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BREAD FOR THE WORLD

BFW is seeking qualified volunteers for both its Intern Program and Summer Organizing Project. The Intern Program places volunteers in the New York and Washington, D.C. offices for varying lengths of time and with a variety of responsibilities. The Summer Organizing Project is a ten-week internship which includes basic training in organizing skills and eight weeks of organizing within a specific geographical region. For more information on either program, contact Sharon Pauling, Bread for the World, 32 Union Square East, New York, NY 10003.

INQUIRY

(Questions, proposals, discussions, and research reports on theological and biblical issues)

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY: TOWARDS AN EVALUATION OF THE ROGERS AND MCKIM PROPOSAL

By John D. Woodbridge, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. A review article on a review article by Mark Lau Branson.

In an article appearing this spring in The Trinity Journal, published by Trinity Theological Divinity School, professor John Woodbridge critiques The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible: An Historical Approach by Jack Rogers and Donald McKim (Harper and Row, 1980). (TSF Bulletin published reviews by Gerald Sheppard and Robert Johnston in November, 1980). This report will survey that review article (same 80 pages including notes) and provide excerpts of Woodbridge's work. In our April issue, Donald McKim will reply to the entire article.

TSF members will no doubt gain understanding concerning the intertwined doctrinal issues of inspiration, revelation, and biblical authority. Equally important for the student are the lessons available here concerning historical methodology. As researchers and writers, students can benefit from these exchanges on the study of history. Commentary and examples in the book and in these articles will provide a list of methodological pointers which can help readers acquire guidelines and procedures for writing about historical theology.

Evangelical scholars value "the historical position of the church" and therefore they study scholars throughout church history in order to more responsibly discern contemporary doctrinal formulations. As Woodbridge states,

they have struggled with the problem of determining whether or not a development in doctrine is a healthy clarification of the biblical data or a dangerous departure from evangelical orthodoxy. If a doctrine has a long history of acceptance by their church, or by "the church," Protestants along with Roman Catholics generally give it serious consideration.

In contrast to some modern day evangelical scholars, Rogers and McKim challenge the assumption that the contemporary concept of "inerrancy" has been the traditional position of the church. They seek in this volume to substantiate the view that the infallibility of Scripture has traditionally been and should be seen in regard to faith and practice but not as infalli-

ble (as measured by modern standards) when passages touch on geography, history, or science. Woodbridge commends Rogers and McKim for: (1) their valuing of historical research an important area of research too often overlooked, and their willingness to receive criticism so that their contribution serves as an opening presentation which will encourage further work.

Then Woodbridge lists nine methodological problems: (1) "The Overly Generous Title of the Volume." Since they are dealing only with a particular strand of Reformed thought, the title should not convey that they are writing about a general broad Christian theme of inspiration. (2) "The Apologetic Caution of the Study." Woodbridge would prefer that historians have "a modicum of objectivity," and he believes Rogers and McKim are overwhelmed by their agenda of proving their case. (3) "The Arbitrary Selection of Data." In selecting those sources chosen as representative of church tradition, Rogers and McKim fail to provide methodological reasoning for the choices, and ignore contrary evidences. (4) "The Doubtful Documentation." Woodbridge contends that Rogers and McKim too often relied on secondary sources and misinterpreted both secondary and primary materials. (5) "The Limiting Optic of the Authors' Concerns." Philosophical and theological concerns relating to "biblical authority" are only included when incidentally discussed as the narrower concepts of inerrancy and infallibility are discussed. (6) "The Propensity for Facilitative Labeling." An outdated historical method of grouping individuals without regard to contexts and centuries leads Rogers and McKim to inaccurately use the label "scholastic." (7) "The Inappropriate 'Historical Disjunctions'." Logical disjunctions help one sort out contradictory propositions. Woodbridge writes that Rogers and McKim relied too frequently on false historical disjunctions:

A partial listing of the authors' more important "historical disjunctions" would include these: . . . because a thinker speaks of God accommodating himself to us in the words of Scripture, it is assumed that he or she does not believe in complete biblical infallibility; . . . because a thinker engages in the critical study of biblical texts, it is assumed that he or she does not uphold complete biblical infallibility; because a thinker stresses the fact that the authority of the Scriptures is made known to an individual through the internal witness of the Holy Spirit, it is assumed that he or she does not also believe in complete biblical infallibility.

(8) "The Dated Models of Conceptualization." Citing "recent developments" in the study of history (social history of ideas, history of peoples, history of the book trade), Woodbridge criticizes the tendency to see a religious leader (e.g., Luther) as representative for those who follow (e.g., Lutherans). (9) "The Bibliographical Insensitivity." Woodbridge cites omissions in studied literature which cause the work to be unbalanced.

Next, Woodbridge moves through the historical sequence to offer corrections to the Rogers/McKim interpretations. I will discuss seven of those sections.

(A) **The Patristic Period.** In the footnote, Woodbridge refers to Professor Bromley's comment, "If the Fathers did not give any particular emphasis to the term 'inerrancy,' they undoubtedly expressed the content denoted by the word." Though differences existed during this formative period, Woodbridge states that "common traits of agreement did apparently exist among many Christians concerning biblical infallibility." He goes on to cite Professor Bruce Vawter: "It would be pointless to call into question that biblical inerrancy in a rather absolut

ism was a common persuasion from the beginning of Christian times, and from Jewish times before that." After citing Fathers who apparently held the position of complete biblical infallibility Woodbridge writes;

On the one hand, authors Rogers and McKim simply did not allude to Clement of Rome, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus or other church Fathers who make statements which counter their hypothesis. On the other hand, they suggest that the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Chrysostom and Augustine support their contentions. Professor David Wells points out that the first three authors were Greek and the "fourth dalled with Greek philosophy." Thus Rogers and McKim largely ignored the Roman, legal and Western tradition among the Fathers. Their selection, therefore, is constricted and not felicitous.

Rogers and McKim selectively quote further comments from Vawter concerning Origen, observing that "on occasion Origen wrote as if he did not believe in inerrancy when making a pragmatic response to an exegetical or apologetic difficulty . . ." but Woodbridge quotes Vawter to offer a different picture:

It seems to be clear enough that, in company with most of the other Christian commentators of the age, he most often acted on the unexpressed assumption that the Scripture is a divine composition through and through, and for this reason infallibly true in all its parts. He could say, in fact, that the Biblical texts were not the words of men but of the Holy Spirit (*De princ.* 4.9, PG 11:360), and that from this it followed that they were filled with the wisdom and truth of God down to the very least letter.

Woodbridge adds,

Whether or not Origen was an inerrantist, albeit inconsistent on occasion in practice, is ultimately not our concern at this juncture. Open-minded scholars have differed about the matter. What concerns us more is the disconcerting discovery that Rogers and McKim do not interact evenhandedly with their documentation in sorting out Origen's attitudes on the question.

As the discussion moves to Augustine, Woodbridge quotes from correspondence with Jerome: "I have learned to yield with respect and honor only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error." Rogers and McKim had replied,

Error, for Augustine, had to do with the deliberate and deceitful telling of that which the author knew to be untrue. It was in that context of ethical seriousness that he declared that the biblical "authors were completely free from error." He did not apply the concept of error to problems that arose from the human limitations of knowledge, various perspectives in reporting events, or historical or cultural conditioning of the authors.

INTERNATIONAL BONHOEFFER SOCIETY

Eberhard and Renate Bethge (Bonhoeffer's nephew and author of the definitive biography, *Bonhoeffer*) will be "Scholars in residence" at Lynchburg College in Virginia for the Fall Semester of 1981. Their activities there will begin with leadership of an institute for ministers and scholars on "What Bonhoeffer Means to the Church Today," August 12-14. As additional conferences and lectures in Lynchburg permit, the Bethges will also be able to accept invitations to lecture in churches and other institutions during the semester which ends before Christmas. Further information about the institute, or the possibility of arranging for the Bethges to lecture elsewhere, should be directed to: J.P. Kelley, Department of Religious Studies, Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, VA 24501.

Burton Nelson is working on arrangements for a U.S. lecture tour by Werner Koch in October-November, 1981. Dr. Koch, who was a student of Bonhoeffer, is willing to lecture on the Church Struggle and the resistance movement and also to preach. For fuller details and arrangements, contact him at North Park Theological Seminary, 5125 North Spaulding Avenue, Chicago, IL 60625.

For more information on the activities of the Bonhoeffer Society, contact Dr. Geoffrey B. Kelly, Bonhoeffer Society, La Salle College, Philadelphia, PA 19141.

Woodbridge disagrees, stating that Augustine believed that, "The biblical writers knew truths about the world that they did not reveal in Holy Writ. Concerning the heavens, he wrote,

People often ask what Scripture has to say of the shape of the heavens . . .

Although our authors knew the truth about the shape of the heavens, the Spirit of God who spoke by them did not intend to teach these things, in no way profitable for salvation.

Woodbridge argues that Rogers and McKim misread St. Augustine when the Father urged that unlearned Christians not make an easy appeal to Scripture about scientific questions. Woodbridge similarly suggests that Rogers and McKim misquote their chief secondary source on Wycliffe's views.

(B) The Reformation. Woodbridge likewise believes Rogers and McKim inaccurately interpret Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli. He does, however, appreciate certain aspects of their analysis:

Rogers and McKim give a competent analysis of Luther's and Calvin's stress upon the Bible's essential function of revealing salvation truths. They correctly emphasize the role of Christ, the incarnate Word of God, in establishing the authority of the written Word, the Bible. They also understand that for Luther and Calvin, doing theology should bear practical fruit in the Christian's life. Evangelical readers can benefit from these insights.

Influenced significantly by a neo-orthodox historiography, Rogers and McKim are less successful in creating an over-all paradigm with which to understand the Reformers' thought. Their commitment to several of the "historical disjunctions" to which we referred earlier throws their basic interpretation askew. Rogers and McKim assume almost mechanically that Luther and Calvin did not believe in complete biblical infallibility because they acknowledged the principle of accommodation, because they indicated that the Bible's chief function is to

reveal salvation truths, and because they engaged in forms of biblical criticism.

Luther and Calvin worked out authority questions by stressing scriptural authority as final, as opposed to church authority for Roman Catholics. Woodbridge cites Luther:

It is impossible that Scripture should contradict itself; it only appears so to senseless and obstinate hypocrites But everyone, indeed, knows that at times they (the Fathers) have erred as men will; therefore, I am ready to trust them only when they prove their opinions from Scripture, which has never erred.

Also, Luther declared, "One letter, even a single tittle of Scripture means more to us than heaven and earth." Based on these and other quotations, Woodbridge concludes, "Martin Luther's commitment to the verbal plenary inspiration and biblical infallibility of the Scriptures appears clearly documented in these statements and other ones like them." He cited Lutheran scholar Paul Althaus in this regard.

Rogers and McKim wrote that Luther did not . . .

hold to the theory of the scientific and historical inerrancy of the original manuscripts of Scripture that began to develop in the Post-Reformation periods For Luther, the Bible was infallible in accomplishing its purpose of proclaiming the salvation which the Father had wrought in His Son Jesus Christ.

This conclusion is based on Luther's views of accommodation and a collection of quotations from Luther about particular "critical opinions" about Scripture. Theologian Reinhold Seebergs had compiled the original list, but Woodbridge points out that Rogers and McKim had missed M. Reu's counterclaims. For instance, Woodbridge takes a comment from Luther's *Table Talk*: "The Books of Kings are more trustworthy than the Books of Chronicles," and then gives us Reu's view:

We shall only give the entire sentence from which the quotation has been taken. The sentence reads, "The writer of Chronicles noted only the summary and chief stories and events. Whatever is less important and immaterial he passed by. For this reason the Books of Kings are more credible than the Chronicles." What more does this state than that the Chronicles pass by many things and condense others which the Books of Kings include or offer in detail? In view of the different plan followed by these two Biblical books the value of Chronicles as a historical source is less than that of Kings. But there is not a word about errors in it.

Rogers and McKim had rejected Reu's work, partially based on the evaluation of Otto Heick. Woodbridge notes that: "They fail to observe that Heick, a church historian with pronounced neo-orthodox leanings, may have quite naturally found Reu's exhaustively documented essay disconcerting." Selectivity with Luther's works, a use of "historical disjunctions" which cause misunderstandings, and mistreatment of secondary sources leads Woodbridge to conclude that Rogers and McKim have not done reliable historical work.

Concerning Calvin, Woodbridge again notes the influence of

neoorthodox opinions on the reading of history by Rogers and McKim. In 1959, John McNeill sought to prove Calvin did not believe in inerrancy. He attempted to do this by showing Calvin did not believe in mechanical dictation, so McNeill assumed that Calvin allowed for errors in Scripture. Woodbridge denies that such an assumption follows. Though Calvin did not believe that the human authors were "automatons," God could still "protect his Word" from error. A primary concern for Rogers and McKim centers on Calvin's views of biblical quotations:

Calvin noted that Paul misquoted Psalm 51:4 in Romans 3:4. Calvin generalized about such inaccuracies: "We know that, in quoting Scripture the apostles often used freer language than the original, since they were content if what they quoted applied to their subject, and therefore they were not overcareful in their use of words."

Woodbridge disagrees:

Rogers and McKim's suggestion that Calvin thought Paul "misquoted" Psalm 51:4 is not an appropriate evaluation. A few lines before the passage Rogers and McKim cite, Calvin declared: "And that Paul has quoted this passage according to the proper and real meaning of David is clear from the objection that is immediately added The apostles did not "misquote" Scripture according to Calvin because they expressed the meaning of the Old Testament passages with other words.

Then Woodbridge again cites Rogers and McKim:

Similarly in Calvin's commentary on Hebrews 10:6, he affirmed that the saving purpose of the biblical message was adequately communicated through an imperfect form of words: "They (the apostles) were not over-scrupulous in quoting words providing that they did not misuse Scripture for their convenience. We must always look at the purpose for which quotations are made . . . but as far as the words are concerned, as in other things which are not relevant to the present purpose, they allow themselves some indulgence."

Woodbridge continues his case:

First, the passage which Rogers cites comes from Calvin's commentary on Hebrews 10:5, not Hebrews 10:6. Second, Calvin does not refer to the "saving purpose of the biblical message" in the passage. Third, the authors exclude an important passage from their quotation: "We must always look at the purpose to which quotations are made, *because they have careful regard for the main object so as not to turn Scripture to a false meaning*" (italics are Woodbridge's). In this deleted phrase Calvin is apparently arguing that the Apostles did not intend to betray the meaning of Scripture by creating misquotations. He does not say anything about the "imperfect form of words" in this passage. Rogers and McKim claim

that Calvin the scholar "discerned technical inaccuracies in the humanly written text."

Rogers and McKim write, "In his commentary on Acts 7:16, Calvin declared that Luke had "made a manifest error" as comparison with the text of Genesis 23:9 showed. According to Woodbridge, Calvin wrote,

And whereas he (Luke) saith afterward, they were laid in the sepulchre which Abraham had bought of the sons of Hemor, it is manifest that there is a fault (mistake) in the word Abraham Wherefore this place must be amended.

So, for Woodbridge,

Calvin does not tell us to whom the error should be attributed: "it is manifest that" is the language of an observation, not an attribution. It is probable the Reformer believed that a copyist had made the error.

Woodbridge also discusses other disputed passages of the Reformers and their attitudes toward "science." He proposes that the Bible did inform their cosmologies to a certain extent. In discussing Calvin's view of biblical infallibility, Woodbridge cites studies by Edward Dowey, Brian Gerrish, and H. Jackson Forstman.

(C) The Bible as Infallible Rule. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Rogers and McKim find a pivotal point, according to Woodbridge. Phrases like "infallible rule of faith and practice" are seen by them as expressions which limit the Bible's infallibility to particular issues. Says Woodbridge,

. . . once again Rogers and McKim unfortunately misread the context out of which Reformation Christians made these statements. Certainly these Christians did believe the Scriptures communicate infallible truths about faith and practice. But they did not intend to create by their expressions a limitation on the extent of infallibility of the biblical text. The issue was otherwise. As we indicated earlier, Roman Catholic apologists had argued in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that Protestants needed the teachings of the church (councils, tradition, papal pronouncements) in addition to biblical data, in order to apprehend correct instruction about salvation. For example, in his 1609 Catechism the famous Roman Catholic Guillaume Baile presented this question and answer for lay persons:

Are all things necessary for our salvation found expressly in Scripture? No. It is for this reason that Scripture sends us back to Traditions some of which being divine have as much authority as if they were written.

To this kind of Roman Catholic claim, Protestants frequently responded that the Bible alone was the sufficient and infallible rule of faith and practice. That is, Christians did not need other sources of information (councils, traditions, etc.) in order to

formulate their soteriology. It did not cross the minds of these Protestants to use this expression as a phrase circumscribing the extent of biblical infallibility.

Woodbridge cites other primary sources to sustain his case.
(D) Post-Reformation According to Woodbridge, Rogers and McKim

portray many of the Continental Protestant theologians of the seventeenth century as uncritical disciples of Aristotle and therefore as "scholastics." These theologians were the ones who introduced complete biblical infallibility to Protestant communions and began to treat the Bible's words as conveyors of technically correct information about the world. . . . Melancthon launched what became the scholastic movement for the Lutherans, while Theodore Beza (1519-1605), influenced by several Italian Aristotelians, did the same for the Reformed communities.

In England, Puritans were largely spared from falling under scholasticism's sway. Their philosophical premises, frequently drawn from Ramist sources, acted as effective antidotes. Unfortunately, John Owen (1616-1683) eventually turned some of his fellow Englishmen towards scholasticism later in the seventeenth century.

Woodbridge again quotes Rogers and McKim, In theological method and especially in their view of the authority and interpretation of Scripture, post-Reformation scholastics were more like Thomas Aquinas and his medieval approach than they were like Calvin and his Reformation position.

After citing other primary sources and contemporary interpreters, Woodbridge emphasizes,

The authors reveal one of the weaker interfaces of their interpretation when they link different philosophical preferences with inerrancy or errancy. Their paradigm that "Aristotelians" were generally deductivists, rationalistic, and inerrantists whereas Platonists-Ramists were generally inductivists, fideistically inclined, and believers in limited infallibility is simplistic and reductionistic. And yet they use a form of this paradigm throughout their volume. It is particularly inappropriate for any analysis of seventeenth century theologians. In that century one can find individuals with sympathies for either Aristotle, or Plato, or Descartes, or Ramus, who affirmed biblical inerrancy. The philosophical presuppositions of a thinker did not fashion in a deterministic way his attitudes towards the Scripture.

Woodbridge refers to the works of Paul Dibon, John Robinson, Geoffrey Bromiley and others to substantiate his analysis

of the post-Reformation period.

(E) English Puritans In the section on English Puritans, and especially the Westminster Divines, Woodbridge points out:

According to Rogers and McKim, the English Puritans affirmed limited biblical infallibility but did not adhere to a belief in biblical inerrancy. Remarkably enough in his brief discussion of inerrancy, Rogers does not offer a single illustration of a Westminster Divine who indicated that the Bible did err in any way.

Here, Woodbridge likens the contemporary Rogers-Gerstner sparring to an earlier Briggs-Warfield discussion. In critiquing the works of Rogers and McKim, Woodbridge writes:

the burden of Rogers and McKim's demonstration tends to rest upon "historical disjunctions" because the Westminster Divines believed that the principal purpose of the Bible is to teach salvation truths, because they indicated that the internal witness of the Holy Spirit confirms the authority of the Scripture to the faithful, they did not believe in complete biblical infallibility (or inerrancy). And once again, we suggest that adherence to those particular beliefs does not preclude a belief in the latter doctrine.

Woodbridge also disagrees with Rogers and McKim concerning what the Divines meant by the word "infallible." Woodbridge cites Ames, whom Rogers elsewhere approves as a Ramist who helped keep the Divines out of "scholasticism." Ames wrote,

Only those could set down the rule of faith and conduct in writing who in that matter were free from all error because of the direct and infallible direction they had from God. . . . In those things that were hidden and unknown, divine inspiration was at work by itself. In those things which were known, or where the knowledge was obtained by ordinary means, there was added the writers' devout zeal so that (God assisting them) they might not err in writing.

Woodbridge evaluates,

If the Ramist Ames does set the categories for interpreting the Westminster Confession, then Rogers and McKim have seriously misread that document concerning what the word "infallible" means and how it relates to original autographs hypothesis. . . . Rogers, who cites exclusively secondary sources about Ames, evidently did not become acquainted with the actual writings of the theologian. Due to this kind of methodological lapse, Rogers' *Scripture in the Westminster Confession* and Rogers and McKim's joint study apparently do not give us the last word on the English Puritans and the Westminster Confession. Even our brief comments allow us to affirm this.

OVERSEAS MINISTRIES STUDY CENTER

The Overseas Ministries Study Center, a residential center of continuing education for cross-cultural and international ministries, is offering several courses this spring which may be of interest:

"Leadership Development in Third World Churches." Harvie Conn, Westminster Seminary, and Samuel Rowen, Missionary Internship. March 23-27.

"Christian Mission in a Secular Age." C. Rene Padilla, International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Argentina. March 30-April 3.

"When Faith Meets Faith." Stephen Neill, Oxford. April 7-10.

"The Fullness of Mission: A Latin American Perspective." Samuel Escobar, President, Latin American Theological Fraternity, Lima, Peru. April 21-24.

For more information, write Overseas Ministries Study Center, P.O. Box 2057, Ventnor, NJ 08406.

Woodbridge also cites William Whitaker's *Disputation on Scripture* (1588) as setting the stage for Protestant discussions of biblical infallibility in the seventeenth century. No scholastic, Whitaker (a Cambridge professor) held the belief in complete biblical infallibility and believed that St. Augustine maintained the same stance. Woodbridge includes a lengthy section on the first-significant attacks against complete biblical infallibility in the early modern period. He notes Rogers and McKim's failure to discuss the impact of Jewish scholarship, the writings of Libertines, the apologetics of Roman Catholic fideists, and those of early critics (Holdens, Simon, Le Clerc, Spinoza, and others) upon discussion of biblical infallibility.

(F) Old Princetonians Rogers and McKim write about the development of "Reformed scholasticism" in the U.S. The influence of Turretin is emphasized, as is that of Witherspoon. In critique, Woodbridge writes:

First, the authors do not set the historical stage well for understanding the nineteenth century Princetonians. They do not comment upon Reformed traditions in the Thirteen Colonies. If they had done so they might have noted William Ames' *Marrow of Christian Divinity* (1623, 1627, 1629) which served as an important textbook at Harvard during the seventeenth century. We recall that Ames advocated biblical inerrancy in that volume. They might have discovered that Jonathan Edwards, one of the most brilliant intellects of the eighteenth century, maintained a belief in complete biblical infallibility. They might have observed that some Americans had questions concerning the concept of biblical infallibility in the early eighteenth century: that is more than one hundred years before the idea of establishing Princeton Seminary was more than a twinkle in the eyes of Archibald Alexander or Ashbel Green.

Second, Rogers and McKim paint the Princetonians into a corner as if they were the doughty lone defenders of an outmoded doctrine. In point of fact many contemporary Europeans and Americans from non-Presbyterian communions affirmed the same belief. Samuel Taylor Coleridge caused an uproar in the British Isles and North America by challenging the concept of complete biblical infallibility in his *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit* (1841).

Woodbridge goes on to cite many other non-Princetonians who upheld biblical inerrancy: Beck (Swiss), W. Lee, Gausson (Geneva), John Henry Newman, Charles Finney, G. F. W. Walther.

The attempts of Rogers and McKim and others to isolate Princetonians as reactionary defenders of biblical inerrancy becomes less convincing when placed against the sweep of European and American Christianity in the nineteenth century. Many volumes were published in which authors defended the complete biblical infallibility of the original autographs without making a reference to the Old Princetonians as authorities.

Woodbridge also believes Rogers and McKim give too much credit to Sandeem, including the suggestion

that Warfield and Hodge conspired together to create an unassailable apologetic for Holy Writ's inerrancy. The critic of the doctrine could only prove the errancy of Scripture by locating errors in the original autographs. Since the autographs were lost, the critic could never gain access to them in order to prove his case.

In reality, Warfield and Hodge were emphasizing a position long honored by many Christians throughout the ages.

Ongoing research in the correspondence of A. A. Hodge and B. B. Warfield for the late 1870s and early 1880s gives no hint of a conspiratorial mentality shared by these two men.

(G) Barth and Berkouwer Finally, Woodbridge discusses the Rogers-McKim positive evaluation of Karl Barth and G. C. Berkouwer:

Evangelicals acquainted with Karl Barth's neoorthodox views concerning biblical inspiration at first may be surprised that the authors esteem the Swiss theologian's perspectives so highly. Their surprise might be less intense concerning the authors' encomium for Berkouwer if they recall that Professor Rogers translated the Dutch professor's *Heilige Schrift* into English under the title *Holy Scripture* (1975).

Once we understand Rogers and McKim's great debt to the neoorthodox categories of Barth and those of Berkouwer, then a possible answer to a haunting question begins to emerge. Why does their volume falter as judged by the standards of careful historical craftsmanship? The answer to that question may be this. Rather than trying to interact evenhandedly with the data with which they were acquainted (even if it "went against" their favorite ideas), Rogers and McKim attempted to do history using the categories of the later Berkouwer as the lenses through which they viewed their material. By this we mean that the later Berkouwer's "historical disjunctions" may

CHRISTIAN STUDY PROJECT

"When as Christians we find ourselves deeply immersed in the ongoing life of contemporary society, we are often torn between the demands of the world and our commitment to Christ. How shall we involve ourselves with the issues of the day? Shall we support abortion or pro-life? Vote for nukes or no nukes? Side with Israel or the Palestinians?"

"In our vocations, how will we be Christian teachers, accountants, business people, managers, nurses, doctors, bank tellers, lawyers?"

The Christian Study Project, sponsored by the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, is a two week program held at Cedar Campus, Michigan, August 1-15, 1981. Project staff include Ronald Sider, James Sire (editor, IVP), and Tom Trevethan (IVCF staff). For more information, write James Sire, IVP, Box F, Downers Grove, IL 60515.

have become Rogers and McKim's working premises. Since Berkouwer does not believe in complete biblical infallibility and argues that the Bible's chief function is to reveal salvation truths (pp. 428-429), then those figures of the past who declared that the Bible reveals salvation truths also did not believe in complete biblical infallibility. Since Berkouwer thinks that God's accommodation to us in human language necessitates an errant Bible (pp. 431-433), then those individuals who spoke of accommodation denied complete biblical infallibility. Since Berkouwer argues that according to the Bible "error" relates solely to "sin and deception" (p. 431), then Augustine, Calvin, and Luther only describe error in that way. Since Berkouwer does not believe that the Bible's incidental comments about history and "science" are reliable (p. 431), then Augustine, Wycliffe, Calvin, Luther, and others did not believe this either. Evidently, Rogers and McKim took the later Berkouwer's premises, and to a certain extent those of Barth, and crushed them down hard on whatever data they considered.

Woodbridge concludes,

It is quite probable, then, that the Berkouwer lenses blurred Rogers and McKim's historical vision. How else can we explain the repeated "historical disjunctions," the unfortunate misquotations, the selective use of evidence, the wringing of secondary sources such that their authors' own analyses become misshapen? In brief, the authors' apologetic concern along with their failure to consider the conceptual problems in doing good history overwhelmed their obviously well-intentioned desire to "set the record straight" concerning biblical infallibility. They wrote more as theologians doing apologetics than as historians.

(H) Conclusion. So, Woodbridge's methodological questions are applied, thus he reads history differently than Rogers and McKim:

In several regards Rogers and Mc-

Kim's survey is a disappointing piece. The authors obviously labored long hours upon it, carefully forging their proposal. But despite their sincere Christian motivations for composing it, their efforts will probably be less than satisfying to them. Because they so desperately wanted to plea a certain cause, they generally sacrificed their claims to evenhanded scholarship by discounting out-of-hand contrary evidence, by neglecting worlds of technical scholarship bearing on their broad subject, by fixing too uncritically upon a neoorthodox historiography, and by relying too heavily upon secondary literature rather than examining primary sources for themselves. As a result, their volume lacks that quality of reliability which gives good historical surveys their endurance.

Woodbridge's entire article can be secured from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2045 Half Day Road, Deerfield, IL 60515. Those interested in following this discussion should also read the book being discussed, The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible by Jack Rogers and Donald McKim (Harper and Row, 1980). Recently, this volume won the "Book of the Year" Award from Eternity magazine. In our next issue (April, 1981) Donald McKim will respond to Woodbridge's article.

INTERSECTION

(The integration of theological studies with ethics, academic disciplines, and ecclesiastical institutions)

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ANTI-SEMITISM: THREE IMPORTANT BOOKS By T.L. Donaldson, Th.D. Candidate, Wycliffe College, Toronto.

If the Holocaust has not produced the same crisis of faith within Christianity as it has in some circles of Judaism, it has at least been profoundly unsettling to Christian consciences. When the full extent of the atrocities committed against the Jewish people in the Second World War became known, the question of how such a thing could have happened in the heart of Christian Europe immediately presented itself. It quickly became apparent to Christians and Jews alike that Hitler's anti-Semitism could not have borne such bitter fruit if the soil had not been prepared by centuries of anti-Judaic preaching and teaching in the Church. It was realized, in fact, that a straight line could be drawn from the *adversus Judaeos* tradition of the second and third century apologists who found it necessary to denigrate Judaism in order to win a hearing for the Christian position, through the Constantinian era in which the Church moved into a position in which it could influence the social legislation of the Empire, into the Medieval period with its systematic attempts to push Jews to the margins of European society, and down to the ovens of Auschwitz and Treblinka. This is not to say that Nazism was Christian; though it made some use of Christian terminology for propaganda pur-

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poses, it was decidedly anti-Christian. But it was able to draw freely on anti-Semitic capital which the Church had been laying up for centuries.

Some have gone farther and have suggested that the Holocaust can be explained only by extending the straight line back into the New Testament itself. In what follows, I would like to concern myself with this charge, that the New Testament is in some way or other anti-Semitic. The literature on this topic which has appeared in the past thirty years is extensive. My purpose here is to introduce the lines of discussion by describing three significant books which are fairly representative of the main approaches taken to the question.

The first of these is *Jesus et Israel* by Jules Isaac (1948). Isaac, born in 1877, was a prominent and respected French historian, at one time Inspector General of Education in France and author of standard secondary school and university texts on world history. Like many European Jews of his day he was not particularly orthodox, and showed little interest in his Jewish heritage until the German occupation of France. Deprived of his post by the Nazis in 1941, he began to turn his skills as a historian to the question of the roots of anti-Semitism. In 1943 his wife and several other members of his family were seized and executed, and he spent the last years of the war in hiding, working on his manuscript from farmhouse to farmhouse while he stayed one step ahead of his pursuers. In 1948 *Jesus et Israel* was published.

It was an impassioned book and it made an immediate impact. He did not set out to condemn authentic Christianity however. As he would write later:

Anti-Semitism is by definition unchristian, and even anti-Christian. A true Christian cannot be an anti-Semite; he simply has no right to be one. (Isaac, 1964, p. 21)

He felt rather that the Church had misrepresented Jesus and the New Testament.

His basic methodology was to set the New Testament texts side by side with the commentaries on those texts by the Church Fathers and later writers in order to demonstrate the vast gulf between the two. His book gives the result of this process of comparison, set out in twenty-one propositions in which he attempted to show that the Church had forgotten the essential Jewishness of Jesus and the early Christians. Jesus was, he insisted, a Jewish preacher, born into a Jewish family