparate things together so that we have subject matter and a course outline. The difficulty arises when we mistake the general term for the subtle realities we gather under that banner. It is quite possible to have a course on sacred texts or religious communities. It may also be quite possible to observe overlap and intersection between them – commonalities and similarities certainly exist. But to reify general terms like 'sacred text' as though the Christian Bible, the Tanakh, the Koran and the Vedas are instances of class is a fallacy that distorts each of them. Every one of these texts is most at home in the community for which they function authoritatively – like Orca in the ocean. Each of these texts is embedded in a world of practice and reading and theological understanding. Remove them from their natural habitat to a clinical world for observation and examination and they are Orca in an aquarium – behaving out of keeping with their nature because domesticated.[37]

Where doctrinal discussion takes place in Christian theological study the same difficulty arises. Formal features can replace the storied world of Scripture which is the primary basis of Christian belief. If someone

[36] George Santayana, *Reason in Religion*, vol. 3 in *The Life of Reason* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906), p. 5.

[37] Thanks to my colleague Ross Lockhart for this helpful oceanic metaphor.

asks me to tell them about my spouse, I don't say, 'she's a biped.'[38] That's a formal feature, an abstraction. To describe my spouse, I'd tell stories about how we met, what she loves, what her family of birth is like. The significant doctrines (teachings) of the Christian faith are related directly to the long story that is the Bible, Holy Scripture, read according to a Trinitarian pattern with a Christ-centred focus, as the creeds of the church teach us. Doctrines are secondary commentary on the story; not designed to replace it with higher order conceptual precision. When Christians speak and write about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and salvation they have a particular story, read by particular people, with a particular pattern, in mind. 'God' is a cypher-term until we identify which God we are speaking about. Christians identify this God through the long narrative of the Bible. This is the God of Abraham and Sarah, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is this God identified with these people, who creates the world and people and makes and keeps covenant promises with Israel for the sake of the world. This is a God who comes among us as one of us, who lives, dies and rises again for our salvation as Jesus Christ and sends the Holy Spirit to direct the transformation of all things to God's good ends. That's not God in general, an instance of a general class. As Ludwig Wittgenstein said, 'don't think, but look.'[39]

BEFORE WE SPEAK, WE ARE SPOKEN TO

The assumption that we can speak of God in theological study is a big one and it is an arrogant one if we believe we can manufacture this speech out of the residue of our interiority, community experience, naked observation of the world or current cultural trends. The danger is as Voltaire noted: 'God made man in God's image, and man returned the favour.' Idolatry is a perpetual danger in 'constructive' theology and it is especially acute when theology is forgetful of divine initiative and divine disclosure.

In the history of Christian theology, revelation is what generates our salvation and our thankful, awestruck, bewildered speech about God. We meet God in the places where God has chosen to meet us. And the good news is that God, if the author of Hebrews is right, is loquacious. If we have a problem around God speaking, it will be that God is way too communicative. Based on biblical testimony that's what happens to Isaiah and John of Patmos and to people whom Jesus delivered with a word. They were all gob smacked; amazed. They asked, 'Who is this?' said, 'he speaks

[38] Thanks to my friend Bishop William Willimon for this example of abstraction from the personal to the conceptual.

[39] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 3d ed, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan, 1958), #66.

with authority.' Stammering witness to what disorients and reorients finds a voice. This God wants to be known and loved. This God desires fellowship; opens a conversation[40] with the creatures in the world God made. This God chooses not to be God without us. And so, God talks 'baby talk,' says Martin Luther. God accommodates to our condition, says John Calvin, so that we can receive words about God, experience fellowship and life as God intended it.[41] Behind both these statement lies the doctrine of the incarnation. We understand in Jesus of Nazareth, the Word become flesh, that creaturely reality, flesh and language, is graced to accommodate divine speech. We can know God, not exhaustively, but truly through God's effective downward reach toward us and entry into the human condition. God can effectively deliver the message of reconciliation. 'The Holy Spirit is no skeptic.'[42]

Having been spoken to, the church speaks. Christians, including theologians, are witnesses with words to what God has done for the world in Jesus Christ. Lately, the church and some of its theologians seem to draw back a bit from speaking about God, as a humble gesture. There is wisdom in this. Apophatic theology ('negative theology' which articulates what we don't know about God since God is beyond any final formulation) is a noble part of the mystic traditions of Christian theology. God's infinity and beauty and grandeur exceed our comprehension, always and everywhere. Awe is the human gesture Scripture records before the revelation of God.

There is, however, more than one kind of apophatic theology. Some of what passes for 'apophatic' theology is more akin to agnosticism born of Enlightenment philosophy around epistemological limits. We have no sensible experience of God, according to Kant, and so no real knowledge of God. This approach to the limits of theological language is, it seems to me, simply a denial of revelation; that is, that God can effectively make God's self known through Jesus of Nazareth. Apophatic theology of this sort may not be about humility but rather an attempt to press revelation into a theory.[43]

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40 Robert Jenson maintains that the possibility of conversation with God is what it means to be made in God's image. *A Theology in Outline: Can These Bones Live* (New York: Oxford, 2016), pp. 4, 14-16, 68-69.

41 Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols., ed., John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), I.13.1.

42 Martin Luther, in Jaroslav Pelikan and Helmut T. Lehman, gen. eds., *Luther's Works*, vol. 33: *Career of the Reformer III*, Philip Watson, ed., 'The Bondage of the Will', trans. by Jaroslav Pelikan (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), p. 24.

43 For a detailed discussion of differences between 'classical apophaticism' and its modern Kantian versions with examples see Denys Turner, *The Darkness*

Negative theology, in the history of the Christian church, is less sanguine where it comes to speech about God. It is often accompanied by a more kataphatic confidence; that is, while we can cannot say everything about God, we can truly, but never exhaustively, speak of God by grace. It affirms that we cannot *finally* capture who God is in our formulations; but also that this is a joy, not a reason for silence. The inability ever to reach closure in our speech about God,

> doesn't lead them to conclude that nothing can be said of God. What they affirm is that no form of words, however true as far as it goes, is going to be fully adequate; there is always more to say (even in heaven). This is a theology that is hopeful because of the conviction that there is always more, and that this 'more' is always more compelling and wonderful.[44]

And so, we speak of God as those who have heard and are provoked to praise. We pray for deliverance and take up practices to temper our carnal affections and worldly disquietudes and, like Basil, we scan the world in search of analogical language which may be worthy of God. In Christian theology, we take up the invitation 'to conceive of the infinite Being whose immensity and omnipotence surpass all the efforts of the imagination.' And so we pray . . . 'Come Holy Spirit.'

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of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), cited in Pardue, *The Mind of Christ*, p. 178.

[44] Rowan Williams, *Faith in the Public Square* (Kindle Location 1408-1414). (Bloomsbury UK. Kindle Edition, 2012). See also the lucid treatment of apophatic and kataphatic traditions in Rigby, *Holding Faith*, pp. 19-25.

John Polkinghorne on Creation

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INTRODUCTION

If you were having a thirty-minute coffee break with John Polkinghorne (from now on, JP) in a Physics laboratory in Cambridge in the late 1970s, you were probably asking him what the evidence was for the truth of Christianity. If you were doing that instead of talking theoretical physics, it was because he had announced that he was changing his job in what was not exactly a prestigious career move. Born in 1930, JP was appointed to a new chair in Mathematical Physics in the University of Cambridge in 1968. A decade on, he was seeking ordination into the ministry of the Church of England. After his training and a short period in parish ministry, he returned to Cambridge, first as Dean of Trinity Hall and then as President of Queens' College from which role he retired in 1996. A series of writings over a period of around three decades established him as one of the leading scientist-theologians of our day.

What follows is an account of how he understands creation. His approach to it is embedded in the way that he understands the nature of theology, science and their relationship. In the spirit of pacific and oily conformity, I acquiesce in the widespread judgement that an early trilogy provides an admirable introduction to his thought and steer my exposition of JP on creation, taking my bearings from the middle volume.[1] Because JP emphasizes creation as *creatio continua* and does not sharply distinguish *creatio continua* from providence, it is in principle unsatisfactory in an account of his view of creation to privilege *Science and Creation* over the subsequent volume, *Science and Providence*. However, a glance at the chapter titles in the latter volume – on miracle, evil, prayer, time, incarnation, sacrament and hope – indicates the practical impossibility of

[1] *Science and Creation: the search for understanding* (London: SPCK, 1988). It was preceded by *One World: the interaction of science and theology* (London: SPCK, 1986) and succeeded by *Science and Providence: God's Interaction with the World* (London: SPCK, 1989). Of *One World*, JP remarked in his autobiography: 'Looking at […] the book again today, I am struck by how many themes it contains, even if treated in brief, that were to prove recurrent concerns given further and more developed treatment in my subsequent writings', *From Physicist to Priest: an Autobiography* (London: SPCK, 2007), p. 137.

including all relevant material in a single article. Because JP also emphasizes eschatological *nova creatio*, omitting discussion of his eschatology is equally unsatisfactory but equally a practical necessity for the same reason.[2] If I may further bare the self-pitying travails of the conscientious academic soul, hardest to negotiate is the question of treating JP on divine action. Against the fact that my topic is creation and not divine action must be set the fact that JP frequently concentrates his thought on the latter in order to elucidate the inseparable former. The clamour of divine action to appear somewhere in this article is irresistible.

JP's thought has known a degree of change and modification along the way but only one shift is relevant for us.[3] My article is mainly descriptive, but I raise some critical questions at the end.[4]

OUR WORLD

The title of the first volume in the trilogy is eloquent: *One World*. Science and theology seek, in partnership, to understand it. We can say what the world is like. JP is a critical realist: 'Science is the rational exploration of what is the case'.[5] Although he makes remarks on the philosophy of sci-

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2 JP observes that '[e]schatology is the keystone of the edifice of theological thinking, holding the whole building together', *The God of Hope and the End of the World* (London: SPCK, 2002), p. 140.

3 For a demonstration of continuity, we should read JP's 'Some Responses' in Fraser Watts and Christopher C. Knight, eds., *God and the Scientist: Exploring the Work of John Polkinghorne* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 267-73 after reading the works which stretch from *One World* through his 'mini-systematic theology', *Science and Christian Belief: Theological Reflections of a Bottom-up Thinker* (London: SPCK, 1994) to his overview volume, *Quarks, Chaos and Christianity: Questions to Science and Religion* (London: SPCK, 1994). The designation 'mini-systematic theology' is found in Polkinghorne's, *Scientists as Theologians: a comparison of the writings of Ian Barbour, Arthur Peacocke and John Polkinghorne* (London: SPCK, 1996), p. 8. Amongst shifts in perspective which do not affect my exposition are his later move in the direction of giving scope to metaphor in relation to model, *Faith, Science and Understanding* (London: SPCK, 2000), p. 84. This bears on the precise formulation of JP's critical realism.

4 Excluded from my account are JP's popular scientific works although he noted that *The Quantum World*, published in 1984, was the best-selling of all his works and describes *Rochester Roundabout* (1989) as 'the book I have written that comes nearest to achieving what I had in mind in setting out to write it', *From Physicist to Priest*, pp. 65 and 67.

5 *Serious Talk: Science and Religion in Dialogue* (London: SCM, 1996), p. 35. JP's literature is extraordinarily repetitive so I shall usually give one reference

ence in the course of his defence of critical realism, his realist conviction is rooted in his and his colleagues' experience as practising scientists.[6] Their strong working intuition is that they are discovering things about the world as it is and, if the appeal to intuition be challenged, there remains the question: what can possibly account for the success of science if it fails to attain 'verisimilitude'?[7] JP defends neither a naïve objectivity nor the possibility of discovering ultimate, definitive scientific truth, but he is sure that, in the course of the history of science, there is an actual objective gain in knowledge.[8] His favourite philosopher of science is Michael Polanyi, partly because Polanyi was highly trained in scientific work and did not merely philosophise about it in practical innocence.[9] Theology is also summoned to critical realism, aiming to make sense of the world as it

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where – literally – a dozen or more could be given.

6 For example, Thomas Kuhn's 'account of science is not one that makes sense to a scientist', *Beyond Science: the Wider Human Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 12.

7 *Scientists as Theologians*, p. 3. By 'verisimilitude' JP means 'mapping within the limits of a scale', *Beyond Science*, p. 14. Historically, science succeeded quite simply because 'it really did represent aspects of the way things are', *Quarks, Chaos and Christianity*, p. 7. 'Any other account would make sustained instrumental success a mysterious miracle', *Serious Talk*, p. 36.

8 'At the heart of scientific realism lies the conviction that intelligibility is the reliable guide to ontology, that concepts and entities whose postulation enables us to make deep sense of wide swathes of experience, are to be taken with the utmost seriousness as candidate descriptions of what is actually the case', *Belief in God in an Age of Science* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 109-10.

9 'Reflections of a Bottom-up Thinker' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 2. JP is also indebted to Polanyi more specifically on the questions of tacit knowledge and the unformalizable role of skill and personal judgement in scientific discovery, *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, p. 106. It is interesting, however, that, despite his accompanying interest in divine agency, he seems not to make use of a congenial relevant formulation on the 'stratified structure of comprehensive entities' in Polanyi's *Knowing and Being*: see, e.g., Owen Thomas, 'Recent Thought on Divine Agency' in Brian Hebblethwaite and Edward Henderson, *Divine Action: Studies Inspired by the Philosophical Theology of Austin Farrer* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1990), p. 45. Alister McGrath draws attention to the importance of the same point in Polanyi's *The Tacit Dimension* in *A Scientific Theology: volume 2, Reality* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2002), p. 209.

is and, doing commerce in what is not directly observable, it also eschews naïve objectivity.[10]

So what is the world like? For JP, that is the same question as: what is creation like? It is a basic question; *One World* was preceded by *The Way the World Is*.[11] In answering the question, it goes without saying that JP operates with the standard scientific picture of a world that evolved out of a cosmic big bang.[12] The twentieth century witnessed a big shift from the mechanistic world of the eighteenth century to our open world; first, quantum and then chaos theory effected that.[13] The complex dynamic systems which underlie chaos theory are the most striking of all features making for an open world. They characterise a cosmic order and openness correspondingly conceptualized in terms of necessity and of chance, i.e., of its lawful regularity and historical contingency.[14]

In this context, JP develops an account of causality. Along with the staple 'bottom-up' causality which is the fare of physicists, where energy inputs are discerned by tracking the behaviour of the physical parts, JP emphasises a 'top-down' causality consisting of inputs of 'pattern-formation' which we cannot track in the same discrete behavioural elemental terms but which we can rationally posit in an account of the overall behaviour of the whole. This latter input is 'information' and it is not energetic.[15] Dynamic development can yield one rather than another cosmic 'structure of […] future history' without the difference being specifiable

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10 See the first two chapters of *Scientists as Theologians*. For a good statement of what critical realism is, see *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, chapter 5.

11 *The Way the World Is* (London: Triangle, 1983).

12 For his summary of the standard picture up till the emergence of cosmic self-awareness through to the modern form of *homo sapiens* around 40,000 years ago, see *Science and Christian Belief*, pp. 71-73. However, we must not be misled into thinking that JP accepts 'the total adequacy of a neo-Darwinian account of evolutionary history': it has neither accounted for the relation of its findings to the time-scale with which it works nor explained how increasing complexity actually works, especially in relation to the evolution of the hominid brain, *Science and Christian Belief*, pp. 16-17. For the insufficiency of a Darwinian evolutionary explanation in relation to quantum theory, see Polkinghorne, *Quantum Physics and Theology: an unexpected kinship* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 7-8.

13 Of quantum theory, JP says: 'At the level of explanation and prediction it is, perhaps, the most successful scientific theory ever. Yet', he adds, 'we do not understand it', *Faith, Science and Understanding* (London; SPCK, 2000), p. 6.

14 See, e.g., *Faith, Science and Understanding*, p. 6. This is integrated into a theological account in chapter 6.

15 See, e.g., *Reason and Reality* (London: SPCK, 1991), chapter 3.

in terms of energy.[16] So there is a 'bottom-down' operation of the whole, a pattern-formation decisively constitutive of that whole which is the product of active informational non-energetic input. 'By information is meant something like the appropriate specification of dynamical patterns of ordered behaviour'.[17] 'Something like' is not a lapse into vagueness; scientists are still en route to understanding information and understanding it as the stuff of the universe, at least as basic as matter and energy.[18] Of course, energetic and informational causalities operate concurrently. Informational causality can be succinctly described as a 'holistic form […] that organizes the world's patterns of behaviour at the structural level.'[19] The big picture is that chaotic systems are sensitive to the very slightest conditional change and this massively affects the future.[20] Here we encounter openness, 'gaps' in the universe, not the epistemic gaps which

16 *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, p. 62. More precisely, we witness only 'vanishingly small' energetic differences; see Nicholas Saunders, 'Polkinghorne on Mathematics and Chaos Theory' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 64.

17 *Exploring Reality* (London: SPCK, 2005), p. 31.

18 JP observes that it is 'beyond my power to specify with precision' how information is related to dynamic structure, *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, p. 50, n. 2. But he is 'bold enough to conjecture that by the end of the twenty-first century, an appropriately formulated concept of information will have taken its place alongside energy as a fundamental category in science', *Theology in the Context of Science* (London: SPCK, 2008), p. 78. He is a strong opponent of reductionism and the belief that the sub-atomic world is the basis of scientific explanation in physics. To get at JP's reasoning, we should need to delve into an area which we must unfortunately neglect, namely, his understanding of personhood. To take a simple example, he understands the intentional action of raising an arm as an action of the whole individual exercising a top-down causality irreducible to sub-atomic explanation, *Science and Theology: an Introduction* (London: SPCK, 1998), p. 88.

19 With Terry J. Wright, 'Is Informational Causality Primary Causality? A Study of an Aspect of John Polkinghorne's Account of Divine Action' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 34. Note what JP says of quantum events, namely, that '[s]ubatomic events scarcely look like promising locations for holistic causality […]. If quantum theory does have a role to play in solving the problem of agency, it will only be because its effects are amplified in some way to produce an openness at the level of classical physics', *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, p. 60. Cosmic openness is the function of chaos and not of quantum.

20 Although the investigation of chaos may be defined – e.g., as 'the qualitative study of unstable aperiodic behaviour in deterministic non-linear systems' (Kellert) – it does not follow that chaos *theory* can be dogmatic on what constitutes mathematical chaos. So Saunders, 'Polkinghorne on Mathematics' in

wrongly led to past talk of the 'God of the gaps' but ontic gaps which describe cosmic openness.[21] We shall later see how JP takes this up into a theological account of divine causal action.

So much for the world; what of theology? JP espouses a natural theology, an account of which, including the significance of moral and aesthetic experience, would take us too far out of our way, but we should note his conviction that the world as scientifically described points to a Creator.[22] JP marvels at a world whose accessibility to our understanding goes far beyond our evolutionary need to survive and adapt.[23] Not only is the world intelligible, it is mathematically beautiful and mathematics is 'unreasonably effective' (Eugene Wigner) in describing it; how can the free creation of the human mind, which mathematics seems to be, prove so 'finely tuned to the structure of the universe'?[24] Exploring the

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Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 53, n. 8. I shall later note the significance of mathematics for JP.

21 'One god who is well and truly dead is the god of the gaps', *Traffic in Truth: Exchanges Between Science and Theology* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2000), p. 29. If gap language is used positively, it must be in a different way: 'In this *intrinsic* sense, we are quite properly "people of the gaps" and God is quite properly a God of that kind of gap also', *Serious Talk*, p. 86. I apostrophise at this juncture to say that JP has a tendentious understanding of the God of the gaps as one who is related just to 'the bits that are hard to understand' in creation and not to the whole of it', *Traffic in Truth*, p. 30. He says this more than once: see *Quarks, Chaos and Christianity*, p. 22. He does not meet the objection that the historical 'God of the gaps' is ontically related to the whole of creation but invoked as an *explanation* for what is scientifically inexplicable – wider ontological denial is not entailed in narrower epistemological appeal. It is also noteworthy that – rightly or wrongly – Arthur Peacocke believed that Polkinghorne's account of indeterministic systems constituted a gap for God, cited in James M. Watkins, 'John Polkinghorne's Kenotic Theology of Creation and its Implications for a Theory of Human Creativity' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 230.

22 I also ignore JP's axiological argument for the existence of God, *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, p. 20.

23 With reference to our knowledge of the quantum world, JP remarks: 'I cannot believe that our ability to understand its strange character is a curious spin-off from our ancestors having had to dodge saber-toothed tigers', *Beyond Science*, p. 79.

24 *Beyond Science*, p. 80. '[T]ime and time again, the search for beautiful equations has proved the key to fruitful advance in fundamental physics […]. This profound human ability to understand the world […] goes far beyond any evolved capacity needed in the struggle for survival', *Scientists as Theologians*, p. 52.

metaphysical implications of physics leads us to the key player in natural theology – the Anthropic Principle. The fine-tuning of the world so that carbon-based and eventually human life can emerge from its fabric is surely best (by far) explained if we posit a Creator.[25] It is an argument from design but, JP claims, not of the old kind which worked from the superficial appearance of outward design to the conclusion that there is a Designer. JP's argument works strictly from the physics, chemistry and biology of the universe as disclosed by a rigorous scientific account, complementing and not rivalling such an account.[26] His is a 'revived and revised natural theology'.[27]

Does JP think that a natural theology arising from a scientific account of the world should exercise any constraint on the Christian understanding of creation? Well, he would doubtless say that anything which is known, whether through science or any other avenue, self-evidently constrains what we may rightfully say about anything else.[28] For example, if science definitively discloses a heliocentric world, this quite rightly exercises a constraint on Christian doctrine. For JP, natural theology is part of theology, integrated into the rest of theology in a single endeavour

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[25] *Serious Talk*, pp. 68-72. JP constantly reiterates this point, making distinctions between types of Anthropic Principle, e.g., in *Reason and Reality*, chapter 6. See *Scientists as Theologians*, p. 52 on the moderate Anthropic Principle. As far as JP is concerned, the alternative explanation – that there are millions of other universes so that the probability of the existence of one as fine-tuned as ours is increased – altogether lacks scientific evidence in its support.

[26] 'This new natural theology differs from the old-style natural theology of Anselm and Aquinas by refraining from talking about "proofs" of God's existence and […] from the old-style natural theology of William Paley […] by basing its argument not upon particular occurrences (the coming-to-be of the eye or life itself) but on the character of the physical fabric of the world, which is the necessary ground for the possibility of any occurrence', *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, p. 10. His reading of the history of natural theology has been challenged: see Russell Re Manning, 'On Revising Natural Theology: John Polkinghorne and the False Modesty of Liberal Theology' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, pp. 210-11. In conjunction with this, see Del Ratzsch, *Science and its Limits: the Natural Sciences in Christian Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL/Leicester, UK: IVP, 2000), pp. 126-28. It is interesting to notice that JP is not strongly opposed to Intelligent Design, *Faith, Science and Understanding*, p. 77.

[27] *Scientists as Theologians*, p. 52.

[28] Nothing which is known can be validly contradicted because, if the putative contradiction stands, then what was originally taken to be known was not actually known.

to understand God.[29] To the extent that this constitutes scientific 'constraint', JP certainly does not wish it to be understood as imperialism, domination or control:

> Science cannot tell theology how to answer theological questions, and theology cannot tell science how to answer scientific questions […]. Science will tell theology what the structure and the history of the physical world are like. Theology will gratefully acknowledge these gifts and seek to set them within the more profound and comprehensive setting that belief in God affords.[30]

Where moves towards a theological understanding are made on the basis of science, JP introduces convergent moves on the basis of Christian doctrine in order to attain a unified and consistent conclusion.[31] Perhaps the most significant consonance in relation to creation emerges when we observe the combination of order and openness in the world disclosed by science. Order bespeaks a God of order, of rationality and of fidelity to that order and this is the creational expression of his internal rationality. Openness bespeaks a God who does not determine all things. JP takes the relevant theological propositions to be capable of being theologically established and not foisted unilaterally on theology by science.

CREATOR AND CREATION

So we arrive at JP's theology of creation and the trilogy.[32] Creation comes up for sustained, if summary, discussion in *One World* under the rubric of 'Possible Conflicts' between science and theology (pp. 65-77). Conflict turns out to be needless in relation to cosmic origins: divine causality and physical causality operate on different and compatible levels, divine creation being 'properly understood as a continuing act of God's will which maintains the cosmos moment by moment. It is not just about some initiating instant' (p. 66). In so maintaining it, God, as 'a patient and subtle Creator' effectively works out his purposes through the nexus of chance

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29 *Science and Christian Belief*, p. 43.

30 *Traffic in Truth*, pp. 10-11. Science can, 'to a minor degree, constrain the form of some of the answers that can be proposed' by theology, *Science and the Trinity: the Christian Encounter with Reality* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 5.

31 If we are entertaining the vocabulary of constraint, there is two-way traffic: the first consequence of the way in which Christians (and other theists) think about creation 'is that we expect the world to be orderly, because its Creator is rational and consistent', *Quarks, Chaos and Christianity*, p. 18.

32 From now on, page references to the trilogy will usually appear in the text.

and necessity, contingency and potentiality' (p. 69). Conflict also turns out to be needless in relation to divine interaction with the world and at this juncture JP introduces a concept, albeit tentatively, which will be key in his subsequent literature: the concept of kenosis. God is love and this means that his interaction with the world will inevitably follow the way of love. Such 'may well involve the acceptance by its author of some measure of limitation, a kenosis […] of divine power' (p. 71). God does not determine; he interacts with the world.

The tentative 'may' in the description above is transmuted into something more definite in *Science and Creation*, a single-volume gift of a work to the lazy expositor tasked with expounding JP on creation, for its main lines are adumbrated and supplemented rather than fundamentally altered in the subsequent literature. At least this is so for the most part. There is one significant shift in JP's thinking. In a second edition, published eighteen years later, JP acknowledged that he had changed his mind on one aspect of divine causal activity. In the first edition, divine action is not one cause amongst many worldly causes, for it features causality of a different order. By the time of the second edition, the author 'had come to believe that God may choose to act as a providential cause within the open grain of nature', a 'gracious decision to act in this way […] being part of the divine kenosis in creation'.[33] That is, divine causal activity can take mundane as well as a divinely unique form. We shall shortly see that with the word 'kenosis' we arrive at something fundamental in JP's thought on creation.

In *Science and Creation*, after advancing the cause of natural theology and the need for metaphysics which physics signals, JP offers a relatively technical account of key features of the physical world laid bare by modern science – its generic becoming and the particularity of its evolutionary course; its embodiment of the interplay of chance and necessity, symmetry and spontaneity. What theological account of the cosmos and its Creator is consonant with this? JP reiterates his belief that the doctrine of creation should not be 'conceived of as a doctrine of temporal origin', a mistake not uncommon in the history of Christian thought (p. 54). God's sustaining of the cosmos 'by a continuous act of will' is creative activity in a full-orbed sense. Key for JP is the thought of God creating by 'letting-

[33] *Science and Creation* (Conshohocken, PA: Templeton, 2006), p. xii. The distance which JP has travelled here is indicated by the remark in the first edition that the God conceived of as Creator in his (JP's) terms is removed '*as far as possible* from any idea of a demiurge. The latter is a cause among causes' (p. 55). Italics are mine. It should go without saying that JP does not think that the God of the first edition has *in toto* transformed into the demiurge of the second.

be', not in the mode of deistic absence but in a much subtler and complex way. However, not only must the traditional understanding of creation be re-envisioned in order to make space for continuous letting-be; something metaphysically richer is in order. Enter Moltmann. Moltmann rejects any belief that *creatio ex nihilo* is creation either out of the divine being or out of pre-existent matter. Rather, '[i]t is only God's withdrawal into himself which gives that *nihil* [as in *ex nihilo*] the space in which God becomes creatively active.'[34] The creation which is outside God, according to Moltmann, 'exists simultaneously *in God*, in the space which God has made for it in his omnipresence […]. Has God not therefore created the world 'in himself', giving it time *in* his eternity, finitude *in* his infinity, space *in* his omnipresence and freedom *in* his selfless love?'

'Moltmann is the contemporary theologian who has been the greatest influence on me in my own theological thinking.'[35] When it comes specifically to the doctrine of creation, two of Moltmann's works command JP's attention: *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God* and *God in Creation*.[36] The discussion in *The Trinity* which is of interest to JP and which Moltmann develops in *God in Creation* sets out Moltmann's unease with the traditional notion of God creating *ex nihilo* as an act of sheer will, in a form constrained *by* his nature but not *out of* a nature constrained to create.[37] On a traditional understanding, God is contingently a creator in the sense that he might not have created, but he is not eternally creative. He is not essentially self-communicating love except within the self-enclosed Trinity. Supposedly, he creates 'outwards', but herein lies the problem. What can 'outwards' be for God? If there is an 'outside' vis-à-vis God, 'then we must assume […] an equally eternal non-divine or counter-divine entity, which would be "outside". But would this not be to contradict God's divinity, which means his omnipresence?'[38] Moltmann proposes that in order for God to create, he must limit himself, making space within himself by self-limiting withdrawal. There are thus two movements: first, the letting-be of space by withdrawal and then creation *ex nihilo* in that space (the

[34] The citations from Moltmann are found on p. 61 of *Science and Creation*.

[35] 'Some Responses' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 270. Consistently rejecting both panentheism and process thought (e.g. *Science and Christian Belief*, pp. 64-68), JP finds in Moltmann's thought an acceptable alternative to traditional theistic orthodoxy.

[36] Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God: the doctrine of God* (London: SCM, 1981) and *God in Creation: an ecological doctrine of creation* (London: SCM, 1985).

[37] See *Trinity*, pp. 105-14 and *God in Creation*, chapter 4.

[38] *Trinity*, p. 109.

nihil).[39] Christian theology has barely considered this option historically – '[N]o one has even asked the critical question: can the omnipotent God have an 'outward' aspect at all?'[40] – but the Jewish kabbalistic tradition explored it particularly via Isaac Luria's notion of *zimsum*, a concentrated contraction and withdrawing of oneself into oneself, God into himself.

Why does JP (whose references to Moltmann on this point are not confined to *Science and Creation*) support this notion? As far as he is concerned, the traditional characterization of the God who created *ex nihilo*, as one who willed freely and in accordance with his nature, is correct in its general formulation as far it goes. But the traditional understanding of divine self-sufficiency which accompanies it neglects the nature of God as the generous outflow of love and Moltmann correctly sees that.[41] Love bestows freedom. Creative love involves, though involves more than, an ongoing gift of freedom embedded in a *creatio continua*. In relation to the world's emergence, we have 'the difficult but essential task of trying to preserve both the independence of creation and its Creator's involvement with it' (*Science and Creation*, p. 62) and this is where Moltmann, with his reference to the *zimsum*, attracts JP's commendation.

Moltmann is not alone in attracting it. He is joined in *Science and Creation* by a second influential figure, W. H. Vanstone.[42] Vanstone is no less influential than is Moltmann on this point in particular, but their influences are a bit different, if neatly convergent. Whereas they are both influential in relation to kenosis, Moltmann's influence is that of the theologian, Vanstone's that of the pastor.[43] Vanstone is appreciated and saluted for his insight into the nature of love, even if he can be 'excessive' (p. 62). In

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39 The space created by divine withdrawal is not a vacuum: it is 'God-structured', Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology* (London: SCM, 1996), p. 299.

40 *God in Creation*, p. 86.

41 Alan Torrance, who notes the appropriate conceptual distinctions in Moltmann, for whom 'the predicate *ex nihilo* serves to emphasise the ultimate and unconditioned nature of the divine love', rightly characterises creation here as an 'ecstatic act of divine communion', '*Creatio Ex Nihilo* and the Spatio-Temporal Dimensions with Special Reference to Jürgen Moltmann and D. C. Williams', in Colin E. Gunton, ed., *The Doctrine of Creation: Essays in Dogmatics, History and Philosophy* (London, UK/New York, NY: T&T Clark, 1997), pp. 83-104, quotations from pp. 84-85.

42 Only one work by Vanstone features here, *Love's Endeavour, Love's Expense: The Response of Being to the Love of God* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1977).

43 So in the Gifford Lectures, *Science and Christian Belief*, Moltmann is prominent and Vanstone barely present.

a volume where he compares his own thought with that of other scientist-theologians (Ian Barbour and Arthur Peacocke) JP points out that '[w]e all refer to the writing of W. H. Vanstone', remarking that '[a]'lthough his thought is motivated by a profound meditation on the nature of creation by love and it shows no sign of an engagement with modern science, it has led him to give what is a perfect insight into the nature of an evolutionary universe.'[44]

It is useful if we briefly turn to Vanstone himself. Vanstone stipulated 'three marks or signs' which deny 'the authenticity of love'.[45] The first is limitation; the second is control; the third is detachment. 'From these we may approximate to a description of authentic love as limitless, as precarious and as vulnerable.'[46] From an agentic point of view, utter self-expenditure, willingness to accept the utter precariousness of love's outcome and utter lack of self-sufficiency are the order of the lover's day. If ideal human love is like that, divine love cannot possibly be different without doing violence to our use of the word 'love'.[47]

Hence a chapter in Vanstone's work titled, 'The Kenosis of God'. Prescinding somewhat, it would seem, from his account of the phenomenology of love, Vanstone avers as a matter of theological principle that 'when Christian devotion contemplates the Redeemer, it attributes to his "labour" a limitlessness, a vulnerability and a precariousness which mark it as the labour of authentic love' and, this being so, the Creator must also be so characterized.[48] This is the principle which governs Vanstone's account in this chapter. The self-sufficient, controlling God who guaran-

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44 *Scientists as Theologians*, p. 46. JP also avers here that the three scientist-theologians all believe also in divine self-limitation or kenosis (p. 45). He is being gentle in his reference to Vanstone and modern science; in the chapter of *Love's Endeavour* where he does talk about science (chapter 5), Vanstone takes as modern a scientific world-view which JP throughout his work shows to be outdated and wrong.

45 *Love's Endeavour*, p. 42.

46 *Love's Endeavour*, p. 53. 'It is perhaps proper that our approximation should contain a degree of mistiness and imprecision: for we are describing not that which any man has known or experienced but that towards which every man, at the depth of his being which is more profound than language, gropes and aspires' (pp. 53-54).

47 'If we can describe the form of authentic love, we can hardly look elsewhere for a description of the love of God. If we can say "what love ought to be", we need enquire no further what the love of God is. Any further question would be profitless and even meaningless enquiry into "an unknown something"', *Love's Endeavour*, p. 39.

48 *Love's Endeavour*, pp. 58-59.

tees outcomes is out of the question. JP is impressed by the main line of this reasoning.[49] The world is one of being, order and necessity but also of becoming, disorder and chance. This is our world of evolutionary process. 'Without chance there would be no change and development; without necessity there would be no preservation and selection. They are the yin and yang of evolution.'[50] Chance most certainly does not do away with Christian belief.[51] It is itself embraced within God's purposes, but it is not the product of divine control. '[T]he role of chance in the world's process is a reflection of the precariousness inescapable in the gift of freedom by love' (*Science and Creation*, p. xiii). This is what Vanstone so strikingly captures, without the science. Luria's *zimsum* is Vanstone's *kenosis*.[52]

I have given Moltmann and Vanstone expository space because they are important co-contributors to JP's fundamental theological understanding of creation.[53] In *The Work of Love*, a collection edited by JP, they

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[49] JP uses the word 'excessive' (see above) without comment, but a comparison of his thought on creation with that of Vanstone yields at least two points of disagreement. The first is that JP believes, as Vanstone does not, that theodicy requires the conviction that God necessarily brings out of evil a greater good (see *Love's Endeavour*, p. 65). The second, and more prominent, is that JP believes that the ultimate eschatological triumph of God, albeit not achieved via a determinate programme, is an article of faith. Vanstone, in a way which is arguably consistent with his governing theological principles, says that '[t]here is given to the creation the power to determine the love of God as either triumphant or tragic love', *Love's Endeavour*, p. 67. This is also a christological (staurocentric) principle (p. 70).

[50] *One World*, p. 51.

[51] JP calls it 'tame chance' because it functions within a lawfully regular environment, *Science and Providence*, p. 30.

[52] 'Creation as kenosis' is a loose, though perhaps not hopelessly loose, family of ideas rather than a uniform point of view. For the variety amongst panentheistic thinkers alone, see Watkins, 'John Polkinghorne's Kenotic Theology' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 222, n. 15. From a different theological vantage-point, we may also mention Emil Brunner, whom Moltmann cites in this connection in *Trinity*, p. 237, n. 23 and *God in Creation*, p. 87. JP attributes to T. F. Torrance a kenotic view of creation in *Faith, Science and Understanding*, p. 180.

[53] Before taking our leave of Vanstone, I note that he rather unexpectedly qualifies his account of God by emphasising the danger of excessive anthropomorphism, applying this to talk of divine vulnerability and describing a 'self-emptying of Him Who is already in every way fulfilled', *Love's Endeavour*, p. 69. Speaking generally, he holds that 'between that which is properly predicated of God and that which is improperly predicated we cannot draw the line with any confidence' (p. 67).

are picked out as the inspiration for the essays gathered together there.[54] JP's essay on 'Kenotic Creation and Divine Action' in this collection is an important one. When, in the preface to the second edition of *Science and Creation*, JP alluded to the modification of his position on divine causality, it is to this essay that he referred. Its importance for understanding JP on creation lies in its integration of divine kenosis into his thinking about divine causality (or *vice versa*).

For some time before *The Work of Love*, JP had explored a theological account of the scientific phenomenon of top-down causality. 'The notion of such top-down causality seems to offer an attractive possible analogy to the way in which God could interact with creatures'.[55] Reminding us in his essay in *The Work of Love* that a scientific account of the nature of informational causality generates metaphysical questions, he envisions the possibility of a theological account incorporating the science and encompassing 'our human experience of willed action and our religious intuitions of God's providential care'.[56] An account of special providence (particular divine action in the process of creation as opposed to the general providence which is the divine sustenance of cosmic order) might be metaphysically parsed in terms of 'God acting through *pure* information input' in contrast to creatures, whose acts 'involve a mixture of energetic and informational causalities' on account of their embodiment (p. 101). 'Active information might prove to be the scientific equivalent of the immanent working of the Spirit on the 'inside' of creation.'[57] This is preferable to trying to discern divine action at quantum level.[58] On this (active information) scenario, God is not a cause amongst causes, not a *dramatis persona* but an improvisatory director.[59]

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54 Polkinghorne, ed., *The Work of Love: creation as kenosis* (Grand Rapids, MI/ Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2001), p. x. Moltmann is himself one of the essayists in this collection.

55 *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, p. 58.

56 'Kenotic Creation and Divine Action', p. 100. As this is a fairly brief essay (pp. 90-106), I shall not cite the particular page references to my citations from this essay.

57 *Science and Theology*, p. 89. JP is tentative: see both *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, p. 72 and *Faith, Science and Understanding*, p. 141. Furthermore, see 'Some Responses' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 272.

58 *Faith, Science and Understanding*, p. 120.

59 Terry Wright observes that '[o]n this account, God seems to act not so much by *causing* things to happen, but by influencing the context *within which*, or the conditions *under which*, things happen', 'Is Informational Causality Primary Causality?' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 34. Although Wright may be correct in identifying an element of unclarity in JP's account,

But does this do full justice to divine kenosis? It is the realisation that it does not which now prompts JP to re-examine the distinctiveness of divine causality as proposed in his previous accounts and, while retaining that belief in this essay, to modify it by identifying a supplementary mode of divine causality, one which *does* operate as do material causes. In so acting, God is kenotically condescending to our estate.

Accordingly, JP now identifies four forms of divine kenosis. First, there is the kenosis of omnipotence: God allows evolutionary history to make itself. Second, there is the kenosis of 'simple eternity': in bringing forth creation, God 'added', as it were, a temporal pole to his deity in order to interact kenotically with creation.[60] Thirdly, there is the kenosis of omniscience: 'The future does not yet exist and this leads to the belief that even God does not yet know it'. Fourthly, there is the form which expresses JP's new move: there is the 'kenosis of causal status'. Divine special providence may now act as a cause among causes. The incarnation, which generates kenotic language in the first place, dramatically reveals the God who becomes a cause among causes. It is not that divine governance of the universe is set aside or jeopardized in incarnation; it is that incarnation tells us something about the form of divine governance. It suggests that to ascribe to God creative governance in the form of primary causality exercised by total control is mistaken; there is not total control and at least one form of divine causality is a creaturely form. The Spirit acts kenotically as did the Son in incarnation. A sound scientific account of 'intrinsic' cosmic 'unpredictabilities' opens the space for us to talk of the 'interweaving of providential and creaturely causalities'. Thus 'kenotic providential causality is also exercised energetically as well as informationally'; the identification of the working of the Spirit with pure information input is no longer simply an alternative to energetic causality.

I have alluded to this essay in order to extend my report on the crucial chapter in *Science and Creation* on 'Creation and Creator'. Moltmann

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his own description is unclear also. Presumably he means 'not so much…*but more by*' rather than '*not by*…but by' (italics are mine in the construction of each of my two alternative formulations). But the 'not so much' is metaphysically unclear. And the academically peevish will also ask whether he means 'either context or condition','both context and condition' or that 'context' and 'condition' can be used interchangeably. (I suspect the last.)

60 'Pole' is the language of process thought and Polkinghorne has sometimes been regarded as a process theologian (*Science and Christian Belief*, p. 65) although he has consistently repudiated process (along with panentheist) thought. One of his criticisms is that it regards the temporal/eternal polarity 'as a metaphysical necessity rather than a kenotic acceptance on the Creator's part of participation in temporality', *Exploring Reality*, p. 119, fn. 3.

helps JP out again in the chapter immediately following. Turning to 'The Nature of Reality' and enquiring what a unified theological and scientific account looks like, JP concentrates on the dual character of our world, comprising both material and mental phenomena. In his chapter on 'Levels of Description' in One World, after alluding to the hierarchy of knowledge we obtain when we indicate physics, chemistry, biochemistry, biology, psychology, sociology and theology, JP observed that '[t]he most important and perplexing problem in this general area of level relationships is the perpetual puzzle of the connection of mind and brain' (p. 92). He briefly remarks on it there but now takes it up further in *Science and Creation*. His conclusion is that we have 'a complementary world of mind/matter in which these polar opposites cohere as contrasting aspects of the world-stuff, encountered in greater or lesser states of organization' (p. 71).[61] 'Complementarity' in this context takes the form of contrasting accounts of the same phenomenon. The question of complementary modes of description came up in physics dramatically and famously in the case of light waves and particles which, in quantum theory, yielded an account of them as complementary actualities constituting a single reality. We can abstract from this a set of reflections on complementarity and JP holds that you can move beyond the complementarity internal to physics to the notion of the complementarity which obtains in the relation of physics to metaphysics.[62]

Such is the contrast between mind and matter which is embraced in dual-aspect monism that it allows us to speak of a 'noetic world'. '[W]e have good reason for supposing that there are inhabitants of the mental world which are not anchored in the material' (p. 75). There are truths of mathematics.[63] There might be angels. Parapsychological phenomena might inhabit such a world. All this is an attempt

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[61] Interestingly, JP does not absolutely rule out dualism (*Exploring Reality*, p. 46). To understand why, we should need to elaborate on JP's view of the resurrection of the body although this is not to imply that his view is dualist. JP finds Aquinas' view of the soul as the form of the body akin to his own, *Exploring Reality*, p. 47.

[62] JP notes that Barbour opts for understanding complementarity solely as an inner-disciplinary concept, *Reason and Reality*, p. 26. JP treats it in that restricted way in his early *The Way the World Is*, pp. 23-25.

[63] 'If there is a dualism in P's thought […] it is perhaps a dualism of mathematics and matter', Fraser Watts, 'Theology and Scientific Cosmology' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 141. He adds that '[a]lthough Polkinghorne is no dualist, it would not be difficult for someone to take his emphasis on information, and to develop it in a more dualistic way than he does himself', p. 147. JP himself observes that '[t]he one absolute duality that I believe is theologi-

> […] to do justice to what seems to me to be a fundamental human experience, namely that by our biologically evolved consciousness we participate in a realm of reality which has not come into being either with us or with the origination of the physical world in the big bang, but which has always been there.

Platonism? JP denies it for two reasons. Firstly, he is not proposing a priority of the mental over the material. Secondly, his noetic world 'is not an eternal uncreated world' (p. 77). It is not the ultimate Platonic world of the intelligible; it depends on God. Enter Moltmann with a dose of theological help. Moltmann's help comes from his musings on God as Creator of heaven and earth and the question which he poses at the beginning of the relevant chapter in *God in Creation*, 'Why Is Creation A Dual World?', i.e., a world of heaven and earth.[64] Reflecting on the basis of both biblical linguistic usage and the triune nature of God, Moltmann observed that a 'world which has been created by God, and which continues to be created every moment, is bound to be a world *open to God*.' It has its unity not in itself but in God and '[i]n this sense it is an 'open system'. Then comes a sentence which JP quotes more than once: 'We call the determined side of this system 'earth', the undetermined side 'heaven'.[65] Having earlier considered the biblical phrases, 'heaven', 'the heavens' and 'the heaven of heavens', Moltmann identifies a sense in which 'heaven' can be a 'term for the side of creation that is open to God'.[66] It is a 'kingdom of God's energies', energies which 'know no end' because 'God's potentialities are determined by the creative God himself'.

Admittedly, JP is a little cautious in the way that he describes his position in relation to that of Moltmann.[67] What he says in *Science and*

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cally essential to preserve is that between Creator (disembodied Spirit) and creatures (beings in a world of mind/matter complementarity). I see human psychosomatic unity as realised through information/matter complementarity, without denying the possibility of extremes of pure matter (stones) and pure mind (the truths of mathematics; angels?)', 'Some Responses' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 271.

64 *God in Creation*, p. 158. For what follows, see pp. 158-69 in that volume.

65 Aside from *Science and Creation*, p. 79, see *Reason and Reality*, p. 42 and *Science and Christian Belief*, p. 80.

66 '[W]e shall use the word heaven to mean *the openness to God of the world he has created', God in Creation*, p. 165. The italics are Moltmann's.

67 '[W]e can give scientific encouragement to what he is driving at', *Science and Christian Belief*, p. 80, Moltmann's thought being 'innocent […] of any detailed concern for scientific insight', *Reason and Reality*, p. 42. For the contrast, though not collision, between Moltmann and JP on openness, see Junghyung Kim, 'Christian Hope in Dialogue with Natural Science: JP's Incor-

Creation is that '[t]here is clearly some consonance between aspects of the noetic world of which I am speaking and Moltmann's created heaven', for, as Moltmann puts it, divine potentialities and potencies are not 'the potentialities and potencies' of God's 'eternal essence *per se*' but are self-designations precisely in his capacity as Creator. Thus, we may speak of heaven in this context as 'the first world God created so that from there he might form the earth, encompass it, and finally redeem it'.[68] How is this connected with and theologically helpful for JP's noetic world? Firstly, if truths of mathematics indicate a noetic world – one which we *discover*, so there really *is* a noetic realm – Moltmann's account is a salutary reminder that the noetic world is not simply that of the 'Great Mathematician'; aesthetic and moral truth reside there too. Secondly, 'God himself is not to be found in the noetic world' (p. 80). It contains his energies but not his essence. That is, the noetic world is a created world and God is not essentially part of it, but it is pervaded by his energies. Mathematics meets Moltmann: mathematics '[i]n a remarkable way […] illustrates the openness of that world which Moltmann sees as the characterizing property of created heaven' (p. 82).

All this is said in the penultimate chapter of *Science and Creation*. The final chapter, on 'Theological Science', elaborates the belief that theology and science 'share a comradely concern in the search for truth about the world' (p. 88).

JP's specific brief in *Science and Providence*, the third volume of his trilogy, is to describe how a personal God might interact with the world. The complex systems in the world scientifically disclosed to us behave in extremely subtle ways, characteristically involving 'an infinitesimally balanced sensitivity to circumstance' and entailing 'an almost infinitely multiplying variety of possible behaviours' (p. 28).[69] The flexibility of lawful process allows us to speak of both the purposive and the acquiescent wills of God.[70] The possibility of immanent divine action lies 'in those complexes whose precarious balance makes them unsusceptible to prediction' (p. 32). JP does not believe that immanence rules out what we have customarily thought of as 'transcendent' action, signally through miracle. Miracles are not interferences; '[t]he miraculous is simply the providential in unusual circumstances' (p. 25), a form of divine operation

poration of Bottom-up Thinking into Eschatology', in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, p. 172, n. 88.

68 Moltmann's words are quoted on pp. 79 and 80.

69 Note JP's corresponding denial: 'I doubt whether God interacts with the world by scrabbling around at its subatomic roots', *Serious Talk*, p. 79.

70 These are not the only categories: there is also an 'economic' will, *Science and Providence*, p. 30.

in the world which differs from what we ordinarily encounter, and the interpretation of miracles must be integrated into our believing knowledge of God's rationality and faithfulness.[71] If a good and faithful God can work miracles, why is there evil? JP introduces a free-process defence to accompany free-will defences in explanation of evil; God bestows freedom on his creation and not just on his creatures.[72] As in the case of miracle, so in the case of prayer: God interacts rather than intervenes. In a short book (and his books are usually short and never long) JP paints on a broad canvas, with time, incarnation, sacrament and hope all being treated in the context of science and providence, the hope pointing to an aspect of JP's theology of creation which I am (with a thoroughly bad conscience) neglecting, namely, his belief in the *nova creatio*, a creation continuous with the old, a *nova creatio ex vetere*, not *ex nihilo*, yet radically new. Its fullest exploration is in *The God of Hope*. For JP, Christian hope is hope in the teeth of and not in tandem with scientific projections for the future of the cosmos.

BRIEF QUESTIONS

JP's authorship is a sustained, conscientious attempt to understand as much of Christianity as he can as a scientist-theologian and to set it out in an economical but not an obscurely cryptic fashion in a natural, a systematic and a philosophical theology where doctrine and apologetic are deeply integrated in thought and literature. His approach to theology is

[71] JP brings science to bear here by giving conceptual help in the form of explaining how regime or phase changes alter normal behaviour in the world of matter. He makes this point from early on in his literature up to the later *Quantum Physics and Theology*, pp. 33-34.

[72] See *Science and Providence*, pp. 64-66. Additionally, JP regularly points out in his literature that the universe is a 'package deal': that which allows the universe to be itself for good allows it also to be itself for evil. '[G]enes will mutate and cause cancer and malformation through a process that is also the source of new forms of life […in] an integrated process in which growth and decay are inextricably interwoven as novelty emerges at the edge of chaos', *Exploring Reality*, pp. 143-44. 'The engine driving biological evolution is genetic mutation and it is inevitable in a universe that is reliable and not capriciously magical, that the same biochemical processes which enable germ cells to produce new forms of life will also allow somatic cells to mutate and become malignant', *Science and the Trinity*, p. 72. Here, 'science's gift offers theology modest help with the greatest theological problem of all – the problem of pain and suffering', *Traffic in Truth*, p. 17.

broadly that of Schleiermacher: theology is reflection on experience.[73] He carries this beyond the dissent which he frequently expresses from a view of revelation or Scripture as involving what he terms the mysterious communication of propositional truth, to the point of often proceeding theologically without attention to the main contours of biblical testimony. His positive use and endorsement of Vanstone illustrate this. Vanstone's account of divine kenosis may, from the point of view of theological method, be adjudged a vast *a priori*, his account of divine love ultimately openly controlled by a general phenomenology of love. Some of us, including the author of this article, will be critical and maintain that where the ascription of love to God is derived from Scripture, we should begin our theological labours by asking what it means there; how it is knit there into sovereignty; how divine will and foreknowledge look there; whether vulnerability and risk emerge there. JP shows no interest in interrogating the biblical witness on this score, choosing rather to proceed by conceptual insistence that love is directly incompatible with divine control, decree, determination or programme and, by deductive reasoning, with divine foreknowledge (which he takes to eliminate freedom). As my remit is neither JP's doctrine of God nor his use of Scripture, I merely note an avenue for exploring his view of creation which here remains unexplored.[74]

In a brief conclusion, it seems more useful to ask whether JP's understanding of creation is affected by scientific constraints on his theology beyond the minimal degree to which I have earlier alluded. JP pretty consistently proposes independent theological grounds for affirming positions consonant with those yielded by science. Even in a case like the traditional notion of an historical fall, whose impossibility is apparently decided for JP by the scientific evidence, it would be hard to argue that he did not also arrive at this conclusion on literary-critical grounds, reading

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[73] JP would doubtless wish to qualify this by warning us not to exaggerate the theological novelty in Schleiermacher's approach, *Science and Christian Belief*, p. 129. As I agree with his substantive account of JP on experience, I shall not quarrel with Russell Re Manning's identification of a (methodological) connection with Tillich rather than (though not as opposed to) Schleiermacher; see Re Manning, 'On Revising Natural Theology' in Watts & Knight, *God and the Scientist*, pp. 200-4.

[74] I do not imply that Scripture is relatively unimportant to JP devotionally: see *Searching for Truth: A Scientist Looks at the Bible* (Oxford: Bible Reading Fellowship, 1996), p. 13 and *Science and the Trinity*, pp. 39-42. When it comes to eschatology, JP can give strikingly more attention to Scripture than in his construction of the doctrine of God or, for that matter, creation: see *The God of Hope*.

Genesis 1-3 as myth independently of scientific constraints.[75] It is doubtful if science requires or pushes towards something like the *zimsum* and where science is pretty uniformly pessimistic about the future, whether we are in for the Big Crunch or the Big Freeze, JP is a determined eschatological optimist on purely theological grounds. It looks as though JP has secured significant independence for theology.

Nonetheless, in JP's work science can *de facto* exercise both the kind of substantive pressure on Christian doctrine and a disciplinary pressure on Christian theology which require critical scrutiny. As regards the substantive point, JP frequently argues that since (a) God knows things as they are and (b) things occur in temporal succession then (c) God must know things according to their temporal succession; but he once formulates the consequent need for a revised notion of divine eternal timelessness in these terms: 'One motivation for this move is the discovery that physics' actual knowledge of the character of process can be interpreted as being consistent with the picture of a world of true becoming'.[76] We may judge JP guilty of error in philosophical reasoning in the way he arrives at his conclusion of the form of God's knowledge of temporal events. We may also demur from a theology which involves the categorical denial of foreknowledge on the grounds that there is no future to be known; if there were such a future and God knew it, then, JP holds, God would not be perceiving time as it really is in its indeterminate succession. However, for present purposes, the point I wish to make is just about the pressure exerted by science on theology. The massive instantiation of such pressure in JP's work is his wider emphasis on the scientifically-disclosed openness of the world-process which he judges strongly suited to a denial but strongly unsuited to an affirmation of comprehensive divine control.[77] Both philosophical and theological reasoning will impel some of us to question the logical structure of JP's inferential procedure, grounded in scientific disclosure. Can we really read off a particular modality of divine action, even with significant probability, from the (putative) phe-

[75] JP is opposed to belief in the fall of an original pair, such as is depicted in Genesis 3, not to a suitably honed understanding of the fall as a path wrongly taken by humans in the course of history, *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, pp. 88-89.

[76] *Quantum Physics and Theology*, p. 96. As it stands, we may wonder whether the juxtaposition of 'knowledge' and 'picture' in this formulation constitutes a felicitous expression of JP's point, but in the context it is clear what he is saying.

[77] JP is on to this question early in his literature: see the remarks on Donald Mackay in *One World*, p. 68.

nomenon of cosmic indeterminacy? I ask the question without seeking to foreclose the answer.[78]

As for disciplinary pressure, JP's engagement with Austin Farrer is a particularly good example of his view of what creation requires in the way of theological explanation.[79] From an early stage, JP gave critical attention to Farrer's work, including the claim that the causal joint between the double agency of divine and human action is metaphysically elusive.[80] 'Austin Farrer's account of double agency is so emphatic about the inscrutability of the divine side of it as to provide us with no help.'[81] JP is sympathetic to Arthur Peacocke's criticism that Farrer's 'advocacy of this paradox comes perilously close to the mere assertion of its truth'.[82] Frankly, JP finds Farrer's account 'an unintelligible kind of theological doublespeak', by which he appears to mean that Farrer's affirmation of omnipotent agency working non-coercively and non-competitively through creaturely agencies has the status of being simply a bald, metaphysically inexplicable affirmation.[83]

Whatever merits adhere to his criticisms and even though his use of the word 'sometimes' below may cause us a moment's hesitation in coming to Farrer's defence, JP is surely unjust in his observation that 'sometimes, in his writings' Farrer 'exhibits something of the metaphysician's disdain for the pedestrian details of physics'.[84] Farrer is not refusing science; he is simply discounting its ability to make the kind of confident metaphysical contribution which JP thinks it can make.[85] When Farrer's meticulous

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78 Theological pressure on JP's position here is increased if we side with those who question whether we can move from Heisenbergian uncertainty to cosmic indeterminacy.

79 Austin Farrer (1904-68) was a wide-ranging Anglican thinker and writer whose principal influence has been in the field of philosophical theology.

80 At some points, JP appeals appreciatively to the work of Farrer and their judgements concur. The difficulties attending a concise formulation of what double agency is appear in Owen Thomas's statement in 'Recent Thought on Divine Agency': 'What is affirmed in double agency, as I understand it, is that in one event both the divine and creaturely agents are fully active' (p. 46). While subsequent explanation offers a degree of clarification, the question that one is bound to ask remains: what does 'fully' mean? 'God acts in and through the finite agent which also acts in the event' scarcely explains 'fully'.

81 *Reason and Reality,* pp. 45-46.

82 *Scientists as Theologians,* p. 31, though JP includes a criticism of Peacocke in this connection.

83 *Science and Christian Belief*, pp. 81-82.

84 *Science and Providence*, p. 13.

85 The deeper issue here is JP's quarrel with the way Farrer and others operate with a distinction between the natural and the supernatural, *One World*,

and detailed treatment of analogy yields agnosticism on the operation of double agency, it is not with the intention or effect of demeaning science or, for that matter, showing a lack of metaphysical ambition. Agnosticism arises of Farrer's conviction that divine agency works so differently from the human that the failure to conceptualise their relationship constitutes a theologically positive affirmation of the distinction of divine nature.[86]

JP would respond that it remains that a lack of explanatory power is the outcome of Farrer's approach; what intellectual progress have we made by positing double agency?[87] But does JP not at this point questionably model his expectation of theological progress on his experience of scientific progress? Farrer says: 'How God works in creating, that is the mystery; not the purposes his working achieves'.[88] He makes the relevant point when attending not initially to creation but in the first instance to grace and freedom.[89] From a religious point of view, Farrer holds that we do not need the metaphysical account whose lack JP laments.[90]

> [T]he causal joint […] between infinite and finite action plays and in the nature of the case can play no part in our concern with God and his will […]. The causal joint (could there be said to be one) between God's action and ours is of no concern in the activity of religion.[91]

Farrer does what JP shows no sign of interest in doing, i.e., mull over biblical passages in Proverbs or Isaiah, for example, in the context of thinking about divine causality.[92] Farrer would surely substitute 'Polkinghorne' for 'Hartshorne' in the sentence: '[A]nd perhaps if God is to be God he cannot be as intelligible to man as Hartshorne would have him'.[93] Whatever our judgement on the broad attribution of fideism to Farrer, JP misunder-

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p. 89. It is possible to sympathise with his broader objection without agreeing with how JP approaches the question of describing the causal joint.

86 See particularly Farrer's *Faith and Speculation: an essay in philosophical theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1967).

87 *Science and Providence*, p. 12.

88 *Faith and Speculation*, p. 110.

89 'The traditional problems of Grace and Freewill are simply expressions of the invisibility which covers the 'causal joint' between infinite and finite act', *Faith and Speculation*, p. 172.

90 See Farrer's whole chapter on grace and free will in chapter 4 of *Faith and Speculation*.

91 *Faith and Speculation*, pp. 65-66.

92 *Faith and Speculation*, pp. 61-63, 97-99.

93 *Faith and Speculation*, p. 140. 'In any settlement of boundary-issues between God and nature, there must be give-and-take; the divine has its own logic and must be allowed its own rights. It is as vital that God should remain

stands its theological meaning badly when he says that if no explanation for a causal joint is given, '[t]his leaves the idea looking like mere fideistic assertion'.[94] If belief in such a joint is well grounded, how can the failure of explanation be judged fideistic more than JP's failure to understand how God can both be three and one is fideistic in a case where he judges his own belief in divine triunity well grounded?[95] Farrer is a fideist in relation to creative causality only if the criteria for fideism are determined by physics.

Despite my criticisms of John Polkinghorne, let me conclude with an appreciation of what I think we might fairly term his integrative ambition, advertised in the title and content of this first work in the trilogy, *One World*, and pursued with relentless and unapologetic (and, in another sense, apologetic) determination since then.[96] As an exemplar of this ambition and of the particular thesis that Christian belief in creation causes science no embarrassment – that, on the contrary, our Christian belief is holistically enriching and even mildly required by scientists – John Polkinghorne surely commands our gratitude.

God, as that nature should remain nature', p. 151. In fairness to him, JP often acknowledges the limits on our knowledge of God.

94 *Science and Theology*, p. 86.

95 JP was able to write a whole volume on *Science and Trinity*.

96 For JP's mature thinking on taxonomies, see the first chapter of *Science and the Trinity*.

The Westminster Assembly's Probable Appropriation of James Ussher

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since James Ussher (1581-1656) died, scholars have regularly cited him as a significant influence on the Westminster Assembly and its confessional documents.[1] He was the Irish Reformation's leading theologian, first teaching at Trinity College Dublin, and later becoming Archbishop of Armagh. He never attended the Westminster Assembly, but at least one seventeenth-century author still claimed that the Westminster Larger Catechism was simply an 'Epitomiz'd' version of 'Bishop Usher's *Body of Divinity*.'[2] Modern historiography, however, requires primary source documentation. The Assembly's writings, Ussher's correspondence, and his friendship network indicate a high probability that the Westminster divines appropriated Ussher's theology, but this probability does not definitively prove Ussher's mark upon the Assembly. This essay does

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1 Unless otherwise noted, all works cited in this essay were published in London. Chad Van Dixhoorn (ed.), *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly, 1643-1652*, 5 volumes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), I, 141-2 (henceforth abbreviated as MPWA); Richard A. Muller, '"Inspired by God–Pure in All Ages": The Doctrine of Scripture in the Westminster Confession', in Richard A. Muller and Roland S. Ward, *Scripture and Worship: Biblical Interpretation and the Directory for Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2007), pp. 39-42; J.V. Fesko, *The Theology of the Westminster Standards: Historical Context and Theological Insights* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), pp. 60, 125-68; Crawford Gribben, *Irish Puritans James Ussher and the Reformation of the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014), p. 87; A.A. Hodge, *Evangelical Theology: A Course of Popular Lectures* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1976), p. 165; John Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray*, 4 vol. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1982), IV, 221; Crawford Gribben, 'A New Introduction', in James Ussher, *A Body of Divinity* (Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2007), p. xi; Andrew A. Woolsey, *Unity and Continuity: A Study in Reformed Tradition to the Westminster Assembly* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformed Heritage Books, 2012), pp. 39-79; R. Scott Clark, 'Christ and Covenant: Federal Theology in Orthodoxy', in Herman J. Selderhuis (ed.), *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 426.

2 Anonymous, *The Life & Death of Stephen Marshal* (1680), p. 27.

not argue that Ussher was the Assembly's foremost source, but that he was demonstrably one source. Ussher had direct connections to many divines, was given unique preferential treatment, and it appears his works were used to compose the Assembly documents. This essay demonstrates these claims, which indicate that most probably Ussher was an important source at the Assembly.

The Westminster Assembly met from 1643 to 1652 during political upheaval. Parliament called it as an advisory committee regarding ecclesiastical reform. Ussher had come to England in 1640 and, when the Irish Rebellion of 1641 prevented him from returning to Ireland, he preached the rest of his life in England. During the English civil war, Ussher's loyalties were divided between the king he believed God had appointed and the Reformed theology Parliament's Assembly was enshrining. Parliament invited him to attend the Assembly and, although these invitations were really summons, Ussher's theological politics outweighed the risks for absenting.[3] Although Ussher sided with the king, his theology was closer to that of the Assembly than to Charles I's religious agenda.[4] Ussher's friends at the Assembly likely felt betrayed when he absented and moved to Charles's camp in late 1642.[5] Evidence still suggests they may not have been satisfied to go without Ussher's contributions, even in his absence.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

'Influence' is notoriously difficult to prove, which is why this discussion is framed in terms of the Westminster Assembly's 'probable appropriation' rather than influence. Footnotes were not mandatory in the early-modern period, which means that the lack of references to Ussher in the Assembly's documents can cut both ways. As already noted, Ussher's absence was a sore spot for many divines, but, nevertheless, they still highly esteemed Ussher. At least three participants in the Assembly dedicated books to him, and at least twenty-three contributors to the Assembly cited him approvingly in at least forty-seven works. Almost all of these instances included multiple citations within the work and some examples evidence

3 MPWA, vol 1, p. 141; James Ussher, *The Soveraignes Power, and the Subjects Duty: Delivered in a Sermon, at Christ-Church in Oxford, March 3 1643* (Oxford, 1643), p. 27.

4 Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-Modern Ireland and Britain* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 257-71.

5 Ford, *James Ussher,* p. 261.

thorough dependence on Ussher.[6] Many divines corresponded with him before and during the Assembly and Joshua Hoyle (bap.1588-d.1654) and Stanley Gower (bap.1600-d.1660) both trained under him. Admittedly, these connections between Ussher and contributors to Westminster do not prove they used his theology, but it illustrates that they respected his scholarship. These factors make it likely that when the Assembly's documents appear to reflect Ussher's theology, they in fact do. This section samples the Westminster divines' inclination to appropriate Ussher.

Assemblymen cited Ussher before, during and after the Assembly met. These publications began in 1624 and extended to the late seventeenth century. This timeframe's end relates to the divines' lifespans more than a wane in Ussher's reputation. Scottish minister George Gillespie (1613-1648) published *A Dispute Against the English-Popish Ceremonies* in 1637, arguing the Laudian regime imposed Catholic superstition upon the Church of Scotland. He repeatedly cited Ussher, using Ussher's *Answer to […] A Jesuite and a 1624 sermon*.[7] Gillespie had refused ordination by a bishop, which heightens these citations' significance.[8] When *Dispute* was published, Ussher was the Archbishop of Armagh, and, although Ussher shared many 'puritan concerns,' he had mixed views on worship. He had written against Catholics concerning ceremonies and had defended the

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6 Robert Baillie, *The Life of William* (1643), pp. 15, 21; Thomas Bayly, *Certamen Religiosum* (1651), pp. 256, 325-6; Cornelius Burges, *A Case Concerning the Buying of Bishops Lands* (1659), p. 27; idem, *Reasons Shewing the Necessity of Reformation* (1660), p. 53; idem, *No sacrilege* (1660), pp. 35, 59, 60; Edmund Calamy, *The City Remembrancer* (1657), p. 13; James Durham, *Commentarie Upon the Book of the Revelation* (Edinburgh, 1658), pp. 341, 499; idem, *Practical Exposition of the X Commandements* (1675), sig. D2v-D3r; idem, *The Law Unsealed* (Glasgow, 1676), [to the reader, p. 7]; John Dury, *An earnest plea for a Gospel-communion* (1654), pp. 79-83; idem, *summarie account of Mr. Iohn Dury's former and latter negotiation* (1657), p. 7; Daniel Featley, *The Romish Fisher Caught* (1624), sig. K3v, sig. P3v; idem, *Roma Ruens, Romes Ruine* (1644), p. 33; idem, *the Dippers Dipt* (1645), p. 12; idem, *The League Illegal* (1660), pp. 24, 39; Thomas Gataker, *Last Will and Testament* (1654), p. 4; Thomas Hill, *The Best and Worst of Paul* (Cambridge, 1648), p. 15; Stephen Marshall, *Defense of Infant-Baptism* (1646), p. 34; William Nicholson, *Ekthesis Pisteos* (1661), p. 38; Samuel Rutherford, *The Divine Right of Church-Government and Excommunication* (1645), pp. 5-6, 52, 59; John Wallis, *A Defence of the Royal Society* (1678), p. 26.

7 James Ussher, *An Answer to a Challenge Made by a Jesuite in Ireland* (Dublin, 1624); idem, *A briefe declaration of the universalitie of the Church of Christ* (1624).

8 K.D. Holfelder, 'George Gillespie (1613-1648).' *ODNB*.

scriptural basis for worship practices.[9] Gillespie listed Richard Hooker as his first opponent in *Dispute*, but Ussher sympathised with Hooker's arguments.[10] Gillespie likely knew that Ussher held somewhat different views, but this knowledge did not stop him from enlisting Ussher's work. He cited Ussher to defend the Reformed view of Christ's mystical presence in the Lord's Supper.[11] Ussher shared this view, but crucially Gillespie cited him as 'the Archbishop of *Armagh*,' indicating he would happily side with a prelate when he was not imposing unbiblical ceremony. Gillespie further cited Ussher's sermon preached to James I on June 20, 1624.[12] Gillespie did not depend upon Ussher's full arguments in these citations and it seems he wanted to indicate that he sided with Archbishop Ussher. Gillespie's *Dispute* released prior to the Assembly, but he was called to act as one of the Scottish commissioners in September 1643.[13] He clearly respected Ussher's scholarship and took that into the Assembly.

In contrast to Gillespie's use of Ussher concerning worship, an English Presbyterian and an Independent cited him regarding theology proper. Francis Cheynell (b.1608-d.1665) cited him against the authority of popes and to establish the ecumenical councils' importance in founding proper Trinitarianism.[14] Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680) argued Ussher proved that the early church taught the Son's divinity.[15] Cheynell's work was published while the Assembly met, but Goodwin's book was likely prepared well after the Assembly and Ussher's death. Goodwin's continued dependence on Ussher reveals his enduring legacy among at least some of the Westminster divines. In 1650, when Cheynell's work was released, Ussher was not long back to London after travelling with Charles I. This would have been the time he was most likely to be blacklisted. An objection that Cheynell was working on this book before 1650 fails because that was when Ussher was accompanying Charles. Charles was executed in

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9 Ussher, *Answer*; CUL MS Add. 69, fol. 16r-17r.

10 'Hooker is good on ceremonies.' Queen's College, Oxford MS 217, fol. 42v.

11 George Gillespie, *A Dispute Against the English-Popish Ceremonies* ([Leiden], 1637), 3.4.9, 3.4.13.

12 Gillespie, *Dispute*, 3.8.1; Ussher, *briefe declaration*.

13 MPWA, vol. 1, pp. 23-7.

14 Francis Cheynell, *The Divinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit* (1650), pp. 259, 296, 299, 363. Cheynell also cited Ussher in *Sions Memento, and Gods Alarum* (1643), pp. 25, 26; idem, *Chillingworthi novissima* (1644), sig. D4v, sig. E2r.

15 Thomas Goodwin, *Of The Knowledge Of God The Father, And His Son Jesus Christ*, in Thankfull Owen and James Barron (eds.), *The works of Thomas Goodwin* (1683), p. 16; T.M. Lawrence, 'Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680)', *ODNB*.

1649, but Ussher's reputation seemed to remain intact among the divines. Cheynell was not attempting to re-establish Ussher's reputation after the royalist experience since the mountain of works by Assembly members citing him show he was an abiding authority for them. Goodwin was certainly not trying to re-establish Ussher's good name with Parliament since he wrote his work during the Restoration. Ussher was simply an important theologian among the Westminster divines.

Assemblymen dedicated a handful of books to Ussher. Edward Leigh (1603-1671) was an MP nominated to serve the Assembly as a teller.[16] His *Treatise of Divinity* has been called 'one of the more important resources' for understanding the Assembly's theology.[17] He cited Ussher in this important work, but also throughout his writing corpus.[18] He dedicated two books to Ussher, even bragging that he 'was the last who dedicated a Book to that great Light of all the Reformed Churches, my Lord of *Armagh*,' and wrote immensely high praise for the Archbishop.[19] He pervasively cited Ussher and, if Leigh's work is important for understanding the Assembly, Ussher's works are crucial to understanding Leigh.[20] John Ley (1584-1662) was on the committees that wrote the confession and examined ministerial candidates.[21] He corresponded with Ussher, cited him in several works, and dedicated his 1641 *Sunday a Sabbath* to him.[22] Joshua Hoyle, an English Presbyterian, represented Trinity College Dublin, and is one of the most important connections between Ussher and the Assembly. He studied at Trinity College during Ussher's professorship, and succeeded Ussher as professor of theological controversies. Hoyle made many speeches on the Assembly floor and was a favourite for conducting Parliament's opening prayers.[23] He had resisted the imposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles on the Church of Ireland and defended

16 John Sutton, 'Edward Leigh (1603-1671)', *ODNB*.

17 Fesko, *Westminster Standards*, p. 405.

18 Edward Leigh, *Treatise Of Divinity* (1646), p. 119.

19 Leigh, *Annotations upon All the New Testament* (1650), sig. A4r; idem, *Treatise Of Religion & Learning* (1656), sig. A3r ff, p. 359; idem, *Foelix Consortium* (1663), A3r-A4v.

20 Leigh, *Religion & Learning*, pp. 104, 122, 170, 172, 230, 301; Leigh, *Annotations*, pp. 147, 148, 186-7.

21 MPWA, vol. 1, p. 127.

22 *The Correspondence of James Ussher, 1600-1656*, 3 vol. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2015), 1:211-4, 2:715-6, 3:843-51; Ley, *A Letter (against the erection of an altar)* (1641), p. 12; Ley, *Defensive Doubts* (1641), sig. B2v-B3r; idem, *Sunday A Sabbath* (1641), sig. A2r-C2r.

23 E.g. *Journal of the House of Lords: Volume 6, 1643* (1767-1830), p. 648; *Journal of the House of Lords: Volume 7, 1644* (1767-1830), p. 439; *Journal of the House*

keeping the Irish Articles, of which Ussher was the primary author.[24] He had written to Ussher over the years and Ussher referred to him in other correspondence.[25] In 1641, he dedicated his book *A Reioynder to Master Malones Reply* to Ussher.[26] The work was actually a sequel to Ussher's *Answer to […] A Jesuite*.[27] Hoyle perhaps most clearly and directly links Ussher's works and the Assembly documents, as he had important roles on the committees that produced the Confession and the Larger Catechism.[28] Hoyle, Leigh, and Ley, however, were all important figures at the Assembly who gave credence to Ussher by dedicating works to him.

Many more connections exist between Ussher and contributors to the Assembly. William Twisse (1577/8–1646), the Assembly's first prolocutor, cited Ussher to defend predestination.[29] William Bridge (1600/1–1671) also cited Ussher to the same effect.[30] Henry Hammond (1605–1660) referred to Ussher concerning eschatology.[31] John Selden (1584–1654) was Ussher's trusted friend, corresponded extensively with him, and cited him.[32] Thomas Westfield (1573–1644) said 'The Lord Primate of Armagh, never to be mentioned without honour, for his unparallel'd Workes'.[33] Stanley Gower, once Ussher's personal chaplain, helped publish some of Ussher's sermons.[34] This merely samples of the connections between Ussher and the Assembly.

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of Lords: Volume 9, 1646 (1767-1830), p. 494; *Journal of the House of Lords: Volume 9, 1646* (1767-1830), p. 435.

24 Ford, *James Ussher*, pp. 199-200.

25 *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. 2, pp. 489, 627; vol. 3, pp. 1159-61.

26 Hoyle, *Reioynder to Master Malones Reply Concerning Reall Presence* (Dublin, 1641), sig. C3r.

27 Ford, *James Ussher*, p. 62.

28 MPWA, vol. 1, p. 125.

29 *Riches of Gods Love unto the Vessells of Mercy* (Oxford, 1653), vol 1, pp. 58, 59; vol. 2, pp. 13, 89, 90.

30 *Gospel-Marrow* (1659), sig. a2r-a2v (This preface's pagination does not begin on the first page of the preface. The page numbers here are what is marked on the pages where Ussher was cited).

31 *Paraphrase of Annotations* (1659), pp. 865, 875; Hammond also cited Ussher in *A Letter of Resolution* (1653), p. 463; *A Vindication of the Dissertations Concerning Episcopacie* (1654), pp. 41, 60, 146-7, 150-1; *An Answer to the Animadversions* (1654), pp. 9, 10-11, 16, 24.

32 Ford, *James Ussher*, pp. 104, 267-8; *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. 1, pp. 246, 250, 319-20, 326, 327, 327-8; vol. 2, pp. 408; vol. 3, pp. 1085-6, 1087, 1088-90, Selden, *Of the Dominion* (1652), p. 274.

33 *England's Face* (1646), p. 2.76.

34 Jacqueline Eales, 'Stanley Gower (b.1600?, d.1660)', *ODNB*. James Ussher, *Eighteen Sermons, Preached in Oxford* (1662).

Further, Ussher received significantly preferential treatment from Parliament and Assembly contributors. Parliament had sequestered royalist libraries, but when Ussher requested that his be returned, they obliged.[35] When Ussher returned to London in 1647, they voted to pay him £400 annually 'in respect of his great Worth and Learning.'[36] Parliament then voted to invite him again to the Assembly, indicating desire to have his influence there, and in person.[37] They even sent Ussher to the Isle of Wight as an envoy to the king.[38] The Assembly itself examined ministers for English pulpits, which means that they must have approved of Ussher when Parliament appointed him to preach at Lincoln's Inn.[39] Ussher's preaching appointment contrasts with how Assembly member Daniel Featley was imprisoned supposedly for mailing his speeches from the Assembly to royalist conspirators, but the recipient of those speeches was Ussher.[40] Whereas Featley died in prison for consorting with royalists, Ussher was given a pension and a pulpit. Although this atmosphere of respect for Ussher does not itself prove divines made use of his works in their confessional documents, it does reveal a context in which possible instances of Ussher citations become highly probable instances of dependence on him.

ECHOES OF USSHER'S WORKS IN THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS

This section argues that the Westminster Assembly used Ussher's works as primary sources. Ussher's absence from the Assembly means his impact was necessarily indirect. The seventeenth century remark that the Assembly 'Epitomiz'd Bishop Usher's *Body of Divinity*' in their catechisms shows

35 *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 5, 1646-1648* (1802), p. 29.

36 *House of Commons: 1646-1648*, 326; *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 6, 1648-1651* (1802), p. 247.

37 *Journal of the House of Lords: Volume 9, 1646* (1767-1830), p. 643.

38 *House of Commons: 1648-1651*, p. 69.

39 Chad Van Dixhoorn, *God's Ambassadors: The Westminster Assembly and the Reformation of the English Pulpit, 1643-1653* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017), pp. 41-61; *House of Commons: 1646-1648*, pp. 393-4; *House of Lords: 1646*, p. 643. In personal conversation, Dr. Van Dixhoorn said that he never came across Ussher's name in the records of examined ministers, but that simply means that possibly Ussher was not officially examined before the committee. If this were the case, the obvious explanation, which Van Dixhoorn supported, would be that the committee felt no need to go through the examination process with someone of Ussher's repute.

40 Arnold Hunt, 'Daniel Featley (1582-1645)', *ODNB*.

that Ussher was linked to the Assembly's documents within a short time.[41] This section demonstrates the Westminster Confession (WCF) included significant portions of the Irish Articles (1615) (IA). Although there has been some scholarly disagreement, Alan Ford has recently argued Ussher was at least the primary author of the IA, and Ussher's prominent role in their production is generally accepted.[42] In that respect, its use at the Assembly represents his influence.[43] Even in the seventeenth-century, Ussher's defenders and opponents accepted his predominant role in the Articles, calling it 'Usher's own private Opinions.'[44] Manuscript evidence shows there was an early draft of the IA in Ussher's own hand, and this draft extensively used material from Ussher's other catechisms.[45] This evidence points to Ussher's role as primary author of the IA, particularly the exact linguistic links between the confession and Ussher's own writings, and that means any use of the IA in the WCF is use of Ussher. Aside from the connections between the IA and the IA, there are also links between the Larger Catechism (LC) and Ussher's *Body of Divinitie*.[46] Some have disputed that he authored the Body, but extensive manuscript evidence proves it was also his work.[47] The IA and the *Body of Divinitie* are the written works linking Ussher to the Assembly.

Most scholars accept that the IA was a primary source for the WCF.[48] Several have documented the general overlap of the content and the same

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41 Anon., *Life & Death of Stephen Marshal*, p. 27.

42 Ford, *James Ussher*, pp. 85-103; R. Buick Knox, *James Ussher: Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967), pp. 16-24; Amanda Louise Capern, 'The Caroline Church: James Ussher and the Irish Dimension', *The Historical Journal* 39 no 1 (1996), pp. 72-3; Ford, *James Ussher*, pp. 83-8; cf. Alan Ford, *The Protestant Reformation in Ireland, 1590-1641*, 2nd ed. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997), pp. 157-9.

43 Fesko, *Westminster Standards*, p. 408.

44 Peter Heylyn, *Aerius Redivivus* (Oxford, 1670), 394-5; Nicholas Bernard, *Life and Death […] James Usher* (1656), p. 49; Richard Parr, *Life of […] James Ussher*, pp. 14-15, 42-3.

45 TCD MS 287, fol. 102r-105r.

46 James Ussher, *A Body of Divinitie* (1645).

47 Harrison Perkins, 'Manuscript and Material Evidence for James Ussher's Authorship of *A Body of Divinitie* (1645)', EQ 89.2 (2018), pp. 133-61.

48 Muller, 'Inspired by God', pp. 40-2; Fesko, *Westminster Standards*, p. 60; Alexander F. Mitchell, *The Westminster Assembly: Its History and Standards* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1884), pp. 372-85; Robert Letham, *The Westminster Assembly: Reading Its Theology in Historical Context* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2009), pp. 62-83; Benjamin B. Warfield, *The Westminster Assembly and Its Work* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1959; repr. Still Waters Revival Books, 1991), p. 59.

basic topical outline.[49] Parliament tried to use the IA to interpret what the Church of England should be and proposed a bill to make the IA authoritative alongside the Thirty-Nine Articles (EA), which should dissuade doubts about their importance for Parliament's Assembly and should nullify concerns about whether language that appears verbatim both in the IA and the WCF came from another document.[50] The IA were printed in London in 1628 and 1629, which likely related to Parliament's attempt to give them official status in England around that time.[51] Additionally, Joshua Hoyle represented Trinity College Dublin at the Assembly, was important in the committees that wrote the WCF and the LC, and he had vigorously defended maintaining the IA when Laud imposed the EA in Ireland in 1634.[52] Hoyle is a demonstrable link between the two confessions, but given Parliament had wanted to adopt the IA, and the general respect for Ussher among Reformed theologians, he was not likely alone in wanting to use Ussher's confession as the basis for the new one. A sample of quoted phrases and sections should sufficiently show connections between the two confessions.[53]

On the doctrine of God, the WCF used several instances of identical wording to the IA. The later document, however, did not always keep its citations from the IA together. WCF chapter two split the eighth IA and used sentences from it in paragraph one and three.

> IA 8: There is but one living and true God everlasting, without bodie, parts or passions, of infinite power, wisedome, and goodnesse, the makes and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead, there bee three persons of one and the same substance, power, and eternity: the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost.[54]

> WCF 2.1: There is but one only, living, and true God: who is infinite in Being and Perfection, a most pure Spirit, invisible, without body, parts or passions, immutable, immense, eternall, incomprehensible, almighty, most wise, most

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49 Mitchell, *Westminster Assembly*, 372n1; Warfield, *Westminster Assembly and Its Work*, pp. 62-83; Muller, 'Inspired by God', pp. 40-1.

50 John McCafferty, 'Ireland and Scotland, 1534-1663', in Anthony Milton (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume I: Reformation and Identity, c.1520-1662* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 251; Ford, *James Ussher*, p. 140.

51 McCafferty, 'Ireland and Scotland, 1534-1663', p. 251.

52 Ford, *James Ussher*, pp. 43, 199-200; MPWA, vol. 1, p. 125.

53 Letham, *Westminster Assembly*, p. 64 documented an extensive list of proposed corresponding sections.

54 IA, sig. B1r.

> holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the Counsell of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory;[55]

> WCF 2.3: In the Unity of the God-head there be Three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.[56]

It could be objected that the Westminster divines could potentially have used other sources. The EA did say,

> There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodnesse, the maker and preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the father, the Sonne, and holy Ghost.[57]

The matching wording of all three documents might appear to support the objection about other potential sources besides the IA. There are, however, serious considerations that reduce that objection. The IA used the EA as a source, and it is not surprising that explanations of ecumenical doctrines were adopted unchanged. The following considerations show that the corresponding language between the EA and WCF most likely owe to the EA's use in the IA.[58] When the Scottish commissioners, including George Gillespie, arrived at the Assembly in September 1643, they were opposed to the EA.[59] This commission was important in Assembly debates, and did play real roles in shaping the Westminster standards.[60] The Scottish participation in the Assembly, and their general objection to English style religion, suggest that the IA are the probable source of language in the WCF over the EA. The IA had used the EA, but had diverted from them in crucial ways that would be important to the Westminster Assembly. For example, the EA clearly affirm that tradition and common authority can establish practices that are mandatory for worship as long as those practices are not forbidden or contrary to Scrip-

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55 *The humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, Now by Authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster, Concerning a Confession of Faith* (London, [1646]), p. 7. Henceforth abbreviated WCF.

56 WCF, p. 8.

57 *Articles Agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of both Provinces* (1628), sig. B2r. (Henceforth abbreviated EA.)

58 Muller, 'Inspired by God', pp. 39-41.

59 MPWA, vol. 1, p. 27.

60 MPWA, vol. 1, pp. 23-31.

ture.[61] The IA, however, affirmed that worship cannot include anything 'besides or contrary to the Scriptures,' which was far more aligned with the 'puritan' concerns of the Westminster Assembly.[62] The divines most probably used the IA rather than the confession that was contrary to their views on something that had been a highly inflammatory issue.[63] Further evidence from the IA and WCF shows that the latter used a good deal of material from the former that was not found in the EA, most especially the more explicit Reformed viewpoints on predestination, covenant theology, and the Pope as the antichrist. In other words, for wording on the doctrine of God and subsequent doctrines, the divines followed confessional trajectories Ussher's work set.

In some of the corresponding sections, the WCF adopted the strong predestinarianism of Ussher's confession.

> IA 11: God from all eternity, did by his unchangeable counsell ordaine whatsoever in time should come to passe: yet so as thereby no violence is offered to the wils of the reasonable creatures, and neither the liberty nor the contingency of the second causes is taken away, but established rather.[64]

> WCF 3.1: God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy Counsell of his own Will, freely, and unchangeably ordaine whatsoever comes to passe: yet so as thereby neither is God the Author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the Creatures, nor is the Liberty or contingencie of second Causes taken away, but rather established.[65]

The WCF repeated the twenty-first IA in two different chapters. The passage from the IA dealt with humanity's creation, and how God built the covenant of law into human nature, as well as the ability to fulfil that covenant. WCF 4.2 adopted that description of how man was created, and WCF 7.2 used the idea of a covenant with Adam. Some of the language about man's creation was cited exactly. That is not the case with the covenant between God and Adam, but the IA was the first Reformed confession to name this covenant. The terminological shift between 'covenant of law' and 'covenant of works' is insignificant.[66] The idea of a covenant with

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61 EA, sig. D1r.

62 IA, sig. C4r (article 52); WCF, p. 34; Ward, 'Background and Principles', pp. 85-109.

63 Ford, *James Ussher*, pp. 92-4.

64 IA, sig. B1r-B1v.

65 WCF, p. 8

66 Richard A. Muller, 'The Covenant of Works and the Stability of Divine Law in Seventeenth-Century Reformed Orthodoxy: A Study in the Theology

Adam had been in use for some time, but Ussher codified the covenant of works into the confessional mainstream, and Westminster followed his lead.[67]

> IA 21: Man being at the beginning created according to the Image of God (which consisted especially in the wisedome of his minde, and the true Holinesse of his free will) had the covenant of the Law ingrafted in his heart: whereby God did promise unto him everlasting life, upon condition that hee performed entire and perfect obedience unto his Commandements, according to that measure of strength wherewith hee was endued in his creation, and threatned death unto him if hee did not performe the same.[68]

> WCF 4.2: After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortall souls, indued with knowledge, righteousness and true holinesse, after his own Image; having the Law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it:[69]

> WCF 7.2: The first Covenant made with Man, was a Covenant of Works, wherein Life was promised to Adam, and in hime to his Posterity, upon condition of perfect and personall obedience.[70]

Both confessions stated that Adam was created with natural ability to fulfil the law. The confessional position was that he did not need extra help to do the law or meet the terms of the covenant. This was a response to the Roman Catholic notion of the *donum superadditum*, a doctrine that said Adam would have fallen had God not given him grace.[71] The Westminster divines used the Irish confession to continue a polemic against Catholic presuppositions.

Perhaps the largest divergence between the IA and the WCF concerns the civil magistrate. This is not surprising since Ussher did not attend the Westminster Assembly because of his royalist commitments and Parliament was the governing force for the divines. The IA reflect Ussher's royalism by explicitly naming the King as the magistrate in question, whereas the WCF confined its references to 'the Civil Magistrate,' how-

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of Herman Witsius and Wilhemus à Brakel', in *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (New York: OUP, 2003), p. 175.

67 Harrison Perkins, 'Reconsidering the Development of the Covenant of Works: A Doctrinal Trajectory', *Calvin Theological Journal 53.2* (2018), pp. 289-317.

68 IA, sig. B2v.

69 WCF, pp. 10-11.

70 WCF, p. 14.

71 Harrison Perkins, 'James Ussher and the Covenant of Works', (unpublished PhD thesis, Queen's University Belfast, 2018), pp. 65, 68-9, 76-8.

ever defined. Even given these political differences, there is still striking overlap between the two documents. The WCF used specific phrases from the IA to guard the church's authority over the spiritual kingdom, but amended the language to downplay aspects that did not match their political sensibilities.[72] Both documents share the same view about the spiritual authority of the church.

The IA was the first Protestant confession to mention the covenant of works explicitly, the WCF following suit, but the IA was also the first confession to call the Pope the antichrist. Although this was a commonly held view among Protestants, no church *confessed* this before 1615. The Westminster Assembly again followed suit and included reference to the Pope as antichrist. The WCF does not repeat the exact wording, but it does build a confessional trajectory that started with the IA.[73] Although Protestants in the period commonly held this doctrine, Ussher still paved the way for this doctrine into the confessional mainstream. And yet again, Westminster followed his lead. This sample should be adequate to demonstrate WCF's direct appropriation of the IA.

The LC also bears striking resemblances to Ussher's *Body of Divinitie*. Some have denied Ussher was the author of the *Body*, but manuscript evidence, and comparison with his other works and personal papers, makes this denial untenable.[74] John Downame, however, was the licenser of books for Westminster in the 1640s and on the Assembly's committee to examine ministers, and he published Ussher's work in 1645.[75] Downame's preface praised both Ussher and this book. Ussher was displeased with this initial publication, which makes it seem that it was primarily agents of the Westminster Assembly who wanted Ussher's catechism in print. Downame also published a set of two briefer catechisms by Ussher, again without his permission, although he later revised these and approved their publication.[76] Downame and five Westminster divines had previously written to Ussher to convince him to help produce a full body of divinity.[77] John Dury, who wrote the new prefaces for the 1677 edition of Ussher's *Body of Divinitie*, forged a letter from Ussher so to appear to have the Archbishop's support for the project.[78] The divines' previous efforts,

72 IA, sig. C4v; WCF, p. 39.

73 IA, sig. D4r; WCF, p. 43.

74 Perkins, 'Manuscript and Material Evidence', pp. 133-61.

75 Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, sig. A3r-A3v.

76 James Ussher, *The Principles of Christian Religion* (1645); Ussher, *The Principles of Christian Religion* (1653).

77 Dury, *earnest Plea for Gospel-Communion*, p. 83.

78 *Correspondence of James Ussher,* vol. 3, pp. 1095-6. Elizabethanne Boran convincingly argued the letter was forged; *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol.

which also included Downame, to produce a theology with Ussher's name on it suggests the 1645 publication of the *Body* was an extension of those efforts. Parliament was growing anxious in 1645 for progress on the Assembly's catechisms.[79] They had begun writing a catechism in 1643, but there were continual setbacks.[80] Perhaps some divines set forward Ussher's works to placate impatient onlookers. This publication of Ussher's work says a great deal about his importance to the Assembly, and significantly heightens the probability that Ussher's works were used as sources.

There are certainly instances where the LC took Ussher's exact words from the *Body*. For instance,

> BOD: *Why is he called Jesus?* He is called Jesus, that is, a Saviour, because he came to save his people from their sins […].[81]

> LC: Q. *Why was our Mediator called Jesus? A.* Our Mediator was called Jesus, because he saveth his people from their sins.[82]

And again,

> BOD: *What is the summe of the first* [table of the law]? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy Soule, and with all thy strength, and with all thy minde, *Deutero. 6[.]5. Mat. 22.37, 38. Luke 10.27.*[83]

> LC: *Q. What is the summe of the four Commandments, which contain our duty to God? A.* The summe of the foure Commandements containing our duty to God, is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our minde.[84]

In both examples, the answers themselves are not the noteworthy aspect, since they are at least partially scriptural quotations, but it is noteworthy that these citations were paired with the same question in both texts. It could be objected that this may have been a commonplace understanding,

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3, p. 1095n1.

79 John R. Bower, *The Larger Catechism: A Critical Text and Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2010), p. 7.

80 Bower, *Larger Catechism*, pp. 5-6.

81 Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, p. 167.

82 *The humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines, Now by the Authority of Parliament sitting at Westminster, Concerning a Larger Catechism* (London, [1647]), pp. 9-10. Henceforth abbreviated WLC.

83 Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, pp. 208-9.

84 WLC, 27.

and it may have been, but historical probabilities are the focus here. Given the other evidence presented – Ussher's link to Hoyle who worked on the LC, and Assembly's circle of influence published Ussher's *Body* – seeming connections between Ussher's texts and the Assembly's are probably genuine. Ussher wrote in his briefer catechism, *'What is God? Ans.* God is a Spirit, most perfect, most wise, Almighty, and most holy.'[85] This was almost certainly the template the divines used when they wrote, *'Q. What is God? A.* God is a Spirit, infinite, eternall, and unchangeable in his being wisdome, power, holinesse, justice, goodnesse, and truth.'[86] Even if this phrase was used in a prayer by George Gillespie Assembly as legend holds, we know Gillespie read Ussher and he could have taken it from Ussher's catechism. This answer's expansion is easily explained by noting both the *Body* and the *Principles* addressed the essence of God in several questions, but the divines rolled that discussion into one question.

In addition to instances of direct quotation, the LC condensed Ussher's longer material into single paragraphs or phrases. The different lengths of the *Body* and the LC create difficulties in correlation, making it better to search for phrases repeated from Ussher's book in the catechism than whole passages. The Christological sections provide examples of exact borrowed phrases:

> BOD: *Why was it requisite that our Saviour should be God?*
> Because, first, none can satisfie for sin, nor be a Saviour of soules, but God alone; *Psal. 49.7. 1 Thess. 1.10.* For no creature though never so good, is worthy to redeem another mans sin, which deserveth everlasting punishment.
>
> Secondly, the satisfaction for our sins must be infinitely meritorious, otherwise it cannot satisfie the infinite wrath of God that was offended; therefore that the work of our Redemption might be such, it was necessary our Saviour should be God, to the end his obedience and sufferings might bee of an infinite price and worth, *Acts 20.28. Heb. 9.14.*
>
> Thirdly, No finite creature was able to abide and overcome the infinite wrath of God, and the sufferings due unto us for our sins; Therefore must our Saviour be God, that he might abide the burthen of Gods wrath, in his flesh, sustaining and upholding the man-hood by his divine power, and so might get again, and restore to us the righteousnesse and life which we have lost.
>
> Fourthly, our Saviour must vanquish all the enemies of our salvation, and overcome Satan, Hell, Death, and Damnation, which no creature could ever doe. *Rom. 1.4. Heb. 2.14.*

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85 Ussher, *Principles* (1645), pp. 3-4.

86 *The humble Advice of the Assembly of Divines […] Concerning a Shorter Catechism* ([1647]), p. 2. Henceforth abbreviated WSC.

Fifthly, he must also give efficacie to his satisfaction, raising us up from the death of sin, and putting us in possession of eternall life.

Sixthly, he must give us his Spirit, and by it seale these graces to our soules, and renew our corrupt nature, which only God can doe.[87]

LC: *Q. Why was it requisite, that the Mediator should be God? A*. It was requisite that the Mediator should be God, that he might sustain and keep the humane nature from sinking under the infinite wrath of God, and the power of death; give worth and efficacy to his sufferings, obedience and intercession; and to satisfie Gods justice, procure his favour, purchase a peculiar people, give his Spirit to them, conquer all their enemies, and bring them to everlasting salvation.[88]

Another example where a long section is condensed into a brief statement:

BOD: *Why was it requisite that our Mediatour should be Man? was it not sufficient that he was God?*

No, it was further requisite that he should be man also; because

1. Our Saviour must suffer and die for our sins, which the Godhead could not doe.
2. Our Saviour also must perform obedience to the law, which in his Godhead he could not doe.
3. He must be man of kin to our nature offending, that he might satisfie the justice of God[89] in the same nature wherein it was offended, *Rom. 8.3. 1 Cor. 15.21. Heb. 2.14, 15, 16.* For the righteousnesse of God did require, that the same nature which had committed the sin, should also pay and make amends for sin, and consequently that onely nature should be punished which did offend in *Adam*: Man therefore having sinned, it was requisite for the appeasing of Gods wrath, that man himself should die for sin; the Man Christ Jesus offering up himself should die for sin; the Man Christ Jesus offering a sacrifice of a sweet smelling favour unto God for us, *1 Tim. 2.5. Heb. 2.9, 10 & 15, 15. Rom. 5.12.15. Eph. 5.2.*
4. It is for our comfort, that thereby we might have free accesse to the throne of Grace, and might find help in our necessities, having such an high Priest as was in all things tempted like unto ourselves, and was acquainted with our infirmities in his own person, *Heb. 4.15, 16, & 5.2.*[90]

LC: *Q. Why was it requisite that the Mediator should be Man? A*. It was requisite that the Mediator should be Man, that he might advance our nature, per-

[87] Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, p. 161.
[88] WLC, p. 9.
[89] This phrase also links to the antecedently quoted Larger Catechism answer.
[90] Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, p. 164.

> form obedience to the Law, suffer to make intercession for us in our nature, have a fellow-feeling of our infirmities; that we might receive the adoption of sons, and have comfort and accesse with boldnesse unto the throne of Grace.[91]

These explanations overlap phrasing and demonstrate that the divines trimmed long sections from Ussher into terse statements for memorizing.

To avoid overstatement, Ussher's *Body* was not the only source the divines used to write the LC. Ussher's phrases were scattered into LC answers combined with other phrases and explanations. The divines tended to wrap what they thought Ussher put well into other material, as seen in the section on the sacraments.

> BOD: *What is Baptism?* It is the first Sacrament of the New Testament, by the washing of water (*Ephes. 5.26.*) representing the powerfull washing of the blood and spirit of Christ, (*1 Cor. 6.11. Heb. 10.22.*) and so sealing our regeneration, or new birth, our entrance into the Covenant of Grace, and our ingrafting into Christ, and into the body of Christ, which is his Church, (*Joh. 3.5. Tit. 3.5. Act. 8.27.*)[92]

> LC: *Q. What is Baptisme? A.* Baptism is a Sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the Holy Ghost, to be a signe and seale of ingrafting into himself, of remission of sinnes by his bloud, and regeneration by his spirit, of Adoption, and resurrection unto everlasting life; and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible Church, and enter into an open and professed ingagement to be wholly and onely the Lords.[93]

The answer of the Westminster Shorter Catechism piled phrases from Ussher's work more clearly together:

> WSC: Baptisme is a Sacrament, wherein the Washing with Water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signifie and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, and our ingagement to be the Lords.[94]

Phrases with the language of 'washing,' 'ingrafting,' and 'sealing' all appear in the texts of Ussher and the divines. The divines also leaned on Ussher's definition of the Lord's Supper.

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91 WLC, p. 9.
92 Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, p. 411.
93 WLC, pp. 47-8.
94 WSC, p. 15.

> BOD: *So much for Baptism: What is the Lords Supper?* It is the second Sacrament of the new Testament, wherein God by the signes of bread and wine signifieth sensibly, and exibiteth to every faithfull receiver the body and bloud of Christ for his spirituall nourishment and growth in Christ, and for so sealing unto him his continuance, with increase in the body of Christ, which is his Church, confirmeth him in the Covenant of grace. Or thus: It is a Sacrament of the Gospel, wherein by the outward elements of Bread and Wine, sanctified and exhibited by the Minister, and rightly received by the communicant, assurance is given to those that are ingrafted into Christ, of their continuance in him, and receiving nourishment by him unto eternall life.[95]

> LC: *Q Wherein doe the Sacraments of Baptisme and the Lords Supper differ? A.* […] whereas the Lords Supper is to be administered often, in the Elements of bread and wine, to represent and exhibit Christ as spirituall nourishment to the soul, and to confirm our continuance and growth in him, and only to such as are of years and ability to examine themselves.[96]

Although rearranged, some phrases from Ussher about the Lord's Supper reappeared in the catechism. The pattern of borrowed phrases explains why many concluded that the *Body* was the foundational text behind the LC.[97] The LC repeatedly seems to mirror the theology of the *Body*, likely because the latter was the source.

The LC's connections to the *Body* may not appear as direct as those between the IA and the WCF. The summaries and phrases that appear in the catechism may not definitively persuade sceptical readers, but key factors must be remembered. The *Body* was not just a possible source. The Assembly knew and read it because they, not its author, published it, and they praised it highly.[98] Dury had gone to great lengths to link Ussher to his international theological project.[99] Downame may have published the *Body* in 1645, near the time the Assembly worked on the LC, so the

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95 Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, p. 422.

96 WLC, p. 52.

97 Mitchell, *Westminster Assembly*, p. 364; Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, 3 vol (Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1877), 1:786n2; 'Westminster Catechisms', in Frank Leslie Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 1745.

98 James Ussher, *A Body of Divinity: Or, The Sum and Substance of Christian Religion Catechistically propounded and explained, by way of Question and Answer, Methodically and familiarly handled, For the Use of Families*, 7th ed. (1677), sig. A2r-A2v, pp. 1-40.

99 *Correspondence of James Ussher*, vol. 2, pp. 605-8, 614-5, 630-1, 633-5, 637-9, 653-4, 661-3, 665-9, 721-4, 775-7, 809-10, 811-2, 839-41; vol. 3, 1095-6.

divines could access it as they composed their catechisms.[100] The divines, therefore, almost certainly drew from the *Body* as a source document.

CONCLUSION

The Assembly first met in Westminster Abbey's Henry VII chapel. In a final show of deference in 1656, Oliver Cromwell insisted Ussher be buried in the Abbey and he still rests in the St. Paul Chapel.[101] This chapel, however, is just at the bottom of the stairs to the Henry VII chapel. Ussher's grave marks the same relationship he had to the Assembly in life: present but just outside. In life and death, Ussher was the ghost in the corner of Westminster. The Assembly's appropriation of Ussher evades definitive proof, as its minutes leave no explicit mention of him. Committees, however, drafted the public documents and floor debates discussed substance and phrasing, not whom the committees cited. Committees were not permitted to discuss their work outside the Assembly, which means discussions of citations are lost. Probability remains. Not only was it possible that Ussher's views were often discussed in committee work, the divines' demonstrable dependence on Ussher in published works makes it most probable that his works were consulted. Ussher echoes in the Assembly's documents were noticed early on, but until now no one argued that these reveal Ussher's influence. Ussher's reputation, the echoes of his works in the standards, and the considerable instances in which Ussher or his works were connected to the Assembly all suggest that his influence was highly probable. Historical factors, therefore, indicate it is most likely that Ussher's legacy lives on through the documents of the Westminster Assembly.

[100] Perkins, 'Manuscript and Material Evidence', p. 144.
[101] Ford, *James Ussher*, pp. 270-1.

'One Can't Believe Impossible Things': A New Defence of Penal Substitutionary Atonement In Light Of The Legal Concepts Of Vicarious Liability And *Respondeat Superior*

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Alice laughed: 'There's no use trying,' she said; 'one can't believe impossible things.' 'I daresay you haven't had much practice,' said the Queen. 'When I was younger, I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.' [1]
Lewis Carroll

On any given Sunday congregations all over the world will gather to sing songs extolling the goodness of God for the sacrifice of his Son. They will boldly proclaim lyrics of hymns like, 'And Can It Be, That I Should Gain,' saying:

> And can it be, that I should gain an interest in the Saviour's blood?
> Died he for me, who caused his pain?
> For me, who him to death pursued?
> Amazing love! How can it be that thou, my God, shouldst die for me![2]

To many Christians in such congregations, the claims expressed in songs like this encapsulate glorious truths of the gospel. This, however, is not universally the case. There are Christians who for various reasons—be it personal experiences or intellectual objections—do not find such claims of the gospel to be 'glorious.' To such Christians penal substitution does not represent good news, rather, it perpetuates a distorted image of who God is.[3] In many cases opponents of penal substitution reject the doctrine because of the supposedly abusive nature of the doctrine. The doctrine

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1 Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass: And what Alice Found There* (Philadelphia: Henry Altemus Company, 1897), pp. 102–3.

2 Charles Wesley, 'And Can It Be, That I Should Gain', 1738.

3 For example, see: Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Parker, *Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and the Search for What Saves Us* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001), pp. 30–31; Delores Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-Talk* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993), p. 167.

makes God look too much like a child-abuser or an abusive husband who demands unthinking submission from his wife. Such objections ought to be addressed in pastorally sensitive ways. Afterall, personal experience of abuse—not mere intellectual opposition—might be at the core of some people's rejection of penal substitution. In addition to rejecting the doctrine because of its supposed unsavoury ethical or pastoral implications some have rejected penal substitution on the grounds that penal substitution—in general and not simply as a theological doctrine—is by definition impossible. In this essay I attempt to address one version of this objection raised by Brent Kyle in 'Punishing and Atoning: A New Critique of Penal Substitution.'

The essay proceeds as follows. In part one I define penal substitutionary atonement and distinguish between two versions of the doctrine: Penal Substitution Simpliciter and the Penal Consequences View of Atonement. With this distinction in place, part two examines Kyle's argument which states that a necessary condition for punishment is that the person inflicting the punishment must believe that the person receiving the punishment is in some way responsible for the offence. I argue against this condition by appealing to the legal concept of vicarious liability. This concept serves as a counterexample to Kyle's proposed condition for punishment, thereby undercutting his argument. In part three I argue that the concept vicarious liability can serve as more than a counter-example to Kyle's proposed criteria for punishment. I make the case that vicarious liability along with the legal doctrine of respondeat superior provides a novel and helpful way for thinking about the theological doctrine of penal substitution. I motivate this claim by showing how being made in the image of God and being united to Christ can ground an appeal to these legal doctrines in a defence of penal substitutionary atonement.

1. DEFINING PENAL SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT

The doctrine of penal substitution can be stated pithily in eight words: Christ died in my place for my sins. Yet, given the doctrine's significance, and its place in gospel proclamation, more nuance is necessary. This nuance involves distinguishing between different versions of the doctrine.

Current discussions of penal substitution suggest that there are at least two versions of the doctrine. Let us call the first version Penal Substitution Simpliciter (PSA) and the second version the Penal Consequences View of Atonement (PCA). Let us define PSA as the doctrine according to which:

> Sinners deserve to be punished for their sin. Christ undertakes the punishment for sin that sinners deserved. Because of this, sinners do not need to undertake that punishment themselves because God's justice is satisfied by Christ's death.

This definition finds support in a number of important historical documents—e.g. The Belgic Confession and The Heidelberg Catechism—as well as contemporary articulations of the doctrine.[4] This version of penal substitution, however, is not the only account that one could provide. There is, in fact, a second version that has recently received some attention and is consistent with several historical protestant articulations of atonement.

Let us define the second version of penal substitution, as follows:

> Sinners deserve to be punished for their sin. Christ undertakes the consequences for sin, which had it fallen upon sinners, would be the punishment for sin that sinners deserved. Because of this, sinners do not have to undergo that punishment themselves, yet God's justice is satisfied by Christ.

This second version, which I am calling 'The Penal Consequences View of Atonement,' has recently been articulated by William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland. They define penal substitution as the doctrine that 'God inflicted on Christ the suffering we deserved as the punishment for our sins, as a result of which we no longer deserve punishment.'[5] What is significant about this articulation of the doctrine is that it leaves open whether Christ was actually punished for sin. That is, it is possible that 'God afflicted Christ with the suffering that, had it been inflicted on us, would have been our just desert and, hence, punishment. In other words, Christ was not punished but he endured the suffering that would have been our punishment had it been inflicted on us.'[6] This version of penal substitution has also been articulated by James Denney and is consistent with the confessional statements of a number of traditions.[7] With these

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4 'Thomas Schreiner, 'Penal Substitution View' in *The Nature of the Atonement: Four Views*, ed. James Beilby and Paul Eddy (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2006), p. 67. Stephen Holmes, 'Penal Substitution' in *T&T Clark Companion to Atonement*, ed. Adam Johnson (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), p. 295.

5 William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*, 2nd ed (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017), p. 613.

6 Ibid.

7 James Denney, *The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1917), pp. 187, 214, 208, 273. 'Westminster Confession of Faith', accessed March 14, 2019, <https://students.wts.edu/resources/creeds/

two definitions in place let us proceed to examine Brent Kyle's argument against the possibility of penal substitution.

2. 'ONE CAN'T BELIEVE IMPOSSIBLE THINGS' – THE BELIEF OBJECTION AND VICARIOUS LIABILITY

In a famous scene in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*, Alice addresses the Queen of Hearts saying, 'There's no use trying… One can't believe impossible things.' To which the queen, rather humorously replies, 'I daresay you haven't had much practice.' Some philosophers find themselves in Alice's position, exasperated in their attempts to believe impossible things, like the doctrine of penal substitution. Their exasperation only grows because believers in penal substitution seem to take the same route as the queen, forcing themselves to believe impossible things through 'practice.' What might this 'practice' consist of? Perhaps it consists of rehearsing the contours of penal substitution by listening to sermons, going through catechisms, reading books, or singing songs that extol the doctrine. In light of widespread belief in an 'impossible' doctrine, Brent Kyle sets out to prove that penal substitution is impossible. He does this by arguing for a necessary condition for punishment that falsifies the claims of the penal substitutionary theory.

Kyle's argument begins by assuming that punishment involves imposing harm onto someone.[8] With this assumption in mind he considers two cases in which a person imposes harm towards another. The first is the case of a 19-year-old man who showed up late for work in a sporting goods store. This man, Ryan Wood, was punished by being forced to spend the morning dressed as a mannequin in the store's window. The second case is that of a masochist being flogged by a sadist. In these cases, only the case of Ryan Woods counts as a punishment. Even though the masochist receives harsh treatment, the masochist is not punished. Why is this the case? It is because there is no offence that has been committed by the masochist. Punishment, it is generally recognized, 'always involves an offense in some way or another.'[9] This condition, however, is not by itself enough to establish the necessary conditions for punishment. According to Kyle,

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westminsterconfession.html/>. See VIII.4. See also, The Southern Baptist Convention, 'On the Necessity of Penal Substitutionary Atonement', accessed March 14, 2019, <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/2278/on-the-necessity-of-penal-substitutionary-atonement/>.

8 Brent Kyle, 'Punishing and Atoning: A New Critique of Penal Substitution', *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 74 (2013), p. 208.

9 Ibid.

it also seems clear that 'the punishing authority must at least believe that there was an offense.'[10]

In order to motivate this assumption, Kyle asks us to imagine a father who comes home from a bad day at work and spanks his child to 'let off steam,' knowing the child did nothing wrong. If this were to occur, we would call this treatment abusive, but we would not call it punishment. Now, imagine if the child had skipped school unbeknownst to the father. If, the father, like in the first scenario spanks his child for the sake of letting off steam but is unaware that his child skipped school that day we would still not call this punishment. This seems to indicate that the person doing the punishment must at least believe that there was an offence committed.[11]

Kyle, helpfully, notes that penal substitution can account for what is said so far. God, in penal substitution, believes and knows that there was an offence, i.e. sin. But the knowledge condition is not enough to establish punishment. The punishing authority 'must believe that the intended recipient is responsible for the offense.'[12] If for example, the father had his wallet stolen earlier that day and spanks his child to 'let off steam' knowing that the child did not steal the wallet, this would not count as punishment because the father does not believe that it was the son who committed the offence. The principle we are led to believe from these scenarios is that 'the authority who imposes the harm must at least believe its intended recipient committed the offense.'[13]

Such a view, however, is too strong. There are cases where a person can be punished for an offence even though he is not believed to have committed it. Consider the case of a person who hires a hit-man to murder an enemy. The person who pays a hit-man to murder his enemy did not actually commit a murder. Nevertheless, the client is responsible for the fact that the murder was committed. No one would object to punishing the person who contracted the murder. So, it seems as though what we ought to say is that punishment occurs only if 'the authority believes that the recipient is *responsible* for the offense having been committed.'[14] This does not require full responsibility, but it requires responsibility at least in part. Having worked through a number of scenarios, Kyle concludes with the following condition for punishment:

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10 Ibid. Italics in the original.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid., p. 209.

> P punishes S for (supposed) offense O only if:
> (1) P believes that S is at least partly responsible for O having been committed.[15]

Let us call this the 'belief condition.' This condition, not only creates profound difficulties for penal substitution, it makes penal substitution impossible. Kyle explains, 'In general, condition (1) could never be fulfilled when P is an omniscient being (e.g. God) and S is completely innocent (e.g. Christ). Surely God did not believe that Christ was at all responsible for human sin having been committed.'[16] Given that God could not in fact believe that Christ is responsible for human sin, it is impossible for God to meet the belief condition. Given the impossibility of God meeting this condition we must also say that 'it is not the case that God punished Christ.'[17] Thus, penal substitution seems to be ruled out.

2.1 Responding to the Belief Condition

Given the belief condition of punishment it seems that the defender of penal substitution is in a difficult position. What is a penal substitution theorist to do? The penal substitution theorist could attempt to clarify what version of penal substitution is the target of this argument. Recall, there are at least two versions of penal substitution: PSA and PCA. PSA claims that Christ undertakes the punishment for sin that sinners deserved. If accepted, the belief condition rules out PSA. PCA on the other hand is not ruled out by this condition. Recall, PCA states that Christ undertakes the consequences for sin, which had it fallen upon sinners, would be the punishment for sin that sinners deserved. PCA, it seems, is immune to the belief condition objection. Yet, one could argue that PCA has a major shortcoming, namely, that it is not well recognized as a legitimate historical version of penal substitution.[18]

If penal substitution theorists are unwilling to accept PCA, what options might they have for responding to the belief condition objection? They can attempt to disprove the belief condition by providing examples of cases in which an agent is punished by an authority who believes that the agent being punished is not responsible for the wrongful act. Recently William Lane Craig has provided an example from legal studies that seems to be a counterexample to the belief condition: the concept of vicarious liability.

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15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., p. 210.

17 Ibid.

18 See for example Holmes, 'Penal Substitution', p. 299.

2.2 Vicarious Liability

In the law court there are often cases involving what is called 'vicarious liability.' These cases invoke the legal doctrine of *respondeat superior* in order to impute the liability of a subordinate to his superior.[19] How is the doctrine of *respondeat superior* defined in legal studies? The phrase can be translated as 'let the master answer,' however, it means that 'in certain cases a master is held liable for the wrongful acts of his servant.'[20] In modern legal cases in which the *respondeat superior* doctrine is invoked, an employer is held liable for acts done by his employee in his role as an employee, even though the employer did not do these acts himself and is in no way at fault.[21] Historically, the concept of *respondeat superior* was used to impute liability when an individual was the owner of an instrument which caused harm or when he was the owner of an animal or slave which caused the harm.[22] Most often, however, the doctrine was applied in a master-slave situation to make the master liable for the acts of his slaves. In the modern period, with the outlawing of slavery, the rule was broadened to include servants instead of slaves. There are numerous cases which illustrate this legal doctrine. The first case in modern English law was applied in 1709 *Hern v. Nichols*.[23] In this case a silk merchant was held liable for the fraud by his agent in the sale of silk. Consider also *Ruppe vs. City of Los Angeles*. The court found the employer liable for actions committed by its employee. In this case a city employee was assigned to wire a building and set the electricity meters. The plaintiff who was in charge of the building as a caretaker refused to let the employee enter. The city employee forced his way into the building and assaulted the plaintiff in an attempt to finish the job. According to this ruling, the city employee's actions were deemed contrary to the express instructions of his employer. Nevertheless, the court stressed that the assault was done in the course of employment. Young states that 'the court found that in such situations the master is responsible although the act is unauthorized or even contradictory to express orders.'[24] Other examples of vicarious liability

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19 William Lane Craig, *The Atonement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 65.

20 Christine Young, 'Respondeat Superior: A Clarification and Broadening of the Current Scope of Employment Test', *Santa Clara Law Review* 30 (1990): 599.

21 Ralph Brill, 'The Liability of an Employer for the Wilful Torts of His Servants', *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 45 (1968): 1.

22 Young, 'Respondeat Superior', p. 600.

23 Ibid., p. 601.

24 Ibid., p. 605.

could be given.[25] The principle is in fact widespread. Craig, however, overstates how widespread the principle is when he says that it is a 'largely uncontroversial.'[26] This is simply not true. As a counter example to his claim that vicarious liability is uncontroversial one could point out the most famous case in American law involving vicarious liability: *Wright v. Wilcox*. This case involved the injuries caused by a wagon driver.[27] Wilcox, the wagon driver, was delivering goods for his employer when some boys attempted to board his moving wagon. Wilcox instructed his horses to go faster so that the boys would not board his wagon. However, in the midst of fleeing from the boys, one of the boys fell underneath the wagon and was seriously injured. The court departed from the *respondeat superior* principle and found that Wilcox's employer was not liable for the injury of the boys. The fact that the principle is controversial is bolstered when one looks at international applications of vicarious liability. French law dictates that 'the principle that the liability of an employer for the wrongful acts of his employees is in no way dependent on any fault of the employer.'[28] German law on the other hand has 'imposed a more limited liability upon the employer by connecting his liability with his personal fault; the master is liable only when he has engaged a servant whom he knew or should have known was unfit, or when he did not properly supervise the servant's activities.'[29] The differences between the application of vicarious lability in English, American, French, and German law just go to show that the principle is not in fact uncontroversial.

In addition to being incorrect about how 'uncontroversial' vicarious liability is, Craig is incorrect to say that 'it needs to be emphasized that the employer is not, in such cases, being held liable for other acts, such as complicity or negligence in failing to supervise the employee. Indeed, he may remain blameless in the matter.'[30] The German application of this law noted above falsifies this claim. Still, Craig's appeal to vicarious liability under the *respondeat superior* principle is significant for defending PSA. This is because the liability for crimes committed by a subordinate in the discharge of his duties is applied to the superior. As

[25] For other examples of cases in which *respondeat superior* was appealed to in order to ground vicarious liability see Carr v. Wm. C. Crowell Co. (1946) and *Fields v. Sanders* (1947). In both cases employees of the contracting companies assaulted the plaintiffs over the course of their employment.

[26] Craig, *Atonement*, p. 65.

[27] Young, 'Respondeat Superior', pp. 602–3.

[28] Robert Neuner, 'Respondeat Superior in the Light of Comparative Law,' *Louisiana Law Review* 4 (1941): 2.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Craig, *Atonement*, p. 65.

Craig says, 'the vicarious liability that exists in the law suffices to show that the imputation of our guilt to Christ is not wholly without parallel in our experience.'[31] Given that vicarious liability under the *respondeat superior* principle is commonly—although not universally—accepted, we have a counter-example to Kyle's belief condition (BC). Courts sometimes punish employers for offences even though they believe that the employer was not responsible for committing the offence. Given that we have provided a counter example to the BC it seems, at least initially, as though Kyle's belief condition objection fails.

2.3 Objecting to the Vicarious Liability Defence

Proponents of the belief condition objection might raise an objection to the vicarious liability defence. They could argue that vicarious liability has historically been applied only to cases of masters-slaves, masters-servants, or employers-employees. Penal substitution is not based on any of these relations, thus, the PSA theorist is misapplying this legal principle by applying it to PSA. This objection fails. The reason is that Craig's use of the vicarious liability defence is not meant to show that PSA is in fact a case of vicarious liability. It is only meant to show that we commonly, knowingly, and wilfully violate the BC. If this is the case then the belief condition is falsified. This version of the vicarious liability argument succeeds in undercutting the belief condition objection to PSA.

There is, however, a stronger version of the vicarious liability argument available to the PSA theorist. If one could show that Christ bears vicarious liability for humanity's sin as humanity's *respondeat superior* then the PSA defender could make an even stronger case against the belief condition objection. Craig merely hints at this possibility but does not provide reasons for believing that PSA might be a case of vicarious liability and that Christ is humanity's respondeat superior.[32] Had Craig done this he would have provided a much stronger defence of PSA. In what follows I attempt to motivate the belief that vicarious liability applies to PSA because Christ is our superior in the *respondeat superior* doctrine; thereby showing that PSA can be considered a version of vicarious liability.

3. CHRIST AND THE RESPONDEAT SUPERIOR PRINCIPLE

If one were interested in establishing PSA as a version of vicarious liability then one would need to provide reasons for thinking that the relationship

[31] Ibid., p. 66.
[32] Ibid.

between humanity and Christ fits into a *respondeat superior* relationship. What might ground such a relationship?

3.1 Slaves of the Lord

One proposal for grounding Christ's *respondeat superior* relationship with human beings would be to appeal to a master-slave or master-servant relationship. The editors of the Harvard Law Review explain that, 'it is a fundamental principle of agency that the master is responsible for injuries to third persons cause by the negligence of his servants in the course of their employment.'[33] Although the journal editors recognize the 'well settled' nature of principle, they go on to explain that, 'it is often difficult to determine when the relation of master and servant exists.'[34] This difficulty arises partly because contemporary culture no longer operates within a system of master-servants or master-slaves, rather, it is the employer-employee system that provides the primary impetus for applying the doctrine of *respondeat superior.* This difficulty need not detain those who seek to establish PSA along the lines of vicarious liability. Why not? Because the doctrine of *respondeat superior* developed in ancient times in which master-slave relationships were commonplace, more specifically it developed as a part of Roman law.[35] The historical background of the principle is an asset for the PSA theorist because the New Testament – which was also written in 1st century Greco-Roman context – consistently employs the master-slave relationship to describe the Christian's relationship to Christ.

Paul for example employs this imagery to describe his relationship to Christ in Romans 1:1 and Philippians 1:1 – calling himself a *doulos* of Christ. James, Jude, and Peter also apply this designation to themselves.[36] That figures with such authority as apostles would identify themselves as 'slaves'—even of God—would have been offensive to Romans and Greeks. To be seen as a slave, in the eyes of the apostles' gentile audiences would have been met with contempt and would have been cause for shame.[37]

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[33] The Harvard Law Review Association, 'The Doctrine of Respondeat Superior', *Harvard Law Review* 17 (1903): 51.

[34] Ibid., p. 51.

[35] 'Mr. Justice Holmes has traced the apparent origin of the doctrine to ancient Greek and Roman laws which made the master of the family responsible for the harm caused by his animals, his slaves, and by the members of his family.' Brill, 'The Liability of an Employer for the Wilful Torts of His Servants', p. 1.

[36] See Jas 1:1, Jude 1, 1 Pet. 1:1.

[37] S. Scott Bartchy, 'Slave, Slavery' in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, eds. Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997), p. 1099.

On the other hand, Jewish Christians would have heard the term more positively. This is because 'in the Hebrew Bible the phrase in the singular 'slave of Yahweh' identifies persons who came to enjoy an especially honoured relationship to Israel's God, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Paul.'[38] The apostles who self-identified as slaves of the Lord might have had this Jewish concept in mind as they described their relationship with the Lord. They—especially Paul—might have also employed the term knowing that their Gentile audiences might have heard allusions to the *Familia Caesaris*, that is, the household of Caesar which included slaves and freedpersons. Being a *doulos* of Caesar brought a certain amount of authority and power that derived merely from relating to Caesar.[39] By alluding to the *Famila Caesaris* and the *servus Caesris* Paul might very well have been asserting the Lordship of Jesus Christ over and above all earthly powers.[40]

At this point an objection could be raised. The objection is this: the primary application of the term 'slaves of the Lord' is to leaders not all Christians. Paul, Peter, James, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses are deemed slaves of the Lord, but the term isn't applied to all of God's people. Although it might be true that the term is most commonly used to designate leaders, the term and concept is applied to God's people in general as well. Scott Bartchy writes that 'Israelites are frequently identified as "slaves of Yahweh"… following his liberation of them from Egyptian chattel slavery in exodus.'[41] The term is also used in the New Testament when Paul refers to believers as 'slaves of the Lord' in 1 Corinthians 7:22. More importantly, the concept is used by Paul to describe redemption and sanctification. According to Paul Christians have been purchased by Christ and now belong to him; 'salvation is presented as a spiritual manumission involving a change of masters.'[42] Additionally, Paul says that Christians are no longer slaves to sin but slaves to righteousness, to Christ, and to God's law.[43]

The idea that God's people are slaves of the Lord could be used to ground Christ's role as the superior in the *respondeat superior* principle. This possibility is weakened however if we examine the temporal order

38 Ibid.

39 Michael Brown, 'Paul's Use of *Doulos Christou Iēsou* in Romans 1:1', *JBL* 120 (2001): p. 733.

40 Ibid., p. 735.

41 Bartchy, 'Slave, Slavery', p. 1099.

42 'Slave, Slavery,' in *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments*, eds. Leland Ryken, James Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2010), p. 798. See 1 Cor. 6:19–20 and 7:21–23.

43 Rom. 6:18, 22; 7:25.

of when God's people come to be called slaves of the Lord. In the cases of Israel and of New Testament believers, the designation is only used after redemption is accomplished and applied. In the Old Testament, Israel gets called 'slaves of the Lord' after the exodus event. In the New Testament believers are called 'slaves of the Lord' after Christ accomplishes redemption on the cross. Therefore, to base penal substitution on the ground that we are servants of the Lord is to reverse the temporal order of redemption, that is, it takes what is actually an effect of PSA as the grounds for PSA.

If we are going to develop PSA along the lines of vicarious liability using the *respondeat superior* concept we will have to appeal to another concept besides that of 'the slave of the Lord.' An alternative grounding will still be need to fulfil the criteria that there is a master-slave/master-servant relationship. In other words: 1) There needs to be a hierarchical relationship 2) in which an agent is supposed to carry out his superior's commands and, in some sense, represent his or her superior, and 3) this relationship must not be temporally posterior to atonement. I suggest that the concept the *imago Dei* meets these criteria.

3.2 The Imago Dei

It is now well recognized that terms *tselem* and *demut* in Genesis 1:26 ought to be understood in its ancient near eastern context. In its original cultural context, the term referred to a physical image that depicts the original it represents. The term could be used to refer to an idol made of wood or stone through which a deity would manifest its presence in the world.[44] As such, idols were one way for the divine being to be present in the world. The terms were also used of kings who were living images of God's on earth. Throughout the ancient near east the king was thought to be the embodiment of the divine ruler.[45] In an Egyptian context the image of God referred to the fact that the king was the embodiment of some divine being.[46] In a Mesopotamian context the king, who was the image of God, was simply a divinely appointed and empowered representative. In both contexts, 'the person served as a divine representative specifically for the purpose of exercising dominion.'[47] Given this ancient Near Eastern

[44] See, Marc Cortez, *Resourcing Theological Anthropology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), p. 109 and José Faur, 'The Biblical Idea of Idolatry', *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 69 (1978):1–15.

[45] John Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), p. 212.

[46] J. Gordon McConville, *Being Human in God's World: An Old Testament Theology of Humanity* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), p. 19.

[47] Marc Cortez, *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2010), p. 21.

cultural context we are led to believe that that in the Biblical context, all human beings, being the *imago Dei*, have a particular role. God himself is king, and human beings serve as God's representatives and agents in the world. Richard Middleton explains: 'The *imago Dei* designates the royal office or calling of human beings as God's representatives and agents in the world, granted authorized power to share in God's rule or administration of earth's resources and creatures.'[48] On this reading, to say that human beings are the image of God is to say that they have a particular office or role. Their role is one in which they have been delegated power and authority by a superior, namely God himself.

Could this role, which has appropriately been understood as a 'vice-regent' type role, ground vicarious liability necessary for PSA?[49] I believe that it can. There are at least two reasons why. First, it has the hierarchical structure that the *respondeat superior* principle demands. McConville explains, 'the commission of the humans to 'rule' over creation therefore reflects an underlying metaphor in which the creator God is himself king.'[50] As vice-regents, human beings fall under the authority of their superior, namely the one whom they represent/image. They do not have authority to act on their own behalf, they have delegated authority. Second, the vice-regent role has built in responsibilities that humans can either faithfully fulfil or fail to accomplish and therefore be held liable for. As God's vice-regents humans are called to observe and understand the God-designed order of creation and conform themselves to that order.[51] They are to rule creation according to God's will and his standard, reflecting his loving, benevolent, and wise character. Thus, the task that humans have been given as God's vice-regents in creation parallels the kind of tasks a servant might be given by their master. Finally, unlike the master-slave relationship used to describe God's people in the Old and New Testaments, the image/vice-regent relationship does not come into being after redemption. Rather, the image/vice-regent relationship comes into being temporally prior to penal substitution. It comes at creation. All human beings, regardless of whether or not they are believers stand in a particular relationship to the one whom they image: all human beings are

48 Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005), pp. 27–28.

49 For the idea that the *imago Dei* should be understand as having a vice-regent function see: John Walton, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2015), pp. 56–57; Sean McDonough, *Creation and New Creation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2017), p. 160.

50 McConville, *Being Human in God's World*, p. 20.

51 James Turner, 'Temple Theology, Holistic Eschatalogy, and the Imago Dei', *Theologica* 2 (2018): 106.

made according to the image of God. Since all human beings are created according to the image of God all human beings have the responsibility of being God's vice-regents in creation. How then do we move from saying that God is the *superior* in the *respondeat superior* principle to saying that Christ is our penal substitute? The key to making this move is to recognize the Christological nature of the *imago Dei*. On such a view, properly speaking, 'the image of God is borne by one individual, Christ.'[52] Christ himself is the embodiment of the invisible God.[53] Accordingly, Christ is the one through whom God's rule is manifested on earth. He is the Lord of lords and the king of kings. The rest of humanity is made in his image, such that we image God insofar as we image Christ. We are, therefore, properly speaking, vice-regents of God insofar as we are made according to the image of Christ, who is the ruler over all creation. It is through this relationship that humanity relates to Christ—our penal substitute—as his servants in a *respondeat superior* type relationship.

3.3 Union with Christ and The Respondeat Superior *Principle*

So far, I have argued that the grounds for applying the *respondeat superior* principle to PSA might be found in vice-regent relationship that humans have over creation in virtue of being made according to God's image. This argument could be further strengthened by appealing to the concept of union with Christ.

In a curious statement about the *respondeat superior*, 19th century legal scholar Oliver Wendel Holmes remarks that,

> It is hard to explain why a master is liable to the extent that he is for the negligent acts of one who at the time really is his servant, acting within the general scope of his employment. Probably master and servant are 'fained [sic] to be all one person' by a fiction.[54]

If a case for vicarious liability can be made based on the concept that a master and servant are feigned to be one in virtue of a legal fiction how much stronger would the case for penal substitution by means of vicarious liability be if in fact the master and slave were actually metaphysically one in the eyes of God? There are several ways to ground such an account.

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[52] Oliver Crisp, *The Word Enfleshed: Exploring the Person and Work of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016), p. 53.

[53] Col. 1:15–16.

[54] Cited in C.B. Labatt, *Commentaries on the Law of Master and Servant Including the Modern laws on Workmen's Compensation, Arbitration, Employers' Liability, Etc., Etc.* (Rochester, NY: The Lawyers Co-operative Publishing Company, 1913), p. 6669.

One way – let us call this the Union Account of Atonement – has recently been argued for by Oliver Crisp. He asks us to 'consider the possibility that Christ and the elect together compose one metaphysical entity that persists through time, just as, on the Augustinian realist way of thinking, Adam and his progeny do.'[55] He calls this object, 'Redeemed Humanity.'[56] On Crisp's account, Christ transfers to himself the consequences for the sins of Redeemed humanity and atones for their sins through his death. As a result, all those who are members of the one metaphysical object, 'Redeemed Humanity' are reconciled to God. This includes those who lived and died prior to the atonement.[57]

A second way might involve appealing to Jonathan Edwards's metaphysics of personal identity. How so? According to Edwards 'personal identity […] depends on an *arbitrary divine constitution*.'[58] In other words, personal identity is a matter of *divine fiat*.[59] The Edwardsean can apply this understanding of personal identity to say that God simply regards the redeemed as being one with Christ, and therefore the redeemed are in fact one with Christ. We should stress that for Edwards, this union is not a legal fiction, but a metaphysical reality. This Edwardsean account, I believe, is strong enough to ground the union that Wendel Holmes suggests is necessary for vicarious liability.

Finally, if one remains unconvinced by the previous approaches one could opt for taking a 'mysterian' approach to union with Christ. A 'mysterian' approach to union with Christ claims that union with Christ is a metaphysical reality that we cannot fully or adequately explain, yet it ought to be faithfully believed on the grounds that it is taught by scripture.[60] The mysterian approach to union with Christ might appeal to passages like Galatians 2:15–21 or Romans 6:1–14 which teach that atonement is made in virtue of believers' union with Christ, i.e. they are crucified and raised

55 Crisp, *The Word Enfleshed*, p. 135.

56 Ibid., p. 136.

57 Ibid., p. 138.

58 Jonathan Edwards, *Original Sin, The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 3, ed. Clyde Holbrook (New Haven: Yale, 1970), p. 399. Italics added for emphasis.

59 See Christopher Woznicki, '"Thus Saith the Lord": Edwardsean Anti-Criterialism and the Physicalist Problem of Resurrection Identity', *Theologica 2* (2018).

60 On mysterianism (especially in regard to the Trinity) see Dale Tuggy, 'Trinity' in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Winter 2016 Edition), accessed March 14, 2019, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/trinity/>.

with Christ.[61] Addressing the topic of union and atonement, Robert Tannehill writes that believers are included in Christ who is 'an inclusive or corporate person.'[62] The notion of corporate personality builds upon the claim that 'a single representative of a whole stands in relationship with said people such that they are identified with their representative.'[63] What a mysterian account of union requires is that the notion of corporate personality be based on a metaphysical and not merely legal union. The mysterian account need not provide the underlying metaphysics behind this metaphysically real union since the believer in mysterianism claims that the metaphysics of union cannot fully or adequately be explained. The mysterian account only needs to show that Scripture speaks of a metaphysically real union between Christ and the redeemed especially in regards to atonement.

3.4 Summary

There are several ways to argue for the claim that the relationship between humanity and Christ fits into a *respondeat superior* relationship. A promising way to move forward with such an argument would be to appeal to the king/vice-regent theology of the *imago Dei* taught in Genesis. Another would be to appeal to a metaphysical, and not merely legal, account of union with Christ. Combined, both manners of argumentation would be enough to ground the application of the *respondeat superior* principle to PSA.

4. CONCLUSION

Brent Kyle argues that penal substitution is impossible because a necessary condition of punishment is that the authority who imposes harm must at least believe its intended recipient is in some way responsible for the offence. This criterion, deemed the 'belief condition,' cannot be met in cases of penal substitution because God, being omniscient, knows that Jesus Christ is in no way responsible for humanity's sin. Thus, according to Kyle, it is impossible for God to believe that Christ was responsible for humanity's sin, and therefore the doctrine of penal substitution by definition is impossible. In response to this argument I have made the case that

[61] See, for example, Constantine Campbell's description of how union with Christ relates to penal substitution in Rom. 6:1–14; Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), p. 337.

[62] Robert Tannehill, *Dying and Rising with Christ: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2006), p. 24.

[63] Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ*, p. 341.

the legal principle of vicarious liability provides a counterexample to the belief condition. My argument, however, goes beyond simply providing a defeater to the belief condition, I have argued that the concept of vicarious liability along with the legal doctrine of *respondeat superior* provides a helpful way for thinking about the theological doctrine of penal substitution. I have argued that the defender of penal substitutionary atonement can appeal to the legal principle of *respondeat superior* based two relations: 1) the image of God/vice-regent relationship to God and 2) our union with Christ. By my lights, this argument provides a way for PSA theorists to avoid the accusation that they are acting like the Queen of Hearts, that is, they are wilfully believing impossible things. Accordingly, PSA is not 'one of six impossible things to believe before breakfast.'

Ambassadors Of Christ Or Agents Of Colonialism? Protestant Missionaries In Africa And Their Critics

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The Protestant missionary movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries has for some time now come under severe criticism both by many Western scholars and an increasing number of their African peers.[1] Missionaries are charged with displacing indigenous cultures and supporting the political and economic colonisation on the African continent and other parts of the world.[2] They were driven by an attitude of spiritual and ethno-cultural superiority, so the critics claim.

SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL SUPERIORITY

In their book *Mission in an African Way*, Thomas Oduro, Hennie Pretorius, Stan Nussbaum and Bryan Born critically reflect on the role of Protestant missionaries who came to Africa in the 19th century. They write:

> When the missionaries came to Africa they did not simply bring the Gospel message, they also brought Western culture. The issue was not pure Christianity against impure indigenous belief, but Christianity plus Western culture on the one hand, and indigenous African beliefs and culture on the other […]. The important difference between genuine elements of Christianity and Western culture was generally not understood and valued.[3]

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1 E.g. E.A. Ayandele, *Nigerian Historical Studies* (-:Taylor & Francis eLibrary, 2005), pp. 69-108; J. Bonk, 'All Things to All Persons: The Missionary as a Racist-Imperialist, 1860-1918', *Missiology* 8/3 (1980), pp. 285-306; A.K. Tiberondwa, *Missionary Teachers as Agents of Colonialism: A Study of their Activities in Uganda, 1877-1925* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1998); C.J. Korieh & R.C. Njoku (eds.), *Missions, States, and European Expansion in Africa* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

2 R. McLaughlan, *Re-Imaging the 'Dark Continent' in Fin De Siecle Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), p. 15.

3 T. Oduro, H. Pretorius, S. Nussbaum & B. Born, *Mission in an African Way: A Practical Introduction to African Instituted Churches and their Sense of Mission* (Wellington: Christian Literature Fund / Bible Media, 2008), p. 37.

The authors attribute a strong sense of cultural and spiritual superiority among the Western missionaries as the source of this problem.[4] The missionaries believed that their own culture with its customs and values was not just more advanced than African cultures but matchless in every way. Western missionaries, Oduro and his co-authors argue, were convinced that the traditional African cultures for new indigenous Christians were not only 'undesirable' but also 'dangerous'. In addition, these missionaries were also heavily shaped in their thinking and practice by the Enlightenment which had freed them from the superstitious beliefs and customs of the Middle Ages.[5] The same view is expressed by Chukwudi Njoku, who writes that Western missionaries 'embraced the idea of a civilizing mission, the idea of being heirs of a culturally superior people going out to share the riches and glories of their culture with people from cultures they generally assumed to be inferior to their own'.[6] Paul Leshota writes that missionaries, like many of their contemporaries, had accepted the myth of the 'Dark Continent'.[7] They believed that in contrast to Europe or North America 'Africa was an embodiment of savagery, intractable ignorance, callous barbarity, and an epicentre of evil'.[8] According to Mia Carter and Barbara Harlow missionaries considered themselves to be involved in a cultural war: 'The missionaries' early rhetoric combined idealistic discourses of enlightenment and salvation with aggressive militaristic jingoism; the Christian mission was to enact a war on barbarism and heathenism'.[9] Similarly, Rufus Ositelu speaks of a cultural imperialism which the missionaries practised. He notes:

> In consequence of this cultural imperialism, African men were not considered to be true Christians if they did not wear coat, tie and trousers and were not sons of God if they did not take the name of Jack, Robinson, Jones, Stone or Smith. In short, conversion to Christianity meant rejecting traditional forms of dressing, authority, custom, culture, marriage, medicine etc.

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4 Ibid., pp. 37 & 39.

5 Ibid., p. 39.

6 C.A. Njoku, 'The Missionary Factor in African Christianity', in O.U. Kalu (ed.), *African Christianity, 1884-1914* (Pretoria: University of Pretoria Press, 2005), p. 228.

7 P. Leshota, 'Postcolonial Reading of Nineteenth-century Missionaries' Musical Texts: The Case of Lifela Tsa Sione and Lifela Tsa Bakriste', *Black Theology* 12/2 (2014), pp. 139-40.

8 Ibid., p. 140.

9 M. Carter & B. Harlow, 'The Mission: Christianity, Civilization, and Commerce', in M. Carter & B. Harlow (eds.), *Archives of Empire Volume Two: The Scramble for Africa* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 243.

> Therefore, one should not be surprised that the Christianity imbibed by the Africans from these Western Missionaries was veneer, that is superficial, and in most cases hypocritical.[10]

Frances Adeney argues that the idea of Western superiority went hand in hand with the growing economic imperialism in the second half of the 19th century.[11] This development, she believes, also affected the worldwide Protestant mission movement:

> The lethal cocktail of Western economic imperialism, the notion of a calling to spread Western civilization, and the idea of racial competition and the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon peoples had devastating consequences for Protestant missions. Protestant missionaries, on the whole, were children of their era. Most accepted the idea of Western superiority, believing that God was calling them to spread their ideas of civilization. Even missionaries who seemed to feel that the heathens should be strengthened by bringing them the gospel, not that they should be replaced with "finer materials" […], embraced a vigorous program of Westernization in their mission outposts.[12]

According to the authors of *Mission in an African Way* the attitude of ethno-cultural and spiritual superiority had far reaching implications. It resulted in a number of serious mistakes in the practices of Protestant missionaries.[13] Thus, missionaries treated their African church members in a paternalistic way and did not take their African worldview seriously. They rejected as superstitious traditional customs and beliefs, such as belief in ancestors and witchcraft, and refused to discuss them with their African converts.[14] Furthermore, they ignored the importance of dreams and visions in African cultures by discarding them as mere imagination. Western missionaries also introduced book-based education which gave African Christians 'a sense of self-worth and independence' but left no room for the rich African oral tradition wherein knowledge and wisdom were passed on from the older to the younger generation.[15] Adeney speaks

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10 R.O.O. Ositelu, *African Instituted Churches: Diversities, Growth, Gifts, Spirituality and Ecumenical Understanding of African Instituted Churches* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2002), p. 31.

11 F.S. Adeney, *Graceful Evangelism: Christian Witness in a Complex World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), p. 50.

12 Ibid., pp. 50-51.

13 Oduro, Pretorius, Nussbaum & Born, *Mission in an African Way: A Practical Introduction to African Instituted Churches and their Sense of Mission*, p. 40.

14 Ibid., p. 44.

15 Ibid., p. 45.

of a 'benevolent colonialism', which led to a sense of inferiority that can still be observed in some African societies today.[16]

ETHNIC SUPERIORITY

Other critics like Leon Kabasele, a Congolese theologian, hold that Western missionaries in Africa had an ethnocentric attitude. Kabasele argues that missionaries introduced the Bible to black Africans but did not allow them to read the Bible themselves.[17] He goes on to say that 'in most parts of Africa, the Christianity of the missionaries was also racist because the churches were controlled by the colonists'.[18] Likewise, Paul Hiebert argues that the majority of Protestant missionaries, though they rejected the idea of biological evolution, believed in white supremacy.[19] This conviction had practical consequences. He notes:

> Unlike Spanish Catholic missionaries, who often settled abroad and intermarried with the local people (as in Latin America), Northern European Protestant missionaries considered their "homes" to be the country from which they had come. They often lived in compounds segregated from the natives and discouraged the marriage of their children to local people. They looked forward to furloughs and retirement at *home*. This practice protected their sense of superiority.[20]

Hiebert goes on to say that the belief in the superiority of the white race was also reflected in the missionaries' preaching.[21] He states that missionaries taught that Africans were under the curse of Ham, and therefore unable to govern themselves. In a paper entitled *Missionaries Go Home: The Integrity of Mission in Africa* David Adamo and Joseph Enuwosa give a concrete example of such ethnocentric missionary practice. Thus, they write the following about the treatment of indigenous clergy by British missionaries in Nigeria:

> The missionaries were also high-handed in dealing with the Africans. There was racial discrimination in the appointment of bishops. The ordination of ministers [was] done in favour of the British. The conditions of service made

16 Adeney, *Graceful Evangelism: Christian Witness in a Complex World*, p. 51.
17 L. Kabasele, *African Inter-religious Dialogue: Philosophy and Theology* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse UK, 2013), p. 7.
18 Ibid., p. 8.
19 P.G. Hiebert, *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), p. 81.
20 Ibid., pp. 81-82.
21 Ibid., p. 82.

> by the missionaries for African clergies were poor and offensive to many Africans. A case study here is the treatment, which Western missionaries gave to Bishop Ajayi Crowther in Nigeria. Crowther was the first African bishop. The white missionaries under him were not loyal. They were disobedient and racial. In 1889, […] white missionaries under Crowther, incited the CMS youth from Cambridge to write a damaging report on the black bishop. They did and the CMS authority stripped Crowther of all power. He died in 1891.[22]

A SEXIST AGENDA

For other critics, Protestant missionaries were oppressors whose attitudes and actions were not only racist but also sexist in nature. Sara Boulanger, for example, states that the missionaries' agenda was to permanently reshape the lives of African women.[23] She writes:

> At the forefront of this oppression were missionaries who used Christianity in an attempt to mould Kenyans into the kinds of societies that fit into the "civilizing mission" of colonialism. The missionaries' outlook mixed turn-of-the-century ideas of white supremacy with ideas from the Victorian era, which placed women in subservient roles, stripping them of authority and status. The burgeoning power of colonial rulers and the heightened status of missionaries were bringing about a total restructuring of society's gendered norms.[24]

According to Boulanger one of the polarising issues was the circumcision of women.[25] Together with the colonial government and newly formed political parties Protestant missionaries strongly opposed this practice for ulterior reasons.[26] Boulanger claims that the campaign to abolish female circumcision, an important rite of passage that was widely accepted among the Kikuyu people, was extremely divisive.[27] The campaign, she

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22 D.T. Adamo & J. Enuwosa, 'Missionaries Go Home: The Integrity of Mission in Africa. Paper for the IAMS Assembly Malaysia 2004', <http://www.missionstudies.org/archive/conference/1papers/fp/Adamo_&_Enuwosa_Full_paper.pdf> (Date of Access: 30.01.2019).

23 S. Boulanger, 'A Puppet on a String: The Manipulation and Nationalization of the Female Body in the "Female Circumcision Crisis" of Colonial Kenya', in L. Bernstein, C. Kattau, C. Ndinda & K. Russell (eds.), *Wagadu, Volume 6: Journal of International Women's Studies, Volume 10.1* (2009), p. 140.

24 Ibid., p. 140.

25 Ibid., p. 140.

26 Ibid., p. 141.

27 Ibid., p. 140.

argues, destroyed friendships, split whole families, helped to maintain colonial rule, and increased the influence of Christianity. She notes:

> By participating or not participating in the practice of female circumcision, many young women were severing ties with their families and clans, and through these with Kikuyu culture. Often, when these ties to family and culture were lost, young women turned to Christian religions and related practices to fill the void. […] [T]he Kenyan woman faced double-binds in that no matter what she did, she alienated herself from one side or the other. This dilemma marked her oppressed status and represented the nationalization of the female body.[28]

Boulanger's negative evaluation of the role of missionaries is shared by Cynthia Hoehler-Fatton who calls the Church Missionary Society, a British evangelical Anglican mission, a 'sexist organization'[29]. She goes on to say: 'Missionaries – and the government officials who often depended on them for insights into indigenous culture – generally espoused pejorative views of African women.'[30]

A CRITICAL EVAULATION OF THE CRITICS AND THEIR CRITIQUES

It is certainly true that many 19th century 'missionaries from Europe and North America came out of a context that assumed supremacy of Western culture and "Western religion" that is, Christianity, in a single breath.'[31] Neither can it be denied that there were Protestant missionaries who demonstrated an inexcusable attitude of superiority towards indigenous people. However, it would be wrong to suggest, as some authors seem to do, that this was true for the vast majority of missionaries. To claim that Protestant 'missionaries in general were blind to their ethnocentrism and followed a more tabula rasa approach in terms of the interaction between gospel and culture'[32] does not do justice to the ministry of many missionaries who served on the African continent. For various reasons the highly critical evaluations of the 19th and early 20th centuries' Protestant mis-

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28 Ibid., p. 141.

29 C. Hoehler-Fatton, *Women of Fire and Spirit: History, Faith, and Gender in Roho Religion in Western Kenya* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 12.

30 Ibid., p. 12.

31 S.B. Bevans & R.P. Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Maryknoll: New York, 2005), p. 230.

32 Ibid., p. 231.

sionary movements appear somewhat unrepresentative of all the available evidence.[33]

CHALLENGING SINFUL VALUES AND PRACTICES

Firstly, the critics seem to overlook the fact that Western missionaries were often confronted with sinful cultural values and practices, such as female genital mutilation or other forms of gender based violence, which prompted them to act. While some of the extreme practices may have been deliberately overstated in order to promote the missionary endeavour in the West,[34] they were nonetheless real and could not be ignored. The dividing line between genuine concern for justice and human welfare and insensitive cultural imposition was sometimes blurred. Consequently, '[s]tereotypes of culture-destroying missionaries must thus be nuanced.'[35]

In the case of female genital mutilation, the response of some missionaries, for example, to threaten African believers with excommunication from churches and expulsion from schools, turned out not to be very helpful.[36] However, other ways of dealing with these challenges were more appropriate and effective. Thus, Daniel Karanja[37] writes the following about the situation in Kenya at the beginning of the 20th century:

> Scottish missionaries understood female genital mutilation, as demonstrated by their approach to conducting systematic education from the medical perspective, and they deserve to be commended. In 1906 Dr. John W. Arthur, a missionary, medical (gynaecologist), started his operations in Kikuyu hospital. He joined efforts with Miss M.S. Stevenson, a school teacher (1907-1930) to design a curriculum of instruction for the natives to highlight the dangers of female genital mutilation. Dr. Stanley E. Jones (1914-1924) backed up their efforts by openly campaigning against FGM using education and medical

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33 See also A. Barry, J. Cruickshank, A. Brown-May & P. Grimshaw (eds.), *Evangelists of Empire? Missionaries in Colonial History* (Melbourne: eScholarship Research Centre, 2008).

34 C. Ott, S.J. Strauss & T.C. Tennent, *Encountering Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), p. 125.

35 Ibid., p. 125.

36 Cf. K. Fiedler, *Christianity and African Culture: Conservative German Protestant Missionaries in Tanzania, 1900-1940* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), pp. 75-76.

37 Daniel Njoroge Karanja is a Kenyan born academic who received his first doctorate in Ministry from Andover Newton Theological School in 1999 and his second doctorate in Conflict Analysis from Nova Southeastern University in 2015. He is an adjunct professor at St. Mary's University, San Antonio, USA.

> knowledge to show the local people the extent of damage to the female body. For example, the scar tissues hardened the exterior part of the vagina, making it difficult to dilate during labor. The hardening put the child and the mother at a very high risk of losing their lives […]. The missionaries coached local native female assistants to work as nurses and exposed them to the agony experienced during labor and childbirth as a result of female genital mutilation. The nursing assistants were highly effective in spreading the message about the dangers of FGM and their families.[38]

Approximately two decades after the campaign to abolish female circumcision had been started by the Scottish missionaries, a significant number of Kikuyu Christians opposed the practice.[39] They also rejected the idea that they were just giving in to pressure by the colonial government and adopting Western values. They insisted that their resistance was an expression of their newly found Christian faith.[40] Elaine Storkey comments:

> It was a brave stand, yet the strength of feeling in the culture as a whole was largely against them. Older women, traditionally given authority as overseers of the practice, were reluctant to give it up. And because so much status hung on this essential rite of passage for girls, even church elders could not always prevent their wives and daughters from carrying it out.[41]

While Boulanger is right in saying that the campaign to abolish female circumcision led to divisions among the Kikuyu people,[42] her positive view of this practice, which caused women a lot of pain and posed a serious health threat to them, is nonetheless difficult to comprehend. It seems that critics like her have an idealised view of culture, which considers indigenous African culture with all its traditional values and practices as intrinsically good and worth preserving. This, however, is a rather naive view, as it denies that in every human culture we may find positive elements, which Christians can affirm, and negative elements (i.e. morally evil or theologically heretical views and practices), which they need to reject. 'The myth of the "noble savage"', as Marvin Newell puts it, who is

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38 D.N. Karanja, *Female Genital Mutilation in Africa: Gender, Religion and Pastoral Care* (-: Xulon Press, 2003), pp. 46-47.

39 E. Storkey, *Scars Across Humanity: Understanding and Overcoming Violence Against Women* (London: SPCK, 2015), p. 33.

40 Ibid., p. 33.

41 Ibid., p. 33.

42 Boulanger, 'A Puppet on a String', p. 140.

'tucked away somewhere in a remote corner of the earth, enjoying some kind of social utopia, is just that – a myth.'[43]

THE MISSIONARIES' TRUE MOTIVATION: DRIVEN BY COMPASSION FOR LOST PEOPLE

Secondly, many critics seem to ignore that European missionary activities in Africa (and other parts of the world) 'did not originate in colonial overlordship but in the Evangelical-Pietist mindset of Protestant missions and their cultural background in Europe'.[44] Among those involved in the formation of Protestant mission societies in the 1790s were key leaders of the anti-slavery movement.[45] David Smith notes: 'Within the evangelical movement in Britain in the nineteenth century there was a deep and persistent awareness that a great wrong had been done to Africa and its peoples through the terrible trade in slaves that had blighted the continent'[46]. Like their evangelical leaders, nineteenth century evangelical missionaries were people of strong theological convictions and deep compassion.[47] They were, as Brian Stanley points out, driven by the conviction 'that non-Christians were lost in their sin and dependent on the gospel of Christ for salvation'.[48] In other words, evangelical missionaries had a motivation for their involvement in Africa which was very different from that of their home governments in London or Berlin.

While many missionaries worked together with colonial administrations, it would be wrong to claim that they were all willing agents of colonialism (though they may have given exactly that impression at times). The relationship between missionaries and the colonial powers was much more complex than many of the critics suggest. Not all missionaries saw

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43 M.J. Newell, *Crossing Cultures in Scripture: Biblical Principles for Mission Practice* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2016), p. 26.

44 B. Herppich, *Pitfalls of Trained Incapacity: The Unintended Effects of Integral Missionary Training in the Basel Mission on its Early Work in Ghana* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2016), p. 15.

45 C.H. Kraft, *Appropriate Christianity* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2005), p. 39.

46 D.W. Smith, *Against the Stream: Christianity and Mission in an Age of Globalization* (Leicester: IVP, 2003), p. 106.

47 J.H. Kane, *A Concise History of the Christian World Mission: A Panoramic View of Missions from Pentecost to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982), p. 96.

48 B. Stanley, 'Christian Missions and the Enlightenment: A Revaluation', in B. Stanley (ed.), *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 9.

themselves as full-blooded partners of the colonial governments and supporters of their policies. British evangelical missionaries, in particular, 'were simultaneously attracted and repelled' by British colonialism.[49] While they considered the colonial authorities as 'potential benefactors who might eliminate evil practices', they were concerned about the conduct of many colonial officials who 'committed wrongs such as promoting false religion themselves'. [50] The following passage from Andrew Porter's book entitled *Religious Versus Empire: British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700 – 1914* is certainly worth quoting. Porter writes about the attitude of British missionaries towards the British colonial project:

> Their engagement with empire more often than not took the form of bitter experience. This taught them the lessons that independence was a chimera, and more positively, that selective engagement was nevertheless both possible and at times advantageous to the pursuit of their own distinct goals. Missions thus saw themselves much of the times as 'anti-imperialist' and their relationship with empire as deeply ambiguous at best. Viewing the scene from standpoints other than their own, they may have been wrong in this perception. The extent to which missionaries were identified by local peoples with conquerors and colonisers, damned by proximity to settlers and their own ministrations to administrators, was often seriously underestimated at the time. It has subsequently been a focus for those keen to demonstrate the impossibility of missionaries being other than essential agents of colonialism.[51]

Likewise, the attitude of German evangelical missionaries towards their home country's colonial endeavour can be best described as ambiguous. Among the missionaries of the Rhenish Mission Society (RMS) in South West Africa (Namibia), for example, the annexation of the territory by Germany in 1884 was not undisputed; and not every missionary who supported this move did so for geopolitical reasons. Marion Wallace comments:

> In Germany the head of the mission, Friedrich Fabri, had been an active supporter of the German annexation of South West Africa since 1880. Yet the RMS' support for German rule was not unequivocal as historians like

[49] D. Bebbington, 'Atonement, Sin and Empire, 1880-1914', in A. Porter (ed.), *The Imperial Horizons of British Protestant Missions, 1880-1914* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), p. 21.

[50] Ibid., p. 21.

[51] A. Porter, *Religious Versus Empire: British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700 – 1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 12-13.

> Drechsler have implied. It was not until 1884 that the Society gave public backing to the annexation […]. Although there was much German patriotism among missionaries on the ground, there was also a pragmatic desire for security from the violence of the times; in addition, missionaries like Bam, who favoured German intervention, differed from those, like Gottlieb Viehe, who identified themselves more closely with the interests of Africans and attempted to remain neutral.[52]

While mission director Fabri was 'famous as a theoretician of early German colonialism'[53], Gottlieb Viehe was a pietist for whom Christian mission was solely a spiritual endeavour, and not a political enterprise.[54] As such, he was, as Nils Oermann notes, not 'an enthusiastic, or over-patriotic, advocate of Germany's colonial aspirations'[55]. Viehe was known to be very critical of the role which the German military in general and their commander, Curt von Francois, in particular played during the Nama uprising in 1893.[56]

DEMONSTRATING HUMILITY AND SACRIFICIAL SERVANTHOOD

Thirdly, there are too many examples in African church history of Western missionaries who came to Africa exercising a great deal of humility and displaying sacrificial servanthood. Hiebert distinguishes between the early Protestant missionaries and those who came to Africa in the late 19th century.[57] He argues that the former showed a high degree of love, sacrifice, and cross-cultural sensitivity whereas the latter believed in the superiority of European and North American civilisation. Likewise Pieter Boon states that the early Moravian missionaries in South Africa 'excelled in the essential qualities of humbleness, friendliness and faithfulness'.[58] Richard Elphick stresses that the early Protestant missionar-

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52 M.A. Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990* (Auckland Park: Jacana, 2011), p. 117.

53 L.H. Gann, 'Economic Development in Germany's African Empire, 1884-1914', in P. Duignan & L.H. Gann (eds.), *Colonialism in Africa, 1870-1960, Volume 4: The Economics of Colonialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 221.

54 N.O. Oermann, *Mission, Church and State Relations in South West Africa under German Rule (1884-1915)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1999), p. 35.

55 Ibid., pp. 35-36.

56 Ibid., p. 72.

57 P.G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), p. 287.

58 P.G. Boon, *Hans Peter Hallbeck and the Cradle of Missions in South Africa: A Theological-critical Study, unpublished doctoral dissertation* (Bloemfontein:

ies in Southern Africa, like Johannes Theodorus van der Kemp, did not display any signs of superiority in his attitude.[59] On the contrary, they not only showed a great interest in the cultures of the indigenous people but also challenged the ethnocentric views of their white fellowmen and women:

> To early Protestants missionaries like Van der Kemp, the gospel affirmed that Africans were potential brothers and sisters in Christ. They believed that African languages were the most appropriate instruments of evangelization and that African preachers were the most effective heralds of God's word. These convictions challenged white settlers' confidence that Christianity was a badge of their own superiority and their charter of group privileges.[60]

Van der Kemp and his successor John Philip, who were both outspoken critics of slavery, experienced strong opposition from the white settler community.[61] This to the extent, that some of the settlers even attacked van der Kemp's mission station.[62] These kinds of hostility, however, did not prevent him, even in his sixties, from marrying a woman of Malagasy descent.[63]

Like van der Kemp, Johann Hinrich Schmelen, a German missionary of the London Missionary Society, who came to Namibia in 1814, got married to a non-European woman.[64] Together with his wife Zara, a member of the Nama tribe, Schmelen translated the four gospels into the Nama language.[65] In Namibia, such marriages between white missionaries and black women were not unusual in pre-colonial times.[66]

There are, however, also examples of missionaries who served in Namibia in the second half of the 19th century and who demonstrated

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University of the Free State, 2015), p. 400.

59 R. Elphick, *The Equality of Believers: Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), p. 17.

60 Ibid.

61 J. Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 108; A. Hastings, 'Mission, Church and State in Southern Africa', *Mission Studies* 2/1 (1985), p. 23.

62 Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700*, p. 108.

63 Ibid.

64 U. Trüper, *The Invisible Woman: Zara Schmelen, African Mission Assistant at the Cape and in Namaland* (Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2006), p. 7.

65 A. Ejikeme, *Culture and Customs of Namibia* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood, 2011), p. 49.

66 Cf. Oermann, *Mission, Church and State Relations in South West Africa under German Rule (1884-1915),* p. 195.

the characteristics of their predecessors. Thus, Tuundjakuye Spencer Tjijenda,[67] a Namibian Baptist theologian, writes the following about the German-Baltic Lutheran missionary Carl Hugo Hahn who worked in Namibia:

> Carl Hugo Hahn […] was a true follower of Christ, a peacemaker, church planter and the spiritual father of the Herero nation. He loved our people very dearly and he earnestly wanted to see true spiritual transformation that can only come from hearing, believing, and calling upon the name of Jesus Christ and accepting his gospel […].This is what motivated Hahn to be concerned about the spiritual condition of the Herero-Mbanderu people.[68]

Hahn has been heavily criticised by Western scholars and popular authors for the derogative language he used to describe the Herero and other ethnic groups in the early years of his ministry.[69] Tjijenda, who is aware of Hahn's negative statements, sees those in a different light. He writes:

> It was Carl Hugo Hahn's love for our people which led him to make such a careful observation about their spiritual condition. It was Hahn's love for our people that led him overcome the language barrier so that he could share the liberating and life transforming message of Christ with us […]. It was only after three years that Carl Hugo Hahn could preach his first sermon in Otjiherero after intensive study of the language. In other words, his view was not slanderous in nature but came from the heart of a loving shepherd, from a heart full of concern for people who were in spiritual and moral decay and who needed a saviour.[70]

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67 Tuundjakuye Spencer Tjijenda is the pastor of Grace Reformed Baptist Church in Windhoek, Namibia. He was chairman of the Evangelical Baptist Mission in Namibia and lectured in systematic theology and biblical studies at Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary (NETS).

68 T.S. Tjijenda, 'Hugo Hahn and the Spiritual Condition of the Herero-Mbanderu People', in T. Prill (ed.), *Mission Namibia: Challenges and Opportunities for the Church in the 20th Century* (München: Grin, 2012), pp. 144-145.

69 E.g. C. Pfeffer, 'Koloniale Repräsentationen Südwestafrikas im Spiegel der Rheinischen Missionsberichte, 1842-1884', *Stichproben: Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien* 12/22 (2012), pp. 9-10; P. Erichsen, *Hoffnung auf Regen: Beobachtungen und Erlebnisse aus Namibia* (Berlin: epubli, 2014), p. 308.

70 Tjijenda, 'Hugo Hahn and the Spiritual Condition of the Herero-Mbanderu People', p. 145.

If Hahn was the spiritual father of the Hereros, Martin (Martti) Rautanen deserves the title of spiritual father of the Ovambos, another Namibian people group. Rautanen came to Namibia in 1869 and worked in the country for over fifty years.[71] During this time he translated the Bible into the Ndonga language, one of the main Oshiwambo dialects.[72] Joachim Rieck, a Namibian theologian, comments on his life and ministry:

> His life was incarnational. He lived very humbly among the people he preached to. He respected the authorities of the kings, even when he radically disagreed with them. By and by he won the battle of faith and before long the gospel had taken hold of many people. Today the work in Ovamboland rests on this gospel foundation.[73]

Rautanen demonstrated a high degree of both cultural and socio-political sensitivity. Bengt Sundkler and Christopher Steed believe that Rautanen's own background as a Finnish-speaking serf from Russia was a contributing factor. They write:

> Born a serf […] and thus possibly unique among nineteenth-century Western missionaries to Africa, this sturdy Finn was an example of the liberating effect of the Gospel. He became missionary in charge and chief translator of the New Testament into Oshindonga, 1903, and of the whole Bible, 1927. There was widespread hunger to read the Holy Book […]. Rautanen was to play a subtle political game on behalf of the Ndonga communities in the north of the country. Were they to join the Herero against the commonly detested European power or not? [...] Rautanen advised King Kambonde and his brother Chief Nehale against what appeared military recklessness. Rautanen was as decided an anti-imperialist as any of the Ndonga chiefs but the spectacle of the Herero ethnocide was a warning for the Ndonga to heed.[74]

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71 D. Henrichsen, *Hans Schinz: Bruchstücke: Forschungsreisen in Deutsch-Südwestafrika* (Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 2012), p. 172.

72 R. Simola, 'Encounter Images in the Meetings between Finland and South-West Africa/Namibia', in M. Palmberg (ed.), *Encounter Images in the Meetings between Africa and Europe* (Uppsala: Nordisk Afrikainstitutet, 2001), p. 195.

73 J. Rieck, 'Dr Martin Rautanen ("Nakambale") – Apostle of the Ovambos', <http://jrieck.blogspot.com/2009/10/missionary-pioneers-in-namibia-3-martin.html> (Date of Access: 30.01.2019).

74 B. Sundkler & C. Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 443.

In 2015 the tombstone of Friedrich Heidmann, another RMS missionary, was brought from Cape Town to Namibia.[75] One of the leaders of the Baster community welcomed the stone with the words: 'This is the tombstone of our spiritual Father.' Heidmann had faithfully served as a missionary among the Baster people for almost forty years.[76] He first joined the Baster community at De Tuin in the Cape Colony in 1866. Under his guidance the Baster council sought to secure land for their community from the Cape government.[77] However, their land allocation application was turned down by the colonial administration. In 1868 Heidmann accompanied 90 Baster families when they moved under difficult circumstances from the Cape Province to present day Namibia.[78] Cornelia Limpricht writes about Heidmann's decision to go together with 'his people' into a future full of uncertainties: 'No doubt he could have refused to move with them or he could have applied to be transferred elsewhere. Obviously he wished to continue his work with them, [which had] started two years prior.'[79] While Heidmann supported the efforts of the Baster community to organise their social and political life in Namibia, his work focussed on the spiritual development of the Baster people.[80]

The examples of missionaries like van der Kemp, Schmelen, Viehe, Hahn, Rautanen and Heidmann show that the overall picture painted by the critics of 19th century Protestant missionaries, is most certainly prejudiced with negative strokes. The general charge of ethnocentrism, especially, lacks substance. The attitude of missionaries differed significantly from that of many white settlers or members of the colonial administra-

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75 'Spiritual Father Returns to Rehoboth', New Era 11th May 2015. <https://www.newera.com.na/2015/05/11/spiritual-father-returns-rehoboth/> (Date of Access: 30.01.2019).

76 See R.A. Brendell, *The Rhenish Missionary Society in Namibia: An Enquiry into the Reasons for the Formation of the Rhenish Church in Namibia (1957-1962)*, unpublished dissertation (Windhoek: Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2017), pp. 26-31.

77 Ibid., p. 27.

78 C. Limpricht & H. Lang, 'The Trek of the Rehoboth Basters', in C. Limpricht (ed.), *Rehoboth, Namibia: Past and Present* (Hamburg: Cornelia Limpricht, 2012), p. 11.

79 C. Limpricht, 'Baster Territories in the Northern Cape (South Africa) and Great Namaqualand (Namibia)', in C. Limpricht (ed.), *Rehoboth, Namibia: Past and Present* (Hamburg: Cornelia Limpricht, 2012), p. 26.

80 Brendell, *The Rhenish Missionary Society in Namibia: An Enquiry into the Reasons for the Formation of the Rhenish Church in Namibia (1957-1962),* pp. 28-30.

tion.[81] Smith certainly has a point when he writes, 'missionaries generally resisted overtly racist stereotypes, insisting that the biblical understanding of humankind required them to treat all peoples as bearers of the divine image and objects of the redemptive love of God in Jesus Christ'[82]. The example of Carl Büttner shows that there were also pragmatic reasons why some missionaries rejected racist policies. Büttner, who served in Namibia and East Africa, strongly advocated mixed marriages.[83] He wanted the German government 'to support intermarriage in order to protect Christian African women and their families from sexual and material exploitation from German men'[84]. Büttner feared that such treatment of indigenous women could lead to resentment against the white minority population.[85]

MAKING HONEST MISTAKES: MISSIONARIES AND THEIR LACK OF CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING

Finally, it is too simplistic to identify, as many critics do, the attitude of cultural and spiritual superiority as the core root of all problems. An important factor which is often overlooked but which contributed to the mistakes missionaries made is the lack of cross-cultural knowledge and sensitivity.[86] 'Many mistakes which older missionaries made,' writes Alan Tippett, 'were honest mistakes made in true zeal for the Lord.'[87] However, these mistakes, he concludes, were made because the missionaries had been sent out to the mission field without any anthropological training.[88]

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81 Cf. T. Altena, '"Etwas für das Wohl der schwarzen Neger beitragen" Überlegungen zum "Rassenbegriff" der evangelischen Missionsgesellschaften', in F. Becker (ed.), *Rassenmischehen – Mischlinge – Rassentrennung: Zur Politik der Rasse im Deutschen Kolonialreich* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004), p. 58.

82 Smith, *Against the Stream: Christianity and Mission in an Age of Globalization*, p. 105.

83 L. Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire, 1884-1945* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 87.

84 Ibid., p. 87.

85 K. Roller, 'Zwischen Rassismus und Frömmigkeit', in F. Becker (ed.), *Rassenmischehen – Mischlinge – Rassentrennung: Zur Politik der Rasse im Deutschen Kolonialreich* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004), p. 232.

86 Cf. D.L. Whiteman, 'Anthropology and Mission: The Incarnational Connection', in S.B. Bevans (ed.), *Mission & Culture: The Louis J. Luzbetak Lectures* (New York: Maryknoll, 2012), p. 85.

87 A.R. Tippett, *Introduction to Missiology* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1987), p. 384.

88 Ibid., p. 384.

Unlike Gottlieb Viehe, who was born in Germany but spent his childhood and youth in the United States,[89] or Carl Hugo Hahn and Martin Rautanen, who both grew up in the multicultural and multilingual context of the Russian Empire,[90] not every missionary who came to Africa from Europe or North America in the 19th century had cross-cultural experience like these three, let alone cross-cultural training as it is available today. Some were ordinary farmers or craftsmen[91] who had not been exposed to other cultures before entering the African mission field. Andrew Walls writes that 'English missionary recruits were often of modest educational attainments'.[92] He goes on to explain, 'the Church Missionary College at Islington was set up to give such people basic education'.[93] A similar approach can be found with American evangelical mission societies. For example, James Karanja[94] writes about the early recruitment policy of Africa Inland Mission (AIM):

> What were the qualifications for one in order to work as a career missionary with AIM? At the beginning AIM only emphasized that Africa provided conditions that were "utterly different from those that call for the learning and culture of a Paul or an Apollos." To these early missionaries Africa was "no Ephesus with its learning, but only sin, darkness, ignorance, barbarism and primitivism." To meet these needs it was argued that missionaries did not need "so much scholastic and theological knowledge as that wisdom given by the Holy Spirit, energy, zeal, devotion, and a close walk with God that make great a man that is no scholar." Therefore, it was not necessary to "staff the mission with men who had received theological education of the kind that would qualify them for the ordained ministry." Great energy seems to have

89 Oermann, *Mission, Church and State Relations in South West Africa under German Rule (1884-1915),* p. 34.

90 Cf. S. Heininen, 'Martin Rautanen in Namibia and the Mission Board in Helsinki', in K. Kunter & J.H. Schøjrring (eds.), *Changing Relations Between Churches in Europe and Africa: The Internationalization of Christianity and Politics in the 20th Century* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008), p. 56.

91 Cf. B. Sundkler & C. Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 110; Oermann, *Mission, Church and State Relations in South West Africa Under German Rule (1884-1915),* p. 222.

92 A.F. Walls, *The Cross-cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2002), p. 209.

93 Ibid., p. 209.

94 James Karanja is a Kenyan born theologian who studied in the USA, Switzerland and Germany. He lives in Germany where he works for *Evangelisches Jugendwerk* (EJW), a Protestant youth ministry.

> been spent recruiting dedicated laypeople for overseas service and from this source it was envisaged the mission would fill its ranks.[95]

Other missionary candidates underwent an intensive preparation which 'consisted of Latin, Greek, classical literature, philosophy, as well as theological training,'[96] but who were not necessarily prepared to live among people of other cultures. As Lyman Reed points out, most missionaries at that time were often not trained at all to minister cross-culturally.[97] They received spiritual and professional training, but nothing on cross-culturalism. As a result, these missionaries were prone to fall into cross-cultural pitfalls and erect barriers which would hinder the spread of the gospel and the growth of the Church.

CONCLUSION

Western Protestant missionaries who served on the African continent in the 19th and early 20th centuries have come under severe criticism by contemporary scholars of mission, anthropology and other disciplines. Missionaries, who left their home countries in Europe or North America to serve as ambassadors of Christ, are today portrayed as willing agents of the colonisation of Africa. They are portrayed as people who were motivated by strong convictions of ethno-cultural and religious superiority. The critics, however, seem to overlook that many Protestant missionaries were actually driven by a compassion both for God and for people who needed to hear and accept the Good News of Jesus Christ. Of course their zeal for God and the mission of the Church did not prevent those missionaries from making mistakes. Some of these mistakes, such as paternalism, which undermined the development of indigenous church leadership, and the imposition of Western culture and theology on the indigenous population, without question, became obstacles for the growth of the church. They resulted not only in practical dependency and a feeling of inferiority among African Christians, but also hindered the development of genuinely African expressions of Christianity. These barriers erected by missionaries, however, were, in general, not the fruit of ethnocentric, imperialist, or sexist worldviews and agendas, but often of a lack of cross-cultural competence.

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95 J. Karanja, *The Missionary Movement in Colonial Kenya: The Foundation of Africa Inland Church* (Göttingen: Cuvillier Verlag, 2009), p. 16.

96 Leshota, 'Postcolonial Reading of Nineteenth-century Missionaries' Musical Texts: The Case of Lifela Tsa Sione and Lifela Tsa Bakriste', p. 140.

97 L.E. Reed, *Preparing Missionaries for Intercultural Communication: A Bicultural Approach* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2000), p. 7.

The critics also seem to ignore the fact that the missionaries' views of colonialism differed significantly and were sometimes rather ambivalent. While some missionaries wholeheartedly supported the colonial structures, many others accepted them as a given reality in which they had to serve. In addition, there were those who were critical of colonial policies and the attitude and conduct of European settlers and officials, both civilian administrators and military personnel.

Finally, there are many African Christians today who have a much more differentiated and gracious view of the Protestant mission movement than many of the critics. While not denying the mistakes Protestant missionaries made, a feeling of gratefulness towards missionaries dominates among these believers. They still honour many of those early missionaries as spiritual fathers and mothers. They recognise the enormous sacrifices these men and women made in order to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their foremothers and forefathers. They also respect these missionaries because they appreciate the difference the gospel of Christ brought by them has made in their own lives. As Jim Harries puts it: 'The enthusiasm of many African people's faith in the Gospel of Jesus is partly due to an awareness of the horror of the alternative they had prior to becoming Christians, difficult circumstances that many in the West have in recent generations forgotten.'[98]

[98] J. Harries, 'Anthropology's Origin, Christianity, and a Perspective from Africa, *On Knowing Humanity Journal* 1/1 (2017), p. 2.

The Holy Spirit in Medieval Spirituality as Reflected in Three Discourses of Leading Medieval Writers

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The pursuit of piety was at the heart of Medieval life and thought; one of its important aspects was an awareness of the Spirit's indispensable role in producing holiness in Christians' lives. This article will briefly explore the Spirit's role in Medieval spirituality as it is found in three discourses: Aelred of Rievaulx's *Spiritual Friendship*, Bernard of Clairvaux's *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, and Anselm of Canterbury's *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*. A study of these works will show how the Holy Spirit is critical to the spirituality of these three monks. For Aelred, the Spirit has a significant role in the formation of friendship, fundamental to Aelred's personal holiness. For Bernard, the Spirit is imperative to the spirituality of the church. Without the Spirit, the church will not seek to have the love of Christ, for it is the Spirit that incites her to desire such love. Finally, for Anselm, the procession of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son can affect our knowledge of the triune God, which can also impact our spirituality.

AELRED OF RIEVAULX'S *SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP*

Born in Hexham, Northumbria, England, in about 1110, Aelred produced several treatises on spirituality. One of them, *Spiritual Friendship*, shows how Christian friendship has bearing on Aelred's spirituality. As Mark F. Williams says, Aelred's pursuit of holiness 'placed a high value on personal friendships based upon integrity, honesty, and ingenuousness.'[1] The significance of friendship in Aelred's piety was evident when he proclaimed, 'In human affairs there is no goal that is holier than friendship, nothing more useful, nothing more difficult to find, nothing that is sweeter to experience, nothing more enjoyable to maintain. For friendship bears fruit in this life as well as in the life to come.'[2] Elsewhere, he added,

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1 Mark F. Williams, introduction to Aelred of Rievaulx, *Spiritual Friendship*, trans. Mark F. Williams (Scranton: University of Scranton Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1994), p. 11.

2 Aelred of Rievaulx, *Spiritual Friendship*, p. 44.

> I delighted in the pleasure of being with my friends more than in anything else […]. [T]o me nothing was more pleasant or more delightful or more useful than to seem to be loved and to love in return.[3]

After a long search, Aelred found true friendship in the Cistercian monastery of Rievaulx in Yorkshire; there, he developed godly companionships with his fellow monks. In 1147, he was called to serve as abbot of this monastery, where 'he would spend the rest of his life, preaching, writing, and gradually building up the community until it had almost doubled in size.'[4] It was at Rievaulx that Aelred composed his *Spiritual Friendship*, completed shortly before his death in 1167.

In the prologue, Aelred expressed his reason for the work:

> Since I wished to be able to love in a spiritual manner but could not, I read very much about friendship in the writings of the holy [Church] Fathers. However, since I found no aid in them, I began to write about spiritual friendship and to set down for myself the rules of a pure and holy affection.[5]

Aelred divides the volume into three sections: the first discusses 'the nature of friendship, noting its origin or cause'; the second, 'its advantages and its excellence'; and the last, 'how and among what sorts of people friendship is able to be preserved unbroken until the end.'[6]

To highlight what he called true or spiritual friendship, Aelred contrasted it with carnal and worldly friendship, which is

> created by an agreement in vices, while hope of gain spurs on worldly friendship, and similarity of character, goals, and habits in life makes for a bond of friendship among good people […]. Worldly friendship […] is created by desire for temporal goods and things. It is always full of deceit and deception; in it there is nothing certain, nothing constant, nothing secure.[7]

In contrast, spiritual friendship, by which Aelred means 'true friendship,'

> should be desired not with a view to any worldly good, nor for any reason extrinsic to itself, but from the worthiness of its own nature, and the feeling of the human heart, so that it offers no advantage or reward other than itself

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3 Ibid., p. 27.
4 Williams, introduction to *Spiritual Friendship*, p. 13.
5 Aelred of Rievaulx, *Spiritual Friendship*, p. 28.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid., pp. 35–36.

> […]. [It] is born among good people through the similarity of their characters, goals, and habits in life.[8]

But judging from Aelred's concept of friendship, what really distinguishes spiritual from carnal friendships is Christ. Friendship is 'to be formed in Christ, advanced according to Christ, and perfected in Christ.'[9] It focuses not on the friend but on Jesus. In short, there is no true friendship without Christ. For this reason, although Aelred benefited from the Roman orator Cicero's *On Friendship* (44 BC), the English monk was not fully satisfied with this work, because Cicero penned it from a pagan point of view. Aelred insisted that this true, spiritual 'friendship cannot exist among the wicked' or those who are without Christ.[10]

Aelred also asserted the Holy Spirit's role in Christian friendship: 'One friend clings to another in the spirit of Christ, and thus makes with him "one heart and one spirit."'[11] Aelred has in mind the words of Luke:

> And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common (Acts 4:31–32, ESV).

Using this text, Aelred points out that two friends become one heart and soul through the Spirit of Christ. In other words, for Aelred, the third person of the Trinity unites two friends together, making them 'a single spirit in a single kiss.'[12]

Aelred derived the idea of a 'single kiss' from Song of Solomon 1:2. And as our other authors we will cover below will also show, the Song of Solomon casts the highest form of human friendship (marriage) and its various expressions of mutual love (e.g., a holy kiss between husband and wife) which are then highly suitable and paradigmatic for application to all friendships—provided they are wrought by the work of the Spirit. Commenting on this verse, Aelred stated that

> in one kiss two spirits meet one another, and they are mixed together and so made one. From this mingling of spirits there grows up a kind of mental

8 Ibid., p. 37.
9 Ibid., p. 31.
10 Ibid., p. 49.
11 Ibid., p. 46.
12 Ibid., pp. 46–47. He is particularly thinking of two friends of the same sex.

> agreeableness, which elicits and joins together the affection of those who kiss.[13]

He continued,

> So we might talk of different kinds of kisses: the kiss of the flesh, the kiss of the spirit, and the kiss of discernment. A kiss of the flesh is made by a coming together of two lips, while a kiss of the spirit is made by a coming together of two souls, and the kiss of discernment results from the outpouring of favor through the spirit of God.[14]

Of these three types, Aelred underscored the kiss of the spirit in connection to Christian friendship; he reasoned that this sort of kiss

> is proper for friends who are bound under one law of friendship. For it comes about 'not through physical contact of the mouth but through mental affection'; not by a joining of the lips but by a mingling of two spirits; and from the spirit of God that purifies all things and imparts a heavenly savor from its participation in the act.[15]

He even argues that this kind of kiss, which is wrought by the third person of the Trinity, is

> the kiss of Christ, although he offers it not from his own mouth but from the mouth of another, inspiring that most holy affection in those who love one another, so that it appears to them as though one spirit indwells many different bodies.[16]

Aelred thus picks up the fact that Song of Solomon is paradigmatic of the marriage, that of Christ and his church; and as the mystical union by faith is wrought by the Holy Spirit, so it is like a kiss the Spirit creates between Christ and his bride. It is fitting this be the work of the Holy Spirit, who, as Anselm will discuss more below, is that 'bond of love' (*vinculum amoris*) between the Father and the Son, who breathe forth the Spirit as their Love.

Despite his emphasis on the kiss of the spirit, Aelred was not altogether against the practice of physical kissing among friends of the same gender:

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13 Ibid., p. 47.
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid., pp. 47–48.
16 Ibid., p. 48.

> The kiss of the flesh is to be neither offered nor received, except for definite and honorable reasons—for example, as a sign of reconciliation, in place of words, when two people who had been mutual enemies become friends; or as a sign of peace, as when those who are about to partake of communion in church show their inner peace by means of an external kiss; or as a sign of affection, such as is permitted to happen between a husband and wife, or such as is offered and accepted by friends who have long been apart; or as a sign of catholic unity, such as when a guest is received.[17]

Yet, acutely aware of people who abuse physical kissing, the English abbot warned his readers to avoid any evil form of kissing.

As Aelred himself observed, his portrayal of friendship in the monastery is very similar to the relationship between husband and wife, especially the notion of friendship as the merging of two souls and his approval of physical kissing. For this reason, even one of his contemporary friends said to him, 'I can see that friendship of this type is not common, nor are we accustomed even to dream of it being as you describe it.'[18] As a result of advocating this rare sort of friendship, some modern scholars unfortunately think Aelred was homosexual or that his treatise promotes homosexuality. However, Aelred's writings do not give evidence for this allegation. What is important to note here is the fact that for Aelred, Christian friendship is a vital vehicle for personal piety; in addition, for Aelred the Holy Spirit, not sensuous love, plays a significant role in forming this particular friendship.

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX'S *SERMONS ON THE SONG OF SONGS*

A native of France, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), like Aelred, was also a monk in the Cistercian Order, which rigorously followed the Rule of St. Benedict. Through his life and works, Bernard greatly influenced the spirituality of those both within and without the Cistercian Order.[19] But his sermons particularly impacted the lives of his fellow monks, inspiring them to know and love Christ more. These sermons include a series on the Song of Solomon, which Bernard began in 1135 and 'that was to continue, with breaks while he was absent from Clairvaux, until his death in 1153.'[20]

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17 Ibid., p. 47.

18 Ibid., p. 48.

19 See G. R. Evans, foreword to Bernard of Clairvaux, *Selected Works*, trans. G. R. Evans, intro. Jean Leclercq, O.S.B. (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1987), pp. 1–3.

20 Introduction to Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Sermons on Song of Songs', in *Selected Works*, p. 209.

Ewert H. Cousins, in his preface to Bernard of Clairvaux's *Selected Works*, rightly observes, 'Not all of Bernard's spiritual writings deal directly with love, but in the total corpus of his works love is by far the dominant theme.' Cousins continues,

> It is in 'Sermons on the Song of Songs' that Bernard's spirituality of love receives its most comprehensive expression. The central theme of these sermons is intimacy: intimate love between the Bride and the Bridegroom, between the soul and Christ.[21]

Bernard's *Sermons on the Song of Songs* was likewise deeply Christocentric. This Christocentricism naturally springs from Bernard's allegorical interpretation of Song of Solomon—that the bride and the bridegroom are symbolic images of the church and Christ. Throughout his sermons, however, the French monk also accentuated the relationship between the individual soul and Christ.[22] Also, despite his profoundly Christocentric exposition of the book, Bernard's work is full of references to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Sermons 8, 17, and 18 are particularly pneumatological in tone. For instance, in sermon 8, the French preacher declared that the kiss in Song of Solomon 1:2 is the Holy Spirit; thus, the verse should read, 'Let him kiss me with Spirit of his mouth.' Here the church is asking 'boldly to be given the kiss, that is, the Spirit in whom the Father and the Son will reveal themselves to her.'[23] This claim is reinforced by Bernard's interpretation of John 20:22 and John 15:16:

> 'He breathed on them,' it says, and that certainly means that Jesus breathed on the apostles, that is, the primitive Church, and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' (Jn. 20:22). That was the kiss. What was it? A breath? No, but the invisible Spirit, who is so bestowed in the breath of the Lord that he is understood to have proceeded from the Son as well as from the Father (Jn. 15:26).[24]

In this statement, Bernard noticeably showed support for the Western inclusion of the *filioque* ('and [from] the Son') in the Nicene Creed. It should be remembered that the Eastern churches renounced this inclusion, maintaining that the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone. The Western churches, however, contended that the Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son (*filioque*). This theological issue was the theological difference behind the schism of the Eastern (Greek) and Western

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21 Ewert H. Cousins, preface to Bernard of Clairvaux, *Selected Works*, pp. 8–9.
22 Cousins, preface to Bernard of Clairvaux, *Selected Works*, p. 10.
23 Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Sermons on Song of Songs', p. 237.
24 Ibid., pp. 236–37.

(Latin) churches in 1054. During Bernard's time, a century had already passed, but the issue was still hotly discussed.[25] It is no wonder, then, that the French abbot touched on this subject in his sermons. We are kissed by Christ with the 'Spirit of his mouth,' just as, in an analogous way, the Father and Son enjoy the mutual Love the Spirit is between them.

In his exposition of Song of Solomon 1:2, Bernard raises an interesting point: the bride does not say, 'Let him kiss me with his mouth' but rather 'Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth.' According to him, the church does not ask Christ to kiss her with His mouth, because such a kiss is 'reserved for the Father alone.'[26] The kiss of the mouth is 'the supreme kiss […the] highest kiss, which is beyond description and which no creature has experienced.'[27] That kiss exists only between the Father and the Son: 'The Father kissing the Son, pours into him in full the mysteries of his divinity, and breathes the sweetness of love.'[28] He further states, 'No creature has been given the privilege of witnessing this eternal unique and blessed embrace. Only the Holy Spirit is witness, and able to share their mutual knowledge and love.'[29]

Bernard further told his audience that the 'mutual love and knowledge between him who begets and him who is begotten' is the 'sweetest and most mysterious kiss.'[30] Although the kiss the church receives is not a kiss from Christ's mouth, it is still satisfying, for it is the very Spirit of Christ. Being kissed with the kiss of his mouth is nothing but being given the third person of the Trinity.[31]

Bernard's elucidation of Song of Solomon 1:2 unfolds some essential functions of the Spirit in the lives of Christians. First, it is through the Spirit that Christians can enjoy Christ's love, since Christ kisses them through his Spirit. Without the blessed Spirit, no soul can experience Christ's tender care. Second, as already mentioned, the Father and Son reveal themselves to the church through the Spirit. Consequently, knowing the first and second persons of the Trinity apart from the third is utterly impossible. In this way, the third person of the Trinity stands as the mediator between the church and the other two persons. Quoting from 1 Corinthians 2:10, Bernard proclaimed, 'But God revealed himself to us through his Spirit.'[32] Finally, it is the Spirit who 'prompts the Bride's

25 Ibid., p. 236.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid., p. 239.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., p. 236.
31 Ibid., p. 237.
32 Ibid., p. 238.

boldness [to ask for a kiss], and it is he whom she trustingly asks to come to her when she asks for a kiss.'[33] Therefore, when Christians ask for a kiss, it is the work of the Spirit. Bernard sees the Holy Spirit as vitally important in the spirituality of the church, especially with regard to her relationship with Christ.

ANSELM OF CANTERBURY'S *ON THE PROCESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*

Like Bernard, Anselm (1033–1109) supported the addition of *filioque* to the Creed in the East-West controversy on the procession of the Holy Spirit. Anselm was born in Aosta, Italy, and was regarded as the most learned scholar of his time. In 1060, he entered the monastery of Bec in central Normandy. There, in 1078, at the age of forty-five, the Benedictine monk became abbot. In 1093, he was appointed archbishop of Canterbury in England, and it was during this time that he penned *On the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, started in 1098 and completed in 1102.[34]

In this highly philosophical work, Anselm challenged the Greek Christians on their view of the procession of the Spirit. Whereas Christians in the East believed that the Spirit proceeded from the Father alone, Anselm, along with the Christians in the West, argued that the Spirit proceeded from both the Father and the Son. According to Davies and Evans, Anselm's main argument states that

> only if the Holy Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son is there that symmetry in the relations of the persons of the Trinity which would seem to be required by what we know of the nature of God.[35]

Writing as a Christian philosopher, Anselm reasoned that

> if the Greeks deny that the Holy Spirit exists and proceeds from the Son because the creed is silent about the matter, they should likewise deny that the Holy Spirit exists and proceeds from God because the same creed is silent about the matter. Or if they cannot disavow the latter, they should not be

[33] Ibid., p. 237.

[34] Brian Davies and G. R. Evans, introduction to Anselm of Canterbury, *Major Works*, ed. Brian Davies and G. R. Evans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. vii–ix.

[35] Davies and Evans, introduction to Anselm of Canterbury, *Major Works*, p. xix.

> afraid to profess with us that the Holy Spirit exists and proceeds from the Son, since they do not find this statement in the same creed.[36]

Here Anselm, whom many historians consider the father of scholasticism, used logic to refute the Greeks' position. To further bolster his case, the scholastic doctor, counterclaiming the Greek position, says,

> If the Holy Spirit is from the Father, since he is from God who is the Father, we cannot deny that the Holy Spirit is also from the Son, since he is from God who is the Son.[37]

Then, citing John 10:30, he adds that the Greeks,

> when they read that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, of whom the Son says, 'I and the Father are one,' should profess with us that the Holy Spirit undoubtedly also proceeds from the Son, since the Father and the Son have the same substance.[38]

Moreover, in defence of his conviction, Anselm quoted John 20:22: 'And when he had said this, he breathed on them [the disciples] and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."' Anselm believed that Jesus 'did this so that we understand that the Holy Spirit proceeds from him.'[39] In this verse, Jesus tells His disciples,

> The Holy Spirit comes out of the depths of my body and from my person, in like manner know that the Holy Spirit, whom I indicate to you by this breath, comes out of the recesses of my divinity and from my person.[40]

Why does the whole issue of *filioque* matter to Anselm? For him, if the Spirit does not proceed from both Father and Son, 'Christian faith is destroyed.'[41] That is, if *filioque* is not true, the perfect harmony in the relationship of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit is ruined. Remember that for Anselm such perfect unity in the Trinity is basic to our understanding of the nature of God. Of course, in Anselm's mind, a proper knowledge of God leads to right living. Thus, he wrote the book not only to defend

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36 Anselm of Canterbury, 'On the Procession of the Holy Spirit', trans. Richard Regan in *Major Works*, p. 403.
37 Ibid., p. 404.
38 Ibid., p. 413.
39 Ibid., p. 408.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid., p. 429.

Western teaching but also to protect the Christian life that emanates from this teaching.

We have seen how Aelred and Bernard both use the doctrine of the Spirit as Love from the Father and the Son to explain and elucidate the Spirit's work in the love between Christ and the church. Anselm has a similar sense of this; he recognizes that the Trinity bears upon the life of the Christian deeply, even in the most intimate things: in speaking of the kiss between Christ and his church, made by the Spirit, as both bridegroom and bride are united in love.

CONCLUSION

To sum up our study, we see the critical role the Holy Spirit has in Medieval spirituality. For Aelred, Christian friendship was a vital vehicle for his personal piety, and the Spirit has a significant role in forming this particular friendship. For Bernard, without the Spirit, the church cannot experience the love of Christ and no soul can know God, for God reveals himself through his Spirit. Finally, for Anselm, the procession of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son can affect our knowledge of the triune God, a knowledge that also informs and shapes our spirituality.

Reviews

On Christian Teaching: Practicing Faith in the Classroom. By David I. Smith. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7360-6. x + 172pp. £17.99.

This is a book that ought to be read by every Christian who cares about teaching and learning. Smith draws upon reflection on his own years of teaching experience to make a case for distinctively Christian approaches to teaching. It should be pointed out from the start that by 'Christian teaching', Smith does not mean merely sermons or teaching on subjects that are explicitly theological. Rather, he argues for a 'Christian' way of approaching the teaching of any subject. It is, therefore, a book that is profoundly thought provoking and challenging — it has certainly pushed me to think much more carefully and creatively about my own pedagogy.

Smith is careful to reject simplistic views of what it might mean to teach 'Christianly'. He himself teaches German language, but uses examples drawn from different disciplines to make his point. Christian teaching cannot, he argues, mean simply communicating the same information as any non-Christian teacher and then appending a short 'biblical' or 'moral' message to it. Similarly, prayer at the beginning of a class time is not what makes teaching 'Christian'. In fact, he argues that such approaches often feel forced or contrived to students.

Instead, Smith argues for an approach to pedagogy shaped by a biblical/theological vision for flourishing human persons. To take an example from his own field of expertise, Smith points out the tendency for much language teaching to focus on giving a person the tools to get what they need for themselves in a foreign country — to buy food, purchase goods or arrange travel. This is all very well, he argues, but risks communicating an ethos that language acquisition is about enabling me to get what I want for me and misses a more Christian approach that language acquisition should be about learning to love one's neighbour better. If the goal or telos of learning were the latter, then how would teaching be shaped? Smith argues his point persuasively and illustrates it creatively. To reach the end of the book is to want immediately to review every class for which I'm responsible and try to bring it more into line with Smith's vision.

That said, this is ultimately a somewhat tantalising book. He does as good a job as is possible in writing about things that need to be felt and experienced as much as written about — I am convinced by the thrust of Smith's central argument and I am inspired by many of his examples. However, I am left with a lot of work to do — and I suspect that would

be the case for many readers. Perhaps that is inevitable in a book such as this; Smith articulates his principles and gives some illustrations, but many readers could be left wanting more help applying the principles to their own disciplines. For this reason, Smith's book is likely to gain most traction when either individuals (or preferably whole faculties) read and work through the helpful reflection questions and journaling exercises at the end of each chapter and then modify their pedagogy accordingly.

Since this review is, after all, for a theological journal, it is worth closing with some reflections on the challenges Smith's work presents for teaching theology. It would be tempting for many to think that because the subject matter of theological teaching is, well, theological, then it is automatically 'Christian' teaching. This would be a grave mistake and may well contribute to what we might term theological pedagogical complacency. Of all subjects, teaching theology (by Smith's definition of Christian teaching) should not default merely to the delivery of information with perhaps a prayer to preface the class. That would not constitute Christian teaching as far as Smith is concerned. Rather, it would seem that Smith's book would challenge those of us teaching theology to do the harder work of never letting formation be separated from information and consider carefully whether what we do in class is, in fact, helping our students to love God and love their neighbour better — or not.

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Exodus. By T. Desmond Alexander. (Apollos Old Testamentary Commentary). Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2017. ISBN: 978-08308-2502-8. xx + 764pp. £39.99.

Having preached through Exodus not long ago, and therefore being fairly familiar with what good commentaries are available at all levels, I was curious to see what Alexander's contribution might bring to an already crowded market. With a volume of this size — 764 pages — it has not been possible to read and analyse the whole book, but I have, I believe, a good feel of its contents and approach.

The series claims to be 'accessible to non-experts […] intended primarily to serve the needs of those who preach from the Old Testament […] equally suitable for use by scholars and all serious students of the Bible' (book jacket). I would say that this particular volume achieves those goals, which is commendable, but am not convinced that it adds to what is already available elsewhere.

One of the first things I look for in an OT commentary is the author's stance on the historicity and authorship of the book and I was less than encouraged at Alexander's reasoning about the issue of Mosaic author-

ship. He does not come down firmly on one side or the other but does say that 'Mosaic authorship is not necessarily endorsed by Jesus and his earliest followers' (p. 10). The problem is that he refers to a singular quotation by Jesus in Mark 12:26 where he speaks of the book of Moses and says that this title might simply recognize 'the prominent role played by Moses in the story' (p. 10). However, he ignores the repeated references in which Jesus affirms Mosaic authorship for the Book of the Law (e.g. Matt. 19:7; John 7:19) which encompasses all of the first five OT books. He doesn't interact further than that with what Jesus and the New Testament has to say about the authorship of Exodus and the rest of the Pentateuch.

As he works his way through Exodus, Alexander follows the AOTC series structure. This is a clear and helpful approach, with each section being considered under five headings — Translation, Notes on the Text, Form and Structure, Comment and Explanation.

The Translation is Alexander's own translation of the Hebrew and is followed by some Notes on grammatical issues in the text itself or which are raised by variations in the manuscripts. As a preacher, I thought — and hoped — that I would find the Form and Structure section much more helpful than I did. On occasions, this element of the commentary can take 5 or 6 pages and the result is generally more confusing than clarifying. Personally, I didn't find this aspect contributed to the generally helpful AOTC structure. Additionally, whereas the Comment section is a verse(s) by verse(s) commentary on the passage, it is followed by Explanation which is really further commentary and would have been better included in the Comment section and this would have helped streamline the whole book.

Additionally, there are many references to Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis and other liberal sources, and these got in the way. To be fair, Alexander does note, more than once, that there is 'an increasing unease with this theory' (p. 11), but he doesn't really explain the reason for the unease. I would have expected an evangelical author and publisher to take a stronger stand against these discredited positions which deny elements of inspiration and inerrancy and pay less heed to them.

In an ever increasingly over-populated world of commentaries I ask myself whether this commentary adds anything to what is already available and whether it justifies its production and purchase price. I quickly came to the opinion that this volume adds nothing to what is already out there and, in numerous respects, is not nearly as helpful or profitable. Other works, such as Philip Graham Ryken's 2012 contribution to the Preaching the Word series from Crossway, or John L Mackay's 2001 Mentor Commentary are more robust in their stance on Scripture and clearer in their form and structure. I found Alexander to be too accom-

modating of those with a lower view of Scripture, and that does not inspire confidence in his own treatment of the biblical text.

John Brand, Edinburgh Bible College

Determined to Believe? The Sovereignty of God, Freedom, Faith, & Human Responsibility. By John C. Lennox. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. ISBN: 9780310589808. 368pp. £12.99.

John Lennox was encouraged to write this book at the behest of friends who found his remarks on these topics helpful. The book is, broadly speaking, an attack on the Calvinist theology of salvation—though Lennox prefers to avoid labels, and takes himself to be attacking what he terms theological determinism. He defines this as 'the view that everything is determined by God' (p. 36), including the free actions of human beings. As he points out, theological determinists are therefore compatibilists, holding to a view of free human action as compatible with determinism, while the incompatibilists (or Arminians) hold that free will is incompatible with God determining human choices (p. 25). So far, so good. However, the volume as a whole lacks the rigour necessary for it to have any real value as a contribution to the debate.

The book is divided up, broadly speaking, into six parts of note. The first is a moral argument against theological determinism. Variations of the argument occur throughout the book (see pp. 53, 58, 61, 63, 102, 142, 145, 172, 272) but perhaps the best summary of it is on page 161: 'The deterministic idea [...] that Adam's sin was caused by God's decree, and therefore Adam could not have done otherwise, is grotesque. Morality would thereby be emptied of all coherent meaning.' Quite why this last claim follows is not made clear. Moreover, the argument reveals a profound ignorance of the free-will debate. Some determinists (classical compatibilists) do not grant that God's determination makes one unable to do otherwise. Other determinists, semi-compatibilists, think so-called Frankfurt counterexamples show that being able to do otherwise is not necessary for moral responsibility. Any introductory textbook would have familiarized Lennox with these matters.

The next three noteworthy parts contain Lennox's responses to three different (supposed) arguments for theological determinism. The first argument is that God must determine our salvation otherwise we would be freely contributing to it, and thereby merit it. Lennox responds (p. 132) that having to do something (place one's faith in Christ) in order to be saved is not sufficient to count as meriting it.

The second argument is that human beings are too 'dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph. 2:1) to be capable of turning to Christ. External determi-

nation from God is therefore required. Lennox responds that, although he believes faith precedes regeneration, there is nevertheless 'much of God's grace to be experienced before someone comes to trust Christ' (p. 142), and it is this that tempers the native depravity of the unbelieving heart, enabling choice.

The third argument for theological determinism is one in name only. It concerns the claim that humanity is guilty in Adam, and deserving of damnation on that account, regardless of whether they have the ability to come to Christ or not. But such a doctrine of original sin doesn't entail theological determinism. Arminians can also grant it. In any case, Lennox's response is that there is no biblical case for original guilt: 'we are all damaged by Adam's sin but we are not all guilty of it' (p. 199).

I accept Lennox's responses to the second and third arguments as defensible, but I don't think his response to the first argument is sufficient. It seems to this reviewer that as long as we are required to do a good thing in order to be saved (and calling on Christ is surely that) then we will have something to boast of concerning our own salvation; but Paul says boasting is excluded (Rom. 3:27). Lennox also wants to claim that salvation is 'all of God' (p. 165), but I can't see how to square this with his view, for he thinks one's free decision to turn to Christ, that event of central importance in salvation, is precisely something that doesn't come from God — you decide; God does not.

The fifth noteworthy section is Lennox's exegesis of Romans 9–11 (chs. 12–16). He rightly notes the importance of this passage when it comes to the Calvinist's appeal to the Scriptures. Lennox takes the well-worn Arminian line that the election discussed in these chapters is an election only to temporal privilege (p. 247). Whether this does justice to Paul's distress in 9:1–3, among other things, I leave the reader to judge.

The last part of note is Lennox's concluding defence of the Perseverance of the Saints (chs. 17–20). He affirms the 'once saved, always saved' doctrine, and is therefore a 4-point Arminian. Although he rejects the T, U, L, and I of TULIP, he accepts the P.

Overall, I cannot recommend this book. The amateurish nature of the work precludes serious scholarly engagement, and it is too muddled in the fundamentals to function as a good introductory text. It is also exceedingly verbose. Far too much of the work is a meandering ramble through tenuously related Scriptures, and it could easily have been shorn of 100+ pages.

Matthew J. Hart, University of Liverpool

Paul: A Biography. By Tom Wright. London: SPCK/San Francisco: HarperOne, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-281-07875-2 (SPCK); 978-0-061-73058-0 (HarperOne). xiii + 464pp. £19.99.[1]

Professor Wright here steps aside from the hand-to-hand scholarly fighting of his more 'academic' writings to lay out the story of Paul's life. He writes as 'Tom' (rather than 'N.T.'), signalling (I assume) that this is a mid-level book, accessible to thoughtful readers who may not have formal theological training. In this he succeeds admirably, for he writes beautifully—on page after page I noted fine turns of phrase, metaphors and analogies.

Wright lays the material out as narrative, with the references almost entirely to primary sources, especially Paul's letters and Acts. Endnotes provide references, and readers are spared the forest of footnotes in contemporary scholarly books on Paul (including Wright's own).

The book falls into three parts, with the second the longest. A helpful scene-setting introduction includes a semi-autobiographical section on why Paul is important, important historical and cultural issues in studying the first century, and a discussion of the overall story of (Old Testament) Scripture as Saul of Tarsus saw it before the Damascus Road.

Part I 'Beginnings' outlines Saul's upbringing, and key Jewish traditions which shaped him. He notes (ch. 1) in particular Phinehas (Num 25) as someone who showed 'zeal' which was 'reckoned to him as righteousness' (Ps 106:30–31). Wright connects this with Abraham's faith-reckoned-as-righteousness (Gen 15:6), and argues that Saul was part of the violent ('zealous') tendency within Judaism, by contrast with the 'live and let live' approach of his teacher, Gamaliel.

The Damascus Road experience is critical (ch. 2). Wright suggests (following John Bowker, whom he does not name here) that Saul was meditating on the chariot/throne vision of Ezekiel 1 as he travelled, and that his shock was to find that the figure in the chariot was Jesus. This was the driver (pun intended) of the 'messianic eschatology' which was the centre of Paul's faith and practice over the following decades.

Wright paints Paul's movements following that experience (ch. 3), drawing together information from Galatians 1 and Acts (the maps at the beginning of each chapter are very helpful for visualising distances and journeys). Necessarily, here and elsewhere, Wright has to 'gap fill,' not least for the silent ten years of AD 36–46, and his suggestions are generally plausible and always clearly explained. I particularly like the clos-

[1] Originally published in *Review & Expositor* 115.4 (November 2018); reproduced here with the kind permission of the editor and author.

ing section chapter 3, considering Paul as a man of prayer, where Wright suggests how Paul's praying of Scripture changed in the light of his new recognition of Jesus as the exalted Lord.

Paul's time in Antioch (ch. 4) follows. Wright portrays the multi-cultural nature of the city, and shows what it would look like for Barnabas and Paul's messianic group to gain purchase in that city. He highlights that this group, crossing boundaries of 'culture, gender, and ethnic and social groupings' (p. 91), sets the agenda for Paul's church-planting and pastoring ministries—through Jesus, God is bringing humanity together as one.

Part II, 'Herald of the King,' tells the missionary life of Paul, using Acts in interaction with the letters. Here, I can only identify highlights. Wright sees Galatians as the earliest Pauline letter (a significant, but minority, view, with which I agree), and identifies the crisis in Galatia with the issues leading up to the Jerusalem meeting (Acts 15).

Wright stresses in a number of places (e.g. pp. 110–12) that we must eschew our modern division of 'religion' and 'politics', which is anachronistic in the first century—to follow Jesus as Lord was necessarily to make a social and political statement (readers of Wright will recognize his claim that Jesus-followers were necessarily downgrading Caesar's claims to universal rule). Thus he sees Paul's choice of cities for church-planting as deliberate, focusing on centres of the imperial cult.

Wright outlines a plausible scenario for writing 2 Corinthians (ch. 12), proposing that Paul writes in fits and starts over a journey from Ephesus to Corinth taking some months. For the longest time, Paul does not know whether his (now lost) previous letter and Titus's visit have produced a change in the Corinthians' negative attitudes, and this explains the defensive nature of much of the letter. When Titus arrives (2 Cor 7:6–7), the tone of the letter changes, and Paul then asks for the Corinthians' participation in the collection (2 Cor 8–9) and is much more upbeat (2 Cor 10–13).

A particular feature is the mini-expositions of the Pauline letters, and these are always fresh, readable and stimulating, inviting readers to read and reflect on the letters themselves (Wright's intention, I'm sure). The reading of Romans is masterful and characteristically Wrightian (pp. 321–37) — his long engagement with Romans, dating back to his Oxford DPhil, shines through.

Wright believes Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus for a period, concerning which neither Acts nor letters are explicit. Wright shows the explanatory power of this hypothesis (ch. 10), and locates the four 'prison letters' (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon) in this period

— 'Ephesians' (which Wright, with many, thinks is a circular for several churches) is written from Ephesus.

The book closes with a chapter on Paul's journey to Rome (ch. 14) and a reflection on Paul's contribution and achievements (ch. 15). The latter is a brilliant summary and hints at how Christians today might be freshly stimulated by a deep engagement with Paul.

Throughout, Wright takes seriously the whole range of evidence, rejecting writing sources off because they are considered historically unreliable (as some regard Acts) or 'deutero-Pauline' (i.e. not written by Paul—notably the Pastoral Letters, Ephesians, Colossians, and 2 Thessalonians). Wright robustly uses most of these as sources of evidence, although he hesitates considerably about 1 Timothy and Titus (pp. 396–97).

Who should read this book? It is accessible enough for a thoughtful church member without theological training to read (it would be great for an adult Sunday school course), although they'd need to be ready for 400+ pages. It would be helpful for a theological student looking for a 'bird's eye view' of Paul with lots of helpful insights and details along the way. It would make a great book to use for a Paul class alongside something more traditionally 'scholarly' (such as David Horrell's *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*. 3rd ed. London/New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015).

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The Christ of Wisdom: A Redemptive Historical Exploration of the Wisdom Books of the Old Testament. By O. Palmer Robertson. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-62995-291-8. xxi + 407pp. £15.26.

This book is conceived as the next part of Robertson's larger project to find 'Christ in all the Scriptures' (p. xv), following volumes dedicated to the covenants, prophets, and psalms. Here, he considers the 'Wisdom' books: Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, and Song of Songs. Though these last two are not always considered 'wisdom', Robertson binds them all together as being the 'how-to' books of the Bible, dealing with practical areas of life (p. xvii). The volume will be of particular interest to teachers and pastors of a more conservative Christian tradition.

The Wisdom literature has often been neglected in Old Testament theology, for it is considered to be outside the redemptive-historical framework delineated elsewhere. Robertson reconceives this. Instead of seeing redemption history as a straight line, marching forwards, he imagines a 'spiral of redemption' (p. 25), allowing for the more universal, and ever-repeated features of wisdom to be included, and thus reintegrated into biblical theology.

The book's focus is mainly on the Old Testament texts themselves, but there are frequent reflections on the relevance for the New Testament and Christian theology, and Robertson's tone is sometimes hortatory. Occasionally, poems or hymns are quoted (pp. 132, 272, 315). Robertson's own standpoint is conservative, and some less conservative readers may find some of his comments and language unnecessary or provocative (e.g. references to evolution, p. 110, and gender/sexuality, p. 112; use of gendered terminology 'man', 'he' etc.).

While most of the book is devoted to interpretation of the text, due consideration is given to historical- and composition-critical matters. To benefit readers not wanting to delve into the minutiae, individual scholars' views and detailed technical discussions are kept to footnotes. Robertson's historical-critical conclusions are conservative, and usually marginal to mainstream scholarship. He supports the traditional ascription of Solomonic authorship for much of Proverbs (pp. 34–36), Ecclesiastes (pp. 205–217) and Song of Solomon (pp. 324–238), as well as positing the Solomonic period for the composition of Job (p. 123), and suggesting Jeremiah as the author of Lamentations (p. 280). Though he does discuss both sides of the argument, sometimes I feel he does not fairly represent his opponents' views (e.g. the binary oppositions of monarchic vs. 3rd century BCE for the date of Proverbs ignores possible exilic and Persian datings, p. 35).

Each chapter of Robertson's volume considers a different biblical book, beginning with a contents page for the chapter and ending with a bibliography — helpful for readers wishing to examine one book alone. His consideration of Proverbs is entitled 'How to walk in wisdom's way'. He explores each section of Proverbs individually, drawing out key themes, and highlighting poetic features. He ends by discussing secular versus covenantal perspectives on Proverbs, preferring the latter (which is striking for a book often considered devoid of covenantal themes). He highlights the importance of fear of, trust in, and instruction from the covenant Lord, and focusses on creation, family, and work.

Job concerns 'How to puzzle'. Robertson works through this challenging book section by section, giving explanations and analysis, and showing sensitivity to figures of speech (see his impressive lists on pp. 155–156, 168–169, 183–184). In the comparatively short final section on 'the ultimate message' (pp. 189–194), Robertson argues that Job affirms the doctrine of retribution; can be taken as a figure of speech for the restoration of all believers; and offers guidance on how to puzzle.

Robertson reads Ecclesiastes as a guide to 'How to cope with life's frustrations'. He sees the book as a single, united work (against those who think the epilogue has a different theology). Considering it to be 'a realis-

tic picture of life' (pp. 245–246), he offers a theological interpretation of its 'Gospel' (pp. 255–268) — provocative for those who think that the book contains anything but 'good news'!

Lamentations gives advice on 'How to weep'. Robertson understands the logic of Lamentations as being: calamity has come; sin has caused it; God has ordered it; hope nonetheless. His ultimate interpretation seems more hope-filled than the book itself, and may be heavily influenced by his overall framework, for which redemption is central.

Finally, the Song of Songs is about 'How to love'. Breaking with the tradition of many Christian interpreters, Robertson rejects allegorical and typological interpretations, preferring a straightforward reading which finds a celebration of human love (though this must be situated, Robertson urges, in a monogamous marriage relationship, and a redemptive-historical framework). Rather than the usual interpretive section, Robertson finishes the book by offering his own translation of the Song, supplemented by short commentaries, designed for 'dramatic reading' (pp. 351–379). Some readers may wish to try this interesting and creative suggestion in their own communities.

Overall, this is a helpful volume for those wishing to integrate the wisdom books into conservative Christian theology, and to find within them insights for the how-tos of life.

Suzanna R. Millar, University of Edinburgh

Reading Genesis Well: Navigating History, Poetry, Science, and Truth in Genesis 1–11. By C. John Collins. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-310-59857-2. 336pp. £25.

Jack Collins' book addresses what is often a contentious topic within evangelical circles: how do we read the early chapters of Genesis? He approaches this from a linguistic perspective, but without losing sight of the theological aspects. His overall method is built on the ideas of C. S. Lewis and the concept of 'good-faith communication'. He suggests a 'linguistic-rhetorical-literary' interpretive approach that can be appropriated for the whole of Scripture. Although Collins is technical in his approach and his work is 'academic' in style, it is well explained and should be digestible to a wider audience. This work may be profitably read and applied by most people willing to put in the effort.

The influence of C. S. Lewis in this work cannot be understated, and this review of Collins' book would be incomplete without Collins' reference to a quote from *A Preface to Paradise Lost*: 'The first qualification for judging any piece of workmanship from a corkscrew to a cathedral is to know what it is—what it was intended to do and how it is meant to be

used' (C. S. Lewis quoted in Collins, p. 34). This is the guiding principle of Collins' book: to understand what the text is, what it was intended to do, and how it is meant to be used.

Collins begins his work with some historical background of biblical interpretation from the 19th century to today. He demonstrates how pursuit of the 'simple' or 'literal' sense of the words has led to an unnatural procedure for interpreting language. The simple sense has come to refer to an artificial 'simple' sense imposed on the text by the reader.

In his second chapter, Collins addresses the deceptively simple question of what happens in literary communication. He covers first how literary communications should be approached and then moves on to discuss subtopics of linguistics, rhetoric, literary criticism, and genre. Collins' attention to the underlying theories is continually apparent. In the area of genre, for example, he helpfully distinguishes different facets of language (e.g. register and style) which, in Biblical Studies, are often conflated with genre in a confusing and unhelpful manner.

In chapter three, Collins draws in Speech Act Theory. He uses it as a tool for helping explain the different functions of biblical language. One important conclusion of the chapter is that the function of the biblical text goes beyond conveying information. It importantly aims to shape 'a view of God and the world, his people's place in the world, and their role in the unfolding story of God's work in the world' (p. 86).

Chapter four is titled 'Good-Faith Communication: What does it mean to speak truly?' In this chapter Collins examines how communication works and relates to truth. One important facet of what Collins calls 'good-faith communication' is that 'Not every good-faith act of communication requires that the speaker endorse what he alludes to' (p. 93). He gives the example of referring to the actions of Sam and Frodo (p. 93); this can be done in good-faith without explicitly stating the characters are fictional. An implication for biblical interpretation is seen on his next page 'I suspect that this explains why Jude 14 does not need to explicate its stance toward whether the traditions that we know as the book of Enoch are canonical—he shares a stance with his audience and leaves them to see that' (p. 94).

This leads to a small but integral comment concerning *world picture* and *worldview*. Collins defines these two carefully with the world picture being 'what one imagines to be the shape of the world and the things in it' and the worldview being 'one's basic dispositional stance toward the world' (p. 94). The worldview is something that 'is intended to be normative and to transcend culture and time period' (p. 94). Collins argues that good-faith communication sometimes does and sometimes does

not require endorsement of the *world picture* in order for it to be true (or truthful).

In the remaining chapters (more than two-thirds of the book) Collins applies his work on how communication works to interpreting Genesis 1–11. It is my view that in these chapters he well demonstrates the value of reading Scripture in the manner described. However, I leave it with the reader to read and evaluate these chapters themselves. I have focused on the early chapters here because it is Collins' hope that his method be appropriated for biblical interpretation more generally.

Collins' book is an excellent contribution to scholarship on biblical interpretation. He approaches the material in an exemplary manner, treating language as language and carefully examining what that means for biblical communication. This is well worth including on one's reading list!

Philip D. Foster, University of Edinburgh

Torah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality and Hermeneutics. By Ben Witherington III. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2018. ISBN: 9781506433516. xxviii + 414pp. £28.99.

Along with his previous volumes, *Psalms Old and New* and *Isaiah Old and New* (both 2017), this new volume *Torah Old and New* completes Ben Witherington III's trilogy addressing the use of the OT in the NT. The binding and design are the same, forming an attractive set, and the format of the book mirrors the approach already established in the previous volumes. Many of the themes in this volume on *Torah* pick up again on themes introduced in the previous volumes: for example, the importance of reading both 'backward' and 'forward'. Throughout, Witherington writes in his usual easy and accessible style, and with wit and creativity. The book is not particularly technical, and would be well-suited to college students and ministers wishing to benefit from some reading in the area of OT intertextualities in the NT.

An introductory chapter sets out the overall landscape of the use of the Pentateuch in the NT. Witherington relies in these volumes on citations, allusions and echoes as noted by Nestle-Aland (NA28), and his statistics are taken from a complied list of all of these. This opening chapter also begins to address reflection on the Pentateuch in early Judaism — this is a welcome feature of all of the volumes — and an assessment of Jesus' teaching against that backdrop. Four main chapters then address in turn the use of the books of the Pentateuch in the NT: Genesis; Exodus; Leviticus and Numbers; and Deuteronomy. In each of these chapters, important sections of text are discussed, first by addressing the meaning

in their 'original' context, and then the use of the particular section in the NT. Sections in each chapter titled 'The Lexicon of Faith' deal with more minor uses of the particular book in the NT. In a final chapter, Witherington reflects upon the whole.

The task that Ben Witherington has set himself is massive, and therefore his approach is necessarily selective. Some passages are not addressed which one might have expected to be. The selection of material often reflects Witherington's own (perhaps sometimes idiosyncratic) concerns, and draws heavily at points on his previous NT work. So, within the Genesis chapter, the influence of the Noah Account is seen in Matthew 24 (less than 3 pages), but 2 Peter is not discussed at all. Similarly, although Witherington notes the connection, there is no discussion of the use of Genesis in Revelation 21 and 22. The use of Genesis 6 in the NT, on the other hand, is given almost 15 pages plus an appendix (although this is a very useful section). It will perhaps be a relief to some readers that the issue of Paul and the Law is kept in check by Witherington through a focused, concise and helpful discussion of the various texts.

It is clear that Ben Witherington's aim here is to illustrate the variety of ways in which Pentateuchal texts are used within the NT. He addresses the genre of narrative for the first time (the previous volumes dealing with poetic and prophetic texts), pointing out that around half of the material in the Torah is in fact narrative. He emphasizes the importance of narrative in providing a much broader framework to the thought of the NT than can be detected by picking up on quotations and echoes alone. Witherington is critical of such approaches as being too narrow (e.g. *Commentary on the New Testament use of the Old Testament*, eds Beale and Carson, Baker, 2007). Witherington's own appeal for an awareness of this wider function of the fundamental narrative of Israel resonates with the work of Hays, and also Wright's emphasis on worldview.

This volume does not address intertextual theory specifically (again, some readers may be relieved). For example, the distinctions between quotation, allusion and echo are not discussed, but rather Witherington gets down to business grappling with the texts. However, at points, there are very helpful reflections on the broader nature of intertextuality. Witherington compares the NT authors' uses of Pentateuchal texts as sometimes akin to a jazz musician improvising around a well-known tune. This improvisation can only occur because the base tune is so well-known and accepted. This, in fact, provides the necessary freedom for improvisation — the base tune is always in view. This notion of an intertext functioning as a solid and stable anchor, despite new uses of it in a later text, resonates with Michael Riffaterre's theory of textual stability.

There are three appendices to the book. The first is a complete list of the intertextualities noted by Nestle-Aland; the second, a review of a book that has clearly been influential in Witherington's own reflections on Genesis 1 and 2 — Venema and McKnight's *Adam and the Genome* (Brazos, 2017); and the third, a short excursus (as mentioned above) on the connections between Genesis 6, *1 Enoch* and 1 Peter 3.

With this final volume of his trilogy, the prolific Witherington has delivered a valuable and stimulating set of works exploring the use of the Old Testament in the New.

David R. Kirk, Highland Theological College

Grounded in Heaven: Recentering Christian Hope and Life on God. By Michael Allen. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7453-5. 186pp. £13.77.

Michael Allen's Grounded in Heaven seeks to reform current thinking on Christian hope, that is the promise of the future resurrected state of all believers. He does this by retrieving Classical Christian thinking on the beatific vision (i.e. seeing God in heaven and the New Creation). Allen effectively demonstrates the value of interacting with voices from the past to shape Christian life today. At 160 pages and only four chapters, this book is an example of brevity and depth. It is a concise and multifaceted resource and should be accessible to both ministers and laypeople of any denomination.

In the first chapter, drawing explicitly on John Calvin, Thomas Aquinas, and various contemporary authors, he retrieves a 'substantively theological' eschatology (p. 23), by which he means an eschatology which has God as the centre of Christian hope. This contrasts with an eschatology in which God is an instrument to some greater end. In the second chapter, he reforms this Classical Christian belief in the beatific vision by arguing that while the Bible teaches that God is invisible, the Bible promises that one day Christians will see God. However, Allen takes this to be the Son. Therefore, the Christian hope of the beatific vision is more properly a vision of the Son.

In chapter three, drawing on John Owen, Irenaeus of Lyons, Herman Witsius, Jeremiah Burroughs, Augustine, Calvin, and various contemporary authors, he retrieves the idea that Christians must cultivate a 'heavenly mindedness'. By this Allen means a conscious meditation on God and on all things having their being in Him so that believers may be of some benefit to other Christians, nonbelievers, and society in general in their current life.

In the fourth chapter, Allen reforms 'heavenly mindedness' by following John Calvin's lead in locating 'heavenly mindedness' in connection to the believer's union with Christ. Because of this union with Christ, Christians deny themselves and live to Christ (i.e. 'heavenly mindedness') thereby properly reorienting every earthly good this side of glory. Allen's reform of 'heavenly mindedness', in its essence, transforms self-denial from contempt of one's self or earthly goods into following the principles of scripture which is first and foremost delight in God and all things in as much as they participate in God.

The contribution of *Grounded in Heaven* can be considered in three ways. First, the book offers some critique of the emphasis of Kuyperian tradition, which reacts against an overly spiritual perspective by fixating on the physicality of heaven. In contrast, Allen steps outside this material-spiritual frame of thinking to show how God is the substance of the Christian hope; we will be so transfixed by seeing God that everything else will pale in significance. Second, the book exposes its readers to a broad range of traditions from Catholic, the Reformation, the Puritans, to the early Church, thereby demonstrating intellectual humility in an age of outrage and cultural tribes. Thus, Allen demonstrates how a Christian should engage with other intellectual tribes and their traditions. Lastly, the book retrieves a largely unknown hope: namely, the beatific vision, the sight of, and so intimacy with, God. Scripture makes the promise that one day Christians will not rely on the faith of hearing, but the assuredness of sight. While faith and hope may fade away, love will be for an eternity because we will behold God (1 Cor. 13:12–13).

The reform of 'heavenly mindedness' should be useful to the pastor who is attempting to grow in their Christian life, and also seeking to help different members of his Church grow. The reform of the beatific vision may also help many Christians understand Scripture better, and the promise contained therein. The chapters on retrieval are valuable because they will help expose one to the broader traditions of the church. Even though the reader may disagree with one tradition or another, they will at least be more educated about the different focuses and will hopefully grow in appreciation.

Jake Michel, Edinburgh Theological Seminary

Justification: Volume 1. By Michael Horton. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018. ISBN: 978-0310491606. 399pp. £18.99.

Justification: Volume 2. By Michael Horton. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018. ISBN: 978-0310578383. 527pp. £18.99.

The New Studies in Dogmatics series is quickly, in the view of this reader, becoming essential reading for academic theologians as well as pastors who want to teach biblical doctrines to their congregations with depth and precision. The series overall aims to engage with the best of traditional Christian sources from all periods of church history and provide fresh theological construction of crucial doctrines. Michael Horton's contribution to this series addresses the doctrine of justification, that issue of how sinners can be right with God, and it represents a remarkable achievement in theological thinking. Horton takes on this topic both with a rigorous academic intellect and an obviously pastoral heart, and both are clear on every page as he labours to read all the sources fairly with a deep concern for the truth and awareness for what is good for the people of God.

The first volume is a work on historical theology, tracing the development of the doctrine of justification from the patristic period into the Reformation and early post-Reformation period. This is a masterful treatment of intellectual history that alternates engagement with primary and secondary sources with remarkable skill. Horton clearly immersed himself in the actual primary literature for important patristic and medieval theologians, as well as the expected assessment of Reformation period primary sources by Martin Luther, John Calvin, and their fellow reformers. It is a rare but pleasing thing to see someone cite actual works by William of Ockham when assessing his views. Perhaps the only improvement on this front could have been more engagement with primary works by John Duns Scotus, for whom Horton relied mostly on secondary literature and its citations of Scotus. There was only one historical mistake in this volume wherein Horton confused a piece of secondary literature about Roman Catholic theologian Ambrogio Catarino to be about Cardinal Gasparo Contarini, who played a major role at the Council of Trent (p. 336, n. 101).

The analysis in this volume seems comprehensive, although narrowly focused on topics relevant to justification. The opening chapter sets the stage by describing the various academic conversations currently taking place that form the background for this work. The primary targets Horton had in view are the New Perspective on Paul and Radical Orthodoxy, both of which have challenged the traditional Protestant understanding

of justification. This overt aim to use historical theology towards dogmatic ends of course makes this a fascinating work because most works on historical theology hide their theological goals under the auspices of dispassionate historiography. This could be a disaster in some cases, but Horton's nuanced and balanced reading of the changes in doctrine across the Christian tradition reveals that he never defaults to proof texting, but always takes account of doctrines within their changing intellectual apparatuses and provides a clear analysis of the ideas.

The chapters in this volume begin moving in roughly chronological order from the patristic period through the Reformation, but shift towards the end to consider more topical or categorical issues. These last chapters provide penetrating summary evidence to support the thesis of Horton's work that the biggest variance within the broader Christian tradition happened in the medieval period within the nominalist schools, and that line of thought triumphed in the Council of Trent. He maps out how the premiere patristic and medieval thinkers, even though few had a thoroughly forensic understanding of justification due to their dependence on Latin translations of the Bible rather than the Greek New Testament, still deeply opposed Pelagian and semi-Pelagian views of salvation. Even doctrines that Protestants find problematic no matter how they are expressed, like the Roman view of the supperadded gift, are articulated in ways that are closer to later Protestant views by Thomas Aquinas than the way nominalists like Scotus, Ockham, and Gabriel Biel articulated them. Further, Horton also does a wonderful job of demonstrating the differences between the actual views of Aquinas and 20th century neo-Thomism, which is important because the neo-Thomist movement did significantly reinterpret Aquinas in light of modernity. Some within conservative Protestantism will not like that Horton took a largely positive, although certainly critical stance towards Aquinas, but their objections have likely not considered that within the spectrum of medieval theology, Aquinas was far more adaptable to Protestant goals than the Pelagian leaning nominalist theologians, who also argued for ontological univocity. In the end, it was the less orthodox strains of nominalist soteriology that were adopted by the Council of Trent and remain the views of the Roman communion today.

Whereas volume one dealt with historical issues, but in fact made its own pointed argument, volume two addressed exegetical issues and dogmatic construction. This book is a tour de force response to recent attempts to revise the Reformation doctrine of justification by faith alone from within Protestant circles. The main targets here are the New Perspective on Paul, Radical Orthodoxy, and Federal Vision writer, Peter Leithart. Horton has a remarkable breadth of reading, and engaged fairly

with authors of multiple disciplines. Many theologians are not well versed in biblical studies, but Horton has mounted stacks of exegetical and linguistic evidence against modern challenges to justification by faith alone. His main argument is that modern revisions of this doctrine almost all make some kind of false dichotomy. They tend to set covenant against relationship, forensic categories against transformative ones, and the history of salvation against the order of salvation, but properly understood these *distinctions* are not dualisms opposed to each other absolutely. Many have thought that the way to uphold the need for personal transformation is to collapse that requirement into justification. But Horton shows that is not the case. Justification is not the whole of salvation even if it is a foundational element of it that secures subsequent aspects of the order of salvation.

The first section of this volume outlined the covenantal framework for a properly Reformed, even just biblical, understanding of what justification is. Horton showed that the covenants are the context in which God renders a verdict of justified or condemned. Yet we see in Scripture the distinction between law and promise covenants. This section alone may be worth the price of the book as it is a thorough and robust explanation and defence of Reformed covenant theology oriented towards its explanatory power for soteriology.

The second section described the achievement of justification, looking at the historical work of Christ. The primary takeaway here is the importance of the active and passive obedience of Christ. The point perhaps most polemical here is the refutation of a new insistence on the Christus Victor motif over against penal substitutionary atonement. Again, Horton showed this a false dichotomy, arguing that Christus Victor is a biblical theme, but it is not only compatible with, but best understood in light of penal substitution.

The third section explores the mechanics of justification. He addressed new attempts to redefine justification, showing justification is in fact a term linked with salvation not just ecclesiology, and also defended the basis of justification as the imputation of Christ's righteousness. It is not a transformative category but rests on a legal declaration. The last section talked about the reception of justification, defending the traditional Protestant view that justification is received by faith alone within the context of union with Christ. The culmination of these sections is perhaps the most thorough theological and exegetical response to the New Perspective and Federal Vision to date. Horton's arguments are devastatingly convincing, as he draws on a vast knowledge of historical, exegetical, and theological studies, and proved that these attempted revisions have not even understood the Protestantism they supposedly critique. In fact, they

have responded to pietism more than confessional Protestantism. There are a few editorial slips in this volume where footnotes refer to a different work than indicated in the body of the text, but that does not detract from the immense value of this book and its argumentative force.

Many readers will be familiar with Horton's work, as he has produced a massive stack of books that handle academic theology and pastoral issues. It can hardly be doubted that Michael Horton has been a gift to Christ's church, and the present work proves that yet again. This is a tremendously useful set of books on one of the capstone doctrines of the Christian faith. Horton has managed to create a remarkably traditional understanding of the doctrine of justification, that aligns with trajectories from all eras of church history, that is also vigorously Protestant, and should obviously stand as a premiere work for many years to come. If you are an academic, you will have to engage this work if you want to discuss justification. If you are a pastor, get this work now and read it with enthusiasm. Reading it will be a blessing to you and become one to your congregation as you teach them in light of it.

Harrison Perkins, London City Presbyterian Church

Christianity in North Africa and West Asia. Edited by Kenneth R. Ross, Mariz Tadros and Todd M. Johnson. (Edinburgh Companions to Global Christianity Vol. 2). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018. ISBN: 9781474428057. 499pp. £150.

The *Edinburgh Companions to Global Christianity*, of which this is the second volume in the series, follow on from the *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010*. The series combines reliable demographic information with a wide range of essays written by specialists in this field. This second volume focuses on a part of the world where the Christian Church has faced extremely difficult conditions for its witness and serious questions have been raised as to whether it can even survive in some of these countries as a result of the impact of religious persecution. It is a sobering but invaluable analysis of Christian witness in these social contexts.

The first two chapters cover a demographic profile of Christianity in these twenty-five locations together with an overview of the complexity of the confusing array of different Orthodox and Catholic Churches present, together with more recent Protestant bodies, in mainly Islamic-majority countries. Not only have these Christians suffered from the limitations brought about by their minority religion status, but Western political actions in many of these countries, especially in more recent years, have had a devastating impact on the viability of the remaining Christian communities. The next sixteen chapters cover mainly specific countries

though one chapter covers the Gulf States and three cover two locations such as Armenia and Karabakh or Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The next eight chapters focus on 'Major Christian Traditions'. These are Anglicans, Independents, Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Protestants, Catholics, Evangelicals and Pentecostals / Charismatics. It will be clear to readers that there are obvious overlaps in the boundaries of some of these particular titles, however, the editors and authors in this book have endeavoured to cover as fairly as possible the range of Christian traditions present in these countries. Space restrictions have undoubtedly led to the omission of references to Protestant Christian Churches with a very limited representation, but it is an invaluable account of the presence and witness of the relatively larger historic churches in these countries.

The third main section of chapters on key themes for Christianity in the region covers faith and culture, worship and spirituality, theology, the social and political context, mission and evangelism, gender, religious freedom, inter-religious relations, monastic movements and spirituality, ecclesiology, Christian media and displaced populations, prior to a concluding chapter on the future of Christianity in North Africa and West Asia.

In summary, this is an invaluable guide to the heritage of the Christian communities in two regions of the world largely dominated by Islam. It will be a standard reference work for years to come. A couple of very minor criticisms would include questioning the claim that Evangelicals only became a distinctive group of Christians in the mid-nineteenth century (p.285). This does seem rather late. Secondly, in the references to Roman Catholic documents on ecumenical relations in the later twentieth century (p.358) the broad point being made is correct, but it cannot be denied that *Dominus Jesus* (2000) was a backward step in its comments on the status of non-episcopal churches.

Brian Talbot, Broughty Ferry Baptist Church

Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation. By Richard Bauckham. London: DLT, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-232-52791-9. 226pp. £14.95.

As the population of the planet continues to increase and ecological disasters touch an increasing number of communities across the world there are some serious questions which need to be addressed by the people of God. In his book *Bible and Ecology*, Richard Bauckham seeks to establish a new paradigm for meaningful discussion about living as creatures in a fallen creation.

The book has its origin as a series of lectures which survey the relationship between humanity and the community of creation. It is a straight forward layout with each chapter exploring a different dimension of this topic. One thing to note and be commended from the beginning is the exegetical work which is displayed throughout. Although readers will not always agree with every observation and application, Bauckham's commitment to thoughtfully walking through various texts is to be commended.

He begins by tackling the area of stewardship terminology in chapter 1. Bauckham argues that this vocabulary is misunderstood and has not given the people of God 'a framework within which to approach ecological issues with concern and responsibility' (p. 2). It is a helpful discussion which points out wrongly assumed power relations and leads the reader to re-evaluate humanity's role within the wider creation as revealed in the narrative of Genesis 1-2. Chapter 2 sees a consideration of Job 38-40 inviting further opportunity to reassess our position in creation as creatures. Bauckham rightly argues that, as the largest section in the Bible to deal with the non-human creation, it should feature far more prominently in discussion about the church's interaction with ecological issues than it has done.

Bauckham then presents his new paradigm of humanity as fellow members of the created order in chapter 3. He does this by taking the reader through various texts, particularly Ps 104, Matt 6:25-33 and Ps 148. Although humans are not divine they do have a special role. Creation should never be elevated to the position of divinity nor lowered to a commodity for human exploitation and consumption. Rather, creation should be viewed as sacred. In chapter 4 Bauckham handles the effects of the fall on creation and human culture. He argues that images of redemption in the Bible are not to be seen as utopian but ecotopian; all of creation restored becoming everything that it should be.

The final chapter surveys various passages from the New Testament, suggesting that we must view the whole of history as 'a Christological eco-narrative' (p. 151). Rightly Bauckham affirms that the centre of everything in the universe is the cross of Christ. Only the crucified and risen Jesus can bring the chaos of a fallen world back into alignment. It should be noted that this section contains good observations concerning Christian interaction with technology. Bauckham urges the reader to consider the inherent challenges presented in a physical and intellectual dualism which can be created when trying to replace the natural world with bio-engineering and artificial intelligence.

This book is a great resource for Christians who seek to live life under the Lordship of Christ in every aspect. Bauckham brings wisdom, sim-

plicity and a much needed corrective for the church to consider this important issue as we face increasing globalisation and the ecological challenges which will come as a result. It is easy to access and because of the books origin as a series of lectures it is possible to pick up each section as a stand-alone.

Unlike many other engagements with this topic or humanities role in creation, Bauckham manages to hold together biblical truth, theological reflection and practical application. It is a timely contribution in many areas, particularly for those researching and advocating creation care in the world of global mission and pastors seeking to prepare churches to engage biblically and theologically with these realties in the 21st century.

Martin Paterson, OMF