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Editorial

Psalm 74 offers help in troubled times. It is a lament that reflects upon the destruction of the Temple in 587/586BC. Israel was languishing for her sin. Unbelief and idolatry resulted in exile to a foreign land, a place that was a wilderness. The Psalm communicates painful experiences suffered in Babylon.

At the same time the Psalm also tells of what belonged to God's people in this distressing time. Although they were suffering, God was with them. In the lowest depths they had recourse to the highest appeal – to God who reigns over heaven and earth. A search for help elsewhere had been in vain (v. 9). Yet the help needed is available, 'God my King is from of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth' (v. 12).

This focus upon God leads to contemplation of divine truth. He reigns, for he is king (v. 12). He is king from of old. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is an ever present help in times of trouble. The Lord reigns, even when the opposition is ferocious and the experience has been devastating (v. 8).

These truths of God mean he is the refuge his people need. His past works provide comfort, for he has overcome the fiercest of enemies, demonstrating his ownership of his creation. Meditating upon these past works give reason for confidence in God and give rise to the Psalm's concluding appeals.

When enemies press against and threaten the way of life that God sets out in the Bible, or even life itself, the Psalm encourages readers to turn to God for help. Indeed, the Bible witnesses to God's working salvation. Christ overcomes death, meaning that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:37-39).

Today, Christian newspapers tell of persecutions Christians face across the world – liberties taken away, and cases of injury and death. Closer to home, Christians may feel out of favour for their beliefs and often be reminded that 'here we have no lasting city' (Heb. 13:14).

Psalm 74 serves to teach us that with God there is recourse to the highest appeal. He is for his people. This is demonstrated by the covenant he has made to overcome evil (v. 20), which he has fulfilled through his Son Jesus Christ.

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Temple and Body:
Biblical Community in Ephesians

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A. INTRODUCTION

Though 'community' is spoken of much in contemporary culture, it seems that it is seldom defined beyond a vague sense of 'people like me who like me and like what I like'. But what is a biblical definition of community? What is it for and does it have any purpose beyond itself?

The main part of this paper is an engagement with Ephesians which presents us with a biblical and theological foundation for thinking about biblical community. I will argue that the relatively neglected temple theme in Ephesians has important practical implications and that attending to the concept of God's missional temple will provide us with a framework by which we may evaluate contemporary church praxis.[1]

B. BIBLICAL COMMUNITY IN EPHESIANS – SUMMARY

In Ephesians 2:11-22, Paul describes Christ's people, Jews and Gentiles, as those who have been vertically reconciled to God and horizontally to each other by the peace making work of Christ on the Cross, thus becoming members of and participants in the 'one new humanity' (Eph. 2:15).

Examination of Old Testament background demonstrates that this Gentile-including work of the Messiah fulfils 'in Christ' the trajectories of the OT themes of covenant and temple, mediated by texts in Isaiah and Zechariah. Paul uses the OT in such a way as to make clear that Gentiles and Jews are equally dependent on the peace-making work of the Messiah in order to be reconciled to God and to become members of God's people.

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[1]   The foundations for this paper are my doctoral dissertation and have been built upon and 'field tested" in the context of a new church. For detailed exegesis, see A. Mark Stirling, 'Transformation and Growth: The Davidic Temple Builder in Ephesians' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of St Andrews, 2012).

In the last section of this passage (2:19-22), these strands are drawn together and subsumed into the metaphor of God's people as the new (eschatological) temple, the 'dwelling place for God by the Spirit' (2:22).[2]

The expansionist nature of the themes and texts woven into Ephesians 2:11-22 impart an outward focus to the rest of the letter. The new temple is inherently missional. Discipleship (the building of a new temple composed of people united to Christ) and mission (the purpose of the temple as the dwelling place for God's presence to which the nations will come to worship[3]) are inseparably connected.

Observing connections between Ephesians 2:11-22 and the rest of the letter, especially 4:11-16 helps answer questions of how this temple grows and functions. In Chapter 4 Paul switches metaphors from temple to body. Leaders are given to the body by the risen Christ to help each member find its place and fulfil its function (Eph. 4:16). A synthesis of the argument of Ephesians will then suggest a number of practical applications.

C. ANALYSIS OF EPHESIANS 2:11-22

Ephesians 2:11-22 has been referred to as 'the key and high point of the whole epistle.'[4] It is 'perhaps the most significant ecclesiological text in the NT',[5] containing 'the whole substance of the author's theology; an ecclesiology developed from Christology which permeates the whole document theologically'.[6]

Ephesians 2:11-22 is constructed as a 'once-now' contrast scheme, parallel with similar structures in 2:1-10 and 4:17-24. Comparing Ephesians 2:11-22 with 2:1-10 shows that what is expressed in terms of the reality of sin in 2:1-10 is expressed in terms of estrangement from God's people in 2:11-22. What is presented in 2:1-10 as the transformation from walking in sin (2:2) to walking in good works (2:10),[7] is depicted in 2:11-22 as a

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[2] This is an interpretive key for Ephesians, its various themes cohering around the building, filling and functioning of the new Temple.

[3] See Isa. 2:1-5 for the programmatic statement for this temple theology.

[4] Markus Barth, *Ephesians: Translation and Commentary on Chapters 1–3* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974), p. 275.

[5] Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians: The NIV Application Commentary: From Biblical Text to Contemporary Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), p. 123.

[6] Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Ephesians: A Commentary* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), p. 102.

[7] The repetition of 'walk' (8 times in Ephesians) helps structure the letter and establish that one of Paul's main themes is transformed walking. See e.g., Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians, Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), p. 275.

reversal of exclusion from God's people accomplished by Christ's peace-making death that creates a new humanity (2:15).

There is a progression from remembrance of former state ('Before' 2:11-13) to a description of this new corporate entity and its purpose ('After' 2:18-22), through the peace-making and new-humanity-creating work of Christ ('What causes transformation' 2:14-17). We will consider each in turn.

Before – the former state

The five features of the Gentiles' condition ('without Christ', 'separated from the *politeia*[8] of Israel,' 'strangers to the covenants of promise', 'not having hope' and 'without God') are complementary aspects of the same reality giving a comprehensive description of the condition of the Gentiles who are 'without Christ.'

Of note here is that the reversal of the Gentiles' plight of covenant exclusion in 2:13 and the salvation in 2:8-9 are both 'in Christ Jesus'. The same salvation described in 2:1-10 (in 2:6, 7, 10, as divinely initiated gracious union with Christ) is in 2:11-22 expressed in covenantal terms. Salvation therefore means no longer being 'strangers to the covenants of promise' (2:12). Implicit in this argument is Paul's endorsement of the concept of covenant membership as an affirmation of some kind of continuity between God's people before and after the coming of the Messiah.

There are additional elements that describe the pre-Christian past of the Gentiles. In 2:13, the pronoun 'you' picks up the 'you' of 2:11; the five-fold designation of the Gentiles being summed up as those who were 'far off', a term used in the OT to designate the Gentile nations.[9] The contrast is taken up again in 2:19 where the Gentiles are no longer strangers and aliens.

The 'before' descriptors therefore comprehensively describe the state of non-Christian Gentiles in terms of their lack of membership of God's people. It is this condition of estrangement and alienation and its consequences (summed up as 'far off' and 'apart from Christ') that the readers are encouraged to remember.

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8   That is 'membership of a community with the rights, privileges and way of life associated with that membership', Ernest Best, *Essays on Ephesians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), p. 95.

9   Deut. 28:49; 29:22; 1 Kings 8:41; Isa. 5:26; Jer. 5:15 cf Israel's 'nearness' (e.g. Ps. 148:14).

After – the transformed condition

The negative designation of the Gentiles' pre-Christian past is contrasted with their current condition 'in Christ Jesus' (2:13) which is equated with being brought near. This is especially important because of the connection between this language and OT texts. 2:14-18 addresses the peace-making work of Christ that has brought them near, and 2:19 resumes the contrast with a summary of the pre-Christian state and then a more detailed outworking of the current condition of these Gentiles 'in Christ': they are described as 'fellow citizens of the saints' and 'members of God's household'. Citizenship (*sympolitai*) is contrasted with their previous separation from the *politeia* of Israel.

The use of a *syn* compound to describe this is significant. Together with the statements in 2:14-18 of 'the two being created into one new humanity' (2:15) and 'both being reconciled in one body' (2:16) and 'we both have access to the Father . . . ' (2:18—note the shift to first person plural), a picture emerges in which not only has the situation of the Gentiles been reversed, but there has also been an alteration in the condition of the Jews whereby they are now, together with Gentiles on equal terms, fellow-members of God's people.

It is also significant that those who were estranged from Israel in 2:12, are not explicitly stated to become citizens of Israel, but are 'fellow citizens with the saints.' Similarly (and perhaps to avoid any possible misunderstanding), the contrast is not explicitly made between estrangement from the covenants of promise and then covenant membership. Rather, the imagery is of collective membership of God's household, an image which then morphs so that these members are seen to grow and be fitted together to become a 'holy temple.'

2:22 makes clear that the people being built together constitute the 'dwelling place for God by the Spirit': the people of God grow together to become corporately the sacred space where the presence of God dwelt, just as in the physical temple.

In summary, Ephesians 2:11-22 contains a trajectory from old to new, from Gentile past separated from Christ and far from God and his people, towards membership of Christ's new humanity on equal terms with Jews. Far becomes near; without Christ becomes in Christ; alienation becomes citizenship, and this new humanity becomes the location of God's presence.

What causes transformation?

2:14-18 is the literary and theological bridge between the before and after descriptors. The 'far off' in 2:13 have been 'brought near' by the blood of

Christ. It is Christ's sacrificial death that reverses the five-fold description of the Gentiles' pre-Christian state.[10]

2:14-18 is an unpacking of the concept in 2:13 of the far off coming near. 2:14 introduces Christ himself as 'our peace' with a change from 2nd to 1st person personal pronouns, thereby including Jewish readers. 2:14 continues with the description of what has been done in order for Christ to be 'our peace,': he 'made the two one', destroyed the 'wall of partition' and nullified the law. All of these were done in order that Christ should create 'in him' (in himself) one new humanity, 'thus making peace.'

This 'peace-making' is further expressed in 2:16 as Christ having reconciled both 'in one body to God' through the cross, having killed enmity by it. 2:17 underlines the fact that both Jews and Gentiles are needy recipients of this peace-making work, while 2:18 describes both groups now having access to the Father 'by the Spirit.' This concept of the priestly role of granting access to God's presence provides one of the links to the following temple imagery.

There are several further observations. First, the subject of all of the verbs in this central section is Christ. This contrasts with 2:1-10 where God is the agent and 4:17-24 where it is believers. Secondly, the means by which these reconciling actions are accomplished is by the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross. The far coming near is 'by the blood of Christ,' enmity and the dividing wall of partition are destroyed 'in (or by) his flesh' (2:15), and the reconciliation of the two groups horizontally to form one body and vertically to God (2:16) is 'through the cross.' Thirdly, this horizontal and vertical reconciliation is seen as Christ removing any barriers necessary in order that he should create one united people. Christopher Wright summarises:

> Paul's picture is decidedly not Jews plus Gentiles, remaining forever distinct with separate means of covenant membership and access to God, but rather that through the cross God has destroyed the barrier between the two and created a new entity, so that both together and both alike have access to God through the same Spirit.[11]

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[10] The next occurrence of far and near language in v17 ensures that Jews do not think they need Christ any less – peace is preached to the far off AND those near. The parallel with 2:1-10 where Paul speaks in first person plural of all being by nature children of wrath (2:3), the designation of the 'circumcision' as 'hand-made' (v11 – a term always used of idolatry) and Christ preaching to 'far off and to those near' (2:17), all demonstrate Paul's lack of differentiation between Jews and Gentiles in their need of Christ's peace-making work.

[11] Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God* (Leicester: IVP, 2008), p. 528.

Both dimensions are presented in 2:11-22 as the fruit of Christ's sacrificial death by which he becomes 'our peace.' The work of the Messiah in Ephesians 2:11-22 therefore does not only concern the vertical aspects of the individual believer's condition before God but is also the means by which a new people is created and those who otherwise would be enemies are reconciled both to each other and to God.

Community as new humanity

Ephesians 2:11-22 emphasises the creation of new humanity. One cannot be reconciled vertically to God without also participating in the inaugurated new humanity of 2:15. There is an important connection between Ephesians 2:15 and 4:24 where those who have learned Christ have been taught to 'put on the new man' (with creation language closely associated). Thus, to put on this 'new humanity' is a reference backwards to 2:15 and involves participating in this new corporate entity. The command in 4:24 therefore draws into itself everything that is said of this new humanity in 2:11-22, a point obscured by the NIV and ESV translation as 'new self'.[12]

This theme of participation in the new humanity is foundational for the practical application in 4:25ff which may be conceived, therefore, as relational examples of putting on the new humanity. Reconciliation with God means membership of the new humanity which in turn means a new way of living ('walking') that is consistent with this new reality. This is another way of saying that Ephesians appears to conceive of no separation between soteriology, ecclesiology and ethics. They are held together in this concept of union with the Messiah and therefore communion with Messiah's people and the transformed 'walking' expressive of the new humanity.

Isaiah and Zechariah as Background to Ephesians 2:11-22

What is the significance of the use of the OT concepts and texts in Ephesians 2:11-22? There is only space to sketch in outline Paul's appropriation of OT texts in Ephesians 2:11-22.[13] There is general agreement amongst interpreters that in Ephesians 2:17 Paul combines Isaiah 57:19 ('"Peace, peace, to the far and to the near," says the LORD') with 'he came and

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[12] Baugh's recent commentary surveys various options for interpretation of 4:24 and concludes that 'The new man is the new existence in the inaugurated new creation, which was pioneered by the resurrected Mediator...'; S. M. Baugh, *Ephesians: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), pp. 373-75.

[13] This section of this paper is reproduced from 'Transformed Walking and Missional Temple Building: Discipleship in Ephesians', forthcoming in *Presbyterion* 45/2 (Fall 2019).

preached' from Isaiah 52:7. In using these texts, Paul also imports their theological context (the eschatological pilgrimage of Gentiles to Zion and their inclusion in God's people) and finds their fulfilment in the present reality of the Messiah's people. This appropriation and christologising of key themes in Isaiah is a move consistent with other NT texts.[14] Furthermore, Paul's use of the common Jewish exegetical technique of hook-work linkage (*ge*zērâ šāwâ*) to combine texts invites us to seek further textual influence on Ephesians 2:11-22.

Zechariah 6:12-15 employs the same words 'far off', 'near' and 'peace' as the Isaiah texts and also exhibits strong thematic coherence.[15] Zechariah describes a Messianic figure (the 'shoot') who will 'build the house of the Lord' (Zech. 6:12) and from whom, in a combination of priestly and kingly functions, 'counsel of peace' will issue ('that deliberate policy which procures peace.'[16]). Zechariah 6:15 then describes those who are 'far off' who will come (near) and help to build the temple.

This use of Zechariah coheres with the flow of thought of Ephesians 2 and provides an OT link between the 'far off' language of Isaiah and the concept of temple building. If this is so, then the Temple theme in Ephesians 2:21-22 is not an unconnected afterthought to the earlier statement about the far-off and near, but rather represents the culmination of a carefully constructed argument based on a Christological exegesis of Isaiah 52:7, 57:19 and Zechariah 6:12-15. The concept of 'far off' has been appropriated and applied to the idea of Gentiles becoming members of

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[14] See, for example, Jesus' own appropriation of Isa. 61:1-3 in Luke 4:18-19, Paul's use of 11 quotations from Isaiah in Rom 9-11, 10 quotations from or allusions to Isa. 53 in the NT, and the church's understanding of its mission to the Gentiles being drawn from Isaiah (29:14 = 1 Cor. 1:19; 40:13 = 1 Cor. 2:16; 66:4 = 1 Cor. 2:9; 11:10 = Rom. 15:12; 49:6 = Acts 13:47; 52:5 = Rom. 2:24; 52:15 = Rom. 15:21) For a more complete list and discussion of the relationship of Isaiah to the NT see John Oswalt, 'Isaiah', *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Leicester: IVP, 2000); J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul 'in Concert' in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2002); *Isaiah in the New Testament*, ed. by Steve Moyise and Maarten J.J. Menken (London: T&T Clark, 2005).

[15] For discussion for criteria for recognising re-use of Scripture, see William A. Tooman, *Gog of Magog: Reuse of Scripture and Compositional Technique in Ezekiel 38–39* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

[16] John L. Mackay, *Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi: God's Restored People* (Fearn, UK: Christian Focus, 2003), p. 140.

the people of God. The Zechariah text is drawn in so that the concept of this new people of God is connected with the temple.[17]

What has come to pass in the creation of the new humanity in Ephesians 2:15 is thus the fulfilment of the eschatological pilgrimage of Gentiles to Zion in Isaiah and the rebuilding of the temple (with the help of the 'far off') by the Davidic 'shoot' of Zechariah. Furthermore, by bringing together covenantal concepts and temple imagery to describe this new entity, the church, as the new temple, is presented as the fulfilment of God's covenant promises.

Community as temple

Ephesians 2:11-22 is thus concerned with the figure of the Davidic priest/king who builds the temple and is helped to do so by the far off who come near. The innovation in Ephesians, however, is that Christ's people actually constitute the temple in which he has supremacy as cornerstone or capstone.

The new united humanity, created by Christ through his sacrifice on the Cross, is the rebuilt temple towards which the various OT texts pointed and the spiritual dwelling place constituted by Christ's people joined together and built up becomes the location of God's presence.

Conclusion

The appropriation of the OT in Ephesians 2:11-22 leads to two further conclusions about biblical community.

The use of these OT texts teaches Gentile readers their historical identity as God's people.
Paul's intention seems to be to communicate to the (largely Gentile) readers that they are members of a people in continuity with Israel. It seems hardly conceivable that this is offered merely as an interesting fact for his readers' amusement. Rather, given the general thrust of the letter towards relational application from 4:25 onwards, the readers are intended to understand something about their new identity that will make a difference to how they will then walk in this world. Paul wants them to know that they stand in continuity with the blessings and responsibilities of God's historical covenant people.

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[17] Further support for use of Zechariah is the undisputed quotation of Zech. 8:16 in Eph. 4:25.

The use of these OT texts imparts to the concept of growth a missional trajectory.

Moritz comments 'Ephesians does little more than to bring out the perspective already inherent in Isaiah [. . .] that YHWH's principle of gathering his followers from afar is not restricted to Jews but serves a more universal purpose.'[18] Ephesians 2:22 is key in articulating an idea which then reverberates through the rest of the letter[19] – the notion that believers are part of a corporate entity whose function is to be the dwelling place of God on earth in the way that formerly the physical temple had been. This lays a privilege and responsibility on those believers that sets the stage for all of the letter's practical instruction. It also changes the nature of that instruction. It is no longer only about the moral or relational behaviour of believers. Rather, it is a fundamental aspect of mission that this corporate entity should be built up so that God's presence is manifested to the nations.

D. CONNECTIONS WITH THE REST OF EPHESIANS – HOW DOES THE CHURCH GROW?

Ephesians 4:11-16 – A body with parts and leaders who equip
In Ephesians 4, Paul switches to the metaphor of God's people as a body made up of constituent parts, the functioning of which body depends on each part doing what God made it to do (4:16).[20] This change in imagery emphasises the dynamic of growth less explicit in the temple imagery of Ephesians 2.

The connection between Ephesians 2:11-22 and 4:11-16 is not just thematic. There is also a strong lexical parallel. In 2:21, God's people, like stones in a building, are being 'fitted together' (*synarmologeō*), a word used only one further time in the NT in 4:16 where God's people, like parts of a body, are being fitted together.

This parallel adds to the temple being built of people in Ephesians 2 the additional concept of each member making some kind of functional contribution 'as each part does its work' (Eph. 4:16 NIV).

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[18] Thorsten Moritz, *A Profound Mystery: The Use of the Old Testament in Ephesians* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), pp. 46-47.

[19] See especially the 'glory' language of Eph. 1 and the 'fullness' language of chapter 3.

[20] Literally here it is 'each part working *in measure*'. The use of the term 'measure' repeats Eph. 4:7 where each Christian is given 'grace according the *measure* of the gift of Christ'. The idea is of every member of the body being gifted by Christ to make their contribution to the functioning of that body.

This observation then invites examination of the preceding verses of which Ephesians 4:16 is the conclusion. Ephesians 4:7-16 describes the risen Christ giving gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to his people.[21] These persons are given to 'equip God's people for the work of service'[22] so that the body of Christ is 'built up'.

The language of the rest of the passage is striking in continuing the theme of building up. Notable, however, is the introduction of maturity language. Thus, this 'building up' is towards three parallel expressions of the goal of building: unity 'of faith and of knowledge of the son of God'; maturity that is contrasted in 4:14 with the state of being infants; and 'fullness' (using temple language). All of this is in order that (4:14) 'we' should no longer be immature, characterised by vulnerability to false and deceitful teachings. This immaturity is then further contrasted in 4:15 with 'speaking truth in love,' a condition in which 'we' grow into Christ, the head. The head-body imagery is then further developed in 4:16 by means of the picture of each member of that body having a function that is like the ligaments and sinews that hold the body together so that it 'builds itself up' in love.

There is thus a comprehensive picture of the role of gifted individuals within the church whose function it is to equip these saints so that each plays his/her designated role so that the whole body is built up. Their leadership is aimed at growth to maturity in each of God's saints.

This all, of course, raises the practical question of what this leadership ought therefore to look like and how it ought to be exercised. I will suggest some directions in our application below, but for now it is sufficient to say that this dynamic missional temple that is the community of Christian believers grows only as its leaders function to 'equip' and 'build up' its members to maturity.

Ephesians 4:1-7 – A united body whose unity is maintained by worthy walking of its members

The argument so far has been that biblical community as conceived in Ephesians is deeply rooted in OT concepts of covenant and temple and

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21   It seems to me that Paul here is not so much giving us a taxonomy of leadership in the church as he is giving us a comprehensive designation of leaders and then telling us what they are for. It is better, therefore, to let the following clauses that describe the results of the actions of these people bring definition to the list.

22   Note the singular 'work' rather than the NIV's plural. By translating more literally as singular, emphasis is brought to the concept of each member making their contribution to one overall corporate work, that is, the building and functioning of God's missional temple.

in OT texts that describe the nations coming to God's dwelling place. The concept of the people of God as missional temple that fulfils God's covenant promise to Abraham to bless the nations raises the stakes for healthy, functioning biblical community. In other words, what is at stake in whether this biblical community functions or not is nothing less than the mission of God to bless the nations through his people.[23]

This in turn places Paul's concern for unity in Ephesians 4:1-6 in its proper context. Unity is related to the functioning of this temple and is therefore closely related to mission. Three implications follow.

First, in Ephesians, unity is the fruit of the peace making work of Christ on the cross (Eph. 2:11-22) reconciling those formerly estranged from God and each other in 'one new man' (Eph. 2:15). Disunity therefore risks denying the efficacy of the cross of Jesus.

Secondly, if the church is weak missionally, then it may be as a result of disunity. As we have seen, the two are theologically connected.

Thirdly, unity in Ephesians is not concerned with institutional or organisational membership, but rather with union with Christ and then with the 'worthy walking' that flows from that gracious union (Eph. 4:1) and leads to zeal to maintain the 'unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace' (Eph. 4:3). In 4:2 'worthy walking' that will promote and maintain unity is described as four qualities – humility, meekness, long-suffering and bearing with one another in love. The necessity of these qualities in order to maintain unity presupposes challenges to unity in the body of Christ. Sadly, at times, our brothers and sisters in Christ will be difficult to get along with! Any idealistic notion of biblical community is thus ruled out and perfectionism will be antithetical to unity. Building biblical community will require humility, meekness, long-suffering and a willingness to bear with one another in love.

Ephesians 4:17-24 and 4:25ff – A community graciously united and transformed

Two final observations must be made about biblical community as conceived in Ephesians. First, this community is composed of those who are graciously united to Christ and who are thus described in Ephesians 4:20 as having 'learned Christ'. This is further explained in 4:21-24 – to learn Christ is to hear him and be taught in him to put off the old man, be

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[23] For development of this theme in book length, see especially Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010).

renewed in the spirit of the mind and put on the new man.[24] Those who constitute biblical community are therefore those who have both been transformed and are continuing to be transformed because they are graciously united to Christ. Biblical community is then to be characterised by the kind of relational transformation described in 4:25-6:9 that is the fruit of ongoing participation in and appropriation of the inaugurated new humanity in Christ (4:24 and 2:15).

The second observation is simply to signpost an area that requires much more work. There are numbers of statements in the triune blessing of Ephesians 1:3-14 that inform our doctrine of God. These statements are foundational to the theological and practical concerns of the rest of the letter. They are not so much raw material for philosophical speculation as they are statements about the kind of God who does what the rest of the letter tells us he does. These statements, it seems, are designed to encourage, motivate and give confidence to believers. A God who creates, chooses and blesses in a way that is not at all contingent or dependent on some quality or action in us is a God whose blessing may be received and utterly depended upon. Such a God does not need anything from his creatures, but rather gives lavishly to them. The God of Ephesians 1 is not one who is needy of legalistic service from his people. At the same time, he chose them to be holy and blameless, so his grace is not license. The relative neglect of doctrine of God in contemporary evangelicalism is just one of the factors contributing to distorted views and practices of sanctification.[25]

E. SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS

The idea of God's people as those united to Christ and each other and who constitute and function as God's missional temple is pregnant with application. When we add the concept in Ephesians that the role of leaders is to equip each member to make their contribution to the functioning body, we have a comprehensive picture of the life of the community of God's people and a set of criteria by which we can evaluate our current forms, practices and structures. Will the church in 21st century Scotland be willing to take *semper reformanda* seriously by evaluating all that it does according to whether it serves the functioning of God's missional

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[24]   These verbs express an ongoing action. See Buist M. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), pp. 359-64.

[25]   There is a growing body of literature on this subject. See, for example, Grant Macaskill, *Living in Union with Christ: Paul's Gospel and Christian Moral Identity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2019). Macaskill is explicitly critical of social trinitarian models in weakening our thinking on sanctification.

temple? On this question, it seems to me, hangs the question of mission to the unreached peoples of Scotland. Let me offer some thoughts on application in closing.

Leaders who equip – a vision for leadership

According to Ephesians 4:11ff, Christ gives gifts to the church of leaders whose God-given purpose is to 'equip the saints for the work of service'. Since this means a diversity of members making their contribution to the functioning body, it follows that such equipping though sharing principles, cannot be carried out in a 'one size fits all' manner. A more personal work is implied.

Maturity that results from this equipping is summarised in Ephesians 4:20 as 'learning Christ' and is manifested in the relational transformation described in 4:25ff. Such a relational outcome cannot be accomplished by a non-relational input. People will need more than only doctrinal content (but certainly not less than – see 4:14).[26] Reduction of discipleship to indoctrination and socially induced behaviour modification falls a long way short of what Paul describes here as learning Christ. Helping people to 'learn Christ' and live out the reality of the new humanity is a thoroughly relational process, but it is a relational process that cannot be devoid of content. Biblical content is taught in the context of relationship in which the application of that biblical content is modelled and demonstrated.[27] Rejecting any false dichotomy, we may instead propose a way of thinking about equipping of God's people that is a 'content-full relationship'.

This kind of equipping relationship cannot be reduced to a programme, formula or technique. Rather, it is a way of being in which leaders approach every encounter – be it sermon, small group, personal conversation or casual chat in the supermarket – asking, 'Lord, how may I serve your purposes today in this person's life? How may I speak or act to point them towards Christ and help them embrace and follow him in faith.' It is at this point that contemporary evangelicalism's capitulation to late modernity baulks at anything so soft and ill-defined.[28] Our preference for measurable outcomes and our reductionistic views of success drive methodologies in Christian ministry leadership that bear more resemblance to the modern manager than to our Lord Jesus. Such reduc-

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[26] We may want to ask to what extent our pedagogy in the church is shaped by enlightenment presuppositions rather than biblical/theological categories.

[27] This also has capacity implications – a plurality of leaders will be required.

[28] See, for example, Os Guinness, *Renaissance: The Power of the Gospel However Dark the Times* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014).

tionistic views also create fertile ground for the endemic abuses of power by leaders in the church.

In summary, this way of thinking about church and the role of its leaders challenges contemporary praxis and requires reflection and self-examination by leaders in the church. The discussion above of the character qualities necessary to uphold and maintain unity should particularly challenge leaders whose call is to model to others their own progress in Christ (1 Tim. 4:15). We might, for example, want to privilege character qualities of humility, meekness, long-suffering[29] and willingness to bear with others above mere giftedness or technical competence when appointing leaders.

Discipleship and mission in the 21st century

There is only space here to restate one key point. Because discipleship equips people for their contribution to a functioning missional temple/body, it follows that discipleship and mission are inseparable. Discipleship that is not outward focused and 'missional' is not biblical discipleship. Mission that is reduced to activity separated from growth in character and transformed relationships in union with Christ is not Christian mission.

Factors militating against the growth of biblical community

Ephesians closes with the exhortation to 'stand firm against the Devil's schemes'. With the mission of God dependent on the functioning temple/body, it should be no surprise that the enemy would have schemes to cause dysfunction. There is space here only to list some of those schemes and invite the reader to apply.

Disunity

Disunity is a time honoured tactic and clearly successful in Scotland. The extent to which the devil succeeds in tempting believers to pride, self-assertion, impatience and irritability towards each other (the opposite of Eph. 4:1-2) will be the extent to which unity is disrupted and mission compromised.

Theological weakness and reductionism

Various theological deficiencies will have a knock-on effect on the way God's people live and on whether they manifest individually and collectively the sort of transformed walking that is in view in Ephesians. I have

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29 The Greek here is often translated 'patience', but I feel this doesn't really capture the more active sense of 'suffering long' implied in *makrothymia*. Interestingly, it is the opposite of the modern Greek for 'quick temper'.

suggested above that we must trace these back to source neglect of doctrine of God. Related to this, the desire to formulate a 'simple gospel' that can easily be memorised and shared seems to be associated with a neglect of union with Christ, an idea central to Ephesians and foundational to Paul's ethics.[30] The consequences of this neglect are what Sinclair Ferguson terms the 'non-identical twins' of legalism and antinomianism.[31]

Individualism and Consumer culture

The adaptation of the Gospel to a culture of individual autonomy and the entitlement to have felt needs met, will inevitably conflict with the inherently corporate nature of life united to Christ and his people. A therapeutic and individualistic consumer 'Gospel' will be at odds with the qualities necessary to 'maintain the unity of the Spirit' (Eph. 4:1-3). A 'gospel' that preaches the benefits of justification apart from union with the One who dethrones the sovereign self in his call to discipleship (e.g. Luke 9:23ff) will fail to create the kind of community envisaged in Ephesians and, consequently, mission will be compromised. We will need to think much harder about cultural challenges to biblical community if we are to respond to them effectively.

'Attack the Leaders'

Given the importance of 'equipping God's people for the work of ministry', it is no surprise that leadership should particularly come under attack in order to negate the mission of God through his people. Again, there are numbers of factors, each of which needs a much fuller treatment than space permits here.

Leaders who don't equip

It will always be tempting to try to make the task of leadership in the body of Christ easier. To labour to see Christ formed (that is to help people to learn Christ) cannot be reduced to programme and will not be accomplished only by the delivery of information. Furthermore, a false view of maturity that involves hiding one's struggles rather than 'demonstrating progress' will fail to equip God's people to maturity. Hiding one's faults or sins in the desire to maintain a good reputation is a failure to love God's people who, instead of seeing the greatness of God's grace and how it works, are encouraged to aspire to a modern-day Phariseeism. There

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[30]   See Grant Macaskill, *Union with Christ in the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[31]   Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Whole Christ: Legalism, Antinomianism, and Gospel Assurance – Why the Marrow Controversy Still Matters* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016).

simply cannot be any shortcut to the long, slow, messy and often painful process of loving people towards maturity in Christ. Leaders in the body of Christ are tempted to prioritise almost any other activity than this and our adoption of reductionistic proxy success measures means that leaders will be rewarded and praised for anything other than giving their time to content-full relationships that equip the saints.

Busyness

In every group of pastors where I have taught this material, the feedback has been the same – content-full relationship seems biblical and sounds good, but 'I just don't have the time'. As a pastor, I empathise deeply. But we must ask the reformational question – if we are too busy to give ourselves to what is the central purpose of leadership in the body of Christ, then what are we busy doing and how can we stop or change it as soon as possible?

Insecure leaders who compete

Disunity in the body of Christ can often be traced back to the insecurity and competitiveness of church leaders. Power in leadership is used to compensate for what is perceived to be lacking in the leader's life or to defend against perceived threat. By contrast, to take Ephesians 2:18 seriously is to say that contentment in fellowship with the Triune God should cause a security that abolishes the need to compete with others. Local church life that bears more resemblance to social Darwinism (survival of the best funded with the most attractive programmes), than to the fruit of the reconciling work of Christ is, literally, a dis-grace.

Hospitality

The last signpost is to the importance of hospitality. It is no accident that this is a key qualification for leaders in the body of Christ. Welcoming people into one's home is an essential part of this and allows others to see whether the Gospel is just a nice idea preached from the pulpit or whether relationship with Jesus is lived out in practice. Our homes need to be less refuges and much more outposts of mission.

F. CONCLUSION

'Community' has become a buzzword in evangelical circles in recent years, churches being commended or condemned according to assessments of the quality of their community. It is tempting to see in the contemporary fascination with the subject a response to a culture that is increasingly characterised by fragmentation, isolation and loneliness, at the same time as increasingly dependent upon technological solutions for interpersonal communication. A culture that speaks much of 'community' may do so

precisely because it experiences so little of it, and this may in turn represent a great window of opportunity for the church that is faithful to its calling to be God's missional temple, demonstrating and proclaiming by the quality of Christ-centred community who the Triune God is and what he is like. May God make it so.

On the Block:
Biblical Community in our Locality

Rev Stuart Love, Clincarthill Parish Church
Rev Tim Sinclair, Partick Trinity Church of Scotland
Rev Jane Howitt, St Rollox Church of Scotland

What does biblical community look like in our locality? Three ministers in Glasgow shared their experiences of ministry at the 2019 SETS conference.

REV STUART LOVE, CLINCARTHILL PARISH CHURCH

What does Biblical Community look like in Clincarthill Parish Church?

Introduction
As a minister in his first charge, it has been a useful exercise to reflect on what biblical community looks like in Clincarthill Parish Church. Before exploring how Clincarthill Church expresses biblical community, we first must look back on the history of this congregation, as well as take note of the context of our community and parish.

1. A Bit of History...
Clincarthill Parish Church came into being in 2010. It is the result of a union between Mount Florida and Battlefield East Parish Churches. Union between congregations is a method used to manage *numerical* decline in the Church of Scotland. This can be traumatic for any congregation. Examples could be given which show how poorly this process can be managed and received *in communities*.

In the case of Clincarthill, the union made logical sense. It *was* possible to stand at the door of Battlefield East Church building and hold a conversation with someone standing at the door of the Mount Florida Church building; albeit, using somewhat raised voices.

The parish population is nearly 6000 and the perimeter walked in about half and hour. As only a small percentage of the parish attended the two churches, it made sense to combine the two congregations (which were formed as a result of previous splits and reunions).

From the point of union, the focus of the congregation was internal: not so much out of choice, but out of necessity. It was the task of

my immediate predecessor, and the first minister of the united charge, to bring these two congregations together. Additionally, having completed sales of the vacated church building and manse, the money raised was then employed to upgrade the remaining building, making it fit for purpose for the 21st century. These tasks necessitated an internal focus for the congregation's first 6 years of existence.

I was called, ordained and inducted as minister of the newly-formed congregation in October 2016. As I have reflected on this past of my congregation, and sought to discern how God is calling them to move forward for Him, I have found my sense of call to this church crystallise into the following: I am to help turn their focus from being inward to outward; from self to parish/community; essentially, from maintenance to mission.

2. To Whom Are We to Be Community?

The Clincarthill Parish Church logo carries this tagline, 'A Church for the Community'. The idea and importance of community are, therefore, highlighted in the very graphic that we use to 'advertise' ourselves. As such, it is vital that we follow through with what we say on 'our tin'. What we endeavour to do is be a biblical community at the heart of and there to serve our geographic community.

In order to be biblical community which serves our geographic community, we first need to ask and understand: to whom are we to be community?

When I first came to Clincarthill, the perception was that our parish was made up of the retired/elderly, and immigrants. While this perception may sound judgemental or prejudiced, it is based on observed experience: if you take time during the day to walk the streets of our parish and observe, those are the two *predominant* people groups you will see.

However, when we examined our Statistics for Mission, produced by the Church of Scotland (based upon the 2011 census) we found:

- 80% of our parish is of a white/Scottish background

- 36% are aged between 25 and 44; 26% are aged between 45 and 64
     Meaning 62% are of typical working age

- 47% are in full time employment, 10% employed part-time, and 5% unemployed
     The total correlates with the working age figures

To this, we can add some anecdotal evidence:

The old tenement housing in the Mount Florida area of the parish has been well kept. A number of these beautiful old buildings have had their

interior renovated to bring them up to modern standards. The joke in the local area is that, 'it's as nice as the West End, but you're paying South Side prices' (a joke/reality those who live in Glasgow might understand!).

There are reliable and cheap transport links to the surrounding areas (e.g. East Kilbride) but especially into the city centre.

These factors make our parish/community a desirable place to live, particularly by those looking for their first home, and who work in the city. This is evident if you visit Mount Florida station between 6am and 9am, or 4pm and 7pm, as you can witness the mass of commuters going to/returning home from the city centre!

In conclusion we can say that a significant number of our parish eat and sleep in the local area, but spend a substantial amount of their time elsewhere in the city working and (likely) socialising.

Which, of course, leaves Clincarthill Church facing a challenging question: how do we embody and express biblical community to those who spend most of their time outside the geographic community we serve?

3. How Do We Already Embody A Biblical Community?

This is a complex question, and neither I, nor anyone else in the congregation has yet arrived at the definitive answer as to how we might engage or include such people in our biblical community.

That does not mean we aren't trying. I can share with you how I believe we are currently embodying biblical community, as well as share some thoughts on how I believe we need to develop this over the coming months and years.

One thing we noticed about our community is the lack of space for groups to gather. Our church building has a larger footprint than the one which was sold (to another Christian group, which was the cause of much joy and relief to the previous congregation!). There is a local primary school, but the lack of space in their own premises requires them to come to us for large school assemblies.

Accordingly, we have made our building open and available to community groups who need space. This brings many benefits: it doesn't require a great investment of resources from us, as groups are already established, with leaders to run it and clientele to come. It raises the profile of the church (well, at least the building) and hopefully sends a message that people from the community are welcome.

We also created groups meant to extend the hand of friendship, in the name of Christ. We run a Coffee Morning and a Seniors Friday Diners: opportunities for people to gather for a time of socialising around a cuppa or a meal. Congregation members are leaders in our Brownie and Boys'

Brigade Company, for young women and men. We run an event called 'Feed the Fans', where we open our building and provide refreshments and (most importantly) toilets to those fans coming to events at nearby Hampden Park – Scotland's national football stadium.

All of this, I would class as 'Acts of Loving Kindness'. We are endeavouring to show and reflect the love of God in these events and send the message out into the community that people are welcome in our place. I believe these events are an important part of our witness, but one thing gives me pause for thought: these could be termed 'evangelism-light' events. While we hope our actions speak of God's love, conversations about the Gospel are few and far between. Very rarely (if at all) does someone from these events, who is not already involved in our (or another) Christian fellowship, express interest in finding out more about God, Christ, or the church's beliefs.

4. How Do We Further Embody Biblical Fellowship?

There are several ways in which Clincarthill could better embody what it means to be a biblical community; and I imagine there always will be. As God's people, our trajectory is to move ever closer to the likeness of Christ, and we acknowledge we are always going to be 'works in progress' this side of the new creation.

There are two areas which I have identified as being of importance, to help us move forward for God.

First: we need to prioritise evangelism and discipleship and create more opportunities for both. As I have said, we are good at the 'acts of love', 'evangelism-light' approach, but this is insufficient. After all, Jesus did call us to make disciples, teaching all that He commanded.

We are in the process of addressing this. Clincarthill Church has used the Alpha course in the past, and our intention is to use this again. One helpful suggestion of our Mission and Outreach team was to identify locations in the parish where we could meet apart from the church building: this could make attending an event less threatening for a non-Christian.

We are also in the early stages of considering how we can develop a holistic approach to our parish mission: focussing on body, mind and spirit. Fitness and health are currently at the fore in peoples' minds, with the spirit being the often-neglected part of that health-trinity. We hope that by taking a holistic approach, and showing we take physical and mental health seriously, we might encourage people to explore their spiritual health more deeply, and perhaps allow us to introduce them to Jesus Christ.

Second: we must address the attitude of 'going to church' versus 'being the church'. This is a hang-over from previous generations: even when

I was growing up, my family would talk about 'going to church' on a Sunday.

Going to church is something you do, at a specific time each week. Being the church is something you are, which impacts all aspects of your life. I believe encouraging and instilling this attitude in those who are part of Clincarthill Church is vital if we are going to be useful to God in the building of His kingdom in our part of the city. How is this done? Well… that is a good question!

Conclusion, and Final Observations

Some observations to conclude:

I am encouraged by the willingness and enthusiasm of most of the congregation, who are willing to move as God calls. I find my calling to these people also to be a help, as I have a real sense the Lord brought us together and we have met in the right place at the right time.

I am also encouraged by what I perceive God to be doing hidden from view. Several in the congregation have been blessed with a sense that God's Spirit is on the move. We do not know what He is doing, but we know He is working.

We have also been blessed in the past two and a half years with two substantial legacies left to the church: both six-figure sums of money. We look at this and trust that God would not grant us such provision if He did not have a plan for us.

What might that be? We do not know, but we carry on, trusting that when things are ready, God will reveal it.

We take heart from Paul's writing that the cross of Jesus Christ was considered foolishness by the Greeks. To the world's ears, it may sound foolish to trust in these unseen things of God; but for us in Clincarthill Church, we declare that, "the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength" (1 Cor. 5:25 NIVUK).

REV TIM SINCLAIR, PARTICK TRINITY CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

I have been the minister of Partick Trinity Church of Scotland since February 2018. I am attempting to describe a living community, with a past as well as a present, that I have recently joined and has not been shaped or steered to any great extent by my ministry.

Partick Trinity, as part of the Church of Scotland, is responsible for a discrete geographical area; specifically, the parish covers the north-eastern corner of Partick including a slice of the University of Glasgow's campus. Partick was, until recently, one of the less affluent districts

within the inner West End of Glasgow. To the east of our parish is the Byres Road corridor and the University of Glasgow, to the north and west the relatively prosperous areas of Dowanhill and Hyndland. Partick is, however, becoming increasingly gentrified. Students and young professionals, attracted by the University and a vibrant arts scene, contribute to a diverse and dynamic population. This young and transitory population have moved in but have not yet squeezed out the 'indigenous' people of Partick; a largely working-class population with a strong connection to the Highlands and Islands.

At the 2016 SETS conference, we explored the influence of consumerism on the church. Glasgow's inner West End, including Partick, is the church-shoppers equivalent of Buchanan Street – Glasgow's main shopping street; there is something to scratch every ecclesial itch. One challenge, amid this febrile market-place atmosphere, is the tendency for churches to be fiercely independent and to view neighbours as competitors and with suspicion. Partick and the wider West End has become something of a hot-house for church plants. The list of new churches gathering within half a mile of our church is always growing. Mirroring the draw of the wider West End cultural experience, many of these churches are drawing Christians from all over Glasgow and beyond. This is not necessarily helpful in Partick and one can only imagine that it is detrimental elsewhere. Several churches from mainline denominations have closed. Partick Trinity is itself the result of the union of a 'trinity' of Partick churches and many neighbouring churches from the older denominations are struggling, if not in crisis.

Although our congregation is also part of a mainline denomination, it has thus far avoided the inertia that has stymied so many of our neighbours. The congregation has managed to straddle the divide between what we might call the 'old Partick' and the 'new' – those drawn by work, study, and the attractions of West End living.

There are various metaphors readily at hand to describe any church. There are the biblical images: a body, a temple, a flock, an exilic enclave, to name but a few. There are also modern equivalents: a team, a movement, a disciple making culture and so on. The term that finds immediate traction in our context is 'family'. I have heard many people testify, with real affection, about individuals in the church who have functioned as surrogate aunts and uncles, grannies and grandpas, or brothers and sisters. Beneath these labels are relationships marked by care, love, humour, and hospitality.

This picture of a church-as-family is easily romanticised and perhaps susceptible to sentimentality. I would suggest that at Partick Trinity it is grounded in concrete action and in a certain posture; there is a lean-

ing in towards one another. I suspect that a dispassionate anthropologist observing our Sunday congregation might well notice certain familial traits: different generations committed to one another, a sharing together in celebrations and sadness, a willingness to stick it out together despite differences in personalities and preferences.

It would be a mistake (albeit a perfectly understandable one) to imagine that I am using family as a collective noun for nice (or at least well-meaning) Christians or nice families of Christians, being nice to one another; where the word family comes with its most positive connotations of happy, secure and settled relationships. In an increasingly affluent community, we might readily expect to encounter capable people with well-ordered lives, that exhibit the wholeness and peace the Bible calls *shalom*.

But for a great many people in our church, the experience of 'church-as-family' is not an echo or happy analogy of their experience of family outwith the church. The family that is found at church is not an attempt to replicate what is found at home.

Indeed, for many of our folk their family at home (by which I mean nuclear/extended family) is incomplete or distorted; robbed of its happiness, security or illusion of permanence, by grief, family breakdown, or crises of physical and/or mental health. Therefore, for a number of our folk, it is actually in church where they come closest to experiencing the family in all its fullness: love, security, stability – *shalom*. At home they see only an echo or a sad parody of family, little that speaks of God's willing for us not to be alone.

Thinking theologically, the great discovery is this: the family into which I am adopted as Christian, which finds a visible and localised expression in the congregation of Partick Trinity, has a wholeness that both encompasses and overcomes the incompleteness of its constituent parts.

Our church might be blessed by the addition of a young, happily married Christian couple, with education and promising careers, with faith and gifts and willingness to use them. At the same time I know from experience that our church-as-family has been blessed by divorcees, widows, orphans, and those bruised by past experiences of church.

For our church-as-family has been blessed by those suffering with anxiety disorders, depression and multiple bereavements, and the exhausted parents of exhausting kids. The closer I look the more the expressions of injury and incompleteness multiply. There is an elderly person who has been widowed longer than I have been alive, a young person who everyone says has a bright future but whose present experience is rootless, restless, and lonely, a single parent who has little freedom, and no energy.

There is a faithful woman whose husband has no faith. But wonderfully each has been called by Christ into a family where they find themselves blessed and the means of blessing to one another.

Shalom is not the entry requirement for the church. But shalom is the expression of God in action as he adopts us into one family. If our locality inculcates individualism, it is by God's grace and for his glory that we are brought into a family, 'bearing with one another in love' (Eph. 4:2).

REV JANE HOWITT, ST ROLLOX CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

In seeking to aim for a greater understanding of St Rollox and what is happening there, we can consider two aspects of the church, drawing from Mark Stirling's address at the SETS conference: its base and build.

The Church Base

The base for the church is a transformation and regeneration area. Sighthill, in the north east of Glasgow's city centre, used to have tens of thousands of residents in a very small locality. In recent years the population has decreased dramatically. Now there are only about two thousands residents. This is because the whole area has been regenerated. Housing has been demolished; people have been dispersed out of the community and housed elsewhere in Glasgow. This was also the experience of the congregation, many of whom were dispersed from Sighthill and housed elsewhere in Glasgow.

Sighthill was an area of very high multiple deprivation. Now because of the reduction in population, those problems are less, but there are still many hardships and parts of Sighthill remain in the top decile of the Scottish index of multiple deprivation. There is still a remnant of the former issues within a reduced population. Perhaps that makes the issues more concentrated, or more diluted, depending on your view of things.

The whole area is changing. Today the community is growing. There are another 850 homes to be built by 2025 and the population is expected to grow by four-fold in years ahead. As church develops vision for ministry, it does so in a void, a vacuum, as we don't know what the area will be like in a few years. This is a tremendous challenge, but also a great opportunity.

Part of the regeneration of the area meant that the old church building was subject to a compulsory purchase order. The new church building has recently been completed and is slightly more central to the housing scheme than before. It is in a really good, strategic position. And the church has been built before much of the housing that is planned for the

area and community is built. So the church can welcome people into the area when they arrive.

One of the characteristics of the parish is there is a higher than average ethnic population. There is a high ethnic mix. Many immigrants were housed in the area following 2000 when many asylum seekers and refugees were received into the UK. At that time many immigrants were located through London to three cities in the UK including Glasgow. From the year 2000 therefore we have been welcoming people into the community from all parts of the world. Within Sighthill, 56% inhabitants are non-white and non-Scots. In the congregation, 80% of members have origins from outside of Scotland.

This gives again many challenges and many opportunities.

As we are taught in Isaiah 2, the community of the church is indeed for all-nations. This is one of the theological reflections that drives our ministry, is that we are a house of prayer for all nations.

There is a challenge of working cross-culturally in the middle of Glasgow. It is a great challenge. Many different countries, backgrounds and denominations are represented at St Rollox. It is a very interesting set of circumstances to be asked to lead in. Some of our members from overseas, have come from very different societal traditions and styles of ministry. For example, older Africans were taught – often by rote – clearly boundaried ways of thinking, acting and doing in their home lands. Their past experience is very different from what they would find in Scotland, in society and church, regardless of denomination. Some undoing of the base is therefore required, and relaying of the base, that enables us to allow to build stronger community and a building that has that space for everyone, for all the nations to be able to live together and worship together and be a family together. Many of our members don't have family in Scotland, so the church as a family is a hugely significant part of life, ministry and social structure. This aspect of church life can't be overemphasised.

When we learn to support one another in these ways, we help people to overcome a lot of pain that people are feeling because of dislocation from home and families. The church is able to be a huge help.

Many different countries, backgrounds and denominations are represented at St Rollox. It is a very interesting set of circumstances to be asked to lead in. Developing an understanding of how church can be church in such a place is something that we are constantly working on.

The congregation faces daily hardship. Many members have come through the asylum process. There are refugees, asylum seekers and 'destitute asylum seekers' – those for whom all government support has been withdrawn.

With these circumstances, many who are able to work end up in poorly paid work. A large number in the congregation work nightshifts. That makes building community even within the church enormously challenging. People cannot come to evening meetings or midweek meetings. Employees experience constant changes in shifts and night-shifts because many of them are seen as being at the bottom of the pile in society. This makes building community through the week and evenings virtually impossible. So most of what we do together is on a Sunday. Most will come on Sunday, but are maybe not able to come on another day, as they can't afford it.

Most in the congregation travel by public transport; they don't have means to have a car. One man was moved to Clydebank, to the west of Glasgow, he takes two buses to St Rollox. Though it is only a distance of ten miles, it takes 2.5 hours by bus. Why does he come? In very broken English, he said, 'Here I feel a peace'. There's something that transcends language when church is living as community. It finds this unity in Christ who transcends barriers. We see this in St Rollox and it is a huge privilege to be there.

That's the base. How then do we then build?

The Church Build

One of the ways we build is into our community and into the community of asylum seekers and refugees who come to us from a vast swathe of Glasgow. There are various activities in which this works. Examples are the sewing and ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) classes, and the charity shop run by the church.[1]

Those who may have been enemies in their homelands have learned at St Rollox to support one another. I think it is amazing how God places people in the right place to do a work that is more than what we could have imagined or expected in their lives.

A biblical text that often comes to my mind in ministry at St Rollox, is that Jesus come to give life in all its fullness (John 10:10). How do we do this? We take a holistic approach. Admittedly, much of what we do in the community is social on the surface. Yet Christ is there. How do we help people see him in that? One way that I have found effective is running a class called 'faith stories'. I gather with Muslim women to read a gospel story where someone meets Jesus. I discuss faith in Jesus. A conversation develops about who Jesus is, and who God reveals his Son to be in Scripture.

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[1] 'Speak Out: Building Global Friendships illustrated film', <https://www.you-tube.com/watch?v=ke-Qk3jQnbg>. Accessed 28th September 2019.

Some in the congregation will speak about 'what happened in the war'. Here they are talking about the war that was taking place in their home country when they fled. Or 'when I was raped,' because that was what some experienced in their home countries. So we have run a trauma healing course, which is produced by the Scottish Bible Society. This course is very helpful, biblically based and enables men and women to speak about their experiences and see it in the context of life in all its fullness that Jesus offers through his healing power.

One of the aspects of building is leadership. We all face this in our church situations. One of the things we have worked hard to develop is a leadership that reflects the ethnic diversity of the church. That is a hard thing to do. Learning to let go and to live with things being done in a different way is more challenging than we like to admit. We need to acknowledge the skills and gifts that others bring and build capacity so that people can know how to use those gifts.

Jeremiah 1 has been a very helpful passage to me for my call to ministry. When Jeremiah recognised he was not capable to do work of his call, God's answer was to say, 'I am with you' (Jer. 1:6), not 'It's ok, you'll be able to do it'. I realise it isn't that I need to be able to do the work, but God will do it, and because God is with me and working through me, he will accomplish far more than I can do. Failure is a necessary part of the church work. We create space to fail, yes, but what we have in mind is to fail in the way that Peter failed, whereby afterwards there is restoration, re-equipping and then hopefully the goods being delivered. It is a long process! Hopefully when people move in, they find the base is there, they will find a place of welcome and an entry point for fullness of life as Jesus promises us.

'Popery Unmasked':
Opposition to the Oxford Movement among Late Nineteenth-Century Dissenters

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Movement, or Tractarianism as it was frequently called,[1] emerged within the Church of England in the early 1830s out of concern over encroaching liberalism and State interference in ecclesiastical affairs (Erastianism). It aimed to restore a vision for Anglicanism rooted in antiquity and organically connected to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church—and thus not subject to parliamentary whims. It eventually developed into Anglo-Catholicism and even witnessed some of its leading lights leave the Church of England for Roman Catholicism—the most prominent being John Henry Newman (1801–1890).

If the Oxford Movement's emergence was met with cautious sympathy among some Anglican Evangelicals who shared the Tractarians' concern over Erastianism,[2] any such sympathy had been long since spent by 1864.[3] Evangelicals—both inside and outside the Established Church—protested that migration to Rome was, in fact, the logical trajectory of the Oxford Movement.[4] By 1880, Bishop J. C. Ryle wrote in the *Churchman*, 'It is useless to deny that […] there is an organized conspiracy among us

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[1] After a series of 90 tracts written from 1833–1841 to advance the movement's ideas. The tracts are available online here: http://anglicanhistory.org/tracts.

[2] Peter Toon, *Evangelical Theology, 1833–1856: A Response to Tractarianism* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1979), p. 21. There was also plenty of early opposition from Evangelicals expressed in journals such as the *Record* and the *Christian Observer*. See Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church: Part 1* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1966), pp. 73–74.

[3] For a discussion of the early links and ultimate incompatibility of Evangelicalism and Tractarianism, as well as early evangelical responses see Kenneth J. Stewart, 'The Oxford Movement and Evangelicalism: Initial Encounters', *Themelios* 44.3 (December 2019), forthcoming.

[4] By 1842, Merle d'Aubigné asserted 'Oxford leads to Rome,' and indeed, 'the Tiber flows in Oxford.' J. H. Merle d'Aubigné, *Geneva and Oxford: An Address* (Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1843), p. 22.

for Romanizing the Established Church of this country [...] Dissenters see it and point the finger of scorn.'[5]

Although the Oxford Movement proper is often dated from 1833 to 1845,[6] many of its ideals gained refinement and momentum in the second half of the nineteenth century, morphing into what is now termed Anglo-Catholicism. While the Oxford Movement challenged some evangelical Nonconformists to have a more robust doctrine of the church, as well as increasing conscientiousness in regard to the aesthetics of their buildings,[7] the majority continued to sound the alarm against the movement, typically denouncing it as 'popery,' 'Romanism,' 'ritualism,' and 'Puseyism'[8]; although 'Tractarianism' was also still employed.

The story of Nonconformist vigilance towards the Tractarian movement received fresh impetus in 1864, the year which marked the publication of John Henry Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*. The significance of this work is hard to minimize, since it not only tells the story of the Tractarian leader's defection to the Roman Catholic Church in 1845, but it is the defence of his integrity through the entire process. Newman was repeatedly charged with nefarious deceit in leading many from the Church of England into the arms of Rome—and for secretly being Roman Catholic during his Tractarian years. The *Apologia* was his response to this charge, and particularly to Charles Kingsley, who spearheaded the attack.[9] But Kingsley's view of Newman's motives was commonly shared by Nonconformists.[10] In 1845, Henry Bulteel, the one-time Oxford don

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[5]   Reprinted in J. C. Ryle, *Light from Old Times* (1890; repr., Welwyn: Evangelical Press, 1980), p. 454.

[6]   E.g. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 1212, and R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement: Twelve Years 1833–1845* (London: Macmillan, 1897).

[7]   See Dale A. Johnson, *The Changing Shape of English Nonconformity, 1825–1925* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 174–179; Dale A. Johnson, 'The Oxford Movement and English Nonconformity', *Anglican and Episcopal History* 59 (1990), 83–88.

[8]   After Edward B. Pusey (1800–1882), a prominent leader of the Oxford Movement and Regius Professor of Hebrew at Christ Church, Oxford.

[9]   On Kingsley see Owen Chadwick, *The Spirit of the Oxford Movement: Tractarian Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 105–34.

[10]   Such perspectives were emboldened and enlarged toward the close of the century by the appearance of Walter Walsh's *Secret History of the Oxford Movement* in 1897. See Martin Wellings, 'The Oxford Movement in Late-Nineteenth-Century Retrospect: R.W. Church, J.H. Rigg, and Walter Walsh', in *The Church Retrospective*, ed. R.N. Swanson, *Studies in Church History*, 33 (1997), 511–15.

turned evangelical maverick,[11] wrote in satirical verse of the popish tendencies of the 'Tractarian ship.' Of Newman, Bulteel recorded these lines:

> There's Newman wise and simple,
> How saintly is his smile!
> Alas! beneath each dimple
> Lurk treachery and guile.
>
> By him the light imparted
> Makes Churchmen ready quite
> Sound-headed and sound-hearted
> To swear that wrong is right.[12]

Although Newman had converted to Roman Catholicism almost 20 years prior, the appearance of the *Apologia* in 1864, provided Nonconformists with another opportunity of warning the faithful about the dangers of popery within the Church of England.[13]

While there continued to be many who opposed Anglo-Catholicism in this later period, the present essay highlights two voices at opposite ends of Nonconformity: C. H. Spurgeon and John Nelson Darby. Spurgeon, the star of dissent, was commonly regarded as 'the greatest English-speaking preacher of the century.'[14] On the other hand, Darby was a pioneer of what has been called 'radical evangelicalism,'[15] since he was no happier with Nonconformity than he was with the Establishment, and branched off his idiosyncratic ecclesiology into exclusive Brethrenism. Indeed, Spurgeon himself thought Darby may have suffered from 'a touch of lunacy.'[16] Between these poles, we will briefly consider reactions from the Method-

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[11] For more on Bulteel and his secession from the Church of England in 1831 see Grayson Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals: Protestant Secessions from the Via Media, c. 1800–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 259–72. See also the article on Bulteel by Timothy Stunt in *ODNB* for his subsequent activity as a dissenter.

[12] Henry Bulteel, *The Oxford Argo*, 1845. I am indebted to Timothy Stunt for pointing me to this poem, and for providing me with its text. The piece is noted in Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals*, p. 280 n173.

[13] Newman's canonization in October 2019 demonstrates his ongoing significance to Roman Catholicism and to England.

[14] David W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism: The Age of Spurgeon and Moody* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005), p. 41.

[15] Timothy C. F. Stunt, *From Awakening to Secession: Radical Evangelicals in Switzerland and Britain 1815–35* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000).

[16] Ian Randall, '"Ye Men of Plymouth": C. H. Spurgeon and the Brethren', in *Witness in Many Lands: Leadership and Outreach among the Brethren*, ed. Tim Grass (Troon, UK: Brethren Archivists and Historians Network, 2013), p. 77.

ist, James Rigg, and the Scottish Free Church preacher, Alexander Whyte. These representative voices indicate that non-Anglican evangelicals of all stripes in the post-1864 period opposed the Oxford Movement as an abandonment of the gospel for the errors of Rome.[17] Of course, these were not the only errors such Victorian evangelicals sought to combat. Other battle fronts included Darwinism, higher criticism, and theological liberalism. But the threat the Oxford Movement posed in leading worshippers back to Rome reminded dissenters of their *raison d'être*: they were people of the gospel.

II. C. H. SPURGEON (1834–1892)

In 1899, the Baptist minister, John Clifford, identified 'the two most influential religious developments' of the nineteenth century as the Oxford Movement, or 'the Anglican Revival,' and 'the appearance and work of Charles Haddon Spurgeon.'[18]

Spurgeon was born in 1834, the year following John Keble's Assize Sermon, the event Newman regarded as marking the birth of the Oxford Movement.[19] He enjoyed friendly relations with Evangelical Anglicans during his youth,[20] yet he also displayed a fiercely negative attitude toward Roman Catholicism. At the age of fifteen, a few months before his conversion, he composed an essay entitled, 'Antichrist and Her Brood; Or,

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[17] Evangelical Anglicans furthered their opposition to the Anglo-Catholic party during this period by forming The Church Association in 1865. One of the aims of this body was to 'fight ritualism in the courts by means of legal action.' Nigel Scotland, 'Evangelicals, Anglicans and Ritualism in Victorian England', *Churchman* 111:3 (1997), 262.

[18] John Clifford, *God's Greater Britain: Letters and Addresses* (London: James Clarke, 1899), p. 158.

[19] John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (New York: D. Appleton, 1865), p. 83. Although see Peter B. Nockles, 'Histories and Anti-Histories', in *The Oxford Handbook to the Oxford Movement*, ed. Stewart J. Brown, Peter B. Nockles, and James Pereiro (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 607.

[20] Iain Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1973), p. 118.

Popery Unmasked.'[21] And as early as 1851, when he was 17, he preached against 'Puseyism.'[22]

The year 1864, however, marked an increasingly alarmist tone in Spurgeon's warnings against popery in the Church of England. On June 5, he preached a sermon entitled 'Baptismal Regeneration,' in which he stated: 'It is a most fearful fact, that in no age since the Reformation has Popery made such fearful strides in England as during the last few years.'[23] The sermon was primarily directed against the Church of England, whose Catechism and Book of Common Prayer, Spurgeon argued, clearly taught baptismal regeneration. He castigated Church of England ministers as frauds, who rejected the doctrine, yet pledged to uphold the formularies of the Anglican Church.

Yet Evangelical Churchmen had thought carefully about this issue in connection with the Gorham case in the late 1840s. High Churchmen and Tractarians opposed an appointment of the Reverend George Gorham for not affirming baptismal regeneration. In the end, however, Gorham was cleared and his position judged to be within the bounds of Anglican orthodoxy. Thus William Goode, Dean of Ripon, chided Spurgeon for his apparent ignorance of the Gorham case. But Spurgeon was not intimidated. In his sermon, 'Thus Saith the Lord,'[24] Spurgeon replied directly to Goode: 'Gorham case, say you; I care nothing for your Gorham case, I want a 'Thus saith the Lord,' warranting you to swear to what you know to be false and dangerous.'[25]

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21 *C. H. Spurgeon's Autobiography*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1899), pp. 57–66. See also Peter J. Morden, *Communion with Christ and His People: The Spirituality of C. H. Spurgeon* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013), pp. 24–25 and Geoffrey Chang, 'Spurgeon's Use of Luther against the Oxford Movement', *Themelios* 43:1 (2018), 46–47.

22 'Salvation in God Only', in Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Lost Sermons of C. H. Spurgeon*, vol. 1, ed. Christian George (Nashville: B&H, 2016), pp. 191, 193. This point is highlighted in Chang, 'Spurgeon's Use of Luther against the Oxford Movement', 46 n10.

23 C. H. Spurgeon, 'Baptismal Regeneration', in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol. 10, https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/baptismal-regeneration#flipbook, accessed November 9, 2018.

24 September 25, 1864. https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/thus-saith-the-lord#flipbook.

25 For helpful summaries of the Gorham controversy see Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals*, pp. 342–55, Chadwick, *Victorian Church*, pp. 250–71, and James C. Whisenant, *A Fragile Unity: Anti-Ritualism and the Division of Anglican Evangelicalism in the Nineteenth Century* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2003), pp. 20–23. That Evangelical Anglicans differed in their understanding of baptism is highlighted in Peter B. Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context:*

Part of Spurgeon's design in the 'Baptismal Regeneration' sermon was to sound the alarm against Puseyism. If the primary blame for the doctrine of baptismal regeneration lay at the feet of the Church of England formularies, the advance of popery in England was sped along by the Oxford Movement. The preacher declared, 'Away from all the tag-rags, wax candles, and millinery of Puseyism! away from all the gorgeous pomp of Popery! away from the fonts of Church-of-Englandism! we bid you turn your eyes to that naked cross, where hangs as a bleeding man the Son of God.'[26]

The sermon sparked no small controversy.[27] With the pamphlets, articles, and sermons that were issued in response, Spurgeon compiled five large volumes.[28] He preached a number of subsequent sermons on related themes, including one three weeks later entitled 'Let Us Go Forth.' This was a call for believers to abandon the Church of England. He declared, 'Often have I read works in which the Puseyites call the Church of Rome their sister Church; well, if it be so, let the two harlots make a league together, but let good and honest men come out of both apostate Churches.'[29]

For Spurgeon, what was ultimately at stake in the controversy was justification by faith or evangelical conversion, which alone brought true spiritual life. As Peter Morden explains, 'The Roman Catholic and Tractarian approaches to baptism […] blurred this fundamental truth, replacing it with "ceremony" and "superstition."'[30]

In 1866, in an article entitled 'The Holy War of the Present Hour,'[31] Spurgeon proposed a strategy for undermining the influence of Tractari-

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Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760–1857 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 228–35.

26   Spurgeon, 'Baptismal Regeneration'.

27   Tim Grass and Ian Randall, 'C. H. Spurgeon on the Sacraments', in *Baptist Sacramentalism*, ed. Anthony R. Cross and Philip E. Thompson (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2003), pp. 64–67.

28   Murray, *The Forgotten Spurgeon*, p. 129 n10.

29   C. H. Spurgeon, 'Let Us God Forth', in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol. 10, preached June 26, 1864, https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/let-us-go-forth#flipbook, accessed November 9, 2018.

30   Morden, *Communion with Christ and His People*, p. 92.

31   C. H. Spurgeon, 'The Holy War of the Present Hour', *The Sword and the Trowel* (August 1866), 339–45. Chang calculates that Spurgeon published 22 articles against the Oxford Movement and Roman Catholicism in the five years following 1864. Chang, 'Spurgeon's Use of Luther against the Oxford Movement', 51.

anism. He argued that the 'Tractarian party' was by far the most powerful in the Church of England, and was on the rise. He wrote,

> Those who remember the Puseyism of ten years ago will have observed the tremendous strides with which it has advanced, and will have been equally struck with the development which it has undergone […]. No longer can we say that Puseyism is Romanism disguised; it has removed the mask, and is now openly and avowedly what it has always been—ritualism, sacramentarianism, priestcraft, Antichrist.[32]

To Spurgeon, this was a call to spiritual arms. 'Let a crusade against Puseyism and all other error be proclaimed,' he urged, 'and let all faithful souls enlist in the great war.'[33] A critical element of his strategy was to take a page out of Tractarian playbook and beat them at their own game. He outlined his plan as follows:

> We would urge the propriety of a very large distribution of religious literature bearing upon the Puseyite controversy...Tractarianism owed its origin to tracts, as its name implies; why may not its downfall come from the same means, if well used? If several millions of copies of forcible, Scriptural testimonies could be scattered over the land, the results might far exceed all expectation. Of course, controversy would arise out of such a distribution; but this is most desirable, since it is only error which could suffer by the question being everywhere discussed. We should like to see the country flooded, and even the walls placarded with bold exposures of error and plain expositions of truth.[34]

His concluded with a plea for action:

> If […] every man had a thousand tongues, every one should cry out against the Anglican Antichrist. No greater plague can break forth among our people than the plague of Puseyism! If there be any human means unused by which the flood of Popery may be stemmed, let us use it, and meanwhile, with heart and soul let us approach the throne of grace, and cry unto the Lord to maintain his own truth, and put his enemies to confusion.[35]

Some took the plea to heart, and came forward to contribute to such a work. The result was the establishment of the Colportage Association. Its mission was 'to extend the circulation of the Scriptures, and to increase

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[32] Spurgeon, 'The Holy War of the Present Hour', 340.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., 343.
[35] Ibid., 345.

the diffusion of sound religious literature, in order to counteract the evils arising from the perusal of works of a decidedly Romish tendency.'[36]

Spurgeon wrote a number of tracts for this effort, with titles such as: 'Anglican Ministers in Papists' Clothing' (Tract 9); 'Against Romish Anglicanism' (Tract 16); and 'The Ritualist Priest and the Ass' (Tract 32).[37] Spurgeon's biting rhetoric was unrestrained in these pieces. He wrote, for example, in Tract 30, 'The distinction between the Popery of Rome and the Popery of Oxford is only the difference between prussic acid and arsenic: they are both equally deadly, and are equally to be abhorred.'[38] He waxed sarcastic in responding to the notion that the Church of England was 'the great bulwark of Protestantism.' 'We will believe it when we believe wolves to be the guardians of sheepfolds, felons to be the defenders of property, and fallen angels to be the bodyguard of heaven — and not till then.'[39]

Spurgeon believed the problem lay, not simply in the influence of Puseyism, but in the principle of establishment itself. As a dissenter, he was convinced that if the church was freed from the state, 'Then those hundreds of godly men who now remain in communion with Romanisers will form themselves into a truly Protestant church, and will in brotherly union with the other free churches form the true bulwark of Protestantism.'[40] He believed that such a move would purge error and revive authentic gospel spirituality. Spurgeon's opposition to the Oxford Movement – or what it had evolved into by the latter half of the nineteenth century – was bold, principled, and unrelenting because he believed the gospel itself was at stake.

III. JOHN NELSON DARBY (1800–1882)

We turn now from Spurgeon to a voice at the other end of the spectrum of Nonconformity, John Nelson Darby. The inclusion of Darby perhaps needs less of an *apologia* than some might assume. In 1970, Ernest Sandeen wrote, 'John Nelson Darby deserves better treatment from historians

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[36] C. H. Spurgeon, *Autobiography: Volume 2: The Full Harvest, 1860–1892* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1973), p. 460.

[37] For these and other 'Sword and Trowel Tracts', see http://archive.spurgeon. org/sw&tr.php. Accessed November 8, 2018.

[38] C. H. Spurgeon, 'Three Clergymen of the Church of England', https://archive. spurgeon.org/s_and_t/tract30.php. Accessed November 8, 2018. It also appeared in the April 1868 edition of *The Sword and the Trowel* under the title 'The Three Priests.'

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

than he has received either from those who have praised him or those who have reviled him. The assessment of his career has not been objectively written or the scope of his influence adequately appreciated.[41] More recently, Donald Akenson, has identified Darby as the fourth most influential figure in the formation of present-day Protestantism, behind only Luther, Calvin, and Wesley.[42] While this claim may sound hyperbolic, Akenson does not mean it to be. He is engaged in a three volume project, chronicling the transatlantic development of apocalyptic millennialism, and Darby is the central character.[43]

Ordained a priest in the Church of Ireland in 1826, Darby was, like many Irish Anglican evangelicals, 'an exact churchman emphasizing sacramental grace.'[44] A riding accident and an extended convalescence in 1827, however, caused him to rethink his ecclesiastical convictions. 'During my solitude,' Darby testified, 'much exercise of soul had the effect of causing the scriptures to gain complete ascendancy over me.'[45] He thus gained a new sense of freedom and peace, for by submitting to the sole authority of Scripture there arose in his mind and heart a new awareness of the love of Christ and his being united to him.[46] This proved transformational to Darby's doctrine and practice, and he shortly thereafter began breaking bread with a small group of believers, who would form the nucleus of what would become the Brethren movement.

Over the next several years, Darby developed his doctrine of the 'ruin of the church,' which argued that the institutional Church was utterly corrupted. The visible Church, with its ecclesiastical, denominational, and clerical structures had moved so far beyond God's original principles that the church was in ruins and irreparable.[47] Darby believed 'the church fell

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[41] Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800–1930* (1970; repr.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), p. 31.

[42] Donald Harman Akenson, *Discovering the End of Time: Irish Evangelicals in the Age of Daniel O'Connell* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016), p. 3.

[43] Volume one: Akenson, *Discovering the End of Time*; volume two: Donald Harman Akenson, *Exporting the Rapture: John Nelson Darby and the Victorian Conquest of North-American Evangelicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). The third volume is forthcoming.

[44] *BDEB*, 290.

[45] J. N. Darby, *Letters of J. N. D.* (Kingston-on-Thames: Stow Hill Bible and Tract Depot, n.d.), 3:298.

[46] Tim Grass, *Gathering to His Name: The Story of Open Brethren in Britain and Ireland* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006), p. 18.

[47] Mathew Austin Clarke, 'A Critical Examination of the Ecclesiology of John Nelson Darby' (University of Gloucestershire, PhD thesis, 2009), pp. 107–15.

into apostasy as it became entangled with, and ultimately indistinguishable from, the world around it.'[48] The true Church was composed of those united to Christ through faith, whose calling now was to withdraw from corrupt Christendom and gather in small companies solely to the name of Christ.

What makes Darby even more intriguing is the fact that the Brethren movement he helped pioneer arose around the same time as the Oxford Movement. Timothy Stunt has argued that the Oxford Movement and the Brethren movement represent two of the most important reactions to the threats of that period—Erastian interference into church affairs on the one hand, and liberal rationalism undermining the authority of Scripture on the other. Both movements might thus be understood as 'a search for authority within the Church.'[49]

In 1854, Darby penned a lengthy essay entitled 'Remarks on Puseyism.' In it he responded to Robert Isaac Wilberforce's *Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, challenging Wilberforce's notion that the Eucharist is the continuation of the incarnation. 'This confusion,' Darby asserted, 'is the essence of the dark apostasy which passes by the name of Puseyism.'[50]

Darby's most sustained response came in his 'Analysis of Dr. Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*.' This piece appeared in 1866 and runs over a hundred pages in length.[51]

While Darby's ecclesiastical position places him among the lowest of low church advocates, he nevertheless, expressed some sympathy with Newman's attraction to Rome. He confessed that while still a clergyman in the Irish Church, he disowned the name of Protestantism. Like Newman, he was looking for the true church. In this restless state of mind, Darby admits that he 'thought much of Rome, and its professed sanctity, and catholicity, and antiquity.'[52] Protestantism did not satisfy his desire for 'reverend antiquity,' and thus he claimed, 'I was really much in

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[48] Grass, *Gathering to His Name*, 95–96.

[49] T. C. F. Stunt, 'Two Nineteenth-Century Movements', *Evangelical Quarterly*, 37:4 (October 1965), 221. Cf. John Munsey Turner, *Conflict and Reconciliation: Studies in Methodism and Ecumenism in England 1740–1982* (London: Epworth, 1985), p. 149. It is also worth noting that Darby, for a time, had a significant influence on J. H. Newman's brother, Francis. See Stunt, *From Awakening to Secession*, pp. 206–7.

[50] J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings* [CW] (Kingston-on-Thames: Stow Hill Bible and Tract Depot, n.d.), 15:262.

[51] J. N. Darby, 'Analysis of Dr. Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*: With a Glance at the History of Popes, Councils, and the Church', *CW*, 18:143–248.

[52] Ibid., 18:146.

Dr. Newman's state of mind.'[53] He recounts his regular fasting, and taking the sacrament from his clergyman. He claimed to have fully upheld the doctrine of apostolic succession and firmly rejected union of church and state.

But Darby's march to Rome was halted and reversed by his study of the 9th and 10th chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He wrote, 'I could not for priesthood, which I believed in, practically give up our great High Priest and His work. What delivered me from this whole system was the truth. The word of God had its own, its divine authority over my soul, and maintained it through grace.'[54]

Although Darby rejected the Roman Church, he did not fully embrace Protestantism per se. Protestantism addressed errors of doctrine and practice in Roman Catholicism, but with its national churches, it had failed to restore 'the church to purity.' Darby concluded Protestantism 'did not see […] the true doctrine of the church, any more than Dr. Newman.'[55] His subsequent Brethrenism was his attempt to flesh out his own doctrine of the church.

In Darby's evaluation, a primary explanation for Newman's position— and by extension, the charm of Anglo-Catholicism—was aesthetics. He wrote, 'The secret of the course of Dr. Newman's mind is this—it is sensuous; and so is Romanism.'[56] A few pages later, he added: '[Romanism] is a sensuous religion, fills the imagination with gorgeous ceremonies, noble buildings, fine music, stately processions. It feeds it with legends and the poetry of antiquity; but it gives no holy peace to the conscience.'[57] Newman himself had written at the time of the publication of Tract 90, 'The Church of Rome […] alone […] has given free scope to the feelings of awe, mystery, tenderness, reverence, devotedness, and other feelings which may be especially called Catholic.'[58]

The charge of sensuosity was not unique to Darby. Evangelicals frequently criticized Anglo-Catholicism along these lines. Bishop J. C. Ryle, for example, in an essay on 'Worship,' argued that the practices of Romanism 'may be very attractive to the eye, and ear, and the sensual part

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[53]   Ibid.

[54]   Ibid., 156–7.

[55]   Ibid., 146.

[56]   Ibid., 145.

[57]   Ibid., 152. Darby cites the passage where Newman said of the Catholic Church, 'I looked at her;—at her rites, her ceremonial, and her precepts; and I said, "This *is* a religion."' Wilfrid Ward, ed., *Newman's Apologia Pro Vita Sua: The Two Versions of 1864 & 1865* (London: Oxford University Press, 1913), p. 394. This passage was removed in the 1865 edition.

[58]   Ward, *Newman's Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, p. 262.

of our nature. But it has one fatal defect about it: it cannot be defended and maintained by plain texts of Scripture. Sacramentalism, Ceremonialism, Sacrificialism, will never be found in Bibles fairly read and honestly interpreted.'[59] With this statement, Darby, and many dissenters, would entirely be one.[60]

But Darby's criticism was not merely about aesthetics. Christianity itself was at stake. The essence of true Christianity is in the believer's direct access to God. Through the work of Christ, the veil in the temple was opened, and thus relationship and fellowship with God was established. The cleansing of one's conscience, forgiveness of sins, and new life in Christ flows directly to the believer, who is encouraged to boldly enter the presence of God. By contrast, 'Romanism,' Darby argued, 'has closed the veil again. The faithful are not reconciled to God, they cannot go into the holiest […] between them and God, they have a priesthood and saints, and the Virgin Mary.'[61]

What Darby found particularly alarming in Newman's *Apologia* was an absence of Christ, and of the Word of God. As to Christ, there was no question of Newman's Christological orthodoxy, but there was no sense of resting in him for peace of soul; no sense of personally possessing Christ 'as the foundation of his soul.'[62] As to Scripture, Darby noticed that in Newman's quest for the proper notion of the Church, there was recourse to the great Anglican divines, and there was much made of the Fathers, but there was no serious engagement with Scripture. In Darby's words,

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[59] John Charles Ryle, *Knots Untied: Being Plain Statement on Disputed Points in Religion from the Standpoint of an Evangelical Churchman*, rev. edn (London: Charles Murray, 1898), p. 355. Elsewhere Ryle asserted, 'There is a natural proneness and tendency in us all to give God a sensual, carnal worship, and not that which is commanded in His Word' (Ibid., 490). On another occasion, he complained that the 'Ritualistic party in the Church of England […] has gradually familiarized people with every distinctive doctrine and practice of Romanism […] a histrionic, sensuous, showy style of public worship.' *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, n.d.), p. 299.

[60] Chadwick described the difference between the old-fashioned high churchmen and the Oxford men as 'not so much a difference in doctrine,' but 'primarily a difference of atmosphere, a concern for the evocative and the reverent, a sense of the whispering beauty and truth of divinity as its presence surrounded the soul.' Owen Chadwick, ed., *The Mind of the Oxford Movement* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1960), p. 28.

[61] Darby, 'Analysis', p. 153.

[62] Ibid., 160. For more on Darby's soteriology see Mark R. Stevenson, *The Doctrines of Grace in an Unexpected Place: Calvinistic Soteriology in Nineteenth-Century Brethren Thought* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2017).

Newman 'never inquired for God's truth on God's authority,' and therefore there was 'no divine ground of faith.'[63]

While there was much more to Darby's response, these two points—the absence of personal faith in Christ, and the absence of the sole authority of Scripture—capture the heart of his critique of Newman, and by extension, the Oxford Movement.

IV. JAMES HARRISON RIGG (1821–1909)

In the closing decade of the nineteenth century, further Nonconformist publications offered assessments of the Oxford Movement. Martin Wellings has called this 'the period of Tractarian reminiscence and biography, as the leading figures of the Oxford Movement reached the end of their lives.'[64]

One out-spoken critic was the Wesleyan Methodist, James Harrison Rigg, whose *Oxford High Anglicanism and its Chief Leaders* appeared in 1895.[65] Rigg focused significant attention on the period following Newman's secession in 1845, and thus Edward Pusey featured prominently. Although Rigg claimed not to be 'a bitter Protestant,' or 'a narrow Evangelical,'[66] he did not hold back in his criticisms of the movement's theology and practice. Like other Nonconformists he decried the Romeward bent of the Tractarians. Rigg declared, 'Puseyism is essentially Popery.'[67] This, in his judgment, was 'the true Protestant view.'[68]

For Rigg, the two foundational errors of Puseyism were 'its sacramental perversions, whereby the holy seals of the Christian faith are turned into superstitions.' And secondly, 'its dehumanising doctrine of the confessional.'[69] Once these errors were embraced, Rigg asserted, 'there is no tenet, either of Tridentine or of modern Popery, which may not be received.'[70]

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[63] Darby, 'Analysis', pp. 163–4.

[64] Wellings, 'The Oxford Movement in Late-Nineteenth-Century Retrospect', 501.

[65] See the discussion of Rigg in Nockles, 'Histories and Anti-Histories', pp. 615–16. Dale Johnson has argued that the Oxford Movement forced Methodism to fully identify as Nonconformists. Johnson, 'The Oxford Movement and English Nonconformity,' pp. 80–83.

[66] James H. Rigg, *Oxford High Anglicanism and Its Chief Leaders* (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1895), p. vi.

[67] Ibid., 90, 298.

[68] Ibid., 90.

[69] Again these statements are found in two places, pages 90 and 298.

[70] Ibid.

His concern was primarily soteriological; the gospel had been not only obscured, but lost in Tractarianism. Rigg acknowledged that Pusey was a stirring preacher, but he did not direct sinners to Christ as Saviour. The characteristic effect of Pusey's preaching was to drive his hearers 'to the priest and the confessional.'[71] He took particular exception to Pusey's contention that 'Wesleyanism substituted its doctrine of 'present salvation' for the comfort through the ordinance of confession and absolution.' To this Rigg responded by turning Pusey's statement on its head: 'Puseyism substitutes for the blessed doctrine of a present and conscious salvation, through "repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," such comfort as may be obtained from confession to a human priest, and absolution pronounced by his lips.'[72] Rigg would conclude that Pusey was essentially one with the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification.[73]

As Wellings has observed, Rigg sought to demonstrate that the leaders of the Oxford Movement were both theologically and intellectually defective, as well as morally suspect. The moral charge was that of dishonesty: the Tractarians were advancing Roman Catholic teaching within the Church of England.[74] Newman, of course, famously denied the charge of dishonesty, and the *Apologia* convinced Rigg that Newman was not 'a consciously dishonest man.' In fact, he believed Newman had maintained his moral integrity. The problem, as Rigg saw it, was that Newman 'was a man whose over-subtlety blinded him. He possessed a highly-trained faculty of mental obliquity […] He had acquired the power of duping himself.'[75] Darby's criticism that Newman's mind was drawn by aesthetics was also part of Rigg's assessment. He charged that for Newman, it was feelings that determined the creed; logic was an afterthought employed to defend his conclusions.[76]

On the whole then, Rigg represents not only the perspective of a Wesleyan Methodist, but what was typical of the Nonconformist evangelical—salvation in Christ alone was not merely obscured by the Oxford Movement, it was replaced in favour of popery. Wellings concludes, 'The

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[71] Ibid., 233.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Ibid., 309.

[74] Wellings, 'The Oxford Movement in in Late-Nineteenth-Century Retrospect', 510.

[75] Rigg, *Oxford High Anglicanism*, p. 310.

[76] Ibid., 155. He went further and charged that 'Newman's was […] a characteristically feminine mind, poetic, impressible, receptive, and reproductive, rather than original and commanding; and with the feminine mind was joined a feminine temperament.'

suggestion that Anglo-Catholicism challenged reason and conscience placed Rigg in the mainstream of late nineteenth-century Protestant polemic.'[77]

V. ALEXANDER WHYTE (1836–1921)

The predominately negative assessment of the Oxford Movement by dissenters must be balanced by occasional voices of appreciation.[78] Perhaps the most notable example here is Alexander Whyte. One of the outstanding evangelical preachers of the Scottish Free Church—and thus, not a nonconformist in the English sense[79]—Whyte has been described as 'the last of the Puritans.'[80] And yet he 'read and reread all the *Tracts for the Times*,' not as a critic, but as an admirer, particularly of Newman, with whom he maintained a correspondence.[81] Gordon Rupp could say, 'In Alexander Whyte, Newman had, in Kierkegaard's phrase, a lover.'[82] In 1901, Whyte published a volume entitled *Newman: An Appreciation*, in which he declared, 'I live by admiration, hope, and love, and Newman has always inspired me with all these feelings toward himself and toward many of his works.'[83] A portrait of Newman 'hung in a place of honour in Whyte's study.'[84] Whyte's admiration was exceptional, but so also was his ecumenical spirit, which was far broader than most evangelicals. Michael Haykin suggests that Whyte looked to other traditions as a 'means of

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[77] Wellings, 'The Oxford Movement in in Late-Nineteenth-Century Retrospect', 510–11.

[78] Johnson seeks to demonstrate the influence of the Oxford Movement on Nonconformists in a variety of ways. Yet he recognizes the overall impact was relatively modest. For example, 'George S. Reaney, who left Congregational ministry for Anglicanism in 1890, thought that 'high church' views were held by very few ministers and scarcely any lay people.' Johnson, *The Changing Shape of English Nonconformity*, p. 178.

[79] *DSCHT*, s.v. 'Nonconformity.' As a Scottish Presbyterian, Whyte provides another important non-Anglican evangelical perspective.

[80] E.g. *DSCHT*, p. 870 and *NIDCC*, p. 1045.

[81] Whyte printed some of the letters he received from Newman as an appendix in Alexander Whyte, *Newman: An Appreciation in Two Lectures* (Edinburgh: Oliphant Anderson and Ferrier, 1901), 249–54. Whyte's wife, Jane, also corresponded with Cardinal Newman. See G. F. Barbour, *The Life of Alexander Whyte* D.D., 7th edn (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), pp. 241–3.

[82] Gordon Rupp, *Just Men: Historical Pieces* (London: Epworth, 1977), p. 141.

[83] Whyte, *Newman: An Appreciation*, 11. Cf. the inclusion of the Newman essay in Alexander Whyte, Thirteen Appreciations (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1913), pp. 283–359.

[84] Rupp, *Just Men*, 142; Barbour, *The Life of Alexander Whyte*, pp. 241–2.

deepening his Reformed faith and challenging his soul to be a more devoted follower of Christ.'[85] Others view Whyte's ecumenism as a shocking 'lack of discernment.'[86]

Despite his admiration, Whyte could not ignore Newman's doctrinal defects and, indeed, spoke out against them. He lamented, not that Newman left the Church of England for the Church of Rome, but that he abandoned 'the Evangelical faith, than which, properly speaking, there is no other faith.' Whyte confessed, 'Paul's indignant language to the Galatian Church alone expresses my sad thoughts over Newman's declension.'[87] Whyte believed Newman should have renounced the slurs he wrote against Luther, Calvin, and the Anglican Reformers, 'whose only offence against Newman and his sectarian and intolerant school had been that they were determined to preach no other gospel than the gospel of a sinner's free justification before God by faith on the Son of God, and on Him and His work alone.'[88]

In an assessment of Newman's published sermons, Whyte wrote:

Looked at as pure literature, Newman's St. Mary's sermons are not far from absolute perfection; but looked at as pulpit work, as preaching the Gospel, they are full of the most serious, and even fatal, defects […] They lack the one all-essential element of all true preaching—the message to sinful man concerning the free grace of God.[89]

Whyte conceded, 'After all is said in praise of these extraordinary sermons, this remains, that Newman's constant doctrine is that doctrine which the Apostle discarded with anathemas—salvation by works.'[90] Although it pained him to say it, Whyte had to conclude that Newman's preaching 'never once touches the true core, and real and innermost essence, of the Gospel.'

CONCLUSION

In the wake of Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (1864), along with the perceived growth of Anglo-Catholicism within the Established Church,

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[85] Michael A. G. Haykin, ed., *A Consuming Fire: The Piety of Alexander Whyte* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2006), p. 7.

[86] William Macleod, 'Alexander Whyte: Lessons to Learn', *Free Church Witness* (October 2013), p. 5.

[87] Whyte, *Newman: An Appreciation*, p. 57.

[88] Ibid., 67.

[89] Ibid., 90–92.

[90] Ibid., 94.

dissenters of all stripes felt duty-bound to expose the dangers of 'popery,' which they believed were clearly displayed in the Oxford Movement. Whether the Baptist Spurgeon, the Plymouth Brother Darby, the Methodist Rigg, or the Free Church Presbyterian Whyte, the concern was the same: in leading people in a Rome-ward direction, the Oxford Movement led them away from the gospel itself. Too much was at stake to keep silent, not least, the authority of Scripture, the sufficiency of the atoning work of Christ—together with his high priestly ministry, and justification by faith alone as the only sure means of salvation and peace with God.

Not surprisingly then, it was the Tractarian doctrine of justification, alongside its sacramentalism, ritualism, and priesthood, that rallied many late nineteenth-century dissenters to express again their commitment to the evangel and to the core doctrines of the Reformation.

'A Singular Submissiveness to the Will of God': The Spirituality of Samuel Pearce (1766–1799)

Brian G. Najapfour

INTRODUCTION: WHY STUDY SAMUEL PEARCE?

You might wonder, 'Why remember and study the life of someone born more than 250 years ago?' Well, one of the reasons we study church history is to learn from the past—both from events and people, especially those who faithfully laboured in the gospel. Negatively, we can learn from the mistakes of these saints. One once said, 'A wise man learns from his mistakes; a wiser man learns from the mistakes of others; a fool learns from neither of them.'[1] Positively, we can learn from their examples of holiness. Past saints were not perfect, but we can imitate them insofar as they imitated Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). And since ultimately, history is 'his story' (that is, Christ's story), the focus of our study of the past is God in Christ who causes all things (without exception) to work together for the good of his people. The grand goal of our study is conformity to Christ (Rom. 8:28–29). If therefore your study of history does not draw you closer to Christ, something is wrong. Perhaps you are studying primarily to inform your mind, rather than transform your heart. But as we look at the life of Samuel Pearce and learn from him, we want God to transform our hearts. We will first sketch his life and then look at one of the aspects of his spirituality: cheerful submission to God's will. I pray we will all learn to cheerfully submit to God's sovereign will, even if his will counters ours, knowing that he knows what is best for us.

'PREEMINENTLY A HOLY MAN': A SKETCH OF SAMUEL PEARCE

Calvinistic Baptist by conviction, Samuel Pearce was born on July 20, 1766 in Plymouth, Devon, England. He was the son of William and Lydia Pearce, both Baptists. His mother died when he was only a child, and the young Pearce was then taken care of by his pious paternal grandfather. Pearce lived with his grandfather at Tamerton Foliot from 1766 to 1774. When Pearce was around eight, his father took him back to Plymouth to be under his care. His father was a deacon in the Baptist church at Plymouth. Thus Pearce grew up in church and under the care of a godly father.

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[1] Cited in Joel R. Beeke and Michael A. G. Haykin, *Why Should I Be Interested in Church History* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2017), p. 11.

However, his 'vicious school-fellows'[2] at the school in their town, where he studied from 1774 to 1780, influenced him to be involved in wickedness. And as he matured in age, 'he became more and more corrupted.'[3] But in 1782, age sixteen, Pearce experienced evangelical conversion through a sermon preached by Isaiah Brit (1758–1837) at the Plymouth Baptist congregation. On July 20, 1783, his seventeenth birthday, Pearce was baptized and became a member of the Plymouth Baptist church.

From 1780 to 1786, Pearce worked as an apprentice to his father, who was a respectable silversmith. Yet with a desire to preach the gospel to the lost, he studied at the Bristol Baptist Academy from 1786 to 1789. While studying, Pearce preached to the miners of the Forest of Dean.[4] In 1790, the year after he completed his theological training, he was ordained minister of Cannon Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, where he found his future wife Sarah Hopkins (1771–1804). The two married on February 2, 1791. They had a wonderful marriage, resulting in five children. Pearce faithfully served his congregation and remained with his flock until his death on October 10, 1799. With God's blessing, the congregation grew spiritually and numerically (more than three hundred souls were converted) under his preaching. During his ministry, Pearce established a Sunday school, benevolent society to assist the poor, and a sick society to care for the afflicted.[5] William Ward (1769–1823), one of Pearce's contemporaries and who had been impacted by Pearce's life, said of him, 'I have seen more of God in him than in any other person I ever knew.'[6] Years later on her reading of a biography of Pearce, Susan Huntington (1791–1823) wrote, 'I am reading the *Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel Pearce*, compiled by Andrew Fuller. How the life of such a man shames and condemns that of common Christians. He was pre-eminently a holy man.'[7]

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[2]   Andrew Fuller, *A Heart for Missions. The Classic Memoir of Samuel Pearce* (Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2006), p. 3. This is a reprint of the third edition of Fuller's *Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel Pearce. A.M.*

[3]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 3.

[4]   E. F. Clipsham, 'Pearce, Samuel,' *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1730–1860*, ed. by Donald M. Lewis (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers), 2:864.

[5]   *The Piety of Samuel and Sarah Pearce: Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory*, ed. and intro. by Michael A. G. Haykin (Kitchener, ON: Joshua Press, 2012), pp. 8, 10–11.

[6]   Cited in *Piety of Samuel and Sarah Pearce*, p. 41.

[7]   Cited in *Piety of Samuel and Sarah Pearce*, p. xix.

'INTO BUSINESS WITH ALL HIS HEART'

In May 1791, Pearce attended the ordination of William Carey (1761–1834) at Leicester, where for the first time he probably met Carey and 'in whom he found a soul nearly akin to his own.'[8] The following year, he was at Kettering for the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society, originally called the Particular (or Calvinistic) Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Amongst the Heathen. Pearce was among those ministers who signed an agreement for this missionary society. Other ministers included John Sutcliff (1752–1814), John Ryland Jr. (1753–1825), and Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)—the latter being elected secretary of the society and the one who wrote a biography of Pearce.[9] Along with Carey, all these men became close friends of Pearce.

Pearce 'entered into [the society's] business with all his heart.'[10] His biographer put Pearce's early involvement in the society this way:

> On his return to Birmingham [from Kettering], he communicated the subject to his congregation with so much effect, that, in addition to the small sum of 13 pounds […] with which the subscription was begun, 70 pounds were collected, and transmitted to the treasurer […]. Early in the following spring, when it was resolved that our brethren, Thomas [a Baptist medical missionary][11] and Carey, should go on a mission to the Hindus, and a considerable sum of money was wanted for the purpose, he laboured with increasing ardour in various parts of the kingdom; and when the object was accomplished, he rejoiced in all his labour, smiling in every company, and blessing God.[12]

In 1794, convinced the Lord was calling him to be a missionary, he considered going to India to help Carey, who had only been in India since November 1793. Pearce's intense desire to join Carey was clear in a letter he wrote to him from Birmingham on October 24, 1794: 'Brother, I long to stand by your side, and participate in all the vicissitudes of the attack—an attack which nothing but cowardice can make unsuccessful.' He adds,

> Every day more fully convinces me that I ought to go. Now, as I mean to adhere to my plan, I have not yet acquainted the Society with my views. There is a meeting at Road, on the 12th of November, 1794. That opportunity I intend to embrace, God willing, and then, whether my Master will count me

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8 Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 28.
9 See Fuller's *Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel Pearce. A.M.*
10 Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 28.
11 John Thomas (1757–1801) accompanied Carey to India.
12 Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 28.

worthy of so high a calling, or whether his providence will check my temerity, will be determined.[13]

Pearce's wife supported his plan for India. In the same letter, written October 24, 1794, he tells Carey, 'Yesterday my wife told me that, on mature deliberation, she approved of the plan I have adopted, and was much more comfortable in her mind than ever before.'[14] However, the Baptist Missionary Society committee, which met in Northampton and sent out Carey, thought it would be better for the mission work in India if Pearce remained in England. As his biographer explains,

> The committee, after the most serious and mature deliberation, though they were fully satisfied as to brother Pearce's qualifications, and greatly approved of his spirit, yet were unanimously of opinion that he ought not to go; and that not merely on account of his connections at home, which might have been pleaded in the case of brother Carey, but on account of the mission itself, which required his assistance in the station which he already occupied.[15]

Pearce's reaction to the committee's ruling displays an important aspect of his spirituality: cheerful submission to God's will.

'TO MAKE MY SAVIOUR'S WILL MY OWN'

After receiving the committee's opinion, he wrote to his wife from North-ampton November 13, 1794,

> I am disappointed, but not dismayed. I ever wish to make my Saviour's will my own. I am more satisfied than ever I expected I should be with a negative upon my earnest desires, because the business has been so conducted that I think […] the mind of Christ has been obtained.[16]

Pearce showed that at the end of the day he wanted nothing but to obtain Christ's mind—that is, to make Christ's will his own. In a diary written October 15, 1794, just preceding the committee's meeting, he penned, 'My business is only to be where he would have me […]. I say […] *"Thy will be done!"*'[17]

On March 27, 1795, from Birmingham Pearce informed Carey of the committee's decision,

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[13]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, pp. 39, 41.
[14]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 40.
[15]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 48.
[16]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 48.
[17]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 57. Italics original.

Instead of a letter, you perhaps expected to have sent the writer; and had the will of God been so, he would by this time have been on his way to Mudnabatty; but "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Full of hope and expectation as I was, when I wrote you last, that I should be honoured with a mission to the poor heathen, and be an instrument of establishing the empire of my dear Lord in India, I must submit now to "stand still, and see the salvation of God."[18]

Here we see the main reason why he wanted to go to India—to establish the empire of God through the proclamation of the gospel. In his diary dated October 15, 1794, he lamented,

There are in Birmingham 50,000 inhabitants; and, exclusive of the vicinity, ten ministers who preach the fundamental truths of the gospel. In Hindostan there are twice as many millions of inhabitants; and not so many gospel preachers. Now Jesus Christ has commanded his ministers to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: why should we be so disproportionate in our labours? Peculiar circumstances must not be urged against positive commands: I am therefore bound, if others do not go, to make the means more proportionate to the multitude.[19]

But with the committee's recommendation, Pearce stayed in England. Pearce took the committee's advice as coming from the Lord. Writing to Carey, Pearce said, 'To this [decision] I was enabled cheerfully to reply, "the will of the Lord be done;" and, receiving this answer as the voice of God, I have for the most part been easy since, though not without occasional pantings of spirit after the publishing of the Gospel to pagans [in India].'[20] Pearce never held a grudge against the committee; he respected their opinion. In fact, his love for them grew even stronger after the meeting. As he said to Carey in a letter dated March 27, 1795, 'I shall ever love my dear brethren the more, for the tenderness with they treated me, and the solemn prayer they repeatedly put up to God for me.'[21]

Yet while Pearce submitted cheerfully to God's will, his passion for the lost in India never disappeared, despite the committee's decision. There was still part of him that longed to go to India. In March 1795, after he had recovered from a serious sickness, he wrote to Fuller,

Through mercy I am almost in a state of convalescence. May my spared life be wholly devoted to the service of my dear Redeemer I do not care where I

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[18]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 49.

[19]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 57.

[20]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 51.

[21]   Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 51.

am, whether in England or in India, so I am employed as he would have me; but surely we need pray hard that God would send some more help to Hindostan.[22]

Again, writing to Fuller in 1796 regarding the letter he had received from Carey about the update of the mission work in India, Pearce said, 'OH THAT I WERE THERE TO WITNESS THE DELIGHTFUL PROCESS [i.e., the delightful conversion of the people in India]! But whither am I running? […] I LONG TO WRITE YOU FROM HINDOSTAN!'[23]

'I WILL DO ALL I CAN TO SERVE THE MISSION AT HOME'

'Disappointed, but not dismayed,'[24] Pearce continued to support the ministry in India while in Birmingham. He regularly prayed for their missionaries. In his diary dated October 17, 1794, he closed his personal devotion with 'earnest prayer to God for my family, my people, the heathen world, the Society, and particularly for the success of our dear brethren Thomas and Carey.'[25] He continued to raise funds for the mission work. Through his preaching, he cultivated an evangelistic zeal among his people; he challenged and encouraged them to assist the work in India through their offering and prayer. He invited all his 'friends to a day of prayer on behalf of the mission.'[26] Through ink, he encouraged their missionaries. In short, he kept what he promised to do if his plan to go to India fell through. The week before the committee met on November 12, 1794, he wrote in his journal,

> I look at brother Carey's portrait as it hangs in my study: I love him in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and long to join his labours: every look calls up a hundred thoughts, all of which inflame my desire to be a fellow labourer with him in the work of the Lord. *One thing, however, I have resolved upon, that the Lord helping me, If I cannot go abroad, I will do all I can to serve the mission at home.*[27]

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[22] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 54.

[23] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 54. Capitalization original.

[24] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 48.

[25] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 58. We find a similar prayer in his diary dated October 31, 1794: 'I prayed for myself, the Society, the missionaries, the converted Hindoos, the church in Cannon Street, my family, and ministry.'

[26] This special prayer meeting for the work in India was held on December 28, 1796. See Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 55.

[27] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, pp. 65–6. Italics mine.

Indeed, from a human point of view, we can say that part of the success of the work in India was due to Pearce's unceasing help. Even though at one point Pearce feared that if he stayed in England, he would be 'a poor useless drone.'[28]

After Pearce's death, Fuller, who also opposed Pearce's going to India, said that if the committee had seen Pearce's diary written shortly before the meeting, 'they would not have dared to oppose his going. But the Lord hath taken him to himself. It no longer remains a question now whether he shall labour in England, or in India.'[29] Then Fuller made a remarkable observation, which highlights one of the aspects of Pearce's piety: 'There appears throughout the general tenor of his life *a singular submissiveness to the will of God*; and, what is worthy of notice, this disposition was generally most conspicuous when his own will was most counteracted.'[30] For sure, it was not easy for Pearce to surrender to God his dream to serve in India.[31] In fact, he once said in his diary written seven days before the committee assembled, 'If they knew how earnestly I pant for the work [in India], it would be impossible for them to withhold their ready acquiescence.' Then he went on to say, 'O Lord, thou knowest my sincerity [...]. If I stay in England [...] I doubt whether I shall ever know inward peace and joy again.'[32] I do not think that what he doubted came to pass, for he learned the heavenly art of converting his disappointment into joy and finding peace in God's sovereign will. In his concluding reflections on Pearce's life, Fuller declared, 'In him we see, in clear and strong colours, *to what a degree of solid peace and joy true religion will raise us, even in the present world.*'[33] Oh, may we also learn to submit to God's perfect will and find peace therein, even when his will counters ours!

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[28] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 65. He gave this statement prior to the committee's meeting.

[29] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 55.

[30] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 67. Italics mine.

[31] Pearce would literally have a dream about the mission work in India. He wrote in his diary dated October 18, 1794, 'I dreamed that I saw one of the Christian Hindoos. Oh how I loved him! I long to realize my dream. How pleasant will it be so to sit down at the Lord's table with our swarthy brethren, and hear Jesus preached in their language!' See Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 58.

[32] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 65. Italics original.

[33] Fuller, *Heart for Missions*, p. 171.

On Hauerwas and the Possibility of a More Robust Evangelical Theological Ethics

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It should be said at the outset that the significance of Stanley Hauerwas for the field of theological ethics is hard to overstate. Indeed, it has been observed that Hauerwas 'is perhaps North America's most important theological ethicist […]. No one in the field […] can afford to ignore him. Hauerwas is certainly the most prolific and comprehensive theological ethicist alive.'[1] Another scholar has noted that in the world of theological ethics Hauerwas 'has become a name in every discussion, a required foot-note in every exploration, an acknowledged dimension in every analysis.'[2] And yet, despite his towering presence and long-term influence, it seems that within the ethical conversations of the Evangelical community Hauerwas has largely fallen upon deaf ears. Though Roman Catholics and postliberal Protestants have found much to commend, critique, and incorporate in Hauerwas's work,[3] it seems that Evangelicals have largely ignored his contributions to the field of theological ethics.[4] Though there is the occasional minority report,[5] it is clear that Evangelicals (particularly of a more conservative bent) have failed to sufficiently grapple with Hauerwas and his influence upon the landscape of Christian ethics.

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[1] J. Berkman, 'An Introduction to the Hauerwas Reader', *The Hauerwas Reader*, eds. J. Berkman and M. G. Cartwright (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 3.

[2] S. Wells, 'Introduction to the Essays', *Faithfulness & Fortitude: In Conversation with the Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), pp. 7-8.

[3] We could cite C. Curran's *Catholic Moral Theology in the United States: A History* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008) for the former and *God, Truth and Witness: Engaging Stanley Hauerwas*, ed. by L. G. Jones, R. Hütter, and C. R. V. Ewell (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005) for the latter.

[4] Note, for instance, his conspicuous absence from standard Evangelical textbooks on ethics such as J. J. Davis, *Evangelical Ethics: Issues Facing the Church Today*, 4th edn (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2015).

[5] One example is D. P. Gushee and G. H. Stassen, *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*, 2nd edn (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016).

It is the proposal of this paper that Hauerwas is a figure Evangelicals need to become more familiar with. Though we will certainly need to approach his work with critical discernment, it seems to me that there is much to be gained from dialogue with Hauerwas and that some of his contributions should be incorporated into how we as Evangelicals 'do ethics.' It will thus be the task of this paper to explore the work of Hauerwas from an Evangelical perspective, seeking to determine in what ways his insights might serve to bolster Evangelical ethics, assisting us in honing and maximizing the distinctive elements that we bring to the table of theological ethics. I will particularly argue that Hauerwas's more confessional approach, centred on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as witnessed to in the church, is one that lends itself quite nicely to the Christ-centredness and prophetic protest of Evangelicalism. This compatibility, I will argue, can enable us to hear from Hauerwas what we have often been unwilling to receive from Roman Catholic and postliberal voices, namely the centrality of the church (a Roman Catholic distinctive) and the significance of virtue ethics (a postliberal distinctive) for a more robust Evangelical theological ethics. I will critically assess potential pitfalls of Hauerwas's work and then conclude by briefly exploring the issue of euthanasia as a case study to envision what Evangelical theological ethics informed by Hauerwasian insights might look like. Ultimately my hope is that engagement with Hauerwas might help Evangelicals toward overcoming what Michael Sleasman has called 'the bifurcation of dogma and praxis [… of] theology and ethics,'[6] a bifurcation that Hauerwas has been quick to observe and lament as well.[7]

THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF HAUERWAS

We must begin this project by drawing out what is distinctive about Hauerwas and thus what makes him a unique and crucial voice for Evangelicals to engage. Hauerwas is a Protestant most often associated with the postliberal school, though his work is largely understood as bucking any particular label, whether it be postliberal, liberal Protestant, or Evangelical. But as I will argue, it is his ability to interact with and draw from diverse theological traditions while transcending the boundaries typically erected between them that enables Hauerwas to make a unique contribution to contemporary Evangelical ethics.

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[6]   M. J. Sleasman, *On Visions and Virtues: A Theological Proposal for a Spesiential Virtue Theory*, PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Deerfield, IL: Proquest, 2008), p. 6.

[7]   S. Hauerwas, 'How "Christian Ethics" Came to Be', *The Hauerwas Reader*, p. 47.

As a prime example of this capacity, we can note that Hauerwas has spent much of his career engaging in dialogue with Roman Catholics, even teaching at the University of Notre Dame for thirteen years. Though a Protestant by tradition (specifically a Methodist), there is indeed much resonance between Hauerwas's ethics and the well-established tradition of Catholic moral theology. Thus Hauerwas in his primer on Christian ethics can answer the question 'Do I write as a Catholic or a Protestant?' by saying 'The answer is I simply do not know.'[8] But the work of Charles Curran has served to make the distinction between Hauerwas and Catholic moral theology a bit more distinct than Hauerwas admits, noting that the Catholic tradition disagrees with Hauerwas's approach to ethics in at least two significant ways: 1. it recognizes a universal morality applicable to all people,[9] and 2. it has traditionally seen itself as directly addressing the world and working together with all others for a more just human society.[10] Curran acutely summarizes Hauerwas's contrast with Catholic moral theology when he notes that, for Hauerwas, 'the Church has an interest in what happens in the world and in the broader society, but it fulfills its role by bearing witness to the story of Jesus in its own life and not by directly working with others to change society.'[11] Indeed, as we put Hauerwas alongside a natural law proponent such as Romanus Cessario[12] or the universalizing tendencies of the papal encyclicals,[13] we see that there are in fact areas where Hauerwas departs significantly from the Catholic fold (departures that we as Evangelical Protestants are likely to join him in). And Hauerwas himself has made those departures explicit, arguing, for instance, that 'the abstractions of "nature" and "grace" in particular have distorted how ethics has been undertaken in the Catholic tradition.'[14]

But in some ways an even greater contrast exists between Hauerwas and the liberal Protestants with whom he is often in dialogue. This is perhaps best seen in Hauerwas's essay 'How "Christian Ethics" Came to Be,' where he sets out a brief history of the discipline and particularly argues

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[8] S. Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), p. xxvi.

[9] For corroboration on this disagreement see J. D. Charles, *Retrieving the Natural Law* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), pp. 141-9.

[10] Curran, *Catholic Moral Theology in the United States*, pp. 159-60.

[11] Ibid., p. 159.

[12] R. Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001), pp. 69-99.

[13] Take, for example, Benedict XVI's *Caritas In Veritate*, addressed not just to Catholics but to 'all people of good will.'

[14] Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, p. 55.

that it was only in the modern period that ethics became problematic. Hauerwas notes that the Enlightenment project, and specifically the work of Kant, had a devastating impact on the cohesiveness of theology and ethics (which in the patristic, medieval, and reformation periods were still fully integrated). He specifically makes the claim that 'Theology, at least Protestant liberal theology, became ethics, but the ethics it became was distinctively Kant's ethics dressed in religious language.'[15] Hauerwas thus largely follows Barth in critiquing Protestant liberalism for departing from distinctively Christian convictions that make Christianity unique and even scandalous, convictions such as God's Trinitarian nature and Christ's bodily resurrection from the dead. But this critique also carries over into ethics, for Hauerwas sees the bifurcation of orthopraxy and orthodoxy and the abstraction/isolation of ethics as a distinct discipline as ultimately the legacy of Protestant liberalism, claiming that 'notions such as "the good" or the "Categorical Imperative" are far too abstract to give the guidance that can come only from the concreteness of God's command as found in Jesus Christ.'[16] His dissonance with Protestant liberalism is also clear in his essay 'On Keeping Theological Ethics Theological,' where he attributes some of the difficulties of keeping Christian ethics distinctively Christian to the heritage of Protestant liberalism. He states ultimately that the contribution of Protestant liberalism to the development of Christian ethics 'in many ways […] failed to represent adequately the resources for ethical reflection within the Christian tradition.'[17]

But as we examine Hauerwas's relationship to Evangelical Protestantism, here too we see signs of discontent and dissonance. Indeed, it is not just Hauerwas's more liberal stance on Scripture or his adamant pacifism that make him a figure Evangelicals largely shy away from; the distance also stems from a decidedly different approach to ethics. Charles Curran notes this difference well when he states that Hauerwas opposes both the 'individualistic liberalism' and the 'emphasis on quandary ethics' that can be found quite often at the centre of Evangelical ethics as it is done today.[18] Indeed, even a cursory examination of some standard textbooks on Evangelical ethics reveals their generally individualistic and quandary-oriented nature. For instance, Feinberg and Feinberg's *Ethics for a Brave New World*[19] dedicates only the opening chapter to prolegomena

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15   Hauerwas, 'How "Christian Ethics" Came to Be,' p. 45.
16   Ibid., p. 49.
17   Hauerwas, 'On Keeping Theological Ethics Theological', *The Hauerwas Reader*, p. 70.
18   Curran, *Catholic Moral Theology in the United States*, pp. 158-9.
19   J. S. Feinberg and P. D. Feinberg, *Ethics for a Brave New World*, second edit. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010).

and ethical theory before diving into thirteen chapters dedicated to distinct ethical issues facing Christians in our cultural moment. John Jefferson Davis's *Evangelical Ethics* gives away its quandary-orientation in the subtitle alone, 'Issues Facing the Church Today.' Like Feinberg and Feinberg, Davis dedicates a single chapter to preliminary questions and spends the remainder of the book exploring isolated ethical issues such as abortion and euthanasia. In contrast, Hauerwas adamantly denies that 'the central task of morality [is] to help us resolve difficult moral quandaries,' and he refuses to hold that 'ethics can be done in abstraction from any concrete community.'[20]

THE SITUATEDNESS OF HAUERWAS

Another factor we must consider in preparing to hear from Hauerwas is his situatedness within the larger field of Christian ethics. As a theologian/ethicist who seems to be at home with neither Catholics nor liberal Protestants nor Evangelicals, we must ask where it is that Hauerwas belongs in the discipline and what distinctive emphases he brings to the table. In answering these questions there is no greater place to turn than his essay 'On Keeping Theological Ethics Theological.' There Hauerwas sets forth his understanding of the development of Christian ethics, once again underlining the concerning nature of the Enlightenment project and the problematic efforts by liberal Protestants (following Kant's lead) to 'save theology by isolating its essence' leaving morality to become 'the "essence" of religion, but ironically […] understood in a manner that makes positive religious convictions secondary.'[21] As Hauerwas traces out this development through the work of Schleiermacher, Rauschenbusch, the Niehbuhrs, Ramsey, Fletcher, and Gustafson it is clear he is none too pleased with the peculiar situation in which contemporary theologians find themselves, one where 'they [wind] up finding it increasingly difficult to articulate what, if anything, Christian ethics [has] to contribute to discussions in ethics.'[22] Hauerwas's summary is that, as theologians 'sought to avoid the more traditional particularist claims of Christianity' so that they could remain actors on an increasingly secular stage, the 'dominant modes of philosophical ethics,' by which he primarily means individualist and quandary orientations, 'received little challenge from the theological community.'[23] For Hauerwas, 'the task of Christian ethics, both socially

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[20]   Hauerwas, 'On Keeping Theological Ethics Theological,' p. 72.
[21]   Ibid., pp. 55-6.
[22]   Ibid., p. 66.
[23]   Ibid., pp. 68-9.

and philosophically, [became] not revision but accommodation,'[24] and, in his estimation, this was simply unacceptable.

So where does this leave Hauerwas? As he readily acknowledges, 'I am certainly aware that the position I have developed is not in the recent mainstream of Christian ethical reflection.'[25] Yet Hauerwas is not without a tradition of his own; indeed he draws explicitly on the work of John Howard Yoder and more implicitly on the work of Karl Barth. Hauerwas's concern to keep theological ethics theological grows out of a more confessional turn, one which emphasizes (following Barth and Yoder both) that we must not downplay our particularistic theological tradition and distinctives, but instead, as Curran summarized it, we as Christians 'must be true to our own story, thereby bearing witness to the world.'[26] Indeed, for Hauerwas, ethics is inherently part of the larger theological task and thus is best done by the church, but only if the distinctiveness of the Christian confession is maintained. Only then is theological ethics truly robust because it is genuinely *theological* and able to criticize, rather than capitulate to, the dominant philosophical paradigms of the day.

It is particularly Hauerwas's confessional turn that I think makes him such a palatable figure for Evangelicals to engage. The fact that he wants to remain grounded in the distinctiveness of the Christian story and confession as he proceeds with his ethical program is something with which many Evangelicals can resonate (and that makes him more appealing to them than many other, especially liberal Protestant, voices). Yet his consistent, prophetic critique of the current state of Christian ethics is something that is quite distinct from what is emerging out of most Evangelical circles, where it seems that the individualist and quandary orientations inherited largely from Enlightenment concerns still dominate. Thus I believe that Evangelicals are not only *amenable to* hearing from Hauerwas; they also *need to* hear from him, and that in two primary areas concerning their theological ethics: the centrality of the church (combating the largely individualistic tendency) and the significance of virtue ethics (combating the gravitation toward quandary ethics).

THE CONTRIBUTION OF HAUERWAS

First, then, we must examine Hauerwas's proposal of a more communal orientation for our theological ethics. At times Hauerwas has stated his position quite straightforwardly, saying things like 'I have argued […]

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[24] Ibid., p. 69.
[25] Hauerwas, 'Why the "Sectarian Temptation" is a Misrepresentation: A Response to James Gustafson', *The Hauerwas Reader*, p. 97.
[26] Curran, *Catholic Moral Theology in the United States*, p. 159.

that the church matters not only for how we as Christians live but how we do theology and ethics,'[27] and even more simply, 'I like to think that theology is a communal activity.'[28] His interlocutors have observed that 'Hauerwas has redirected Christian ethics away from what is always right for everyone to what is currently faithful for the Church.'[29] Indeed, Hauerwas's elaboration on how to do theology/ethics in community and his proposal that our ethics should be done by the church (with confessional convictions intact), in the church (as a community that sharpens, corrects, and forms one another), and for the church (i.e. its implications are particularly for those who are a part of the community of faith) are among his most distinctive contributions to contemporary ethical dialogue. The church is radically central in his conception of theological ethics, so much so he can claim that Christian ethicists 'will not say [anything] significantly if they try to disguise the fact that they think, write, and speak out of and to a distinctive community.'[30] Hauerwas thinks that Christian ethics can't even proceed without 'the recognition of the narrative structure of Christian convictions for the life of the church,' going on to note that 'the basis of any Christian social ethic should be the affirmation that God has decisively called and formed a people to serve him.'[31] It is this church-centredness that guides his most substantial presentation of his theological ethics, *A Community of Character* and *The Peaceable Kingdom*. In the first he argues that the church is a story-formed community which ought to serve as a 'distinct society with an integrity peculiar to itself […] capable of hearing the story of God we find in the scripture and living in a manner that is faithful to that story.'[32] In the second he goes on to show how this story-formed community is 'a servant community […] and a community of virtues,' a perspective that is essential in his mind to any attempt to define *Christian* ethics.[33]

The claim being made here is that Hauerwas's church-centredness is a particularly important corrective for Evangelicals to engage and incorporate when it comes to their theological ethics. There is an increasing resonance in Evangelical circles with the catholic (universal), communal

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27   S. Hauerwas, *In Good Company: The Church as Polis* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), p. 4.

28   Wells, 'Introduction to the Essays,' p. 6.

29   Ibid., p. 5.

30   Hauerwas, 'On Keeping Theological Ethics Theological,' p. 73.

31   Hauerwas, 'Reforming Christian Social Ethics: Ten Theses', *The Hauerwas Reader*, p. 111.

32   S. Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), p. 1.

33   Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, pp. 102-3.

nature of Roman Catholic ethical reflection (think the papal encyclicals), and this is accompanied by an increasing realization that the strength of Catholic moral theology is indeed a weakness within our own tradition. Many Evangelicals are longing to do ethics and to consider moral problems out of a more communal orientation, and this is where I think Hauerwas can be a tremendous help to us, pointing us back to the church as the story-formed community where we can experience a deep-seated unity with other believers, those who have gone before us and those who labour alongside of us. The unity emerges out of the *particularity* of our convictions (e.g. that '*Christ died for our sins* according to the Scriptures') as the testimony of Scripture shapes and bolsters them ('Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures*.'). Essentially, Hauerwas presses us in just the right way by asking: what contribution does our ecclesiology makes to the task of theological ethics (if any)? And in calling us to give an answer to that question, he prompts us to envision the church not as an aggregate of individual Christians making isolated moral decisions, but as a theological community that embodies, together, a distinctive and formative Christian social ethic.

Secondly we must examine Hauerwas's invitation to incorporate virtue ethics into our theological ethics. It should be stated from the outset that, for Hauerwas, this emphasis is intimately connected with church-centredness, for the church is the Scripture-formed community in which virtuous people are cultivated. He claims that 'an individual's character is only intelligible as it draws its substance from a social context,'[34] and thus we should realize that, for Hauerwas, the problems of individualistic liberalism (addressed by his ecclesial-centredness) and quandary ethics (addressed by his virtue ethics) are closely related. Indeed, before Hauerwas argued that the church was central to Christian ethics as a 'community of character' he argued that, 'Christian ethics is best understood as an ethics of character since the Christian moral life is fundamentally an orientation of the self.'[35] Part of Hauerwas's potent critique of many Christian ethicists (including not a few Evangelicals) is that they have largely succumbed to the presuppositions of their secular colleagues by assuming 'that questions of the "right" are prior to questions of the "good," that moral principles [are] more fundamental than virtues […] and that the central task of morality [is] to help us resolve difficult moral

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[34] S. Hauerwas, *Truthfulness and Tragedy: Further Investigations into Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), p. 2.

[35] S. Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics* (San Antonio, TX: Trinity University Press, 1975), p. vii.

quandaries.'[36] Hauerwas wants us to consider that there is a more ancient and, in his opinion, a more biblical way of approaching ethics, one that focuses on character formation, the development of the virtues, the cultivation of the good, and a concern for the ultimate *telos*. For Hauerwas, virtue ethics is a viable system that breaks down the prevalent orthodoxy/orthopraxy dichotomy and, in its Christian manifestation, offers a genuinely biblical way of thinking about ethics as the process of holistic character formation rather than a specific method for solving moral dilemmas. Though this system originated in the West with the ancient Greeks, Hauerwas argues in *Christians among the Virtues* that 'Christianity is not a continuation of the Greek understanding of the virtues, but rather the inauguration of a new tradition that sets virtues within an entirely different telos in community.'[37]

There seems to be the ring of truth to Hauerwas's characterization of contemporary ethics (with Evangelical ethics largely providing no exception) as primarily centred on deontological concerns about 'the right' rather than teleological concerns about 'the good.' This is an unfortunate emphasis when one considers the preponderance of ethical issues and moral quandaries which we must study and even master if we are to operate under a model that emphasizes right method over formation of the good. Simply consider the innumerable advances in the arena of reproductive technologies alone and one quickly realizes that new ethical dilemmas emerge with every new study and technical capacity. Would it not be better if we sought to incorporate certain aspects of virtue ethics so that we might focus more on how we can be better formed into the kind of people who can approach any emerging ethical issue with a prudence, charity, and depth that no amount of methodological proficiency or technical study could prepare us for? This is the vision which Hauerwas asks us to consider, one that undoubtedly speaks to certain blind spots of Evangelical ethics today and is palatable to the Evangelical mind because of its grounding not in Aristotle or even Aquinas, but rather in the Scriptures which call us to be formed more and more into the image of Christ.

THE CRITIQUE OF HAUERWAS

As Hauerwas has acknowledged many times, he is certainly not without critics. Probably the most consistent critique levelled against him has been that his more confessional turn, with its church-centredness and

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[36] Hauerwas, 'On Keeping Theological Ethics Theological,' p. 71.
[37] S. Hauerwas & C. Pinches, *Christians among the Virtues: Theological Conversations with Ancient and Modern Ethics* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), p. 63.

particularistic orientation, is ultimately sectarian in nature. This was the primary criticism brought by influential Christian ethicist James Gustafson. Hauerwas responded in kind with his 'Why the "Sectarian Temptation" is a Misrepresentation: A Response to James Gustafson,' where he argued that Gustafson's criticism is a dismissal much in the vein of Richard Niehbuhr's rebuke of the 'Christ Against Culture' category, unfairly applying Christendom standards to a movement that is raising questions about those very same standards. Ultimately Hauerwas's point is well taken: a prophetic voice raising issues with the fact that Christian ethics has become compromised by the project of Enlightenment liberalism ought not to be dismissed simply because it is raising questions about the good of Enlightenment liberalism and its compatibility with the particularist claims of Christianity.

Perhaps more substantive is Joseph Kotva's criticism raised in *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*. Kotva, while very thankful for Hauerwas's work, is concerned that he has not gone far enough in providing 'an explicitly Christian case for virtue ethics [… failing to] show how virtue ethics connects with and expresses Christian convictions.'[38] Indeed, as I read Hauerwas on this point it seems that he is guilty of the very accusation he made against Gustafson: assuming compatibility of a system (in this case, virtue ethics) with Christianity rather than actually arguing for it. But as Kotva's work goes on to show, thankfully there is a pretty compelling case to be made for Christianity's compatibility with virtue ethics, one which Hauerwas may have assumed but never systematically set forth. This relates to a third critique we might make of Hauerwas, namely that his large-scale suspicion of method often leads him to not be as methodologically rigorous as he should be. Jones and company can note that 'we find ourselves frustrated by his apparent lack of focus or attention to such matters as historical detail and contextual specificity.[…] Engaging Hauerwas is frustrating because he spends far more time writing occasional essays than he does displaying the coherence of his thought.'[39] This sentiment echoes the criticisms of Michael Sleasman[40] and Samuel Wells,[41] and indeed, it is largely recognized that Hauerwas would have done well to consolidate his sprawling set of essays on theological ethics into a more systematic and cohesive expression. Thankfully there are some attempt-

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[38] J. K. Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1996), p. 50.

[39] L. G. Jones, R. Hütter and C. R. V. Ewell, 'Engaging Stanley Hauerwas', *God, Truth, and Witness: Engaging Stanley Hauerwas*, p. 7.

[40] Sleasman, *On Visions and Virtues: A Theological Proposal for a Spesiential Virtue Theory*, p. 30.

[41] Wells, 'Introduction to the Essays,' p. 8.

ing to do just that on his behalf,[42] making Hauerwas's prophetic critique of Christian ethics today and particular vision for what Christian ethics ought to be all the more accessible and clear, especially to any Evangelical theologians who might be listening.

THE APPLICATION OF HAUERWAS

Here we can only briefly examine one ethical issue as a case study for what Evangelical ethics informed by Hauerwasian insights might begin to look like. Let's take the moral issue of euthanasia, a hot-button topic addressed in virtually all Evangelical ethics textbooks. A standard approach to the issue in the literature today would revolve around almost exclusively deontological concerns of what is morally right and what is morally permissible. Generally this would begin with a definition of key terms and then move on to an examination of legal background, reflections on relevant biblical passages, arguments for and against the practice, and a definitive conclusion intended to direct someone faced with a difficult end-of-life scenario. Now contrast that with the approach that Hauerwas takes in his essays 'Memory, Community and the Reasons for Living: Reflections on Suicide and Euthanasia' and 'Must a Patient be a Person to Be a Patient?'

Hauerwas notes there the folly and futility of trying to proceed by determining whether the person who is dying has 'yet passed some line that makes him a person or a nonperson.' 'Rather,' he insists, 'we care […] for him because he is Uncle Charlie.'[43] Thus Hauerwas argues that our approach to ethical issues, rather than being guided exclusively by pre-quandary analysis and philosophical determinations about the state of human personhood, should actually be much more guided by the relational bonds which exist between the parties involved, bonds which grow out of the community of which we are all a part. He claims that we should seek to understand how euthanasia 'relates to the story that forms the Christian community,' coming to realize that the practice is 'incompatible with and subversive of some fundamental elements of the Christian story.'[44] For Hauerwas, euthanasia is ultimately ambiguous when approached as a moral quandary; it can only be properly considered within the framework of someone's communal story (which, in the Chris-

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42   See, as just one example, M. Coffey, *The Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas: A Very Concise Introduction* (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2009).

43   Hauerwas, 'Must a Patient Be a Person to Be a Patient', *The Hauerwas Reader*, p. 600.

44   Hauerwas, *Truthfulness and Tragedy: Further Investigations into Christian Ethics*, p. 102.

tian case, is a story where all God-created life is valued). Thus, for Hauerwas, what is vital is not methodologically training individuals what the right answer to each particular manifestation of the euthanasia scenario is. Rather, the all-important task is cultivating people, and even communities, of character who will act virtuously no matter the particulars of the quandary they encounter because they have been formed by the story of the gospel found in Scripture and are seeking more and more to embody the lordship and servanthood of Christ which that story sets on full display.

It seems to me that this perspective helpfully fills in much of what is lacking in Evangelical ethics today, causing us to re-evaluate our individualistic tendencies and quandary orientation to pursue ethics a bit more holistically. For instance, we see in the work of Scott Rae's *Moral Choices*[45] what a more well-rounded Evangelical ethics informed by Hauerwas's confessional, communal virtue ethics could look like. Rae's work wonderfully incorporates more communal and church-historical perspectives while dedicating four opening chapters to introductory issues, including a substantial section on virtue ethics. This is well on the way to an ethical orientation which balances deontological concerns about 'the right' with teleological concerns about 'the good,' asking not just 'what should we do?' but also asking, in a more foundational way, 'what sort of people are we becoming?' and 'how do we become people who more and more imitate Christ?'

It is for this reason that I hope more Evangelicals will engage Hauerwas as an important conversation partner and even corrective for Christian ethics today, one who rightly insists that Evangelical ethics will only be sufficiently robust when it is robustly *theological*, pressing into our particular confession derived from Scripture (i.e. the gospel) and our distinctively Christian convictions that the church is central rather than peripheral to our ethics and that who we are and are becoming in Christ is far more important than developing a methodology for navigating every (multiplying!) ethical quandary under the sun. By heeding Hauerwas's insights (while remaining aware of his shortcomings) we will be on the way to bringing the best of Evangelical theology to the table of Christian ethics and persisting in the all-important task of keeping theological ethics theological.

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45   S. Rae, *Moral Choices*, 4th edn (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018).

The Significance of Singleness: A Theological Vision for the Future of the Church. By Christina S. Hitchcock. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-5409-6029-0. vii + 146pp. £13.99.

Dr. Christina Hitchcock offers the church a book on a topic that is rarely discussed through a theological lens: *are single people significant to the Gospel story?* Hitchcock, a married professor at the University of Sioux Falls, sets forth the thesis that, 'the life of Christian singleness can serve a picture of the gospel and what that means: participating in true community, finding identity in Christ, and receiving authority to act as God's agents in the world,' (p. xxii). Hitchcock then develops her argument in three parts in order to elevate the status and significance of single people. This excellent book will be of value to anyone wanting to think through singleness from a biblical perspective, particularly to those who have spiritual responsibility to teach and encourage the church.

In part one, Hitchcock offers a compelling critique of the evangelical church as she compares our often-idolatrous emphasis on marriage to our culture's emphasis on sex. Insomuch as marriage (and therefore sex) is often a marker of adulthood, singleness (a term that Hitchcock uses interchangeably with celibacy) is often seen in a negative view, denoting immaturity, and even perhaps not having reached full personhood. Hitchcock warns her readers that 'our inability to think of singleness within the context of the entire kingdom of God has not only hurt our ability to live as single people and to live with single people; it has also damaged our ability to speak wisely, humbly and biblically on such subjects as feminism, homosexuality, extramarital sex, and even missions and evangelism' (p. xxii). Therefore, to be able to engage this topic seriously will bring the church into conversations that we have historically entered with strong biases with a new hope: that we might value each person as theologically significant.

A single person is more than someone 'with extra time and energy,' Hitchcock states (p. 26); rather, he or she is someone who serves as a reminder and picture of the Gospel. A life lived by a single Christian directs our attention to the priority of the church (p. 23) as the church is the single Christian's primary family. Christian singles also show us the reality of the resurrection and the return of Christ, as they remind us that our hope and comfort does not reside fully in this life in the here and now (p. 24). Finally, Christian singles direct our attention to the proper place for our trust (p. 25). Our trust is not in an another person but rather in Christ alone.

In part two, Hitchcock shares biographies of three historical women—4th century church leader Macrina, 3rd century martyr Perpetura, and 19th century American missionary Lottie Moon—whose singleness enabled effective ministry and clearly demonstrate the aspects of Hitchcock's thesis. While I thoroughly appreciated models of the Christian faith that are single women, Hitchcock's arguments could have been stronger if she also had given examples of single men or included single women who were not engaged in full-time vocational ministry. It is noteworthy to mention that in her introduction she addresses these concerns, with the defence that these women are extreme examples whose memorable lives demonstrate truth that should appeal to every Christian, transcending gender, age, class, race, and vocation. Yet, in a diverse society, range of examples would show that singleness is even broader in scope and therefore, has a remarkable impact in the kingdom of God.

In part three, Hitchcock discusses how singleness can shape us into better theologians, drawing on the words of Jesus and of Paul, particularly in 1 Corinthians 7, reminding us that singles point us to a new reality. Hitchcock challenges the assumption that 'the family is not only God's original community but also his eternal community and blueprint for the church,' (p. 144). Our gaze should not be set only on Genesis 1-2 but should also account for the eschaton in which we will be united to Jesus alone.

Though she writes her book to the whole church, the common audience for such a book is Christian single women (like myself). However, this would be a great loss. I would thoroughly commend this book to male and female readers who are married, not-yet-married, and single-again. After all, as Hitchcock states, 'singleness is either a present reality or future possibility for everyone' (p. xxvii). Those who are in a position of power in churches certainly should read this book in order to shape church culture in this positive direction. It is imperative for our churches to come alongside single people, as that population is only growing in our churches today, not only for the benefit of singles themselves but also for the benefit of the entire church.

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The New Elder's Handbook: A Biblical Guide to Developing Faithful Leaders. By Greg R. Scharf and Arthur Kok. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker. ISBN: 9780801076343. 192pp. £8.99.

The motivation behind the book comes from Greg Scharf's own testimony, and wrestling with the question 'how can qualified elders be raised up?' The starting point many of us adopt is to look for those already qual-

ified for eldership. Scharf takes a step back to pursuing a structure for patiently training those *willing* to serve as elders. In this book Scharf and Kok have presented a biblical and helpful way for training elders. They manage, in short compass, to provide the biblical 'why', before offering their 'how'. Typically, books on developing leaders might fall into one of these two positions, so that perhaps a unique selling point of this book is its emphasis both on principle and practical tools in training and developing new elders. This book will be of value to ministers and elders considering where the next generation of elders will come from.

In section 1 they establish a vision of Biblically qualified elders who are growing in knowledge, pursuing obedience and developing as teachers. The example of Ezra is usefully employed both as a model for eldership *and* in providing assurance that God desires godly eldership (and that his grace works in, through and for those he calls). Character formation and spiritual growth are seen to be a work of God over time in which Christian men are called to participate through pursuing spiritual disciplines. Learning in community is strongly emphasized for mutual encouragement, shared wisdom and accountability among other reasons. While in some cases this would not be practical, it is a helpful ideal to pursue.

In section 2 there is the movement towards practically resourcing pastors with a list of seventy-five questions for new or prospective elders. These questions have as their aim: the discovery of truth, the honing of spiritual disciplines and ministry practices, and growth in obedience to Christ. Each question comes with a list of biblical texts to read and reflect on, along with recommendations of supplementary reading on each topic. The list of biblical texts is very extensive and the breadth of questions covering theology, life and ministry is well thought out. Slow, careful, prayerful engagement with the texts in the form of 'homework' before regularly meeting to share and discuss provides a meaningful way to assimilate truth with the intention of passing it on to others.

I deeply appreciate the *pastoral* tone struck throughout the book. This is not a 'five steps to multiplying leadership' book! Better, it calls on pastors and potential elders to lean on God and his grace, to be prayerful and humble in pursuing the noble aspiration of eldership, and it consistently frames the discussion in a way that emphasizes eldership as service not status. Finally, if you are in the camp that says 'Yes! But how?' The *practical* resources that have been used by Scharf for decades will certainly provide a foundation and framework to follow.

If you want to be *proactive* in identifying and training those who may in time be raised up by God for serving his church then you will find much to help with this. It provides encouragement that with God's help

Christian men can grow in knowledge of the Lord, godly character, and skill in serving.

I have recently begun to meet fortnightly with a small group of potential church elders. While the 'test drive' of Scharf and Kok's book is in the early stages, I am confident that this will prove a mutually beneficial resource and guide in training and developing new or potential leaders for God's church.

God's church needs godly elders. But this doesn't happen by accident. Scharf and Kok have provided discipleship principles and practice to helpfully answer the questions 'what if there are no local elders?' or 'how do I train new elders?' I look forward to this book being of benefit in our local church in coming years, and would encourage others to use it too.

James Ross, Edinburgh

The Decalogue: Living as the People of God. By David L. Baker. London: Apollos, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-78359-550-1. xvii + 221pp. £12.99.

The heart of this book is a contemporary application of the ten commandments. Baker discusses four understandings of the purpose of the Decalogue: a Hebrew catechism; ancient Israel's criminal law; basic moral and ethical principles; and the constitution of Israel. He discerns an element of truth in all, and also recognizes the danger of anachronism, but finally adopts the fourth. The Decalogue was Israel's constitution in the sense that it 'begins by stating the basis of Israel's special relationship with God and continues by listing her primary obligations in maintaining that relationship' (p. 35). Furthermore, it has an abiding relevance: 'I am convinced these laws are still important for the people of God, as I aim to show in this book' (p. x). The resulting book is of particular value for students and pastors, but is also accessible to any interested person.

The introductory section discusses the shape, form, origin, and purpose of the Decalogue. A second section, entitled 'Loving God', follows, with chapters on the first five commandments. The third section, 'Loving Neighbor', treats the final five commandments. The brief chapter, 'Living as the People of God', concludes the work. Baker expounds each commandment within three contexts: ancient Near Eastern; canonical; and contemporary. The latter involves his discussion of how the commandments apply today.

Baker is conversant with the wide range of scholarly opinion about the Decalogue, but is clear about his own view: he endeavours to take seriously the claims of the text itself. With regard to human authorship he asserts, 'there is good reason to accept the biblical tradition that the Decalogue originated in the time of Moses and played a key part in the

formation of Israel as a nation' (p. 29). He notes, however, that the text makes claims that go beyond that. Following Clines, he notes that 'the Bible claims God spoke the words of the Decalogue (Ex. 20:1; Deut. 5:22)' (p. 25). Unlike Clines, Baker's view is that there is 'no reason to rule out the possibility that the text is recording a real event' (p. 28).

Baker follows the traditional Reformed numbering of the commandments (p. 5). It should be noted that he differs from that tradition in two ways. First, he understands Exodus 20:2 as a preface particularly to the first commandment, rather than to the whole Decalogue (p. 4). Secondly, as noted above, he groups the fifth commandment with the first four, rather than with those that follow (p. 9).

The book helpfully contains author, subject, and scripture indices. The bibliography is subdivided by topic, making it a useful guide to resources on particular topics.

The book has a number of strengths. Fundamentally, the exposition of individual commandments seems to substantiate Baker's claim that 'along with Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and other ethical teaching in both the Old and New Testaments, […] the Decalogue should be the starting point for Christian ethics' (p. 158). A particular strength of the book is the comparison to ANE material. First, it highlights what is important to the biblical author. Baker notes that the 'relative leniency of Old Testament law in punishing property offenses may be contrasted with its severity in dealing with homicide, ruling out compromise between the murderer and the victim's next of kin' (pp. 126-7). That is, human life is prioritized over property. This comparison also highlights the relative humanity of the biblical penalties. Baker states that 'It is significant that biblical penalties for theft are more humane than elsewhere, never involving mutilation, beating, or death' (p. 126) This is useful apologetically in a society which often misrepresents the Old Testament as barbaric.

The discussion of the canonical context is another strength. For example, the discussion of theft is helpfully placed in the larger context of the Bible's discussion of private property (p. 133). He also considers the commandments in light of the New Testament's presentation of Jesus.

Baker's discussion of the contemporary context is more mixed. Sometimes in application the commandments loose distinction. This is particularly true of the first three. For example, when he says that 'another form of blasphemy is treating god as though he does not exist' (p. 69), his application of the third commandment sounds very like the first. On other occasions, the application could be more current. His treatment of the second commandment includes discussion of 'glossy magazines' (p. 58) but not social media.

Those reservations aside, Baker has produced an easily accessible and stimulating guide to the ten commandments. It would make an excellent textbook for students, with a bibliography that opens avenues for further study. It would also be a useful resource for pastors seeking to teach and apply this portion of Scripture. Indeed, it is written in such an accessible manner that it would be suitable for interested lay people.

Daniel Sladek, Edinburgh Theological Seminary

Christian Higher Education: Faith, Teaching, and Learning in the Evangelical Tradition. Edited by David S. Dockery and Christopher W. Morgan. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-4335-5653-1. 576pp. £40.08.

In *Christian Higher Education*, the editors seek to provide a 'multiauthored, symphonic, and theologically shaped vision' (p. 13) for specifically evangelical Christian higher education in North America. The authors are predominantly from the faculty of Trinity International University and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Reformed, Baptist and broader evangelical perspectives mingle. The 27 chapters, each with discussion questions, survey the theological assumptions, curriculum emphases, and formational goals of evangelical colleges and universities. Given the goal of providing a primer (albeit a hefty one) for administrators, board members and church leaders as well as faculty, staff and students, the focus is not on cutting-edge scholarship and the language is rarely technical. Rather, the book offers examples of evangelical approaches to its various themes. Although the chapters are often more descriptive and declarative than incisive or self-critical, and of rather mixed quality, the book will be useful to those seeking a non-technical representative sample of evangelical thinking about higher education as it exists across the range of a couple of current faculties.

Part 1 of the book focuses on developing a theological framework, with focused attention to knowing and loving God, biblical authority, the image of God, and church history. These chapters frame an emphasis on discipleship and extension of the work of the church that recurs in the remainder of the book. Part 2 offers a survey of curriculum emphases, with chapters focused in turn on worldview, teaching, learning, research, the humanities, the sciences, mathematics, the social sciences, philosophy, music and the arts, education and professional programs. While the approaches vary across chapters, in each case the author develops their understanding of how evangelical faith commitments frame their approach to their area of focus. Some emphasize epistemology and the role

of worldview in scholarship, while others focus more on their approach to teaching and student formation.

Finally, Part 3 is loosely organized around the institution's role in student formation outside the classroom and its mission to and impact on the wider world. Chapters here discuss catechesis, worship and service, student behaviour, leadership, culture and the wider world, the church, international and intercultural learning and missions. While the first part of the book contains a more focused emphasis on theology, various theological summaries recur through later chapters as each author attempts to anchor their own topic in evangelical commitments. While these theological commitments are frequently pointed to as a source of unity and of definitive solutions to intellectual challenges, there is not uniformity; the image of God, for instance, is discussed by various authors, but without consensus as to how it should be interpreted.

A feature of the book that initially seems to differentiate it from other collections on Christian higher education is its apparent strong focus on teaching and learning rather than the more common focus on intellectual frameworks and disciplinary or historical issues. The words 'teaching' and 'learning' appear in many of the chapter titles, and each disciplinary chapter is titled 'Teaching and Learning in…' Addressing the actual processes of teaching and learning has not commonly been a strong point of this kind of writing, and it is good to see some chapters, such as Paul Bialek's interesting chapter on mathematics education, offering concrete proposals in this area. There is a recurring emphasis on student formation, though one that too often falls back on what 'we must' do or what we should 'tell' students in place of careful attention to how to get to the declared vision pedagogically. In the end, many of the curricular chapters lack the focus promised by their titles, with some making no mention at all of students or of concrete teaching and learning processes.

The fact that most authors are drawn from a small range of institutions brings both strengths and weaknesses. The volume is built upon shared concerns and documents a useful cross-section of how faculty at this particular kind of American evangelical institution are thinking about their faith and their work. As with many such collections the quality of the individual chapters varies quite widely in terms of both scholarship and prose. The range of preoccupations addressed may also have been constrained by the culture of the contributing institutions. Secularism, relativism, and 'sexual confusion' recur as concerns, while attention to race is largely relegated to the student life chapters, and attention to current social concerns such as climate change, nationalism, or poverty is essentially absent. Current critiques of the political and cultural role of evangelicalism within the American landscape are alluded to more

than directly engaged. Evangelicals are often rhetorically positioned as standing over against the wider culture, bringing solutions to its moral and epistemological challenges, more than as fully implicated within its struggles. This makes the book feel, at times, somewhat detached from wider issues facing universities and informing current academic as well as broader cultural conversations.

There are some excellent chapters; other readers will have their own favourites, but personally, I found those by Gundlach, Forster, and Watson among the more helpfully suggestive. Those looking for the most incisive developments in Christian thinking about higher education and the life of the mind, or for self-critical engagement with the full range of current cultural shifts, will need to reach beyond this volume. Within these limitations, the book will be useful to readers seeking a sample cross-section of evangelical thinking within and about Christian higher education.

David I. Smith, Calvin University, Michigan, USA

Divine Choreography of Redemption: Setting the Eternal Saga in Time. By William E. Jefferson. New York: Hybrid Global Publishing, 2018. ISBN: 978-1-948181-08-2. 154pp. £15.95.

In this fascinating book written in almost lyrical style, William Jefferson seeks imaginatively to penetrate the spiritual world existing within and beyond time. He does this through allegorical fiction by relating the surreal experience of a fictitious twenty-first century Catholic monk who encounters spiritual manipulation lurking behind the dehumanising trends of modern media. The monk is called Narrative. He belongs to the Order of Message Makers, founded by one Bevin Roberts in 1637 on an island called Estillyen. The Order is dedicated to communicating Scripture through drama in confronting the powers of darkness and putting them to flight. Jefferson's allegory offers a theological analysis of insights culled from media theorists like McLuhan, Postman, and Harari. This book will appeal to those seeking to communicate the Gospel to media smitten audiences.

Narrative tells us how he became aware of living in two worlds—the world of time and space and the eternal world. He both participates in his story and simultaneously observes it from the outside. He finds himself walking the local streets while concurrently looking on from the window of his third-floor monastery room. 'I'm caught up,' he says, 'in something way beyond me […] I'm coping in a world I know, but nothing fits. All the true inhabitants have become characters. I know them; they don't know me' (p. 75). For Narrative, normality is temporarily suspended. He finds himself operating in an unaccustomed mode of reality.

In this allegory the evil powers take the form of three soap box street orators who terrify Narrative. Their common mission in addressing enraptured audiences is to promote the seductive power of mediated messages 'to mold and make us, alarm and harm us' (p. 28). Their names are Platform, Discarnate, and Rejection. Platform preaches 'technopoly'—the thrill of finding fulfilment and bliss in interacting with digital media. He urges his listeners: 'Discover [in technology] the true art of building an image of yourself, which is not yourself, and needn't be' (p. 13). Discarnate presses his audience to abandon the limits of human ability and put their trust in Artificial Intelligence, allowing algorithms to discover meaning and tell them what to do. Rejection, the third speaker, presses his hearers to redeem themselves. 'Oh, the vista of liberation that awaits you. Consider it: free to think, reason, and reject anything that stands in the way of your future present' (pp. 20–21). Narrative later discovers the street orators are coached by a sinister figure called 'Bewilderment' who turns out to be Satan.

Much to Narrative's relief he discovers that the three advocates of Dataism are not the only show in town. For none other than Bevin Roberts, founder of the Order of Message Makers, comes back from the seventeenth century, accompanied by three fellow actors. In a former theatre, now church property, they perform three plays which dramatically present the biblical story, 'The Divine Choreography of Redemption'. The venue is packed by people who a few days earlier were entranced by the soapbox orators. The actors promote the art of peering through the lines of Scripture (pp. 59, 109, 143) so that the audience may discover its own part in the divine drama. The audience's enthusiasm suggests the biblical Story can counteract the seduction of digital media; in the end the three soapbox protagonists flee the town.

A key figure in the book is 'Mr Kind', an elderly gentleman who at the beginning of the tale invites Narrative to descend from his monastery window and enter the allegory. And at the end, it is Mr Kind who commissions Narrative to return to normality. There are hints that Mr Kind is none other than Jesus or, perhaps, the Holy Spirit.

While the fictional audiences of the Message Makers' three plays would have captured the big picture from Adam to Christ, they might have found the specific choreography of redemption somewhat difficult to follow. For it is conveyed thematically (in terms of dreams, angels, prophecies, miracles, etc.) rather than as a sequential narrative. The focus is more on the actors communicating Scripture than on audience engagement with it. A stronger emphasis on the audience grappling with what the text is saying prior to peering between the lines would have made the engagement more rounded. The strength of this book lies, first, in its

claim that the increasingly recognized power of technologies to manipulate and coerce is an indicator of spiritual warfare; and second, in its basic affirmation that the Sword of the Spirit can resist and overthrow this modern idolatry.

Fergus Macdonald, Edinburgh

Studying Paul's Letters with the Mind and Heart. By Gregory S MaGee. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2018. ISBN 978-0-8254-4472-2. 215pp. £17.99.

This 215-page softback presents a fascinating study of Paul's letters. It succeeds in balancing a popular and an academic reading of the Pauline corpus as well as striking an equilibrium between heart and mind in engaging the biblical text. In the book's fourteen chapters the author answers a series of questions ranging from 'Why should I listen to Paul?' to 'How can I get the most out of studying Paul's letters?' and 'How can I wisely apply Paul's teachings?' Also included is a chapter on 'Were all thirteen letters really written by Paul?' and another on 'What are the experts saying about Paul these days?' Anyone wanting a readily readable introduction to Paul will benefit from this book. It will also be of value to preachers preparing to expound the key message of any of Paul's epistles.

The book offers practical advice on discerning the meaning of Paul's letters in their original setting by determining the likely circumstances being addressed in each case, as well as analysing the apostle's train of thought as revealed in repeated words, phrases and topical turning points. The method of analysis on offer recommends today's readers to divide the text of a Pauline letter into paragraphs, and then to devise strong titles for each paragraph. Next steps are to group the paragraphs into larger sections to which titles are also to be assigned. An appendix demonstrates how the author does this in the case of Ephesians.

Having offered help in discerning the *meaning*, the book also stresses the importance of discovering and appreciating the *relevance* of Paul's letters for today. Application is to follow interpretation. The key role of the Holy Spirit in implanting Paul's teachings in the soils of our lives is vital if the letters are to impact us cognitively, affectively, and volitionally; that is, how we think, what we feel, and what we do. While we need to bear in mind, that as cultural outsiders, we are required to interpret Paul's teaching within the context of his original audiences, Paul's 'original intended meaning creates ripple effects touching our significant needs, concerns, and dreams' (p. 123). In making the transition from interpretation to application we don't teleport immediately from one world (of the original readers) to another world (ours). Scripture engagement methods play an

important role in helping us to slow down in the transition, and focus on the text long enough to facilitate reading for spiritual growth.

There's a helpful chapter on 'some specific interpretive challenges' (p. 133). These challenges include: aligning Romans 2:13 with being justified by grace; recognising the 'Corinthian slogans' (like soundbites today); the change of tone in 2 Corinthians chapters 10-13; whether Paul's focus in Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians is ecclesiological or soteriological; the significance of Christ's self-emptying in Philippians 2:5-11; the apocalyptic imagery in the Thessalonian letters; whether the 'trustworthy sayings' in the Pastorals refer to what precedes or what succeeds them; and the challenge of 'mirror reading' the Letter to Philemon.

MaGee also explores Paul's interaction with the Old Testament. 'Paul's letters swim in a stream filled with Old Testament works and ideas' (p. 163). For Paul the OT is revelatory rather than regulatory. This is seen particularly through the series of covenants made with Abraham, Moses, and David, pointing forward to the promise of the New Covenant, which is marked by the ministry of the Son and the gift of the Spirit. In addition to the promise and fulfilment motif, Paul draws deeply on passages about Israel's wilderness wanderings and from the Servant Songs of Isaiah.

In Chapter Thirteen, MaGee evaluates a close and thick reading of the Pauline texts while reviewing the three primary spectra in contemporary scholarship. While recognising there is much to learn from both the New Perspective and the Apocalyptic Perspective on Paul, the writer tends towards the Old Perspective mainly because, in his view, it leans less heavily on leveraging outside sources to interpret the biblical text. The final chapter answers the question in its title—'What ideas were especially important to Paul?' (p. 187)—with: union with Christ; grace, faith, and obedience; the Holy Spirit; and an eternal kingdom perspective.

In this well written book Gregory MaGee offers today's readers an excellent popular introduction to Paul containing very useful pointers to discovering the ongoing relevance of his writings for today.

Fergus Macdonald, Edinburgh

Behind the Scenes of the Old Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts. Edited by Jonathan Greer, John Hilber, and John Walton. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018. ISBN 978-0-8010-9775-1. xix + 616pp. £37.89.

This interesting and attractive introduction to the ancient Near East for students of the Bible distinguishes itself both in its organization and its thoroughness. Individual essays fall into three broad categories: 'Elements of the Drama,' including essays on topics such as historical geog-

raphy, archaeology, and languages; 'Acts and Scenes in the Drama,' which moves from essays summarizing broad periods of biblical history to specific essays on focus topics (e.g., the Sea People, the battle of Qarqar); and finally 'Themes of the Drama,' which includes varieties of essays on God (monotheism, temples, prophecy, etc.), family, economics, and governance. This sketch of the organization of the book also shows the way in which it gives attention to some aspects of life in the biblical world passed over in similar volumes, such as the geography of Israel (including climate and animal and plant life), burial practices, music and dance, warfare, and so on. This is not accomplished, however, by sacrificing attention to the broad history of the ancient Near East: both beginners and those more familiar with the cultural and historical background of the OT will find much that is helpful. I was especially impressed with the discussions of the ancestral period, in which it is argued that both Middle Bronze Age archaeological and textual evidence (2200-1600 BC) show the same world depicted in Genesis 12-50 (pp. 187-93), as well as with the chapter on the Exodus (pp. 194-200), which argues the plausibility of a later date (13th century BC) for the exodus as finding a more natural home in the reign of Rameses II, without dismissing or mishandling the biblical evidence.

The book is not completely positive about the OT: Aren Maeir states that the 'conquest view' of Israelite settlement in Palestine has essentially been disproved in recent scholarship (p. 55; however, the OT shows both violent conquest in Joshua and a more gradual settlement in Judges, without any archaeological evidence contradicting this). The discussion of Sennacherib's famous 701 campaign is very good on the ideology and theology behind Assyrian and OT texts (pp. 302, 5), but less satisfactory on relating them: the supposed sources standing behind 2 Kings 18-20 are mentioned, but no solution or synthesis offered.

Despite this, a variety of interesting new facts are found throughout; for example, that the Greenland ice core shows traces of lead and silver from the Greek and Roman periods, indicating that the slight atmospheric pollution from smelting reached almost to the north pole (p. 23), or that improved horsemanship in Assyria moved chariots to mainly ceremonial roles (p. 507). There is hardly a figure, date, or theme relating to the OT which fails to receive attention. The only area of the book I found sometimes underdeveloped was the connection of the background to the OT itself. While this is not always the case (e.g., the helpful discussion of the political background of Ahab's reign in connection to the battle of Qarqar [p. 284]), more explicit discussion of how we can read the OT more intelligently in light of the background was sometimes lacking. The essay on the physical geography of Israel is meticulous, for example, but aside from the 'way of the sea' in Isaiah 9:1, does not explicitly relate its

survey to the text of the OT itself. More explicit connections of this kind might have helped readers who have not been to Israel themselves. Nevertheless, this volume is very well worth the time of readers looking to deepen their understanding of the OT.

Eric Ortlund, Oak Hill College, London

A Guide to Christian Spiritual Formation: How Scripture, Spirit, Community, and Mission Shape Our Souls. By Evan B. Howard. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018, ISBN: 978-0-8010-9780-5. 288pp. £15.99.

There are many books today on spiritual formation, but this one is a fresh, comprehensive and deeply pastoral study, and well worth attention. As its title suggests, it brings together multiple strands that God uses to shape His people in refreshingly wholistic ways.

Evan Howard is the founder and director of Spirituality Shoppe: An Evangelical Center for the Study of Christian Spirituality. He is also affiliate associate professor of Christian Spirituality at Fuller Theological Seminary. In a brief epilogue, Howard describes his own Christian history, participating in and learning from a variety of evangelical (and other) traditions, including his current charismatic liturgical church in Colorado. This makes the book attractive to a wide evangelical readership as he draws on the strengths and emphases of many sources.

The book comprises twelve chapters in four sections. Part One: The Basics, defines Christian Spiritual Formation and sets it into the whole Scripture narrative. Howard's working definition (p. 18) is this: 'I see Christian spiritual formation as *a Spirit- and human-led process by which individuals and communities mature in relationship with the Christian God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and are changed into ever-greater likeness to the life and gospel of this God.*' This definition flags up that Howard's understanding of spiritual formation is very wide, and embraces almost every possible area of Christian discipleship; but while the covering of topics is quite brief and condensed it is not in any way superficial.

Part Two: The Elements, explores the aims, contexts, agents, process and means of spiritual formation. Part Three: The Practice, surveys prayer, the communal shaping that comes through Christian community and church life, the whole person/community in every dimension of life that needs to be transformed, the outreach to the world beyond the church that is the calling of God's people, and the importance of discerning what God is doing. Part Four: The Ministry, which is by far the shortest section, looks at the particular calling of those—pastors or other leaders—especially gifted to enable the spiritual growth of others.

Each chapter has a helpful summary introduction—a form of abstract—and concludes with a number of extended questions for personal or group reflection. There are also a handful of diagrams. At the end of the book there are 18 pages of notes, including details of many books and journal articles; a Scripture Index; and a Subject Index. There are also numerous stories from real life throughout the book, illustrating in very concrete terms the outworking of the point Howard is making. These elements make it very reader/user-friendly.

For some readers, perhaps accustomed to a narrower understanding of the term 'spiritual formation', or aware of how the term may have been used in past centuries focusing on an individual's private devotion, Howard's inclusion of so much may seem too broad. This is whole-life development, discipleship in every dimension. Yet, isn't this indeed the scope of authentic transformation to which the Lord calls us?

This book is clearly the fruit of many years of pastoral experience, informed by biblical wisdom and by study across a range of disciplines, and is its own testimony to a winsome combination of academic excellence and lived-out devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. It should take its place on seminary/theological college courses, and for local church home study groups, as well as for individual reading.

Rose Dowsett, Glasgow

Gospel Witness: evangelism in word and deed. By David M. Gustafson. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019, ISBN: 978-0-8028-7680-5. xii + 301pp. £24.99.

David Gustafson is chair of the mission and evangelism department at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. He previously served for twenty-five years as a ministry leader with Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ) and as a pastor of evangelism and discipleship. This integration of academic and pastoral experience and passion enables Gustafson to write a book that is both suitable as a seminary/college textbook, and for church leaders, and men and women on the front line of disciple-making.

Gustafson's goal is to encourage mission-oriented ecclesiology, rather than simply to provide a handbook on effective individual evangelism. The book is not about evangelism in programmes or even church-organised events, but about mobilising and equipping all church members to take their part fully in witness to the gospel, and to the Lord of the gospel, in every dimension of life. This is more than what we say as we speak the good news (as we indeed should), but also about what we do and how we

live, serving our communities, being visual aids for the integrity of lives saturated with God's truth embodied.

In his Foreword, Robert Coleman suggests (p. ix) that while the Protestant Reformation rightly recovered the important doctrine of 'the priesthood of all believers', this has too often been seen in terms of the individual's direct access to God, without intermediary, and not so well understood as our shared priestly task in bringing unbelievers to God, and God to unbelievers. That is frequently assumed to be the responsibility of clergy and leaders. *Gospel Witness* unpacks what it means for the whole people of God to be both disciples and disciple-makers.

Gustafson states in his Preface (p. xi) his concern: 'How do we communicate the good news of Jesus Christ in the twenty-first century in ways that are clear and compelling to others? I believe that we must engage in gospel praxis by speaking the good news in words and demonstrating it with deeds. We must engage people who are far from God with the life-changing truths of the gospel. Now more than ever we must think like missionaries as we seek to bring the good news to others. The church stands at a critical moment in history. Unless we reorient our church life toward the biblical tasks of announcing the good news and making disciples, we will miss our opportunity.'

The book's twelve chapters explore how to address this pressing situation, theologically and practically. He covers topics such as Gospel Clarity (ch. 3), Conversion to Christ-Follower (ch. 7), Gospel Praxis in a Pluralistic Society (ch. 8), Baptism and Discipleship (ch. 10), and Shaping a Gospel-Sharing Church (ch. 11). Each chapter has a short introduction, and a conclusion, each of which summarises what will be, or has been, covered; and each chapter ends with a number of discussion questions, designed to help readers think further, and to apply the material to their own contexts. These questions would be helpful also in a study group setting. There are also some charts, and boxes with quotations or questions, scattered through the text. There is an epilogue, an extensive bibliography, and 8 pages of Index.

This is a book infused with pastoral heart, rooted in the practicalities of congregational life, and full of wisdom and inspiration. It digs deeply into each chapter's themes, but is always readable, and free from technical terms. Although written in a North American context, it is universal in its content and challenge, and would be as helpful in Asia and Europe, for instance, as in the USA.

I recommend it.

Rose Dowsett, Glasgow

Orthodox Radicals: Baptist Identity in the English Revolution. By Matthew C. Bingham. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN: 9780190912369. xi + 234pp. £64.

In *Orthodox Radicals*, Matthew Bingham argues that historians have been mistaken to talk of 'Baptists', or even 'Particular Baptists' and 'General Baptists', when discussing mid-seventeenth-century England. He contends that these labels give the misleading impression that there was a cohesive Baptist identity during the English revolution. Instead, Bingham suggests that we should think of seventeenth-century Particular Baptists as 'baptistic congregationalists'. This is no mere rebranding exercise: Bingham seeks to re-shape our understanding of the mid-seventeenth-century confessional boundaries by demonstrating that baptistic congregationalists' closest interpersonal and theological connections were with paedobaptistic congregationalists, including those present at the Westminster Assembly, rather than with those who shared their sacramental views. As such, *Orthodox Radicals* is not a narrative history of the Particular Baptists' origins, but a carefully argued re-interpretation of their identity.

Bingham sets out his stall in the book's opening pages, claiming that historians of the seventeenth-century have been 'unduly and unknowingly influenced' by 'denominational historians whose desire to tell their own "Baptist story"' comes 'at the expense of fidelity to the early modern record' (p. 1). These remarks establish the tone for what follows, as Bingham proceeds to dismantle and reconstruct readers' understanding of the group commonly known as the Particular Baptists.

Chapter one challenges the assumption of a pan-Baptist identity head-on, highlighting the Particular Baptists' unequivocal opposition to Arminianism and consistent prioritisation of soteriological views over baptismal ones. Bingham stresses that there was a 'complex religious landscape in which multiple doctrinal issues intersected' resulting in 'a diverse range of theological alignments' (p. 22), arguing that historians have been mistaken to assume that there was a 'coherent "baptist" communion' (p. 36).

Chapter two emphasises the unity between baptistic and paedobaptistic congregationalists in the 1640s, noting that they were 'held together by unquestioned adherence to Calvinist orthodoxy and the uncompromising logic of congregational polity' (p. 40). Bingham highlights, for example, how Henry Jacob, a leading baptistic congregationalist, received counsel from paedobaptistic congregationalists like Thomas Goodwin and Jeremiah Burroughs, who he described as 'honoured & Beloved Brethren' (p. 44). Fascinatingly, Bingham argues that the 'Dissenting Brethren' at

the Westminster Assembly may have even shared information with the baptistic congregationalists, enabling the swift publication of their own confession in October 1644.

Chapter three proceeds to show that these links were not simply inter-personal, but also theological. The baptistic congregationalists' position on baptism was, as Bingham puts it, 'sunk deep within the soil of con-gregational principle' (p. 63). He argues that the adoption of a baptistic position from the late 1630s onwards cannot be explained by biblicism alone, but must also be understood within the context of congregational-ists' beliefs about the visible church, which they correlated with the visible saints. Bingham contends that this ecclesiological position paved the way for some congregationalists to reject paedobaptism.

The book shifts gears in chapters four and five, using the preceding reconstruction as a lens through which to examine religious identity in the 1650s. Chapter four explores why baptistic views were tolerated under Cromwell while Arminian and Socinian views remained beyond the theological pale, given that they were all perceived as erroneous in the preceding decade. Bingham argues that those with Calvinistic baptistic views enjoyed religious toleration thanks to their longstanding ties to the congregationalists, who rose to prominence under Cromwell.

Chapter five examines baptistic congregationalists' self-identity in the Interregnum, arguing that they saw themselves as continuing the Puri-tan, and broader Protestant, pursuit of reform, viewing 'paedobaptism as simply one more "popish" barnacle that had inappropriately attached itself to the ark of Christ's church' (p. 136). In this context, Bingham argues that divisions between ecumenically minded and sectarian baptis-tic congregationalists were not simply about communion (and whether it should be open or closed), but reflected their broader disposition towards those who had not yet followed them in rejecting paedobaptism.

Readers might be surprised to find almost no discussion of the 'Gen-eral Baptists'. Bingham unapologetically focuses on the 'Particular Bap-tists' because to incorporate the General Baptists alongside them would undermine his central thesis. Given his argument that Particular Bap-tists are better understood as baptistic congregationalists though, read-ers may wonder how best to describe the so-called General Baptists. This is addressed briefly in the conclusion where Bingham suggests the label 'baptistic separatists' (p. 153), but this is not explored in any detail. He has, however, examined the identity of this group in an article in *The Seventeenth Century* – 'English radical religion and the invention of the General Baptists, 1609–1660' (2019) – which readers may find a useful complement to *Orthodox Radicals*.

While Bingham's argument may irk those invested in preserving some sense of a pan-Baptist denominational identity, *Orthodox Radicals* makes the provocative and, in this reader's view, compelling case that these labels are anachronistic and misleading when applied to mid-seventeenth-century England. *Orthodox Radicals* is an important work that deserves a wide-readership amongst all those who desire to understand better the theological landscape of the English revolution.

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Canonical Theology: The Biblical Canon, Sola Scriptura, and Theological Method. By John C. Peckham. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7330-9. xiii + 295pp. £35.00.

As the sub-title suggests, this is a wide-ranging book, arguing that the 66 books of the Protestant canon of Scripture must be central to any theological enterprise. They are to be the norm that norms everything else.

Peckham begins with contemporary questions about the canon of Scripture. He distinguishes the 'intrinsic-canon' model from the 'communitarian-canon' model. With the latter it is the community that determines the canon, so that the canon is in effect an extension of community authority; whereas with the intrinsic canon it is God who determines the canon which the community merely recognizes. Peckham affirms several grounds – theological and historical – why he believes the intrinsic-cannon view to be correct. At the same time he points out that since the 66 books of the Protestant canon are accepted by virtually all professing Christians (though some may acknowledge more books), this answers the tricky question – which community has the right to endorse the Scriptures? If communitarians will accept the answer that it is those communities which hold to the 66 books of the canon, then they need feel no qualms about the starting-point for Peckham's theological method.

In the second major section of the book Peckham moves on to deal with whether sola scriptura can be at the heart of the theological enterprise. He is alert to the major objections to sola scriptura – that it is the product of circular reasoning, that it excludes all other sources of knowledge (including the testimony of past generations of believers), and that it inevitably leads to subjectivism and so to unrestrained diversity. In answering these objections, Peckham recognizes that all interpreters, both individuals and community groups, will bring to the task of interpretation of the sacred texts a degree of subjectivity and fallibility. Those who make sola scriptura the touchstone of their theology are no exception. Hence Peckham is modest about the degree of certainty and uniformity his recommended approach will produce. No contemporary theologian,

however, should avoid bringing their conclusions to the bar of the whole scriptural canon. Some areas of confusion and diversity may remain; but the effort is worthwhile because presently believers may see through a glass darkly, but the knowledge they are given by God of spiritual realities is genuine (cf. 1 Cor. 13:12).

The final sections of the book, which deal most directly with theological method, are the most complex. They involve an attempt to blend together the often distinct approaches of biblical theology and systematics. Peckham believes it is vital as a first step to ascertain the significance of the various passages of Scripture in their immediate context. But it is insufficient to determine the particulars of individual texts. Canonical theologians have also to ask what is the conceptual framework underpinning the text. Once they have fulfilled these tasks, they have to use both these perspectives to formulate their own conclusions. But these conclusions, Peckham assures us, are never to be taken as the last word. They remain open to review and possible correction from further light derived from the whole of Scripture.

Peckham does not lose sight of the importance of spiritual factors in the work of understanding and of formulating the results of detailed investigation of the texts of Scripture. He is especially vigilant about drawing excessive conclusions from what he regards as limited revelation, including the accommodative and analogical use of language in relation to God. Better modest conclusions and modest pretensions than establishing some systematic theology which itself takes precedence over Scripture.

From this brief sketch of Peckham's book, I might give the impression that it is excessively abstract and theoretical. This would be misleading, because the author regularly illustrates his theories with practical examples of the procedures he commends. Thus, readers will find interesting reflections on contemporary debates about the Trinity, the (im)passibility of God and the nature of the love of God.

As with most books about theological method, this is essentially a book for the academy. Certainly, Peckham does acknowledge, in a passing remark, that churches will want to endorse doctrinal standards for their office-bearers; but he does not go into the implications of this. I would have some concerns that in a church setting his procedure in careless hands might lead to questioning the fundamentals of the faith. Even outside of church settings I feel it is unreasonable for believing theologians to question those presuppositions they acquired when they first believed the gospel message. It would have helped if Peckham had distinguished between doctrines that are clearly affirmed and those which provoke

debate among believers. Perhaps there is room here for further work on his part.

Despite the academic thrust, pastors and the like will benefit from a careful analysis of contemporary Protestant debate about the sort of issues involved in the relation between Scripture, Tradition and the authority of the Church. Though these historically have been issues central to Protestant-Roman Catholic debate, Peckham demonstrates that many Protestant scholars have for different reasons moved on to what would once have been considered particularly Roman Catholic territory – the appeal to an extracanonical arbiter in areas of theological disagreement. By contrast, Peckham seeks to demonstrate confidently that it is still possible to affirm and practise a theology based on sola scriptura.

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Christian Dogmatics: An Introduction. By Cornelis van der Kooi and Gijsbert van den Brink. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7265-4. xiv + 806pp. £34.99.

It is difficult to do justice to a volume of over 800 pages in a short review but what must be said is that this one-volume systematic theology provides an excellent introduction to the discipline of Christian Dogmatics and is to be highly commended.

First published in Dutch, this English language version introduces to a wider audience the work of these fine Dutch scholars. It also provides a different perspective to the currently available one-volume systematic theologies, which come mostly from North America, by opening up issues from a Dutch and a wider European perspective, often lacking in those other volumes.

The book is biblical and Reformed in its approach. The biblical basis for every doctrine is expressed clearly and confidently, recognising the important contribution of biblical studies to systematic theology. It arises out of the Reformed tradition but demonstrates the breadth of that tradition, not least by introducing us to many of the elements of Dutch neo-Calvinism. The book also has a strong Trinitarian centre and, on most matters under discussion, this Trinitarian approach helps to open up the subject in an enlightening way. The same can be said of the consistent eschatological viewpoint running through the chapters.

The book begins by laying out its aims and objectives and its definition of dogmatics as 'Disciplined Thinking about God'. It then sets this discipline in the context of the wider discipline of theology, before embarking on the question of God and his existence. This is regarded as prolegomena before embarking on theology proper by discussing the

Trinity. After dealing with the doctrine of God, the writers turn to the doctrines of creation and revelation. This is followed by several chapters encompassing anthropology, before turning to Christology and Pneumatology. The final four chapters are on Scripture, Ecclesiology, Justification and Eschatology. If you think that order of subjects is a little unusual, you have to read the book to see its internal rationale!

For those who want an overview of Christian theology, covering all the major doctrines and which is up to date with recent debates and developments, this book is to be recommended. It will be particularly helpful for the reading lists of university and seminary courses in systematic theology because, while it presents a Reformed theological perspective, it does not offer a narrow 'party line' but rather explores a range of views on the doctrines under consideration, often leaving a decision on conflicting views quite open-ended. It also tackles 'hot button' issues which are absent from many similar volumes, such as the impact on Christian theology of the possibility of extra-terrestrial life (p. 205), as well as discussions on human sexuality in the light of modern debates (p. 280ff.).

Throughout, the writers engage with the leading scholars in the field, as opposed to some recent Reformed systematic theologies, which only interact with scholars in their own tradition. Indeed, van der Kooi and Van den Brink engage with theologians from the early church right through to those of the present day in an impressive and enriching manner. Having said that, we should also say that the engagement with the theological tradition and with the writers under discussion is accessible and clear. Indeed, the book has been written in such a way that educated Christians who are not registered students of theology will benefit from its simplicity of the language, careful explanation of theological vocabulary and the translation of Greek and Latin terms. The integrated footnote system and the further reading recommended at the end of each chapter, plus the excellent bibliography and indices at the end of the book, are also most helpful in directing further thought.

It is to be hoped that many will turn to this book and benefit from it.

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God of all Comfort: A Trinitarian Response to the Horrors of This World. By Scott Harrower. (Studies in Historical and Systematic Theology). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2019. ISBN: 978-1-68-359230-3. xiv + 255pp. £16.00.

Harrower offers a theological and pastoral response to victims of horrors and trauma, arguing that their experience of life as meaningless can be transformed by sharing in God's own redemptive perspective on hor-

rors. This work might well prove useful for pastors or educated laypersons aiming to support victims of horrors as well as for the burgeoning movement within theology interacting with horror studies (however, I do note some concerns in what follows).

Harrower begins describing an experience of peaceful, interpersonal relationship with God and others as the 'ideal' human state, and against this backdrop, defines 'horrors' as events which disintegrate some aspect of a person's existence in a manner which cannot be meaningfully integrated into their self-understanding. He proceeds to dialogue with a variety of issues arising from horrors which his account will attempt to address, of particular note are problematic interpretations of horrors which fail to allow for the possibility of a victim's transformation. Scripture is then identified as a vehicle through which a horror victim may interpersonally share in God's perspective, lending a new perspective to the victim which frees them from being confined to reading scripture solely through the lens of their suffering. To exemplify this dynamic, Harrower first offers a nihilistic, horror inspired-reading of Matthew's gospel. This sort of reading would serve only to confirm the hopelessness of a trauma-victim, but then offers a 'blessed' reading of the same gospel, contending that when the gospel is read while sharing in 'God's perspective,' horrors come to be viewed in light of Christ's redemption. The book concludes with a number of chapters outlining how sharing in the triune God's perspective on horrors offers to horror victims security in the midst of a traumatic world, an antidote to a hopeless self-perception, and a sense of meaning.

Harrower integrates voices from analytic and continental philosophy, trauma studies, biblical studies, pastoral care, psychology, and systematic theology. It's rare to encounter a single text dialoguing with Richard Fahy's philosophy of horror, Paul Griffith's eschatology, Hilary of Poitiers's exegesis, Marilyn McCord Adam's theodicy, and Emmanuel Levinas's phenomenology! While the analysis is necessarily rather general given this breadth of dialogue partners, Harrower impressively weaves these divergent threads into a single compelling argument. Particularly helpful, is Harrower's insightful contention that a theological approach resists the emphasis within trauma studies upon the intractability of horror's effects (cf. pp. 70-85). Additionally, Harrower's interdisciplinary approach shines in his use of scripture. The combination of theological, biblical, and pastoral engagement, leads him to speak (winsomely and relatively uniquely given the current norms within biblical studies) of the primary function of scripture as 'mediat[ing] a personal encounter with God and God's knowledge of himself and all things as they relate to him' (p. 64).

Yet there is a dominance of contemporary voices with no sustained dialogue with pre-modern or even early modern figures (Harrower identifies Thomas's *Summa Theologiae* as a dialogue partner (p. 22) without sustained engagement with the text). One example of a consequence of this imbalance is Harrower's treatment of the Trinity. Many have noted—Barth famously—that for pre-moderns and the creeds themselves, to refer to God as three 'persons' was not to refer to God as three conscious subjects in a modern sense. Yet when Harrower (at key points in his argument) argues that God is a 'stream of consciousness' or conscious subject in which humans can share (pp. 119, 172, 208), he straightforwardly and without qualification cites as evidence of such claims regarding divine consciousness, studies on the nature of human consciousness. Harrower's mode of argumentation implies that God's life is unqualifiedly similar to a conscious human subject, without explicit discussion of the theological novelty and possible issues arising from such an approach (e.g. Ivor Davidson and Rowan Williams argue that unqualifiedly presenting God as a conscious subject is not only novel but creates intractable problems in modern Christologies). Further, Harrower refers to God as a 'mind'—another peculiarly modern divine description—without noting the ways in which such a predicate, if used at all, might need to be qualified. Finally, in some instances Harrower refers to a 'personal mind, belonging to God the Trinity,' (p. 61), while in other contexts describing the Trinity as three distinct centres of consciousness (pp. 12-13). Is God a single mind or three distinct minds? I am unsure as to Harrower's position. He proceeds so briskly to the pastoral application of the Trinity that we struggle to discern whom the triune God offering help is.

Harrower is right to contend that sustained attention to the doctrine of the Trinity yields pastoral dividends, and I applaud both the intention and the scope of his project. My concern is not that Harrower has failed to offer the particular account of the Trinity I prefer. Rather, I worry that the breadth of contemporary voices forces Harrower's analysis of the response of the triune God to horrors into a fairly narrow frame. This may lead to failures to direct us to other possible resources which reflection upon the triune God may unexpectedly offer to horror victims. Nonetheless, the God of all comfort offers victims hope and meaning in the midst of a world of horrors, and Harrower winsomely directs our attention to this God.

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